

# Reading Psalmodia

## Part II

Sections 9 through 12 of the text.

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## 9. TONES, MODES & SCALES.

The **Eight Tones** (*Echoi*,) are defined Calendrically and liturgically as well as musically, in that the offices of each day are organised on the basis of a cycle of eight weeks, each of which has its own Tone. The offices contained in the *Anastasimatarion* and the *Parakleitike* are organised in a sequence of eight successive weeks each of which uses one of the Eight Tones.

Each Tone makes use of a cluster of Modes, some are in common use, some are rarely used. Different modes are used for the Irmic melodies of a given Tone from those used for the Sticheric melodies of the same tone.

Each mode has its own characteristic scales; sometimes the ascending scale used in a specific mode is different in some way from the descending scale of the same mode. Each mode is defined by its scales, its Basic Note or Tonic, its Dominant Notes, its Melodic Loci, (*theseis*,) its Melodic Cadences (*katalexeis*) and its Emotional Character. Just as different modes can use the same scale, a particular melodic locus may occur in more than one mode. Traditional theorists also distinguish the modes according to their Intonation Formulae (*apechemata*), but this is archaic, the classic intonation formulae are really redundant in modern practice.

**Basic Note or Tonic:** each mode has a basic note. The melody almost always ends on the basic note, and the basic note is heard as the foundation note and home note of the mode's scale. It is not always the lowest note of the scale: in the Soft Chromatic scale in Echos II for example, the basic note is G/Di, but the scale regularly descends five notes lower.

**Dominant Notes:** in addition to the basic note of the mode, each mode has one or more other notes that play a dominant role in its melodies and provide the arrival point for its cadential formulae.

**Intonation Formulae** (*apechemata*) in the ancient chant, standard melodic phrases were used by the precentor to define the mode in which the following piece would be sung. Later versions of these phrases and the odd "words" to which they were sung (neanes, anes, agia &c.) are still sometimes used, most commonly, however, the apichimata are reduced to a single note or pair of notes. The chant can be sung perfectly well without the intonation formulae, but they can be useful in ensuring singers know exactly what they are to do.

**Melodic Loci.** (*Theseis*) Western scholars of Mediaeval Byzantine music discovered, on decyphering and analysing the melodies written in the ancient notation, that the same or similar musical phrases kept recurring in different melodies of the same echos. This has led to a consensus amongst them that the art of the Byzantine Melode consisted of constructing melodies by combining together standard stereotyped phrases typical of a particular mode. This is certainly an inadequate account of melurgy whether mediaeval or modern; the psaltic composer has at his or her disposal all the loci of the various modes, but the art of melurgy cannot be reduced simply to the technique of nailing together a sequence of melodic loci. Analysis of long and ornate melodies in particular

would make this evident. A cherubikon by Peter Lampadarios or Grigorios Protopsaltes is no more a simple sequence of loci than is a passage of Homer simply a catena of poetic cliches.

Nonetheless, each mode does have its own typical melodic loci, and the use of these as significant elements in the melodies in a given mode help give it its typical musical flavour.

**Melodic Cadences.** (*Katalexeis.*) A typical and extremely important feature of Byzantine Psalmodia is the use of melodic cadences. Each mode has its own typical cadential formulae. They serve as musical punctuation of the text as well as establishing clearly the mode in which the text is being sung. The cadences are of four kinds:

✂ **Partial Cadences** (*ateleis katalixeis*) function rather like the commas of the poetic text. They mark the end of a musical and textual passage, and at the same time indicate there is more to follow. Partial cadences can end on any of the dominant notes of the mode being sung.

✂ **Complete Cadences** (*enteleis katalixeis*) are more definite, marking the end of a complete section of the hymn. They correspond to the colons or full-stops of the written text. Complete cadences often end on the basic note of the mode.

✂ **Final Cadences** (*telikai katalixeis*) are a special kind of complete cadence used to mark the end of the hymn being sung. They normally end on the basic note of the mode.

✂ **Emphatic Cadences** or **Cue Cadences** (*oristikos katalixeis*) are more emphatic versions of Final Cadences used both to mark the completion of the whole passage of chant the psalter has sung, and to provide a cue for the next *ekphonesis*. Typical of cue cadences is a sustained slow trill on the final note of a piece. Since such cadences cue the clergy, sometimes the piece is concluded on a note other than the basic note to indicate where the *ekphonesis* will be chanted. *The function of the emphatic cadences as musical cues is of considerable importance; the psalter needs to take care not only to use the cue cadences at the right moment, but also to avoid misusing them, (for example, to end one in a sequence of hymns or verses,) to avoid miscuing the clergy.*

The Eight Tones are divided into two groups, four Principal Tones and four Plagal Tones. *The Eight Tones of Byzantine Psalmodia correspond to the Eight Tones of Latin Plainchant, but are not identical with them. It should be noted that the numbering of the two sets of tones is not the same, the odd numbered Latin tones are the four Authentic Tones, the even numbered Tones, the four Plagal. So, for example, Latin Tone Two is also Latin Plagal One and Latin Tone Four is also Latin Plagal Three. In the Byzantine Tone System, Tone Five is Plagal One, Tone Six is Plagal Two, Tone Seven (The Grave Tone) is Plagal Three and Tone Eight is Plagal Four. The Eight Tones of Modern Psalmodia derive from, but are not identical to those in use in the Mediaeval period, though there is nonetheless a close relation between the two systems.*

#### **STONE ONE:**

Scale Type: DIATONIC

Basic Note: Pa

Dominant Notes:      Irmic Melodies:      Pa & Di

                                 Sticheric Melodies:      Pa & Ga

MODES: The Mode in which Irmic melodies are sung is the Diatonic scale on D/Pa:

## **Pa [10] Vu [8] Ga [12] Di [12] Ke [10] Zo [8] Ni [12] Pa**

Usually, however, the note Zo is flattened in both descending phrases and in phrases which ascend to it but do not immediately proceed to the Ni' or Pa' above. Many Psaltai follow a somewhat dubious Thessalonikan fashion and flatten Vu in descent as well.

Exceptionally, the melody *Ton Taphon Sou Soter* is sung to a chromatic mode; usually it is sung in the soft chromatic scale, but some modern versions offer a related melody in a hard chromatic mode. Since it belongs to the Tone One *Anastasimatarion*, the melody is said to be in Tone I Chromatic; it could equally be assigned musically to Tone II.

Sticheric melodies are sung to a mode which uses the same scale, but which uses different melodic loci and cadences.

### **TONE TWO:**

Scale Type: CHROMATIC.

|                 |                     |                    |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Basic Note:     | Irmic melodies:     | Pa                 |
|                 | Sticheric melodies: | Di , sometimes Bou |
| Dominant Notes: | Irmic Melodies:     | Pa, Di             |
|                 | Sticheric Melodies: | Ni, Bou & Di       |

MODES: The Irmic melodies of Tone Two are normally sung to a mode based on the Hard Chromatic scale, with Pa as its basic note. Sticheric melodies are sung to a mode which uses the Soft Chromatic scale, with Di as its basic note. Some Pappadic melodies use a mode based on the Soft Chromatic scale with E/Vu as its basic note.

The use of two modes, one based on the hard chromatic scale, one on the soft chromatic scale is also found in the Plagal Second Tone.

The second tone is very widely used in Psalmody. It is the Tone commonly used for the Ekfonesis, the Antiphons and the Trisagion of the Divine Liturgy. Correctly, Tone II should be used for all the main melodies of the Synaxis, but in contemporary practise Tone V and Tone VIII are commonly used.

### **TONE THREE.**

Scale Type: ENHARMONIC

Basic Note: Ga

Dominant Notes: Pa, Ga & Ke

MODES: Both Irmic and Sticheric melodies are constructed in modes which use the enharmonic scale on Ga. In practice some singers do not make a clear systematic distinction between the scale on which they sing Tone III and the scale they use to sing Tone VIII melodies based on Ga. The sharper Vu of Tone III is, however, important for the colouring it gives.

### **TONE FOUR**

Scale Type: DIATONIC and CHROMATIC

|                 |                         |         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|---------|
| Basic Note:     | Irmic & Short Sticheric | Bou     |
|                 | Slow Sticheric          | Pa      |
|                 | Pappadic                | Di      |
| Dominant Notes: | Irmic & Short Sticheric | Vou, Di |

### Slow Sticheric

### Pa, Vu & Di

MODES: The Fourth Tone makes use of a complex family of modes. Legetos, a diatonic mode based on Vu is used in short Irmic and short Sticheric melodies. (*In practise, Greek and Cypriot Psaltai generally sing Legetos to a distinctly non-diatonic tuning.*) A second Diatonic mode based on Pa and Di, but having its Final and Emphatic Cadences on Vu is used in slow sticheric melodies. A third mode based on Di is used in some Ornate melodies and in the Pappadic style.

In Legetos it is usual to sharpen slightly the Pa below the basic Vu both when Pa acts in effect as a leading note to Vu and in the Locus Bou-Pa-Ni-Pa Vou.

A second and very common mode used in short Irmic and Sticheric styles uses both a slightly sharpened Pa and a slightly flattened Ke; this makes it virtually indistinguishable from the soft chromatic mode of Tone Two. It is now customary to accept that this mode of Four is indeed in the soft chromatic scale and to mark it with the signs and tokens of that scale. This soft chromatic mode is of great importance since it is used for *Theos Kyrios* and for most Apolytikia and Kontakia in Tone Four. The Emphatic Cadence of this mode is normally on Di.

When the note Zo' occurs as an unemphatic note in a descending passage or when the melody rises to it and then descends without emphasising it, it is frequently flattened.

The automelon kathisma *Kataplagi Iosif* is sung to a very beautiful melody in a mode of the soft (or sometimes the hard) chromatic scale. Since *Kataplagi Iosif* is the automelon of very many prosomia, care must be taken to distinguish this, the proper melody of the automelon, from a second melody in a mode of the soft chromatic scale used for the prosomia of *Kataplagi Iosif* when they are sung as apolytikia - this is an important set of apolytikia including *Apegrafeto Pote, Etimazou Bethleem, Ek tis Rizis Iessai* and *I Amnas Sou*.

An uncommon but beautiful enharmonic mode of the Fourth Tone also exists.

## **STONE FIVE or TONE PLAGAL ONE**

Scale: DIATONIC.

|                 |                                |            |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Basic Note:     | Short Irmic & Sticheric modes: | Ke         |
|                 | Slow Irmic & Sticheric modes:  | Pa or Ke   |
| Dominant Notes: | Short Irmic & Sticheric:       | Ke, Pa, Ni |
|                 | Slow Irmic & Sticheric:        | Pa, Di, Ke |

MODES: Most pieces in Plagal I use a mode of the diatonic scale based on Ke or the identical mode transposed to the base Pa. Pieces in the Slow, Ornate or Pappadic styles frequently use a more complex mode which uses both the diatonic scale on the base Pa and the enharmonic scale on Ga used in Tone Three. Some pieces in these slow styles are written in what is called the Pentaphonic mode of Plagal I; this is a beautiful and lyrical mode which has Pa, Ga, Di and Zo<sup>b</sup> as its Dominant Notes, and many of its phrases begin typically on Zo<sup>b</sup>.

## **TONE SIX or PLAGAL TWO**

Scale: CHROMATIC

|                 |                               |           |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Basic Note:     | Irmic & short Sticheric modes | Vu or Di  |
|                 | Slow Sticheric & Ornate modes | Pa        |
| Dominant notes: | Irmic & short Sticheric:      | Vou, Di   |
|                 | Slow Sticheric & Ornate:      | Pa, Di Ke |

MODES: The Second Plagal Tone uses modes based on the soft chromatic scale and modes based on the hard chromatic scale. The Irmic and short Sticheric styles use modes of the soft chromatic scale based on Vu or Di . The Slow sticheric and Ornate styles use modes of the hard chromatic scale based on Pa.

## **BARYS, THE GRAVE TONE**

Scale: DIATONIC and ENHARMONIC

|                 |                                      |   |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Basic Note:     | Enharmonic Modes:                    | Ga or Zo <sup>b</sup>                   |
|                 | Diatonic Modes:                      | Zo or Zo <sup>'</sup>                   |
| Dominant Notes: | Enharmonic Mode on Ga:               | Ga, Di , Zo <sup>b'</sup>               |
|                 | Enharmonic Mode on Zo <sup>b</sup> : | Bou <sup>b</sup> , Di , Zo <sup>b</sup> |
|                 | Diatonic Modes:                      | Pa, Ga, Di , Zo <sup>b'</sup>           |

MODES: The short Irmic and Sticheric styles make use of one mode based on the Tetrachordal Enharmonic scale on Ga, and of modes based on the (Octave-System) Diatonic scale on Zo. The first of these uses the same Tetrachordal Scale as Tone Three, but the Dominant Notes, Melodic Loci and Melodic Cadences of Barys are quite different. The Diatonic modes of Barys are used in the short styles and also in slow and Ornate styles. A family of such modes exists:

**Tetraphonic Diatonic Barys:** or Pentachordal Diatonic Barys, whose melodies are based on the lower Zo, has typical melodic loci that rise up to Ga, but avoid phrases passing directly through it, frequently use Di <sup>b</sup> as a downward "leading note" to Ga, and making frequent use of Di <sup>b</sup> and Zo<sup>b'</sup>.

**Pentaphonic Diatonic Barys:** or Hexachordal Diatonic Barys, or Protobarys is similar to the Irmic mode of Tone One in its lower scale, but makes frequent use of an emphatic Zo<sup>b'</sup> in the upper part of the scale. Its Melodic Loci are closely similar to those of Tone One.

**Heptaphonic Diatonic Barys:** is a dramatic mode of Barys with a very high tessitura. It uses the upper Zo of the Diatonic scale as its basis, and generally ranges from Ga# to upper Ga<sup>'</sup>. It makes regular use of Ke# and of Bou<sup>b</sup> in its melodies, and uses Di and Zo<sup>'</sup> as its dominant notes.

The Octave-System Enharmonic Barys based on Zo<sup>b</sup> is used in a variety of melodies in the Slow and Ornate styles.

## **TONE EIGHT or PLAGAL FOUR**

Scale: DIATONIC

|                 |                     |             |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Basic Note:     | Octave-System mode: | Ni          |
|                 | Tetrachordal mode:  | Ga          |
| Dominant Notes: | Octave-System mode: | Ni, Vou, Di |
|                 | Tetrachordal Mode:  | Ga, Di , Ke |

MODES: There are melodies of all styles, short, slow, Irmic and Sticheric, of Tone Eight which use both the Octave-system mode and the Tetrachordal mode. (Some melodies

can be sung either on Ni or on Ga depending on the Psaltes' preference and the relation of the particular hymn to the melodies preceding and following. Such hymns have a restricted range and can usually be sung equally easily at either pitch.)

## 10. MARKS, TOKENS & ACCIDENTALS

To distinguish the notes of one scale from another, **Identifying Marks** (*Martyria*) are used. An Identifying mark stand at the end of each phrase of the written melody to indicate the note on which that particular Melodic Cadence will end. An Identifying Mark is also frequently used before the start of a written melody, or a passage of written melody, to indicate the starting point, basic note and scale of the melody.

The notes of the natural Diatonic scale carry the following Identifying Marks:

|           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Di</b> | <b>Ke</b> | <b>Zo</b> | <b>Ni</b> | <b>Pa</b> | <b>Vu</b> | <b>Ga</b> | <b>Di</b> | <b>Ke</b> | <b>Zo</b> | <b>Ni</b> | <b>Pa</b> | <b>Vu</b> |
| δλ        | ϩ         | ζ         | ν         | π         | β         | Γ         | Δ         | κ         | ζ'        | ν'        | π'        | β'        |
| Δ         | κ         | ζ         | δλ        | ϩ         | κ         | Γ         | δλ        | ϩ         | κ         | Γ         | ϩ         | κ         |

The equivalent Identifying Marks of the notes of the Soft Chromatic Scale are:

|           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Ni</b> | <b>Pa</b> | <b>Vu</b> | <b>Ga</b> | <b>Di</b> | <b>Ke</b> | <b>Zo</b> | <b>Ni</b> |
| ν'        | π'        | β'        | Γ'        | Δ'        | κ'        | ζ'        | ν'        |
| ν'        | π'        | β'        | Γ'        | Δ'        | κ'        | ζ'        | ν'        |

Those of the Hard Chromatic scale are:

|           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Di</b> | <b>Ke</b> | <b>Zo</b> | <b>Ni</b> | <b>Pa</b> | <b>Vu</b> | <b>Ga</b> | <b>Di</b> | <b>Ke</b> | <b>Zo</b> | <b>Ni</b> | <b>Pa</b> | <b>Vu</b> |
| δλ        | ϩ         | ζ         | ν         | π         | β         | Γ         | Δ         | κ         | ζ'        | ν'        | π'        | β'        |
| Δ         | κ         | ζ         | δλ        | ϩ         | κ         | Γ         | δλ        | ϩ         | κ         | Γ         | ϩ         | κ         |

And those of the Enharmonic Scale:

|           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Di</b> | <b>Ke</b> | <b>Zo</b> | <b>Ni</b> | <b>Pa</b> | <b>Vu</b> | <b>Ga</b> | <b>Di</b> | <b>Ke</b> | <b>Zo</b> | <b>Ni</b> | <b>Pa</b> | <b>Vu</b> |
| δλ        | ϩ         | ζ         | ν         | π         | β         | Γ         | Δ         | κ         | ζ'        | ν'        | π'        | β'        |
| Δ         | κ         | Γ         | δλ        | ϩ         | κ         | Γ         | δλ        | ϩ         | κ         | δλ        | ϩ         | κ         |

In addition to the Identifying Marks, Byzantine notation also uses **Modulation Tokens** (*phthorai*). The practical use of the Modulation Tokens is to indicate the scale used by a melody from the point where the Modulation Token occurs. A Modulation Token can be used together with an Identifying Mark to make clear the exact mode to be used in a melody. More commonly one occurs during the course of a written melody indicating that the note over which the Token is placed belongs to the scale indicated by that particular Token, and that, consequently, the melody shifts to that scale at the point where the Token is placed. The four sets of Tokens are as follows:



### Diatonic Scale Tokens:

|    |    |       |    |    |    |     |   |
|----|----|-------|----|----|----|-----|---|
| ℓ  | φ  | Σ     | φ  | α  | σ  | Σ   | ℓ |
| 12 | 10 | 8     | 12 | 12 | 10 | 8   |   |
| Ni | Pa | Vu Ga | Di | Ke | Zo | Ni' |   |

### Soft Chromatic Scale Tokens:

|    |    |       |    |    |    |     |   |
|----|----|-------|----|----|----|-----|---|
| —φ | σ  | —φ    | σ  | —φ | σ  | —φ  | σ |
| 8  | 14 | 8     | 12 | 8  | 14 | 8   |   |
| Ni | Pa | Vu Ga | Di | Ke | Zo | Ni' |   |

### Hard Chromatic Scale Tokens:

|       |       |       |       |   |    |   |   |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|----|---|---|
| ∞     | σ     | ∞     | σ     | ∞ | σ  | σ | ∞ |
| 6     | 20    | 4     | 12    | 6 | 20 | 4 |   |
| Ni Pa | Vu Ga | Di Ke | Zo Ni |   |    |   |   |

### Octave-System Enharmonic Scale Tokens:

|                 |    |                    |    |    |    |                  |   |
|-----------------|----|--------------------|----|----|----|------------------|---|
| ρ               | α  | ♭                  | ρ  | φ  | α  | ♭                | ρ |
| 12              | 12 | 6                  | 12 | 12 | 12 | 6                |   |
| Zo <sup>b</sup> | Ni | Pa Vu <sup>b</sup> | Ga | Di | Ke | Zo' <sup>b</sup> |   |

### Tetrachordal-System Enharmonic Scale Tokens:

|    |    |       |    |    |                 |    |   |
|----|----|-------|----|----|-----------------|----|---|
| ρ  | α  | ♭     | ρ  | α  | ♭               | ρ  | α |
| 12 | 12 | 6     | 12 | 12 | 6               | 12 |   |
| Ni | Pa | Vu Ga | Di | Ke | Zo <sup>b</sup> | Ni |   |

## ACCIDENTALS:

Psalmodia makes use of three types of accidentals; sharps and flats affecting a single note, sharps and flats affecting every subsequent note of a given pitch until neutralised and the "shades," complex accidentals which shift the pitch of whole groups of notes.

### [A] Sharps and Flats:

Since Psalmodia uses a wide range of intervals, it is no surprise that it makes use of not one but several kinds of sharp (*diesis*) and several kinds of flat (*yfesis*). Unfortunately, musical theorists are not consistent in the number or meaning of the sharps and flats used. The great Chrysanthos defined signs to raise or lower the pitch of a note by 1/4, 1/3, 1.2, 2/3 and 3/4 of a tone. An official statement from the Patriarchate's officials in 1881 defined signs for sharps and flats of 1/6, 2/6, 3/6, 4/6 and 5/6 of a tone! Neither of these extravagant systems of accidentals has really any practical use, and both have passed into virtual oblivion. Even so, there is no single coherent system of sharps and flats to be found in the written corpus of Psalmodia. Some writers use only one flat sign and one sharp sign, some writers recognise three of each, but rarely use more than two. Irritatingly, those who use three signs of each kind do not agree as to the degrees

of sharpness or flatness they indicate; some see them as sharpening or flattening a note by 1/3, 1/2 and 2/3 tone, others by 1/4, 1/2 and 3/4 tone! The easiest way to read the three signs is as flattening or sharpening a note by less than a semitone, about a semitone and more than a semitone - i.e. as a **flattish**, a **flat**, and a **very-flat**, a **sharpish** a **sharp** and a **very-sharp**.

The signs you are most likely to find in musical texts are the following:

**FLAT**

A. ϰ B. ϱ

**SHARP**

A. ϰ̄ B. ϱ̄

Unfortunately, the use of these different signs is not consistent, especially in older texts. Chrysanthos himself used the signs marked A to indicate a flattening or sharpening of a quarter-tone tone and the signs marked B to indicate a flattening or sharpening of a semitone. The Patriarchal Authorities, however, in 1881 defined the value of the signs marked A as flattening or sharpening a note by one sixth of a tone. In more modern use the B signs tend to represent a flat or a sharp and the B signs a flattish or sharpish. A very-sharp or a very-flat is indicated by adding a second bar to the A signs. Where only a single sharp and a single flat sign is used, it will normally be the A signs used. In that case it can be read it as sharpening or flattening by about a semitone, but it will depend on the mode in use what kind of semitone that is.

**[B] General Sharps and Flats:**

The following signs affect every subsequent note of a particular pitch until neutralised:

**General Sharp**

ϰ̄

on Ga affects Vu

**General Flat**

ϱ̄

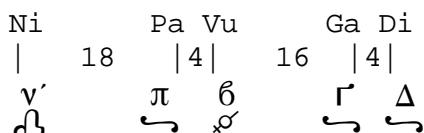
on Ke affects Zo

**[C] The "Shades."**

The Shades (*Chroai*) are an important and distinctive feature of Psalmodia in modern practice, features Psalmodia shares with classical Ottoman music.. There are three Shades, the Yoke (*zygos*), the Tilt (*kliton*) and the Sabre (*Spathi*). Each of the Shades affects a number of successive notes of the scale, changing the musical complexion of the mode in use. The Shades are subtle and complex colourings that can be used to great effect in melodic composition.

**1. The Yoke: ϰ̄**

The yoke is written over the sign for the note Di and modifies the intervals below it as follows:



Note the Identifying Marks of the Shaded notes.

## 2. The Tilt: $\rho$

The Tilt is also written above the sign for Di . It affects the notes below it as follows:

|                 |          |          |            |
|-----------------|----------|----------|------------|
| Pa              | Vu       | Ga       | Di         |
|                 | 14       |          | 12  4      |
| $\pi$           | $\delta$ | $\Gamma$ | $\Delta$   |
| $\delta\lambda$ | $\eta$   | $\kappa$ | $\eta\eta$ |

or, according to an alternative interpretation of the intervals:

|    |    |    |       |
|----|----|----|-------|
| Pa | Vu | Ga | Di    |
|    | 12 |    | 14  4 |

## 3. The Sabre: $\ominus\text{t}$

The Sabre is normally found over the note Ke or the note Ga. On Ke its effect is as follows:

|            |          |          |            |                 |
|------------|----------|----------|------------|-----------------|
| Ga         | Di       | Ke       | Zo         | Ni              |
|            | 20       | 4 4      | 14         |                 |
| $\Gamma$   | $\Delta$ | $\kappa$ | $\zeta'$   | $\nu'$          |
| $\eta\eta$ | $\omega$ | $\eta$   | $\eta\eta$ | $\delta\lambda$ |

on Ga, however, the Sabre affects the scale as follows:

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Pa | Vu | Ga | Di | Ke | Zo | Ni |
|    | 12 | 6  | 8  | 16 | 4  | 14 |

## 11. RHYTHM and TEMPO:

Psalmody is strongly rhythmical. Its rhythmic basis is twofold:

### [A] TONIC RHYTHM or ACCENTUAL RHYTHM:

The accented syllables of the text normally carry a clear musical accent. Sometimes this is the only or the predominant rhythmic element in the music, as for example in musical reading of scriptural texts, in the simple psalm tones, in chanted prose prayers, and in the priests' and deacons' part in the chanting of services.

### [B] METRIC RHYTHM:

Many musical forms follow fixed rhythmic patterns. This is most evident in the case of prosomia which share the metric structure both of their literary text and of their melody with the corresponding automelon. Accentual rhythm, however, can modify the metrical structure of a melody so that, for example, different prosomia of the automelon may have subtly different rhythmical structures depending on the exact accentual pattern of the poetic text.

Traditional Psalitic theory analyses the metric rhythm of hymns on the model of the metrical feet of Classical Greek poetry. This is both cumbersome and unnecessary. All that is required is the recognition that musical metre can be of considerable flexibility and complexity, and that the musical metre of a hymn will express its poetical metre -






the poetic metre is, of course, the stress-accentual metre of post-classical Byzantine verse, not the quantitative metre of classical verse.

In the absence of any other metrical indication, the musical text is presumed to be written in duple or quadruple rhythm, except where accentual rhythm dictates otherwise. The name of the automelon to which a prosomion is sung, the use of bar-lines to mark the feet of the musical metre and direct rhythmic instructions such as "*trisimos*" - in triple time - may all be used to indicate metre.

In recent years, some melodies have begun to iron out the melodic irregularities of the traditional melodies of the prosomia, singing virtually them all in a regular quadruple rhythm that completely annihilates the rhythmic subtlety of the hymns. It does, however, make it easier for congregations to learn the troparia.

The chant makes use of a variety of Tempi, and the signs for them are differently interpreted by different singers and different schools. One important thing to note is that the pace at which the troparia of a Canon should be sung is a brisk musical walking pace, a much more rapid pace than that at which western hymns are normally sung.

The following table of signs identifies the customary signs of tempo which will be found in the musical text and the number of rhythmic beats per minute the tempo marking indicates. The table is, of course, no more than a set of very approximate guidelines. The tempo of reading in particular needs care: the pious and ponderous style affected by some readers is quite as inappropriate to the reading of the sacred text as is the near unintelligible gabble adopted by others in the inane belief this is somehow truly 'Orthodox'. What is required is clear, well-enunciated reading at a normal reading pace that makes the text fully accessible and comprehensible to the hearer. *On rare occasions a liturgical text which is always sung is marked to be read **chyma**: in such cases the text is chanted in a near monotone.*

| TEMPO      |                      | SIGN  | Beats per minute: |
|------------|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Slow       | ( <i>Bradeia</i> )   |  | 80 - 100          |
| Medium     | ( <i>Mesi</i> )      |  | 100 - 100         |
| Moderate   | ( <i>Metria</i> )    |  | 120 - 160         |
| Quick      | ( <i>Tacheia</i> )   |  | 160 - 180         |
| Very Quick | ( <i>Tachytati</i> ) |  | 180 -             |
| Speech     | ( <i>Chyma</i> )     |  | 180 ?-            |

Of these six tempi, the middle three and the last, the speech tempo, are the most regularly used. *The terms mesi and metria are sometimes reversed in use.*

## 12. PSALMODIA IN PRACTICE

### INTRODUCTION.

Psalmody is a liturgical art. Scholars and musicians may find Psalmody of great historical, aesthetic or musicological interest; for the Psalter, while these things may be of interest, the heart of his or her calling is the carrying out of a liturgical ministry. Psalmody is prayer: the Psalter is a prayer-leader.

**Psalmody is part of the public prayer of the Church.** The texts of the chant take precedence over the music: the music of the chant is there to carry and to express the text.

The Psalter's role is not to impose on the chant any personal meaning or emotion, but to realise in song the meaning and the feeling that are **there** in the text and the music. It is important that the Psalter should seek to acquire an accurate awareness of the meaning of the liturgical texts and reflect intelligently on the significance and feeling of the melody belonging to the text. The Psalter exercises a liturgical ministry of great importance, chanting the sacred texts on behalf of the People of God, and has a crucially important function in enabling and supporting the prayer of the whole congregation.

### THE VOICE.

The Psalter needs to have an accurate sense of pitch and a voice appropriate to the liturgical ministry he or she is to exercise. A weak or unsteady voice is undesirable. The modern habit of introducing microphones into the church has at least the merit of enabling singers with particularly quiet voices to function more effectively as Psaltai.

Ideally, a Psalter should have a clear, accurately pitched, melodious and pleasing voice and a range encompassing at least the two octaves from low to high F or low to high G.

Singers trained in operatic or lieder styles need to learn a quite different approach to singing before they can sing Psaltic music. Psaltic chanting is essentially a religious act, not a musical performance and certainly not a dramatic performance. The congregation is not an audience to be entertained and impressed. The liturgical offices are prayer offered in the presence of the Living God, not an exotic form of oratorio. They are part of the public prayer of the Church, not an exercise in personal devotion. The Psalter exercises a ministry on behalf of the congregation; that is something quite different from giving a musical performance for the people's edification.

### THE FORMS of CHANT.

The Liturgical offices contain a wide variety of chant. The Psalter needs to understand and appreciate the character and function of each.

### A] LITANIES

The Byzantine Rite is particularly rich in litanies, from the catena of petitions of the Eirenika to the brief dialogue of the Small Ektenia. Essentially a Litany is a dialogue, usually between deacon and people; the deacon (or the priest) chants a petition to which the people, led by the Psaltai, make a brief, simple response, e.g. "Lord have mercy," or "Grant this, O Lord." Each Litany normally ends with a brief prayer of commendation, to

which the people reply "To You, O Lord," and a doxology sung by the priest, to which the response is "Amen."

The Litany is, and is meant to be, a simple, popular form of prayer. The responses belong to the people, and are one form of chant it is easy to return to the people, especially if the Psaltai are content to give an effective lead, and keep, generally, to simple traditional melodies.

If the Psaltai do make the responses to the litanies, the usual custom is for one choir to make the first six responses of a set of twelve, the other the next six. It is equally possible for the two sides to respond alternately, or for sets of responses to be broken into clusters of three or four.

## **B] LITURGICAL DIALOGUE**

Besides the Litanies, there are many other forms of liturgical dialogue in the Byzantine Rite. The Leitourgika are the most important instance. The Leitourgika are normally sung in the Tone (Echos) of the day. This is the norm, but in practice many churches do not follow it, and use a narrow range of chants traditional in that particular community. Many priests, moreover, are unable to chant the Liturgy in all eight Tones, and this makes it difficult if not impossible to use the full range of Tones for the Leitourgika.

The Leitourgika should be chanted to a suite of melodies that give a sense of unity and continuity to the music of the Anaphora. The words chanted in Liturgical Dialogue must always be clear and intelligible. No musical settings should be used that obscure the words by melodic over-elaboration or decorative excess.

All the Psaltai should make the responses of the Leitourgika together. If the melodies are familiar, the congregation may well chant the responses with them.

## **C] APOLYTIKIA, TROPARIA, KATHISMATA, KONTAKIA &c.**

The Apolytikia and Kontakia of the Little Entrance in the Liturgy, the Apolytikia and Theotokia at the end of Hesperinos and after *Theos Kyrios* in Orthros, the Irmoi, Troparia and Katabasiai of the Kanons have all a similar musical character, they are verses sung either to short, syllabic melodies, or more rarely to slow melodies where each syllable of text is carried on two or three notes. They are to be sung clearly, simply and normally at a fairly quick tempo. Hymns of this kind are sung to melodies in the Irmic modes of the appropriate tone.

## **D] STICHERA**

The later verses of the psalms chanted at Hesperinos and Orthros are interleaved with short verses from the Paraklitiki, the Triodion, Pentekostarion or Minaia. These verses have also both Short and Slow versions. Normally the Short versions are used, though in some communities it is the custom to use the Slow stichera for Sunday services or on solemn feasts. Many of the stichera of the Minaia are Prosomia.

## **E] IDIOMELA**

Idiomela are used most typically as the hymns of the Lity or at *Lord I Have Cried* on Feasts of the Lord. They are always sung in the Sticheric modes of the appropriate tone.

**F] KYRIE EKEKRAXA & PASA PNOI**

These verses have a parallel use, the one to introduce the sequence of Lucernary Psalms at Vespers, the other to introduce the Psalms of Laud (*Ainoi*). Both Short and Slow melodies exist. The *Kyrie Ekekraxa* should be sung slowly (c. 96 beats per minute), prayerfully, with compunction; the *Pasa Pnoi*, on the other hand is an expansive, celebratory chant.

The slow melodies in current use descend from the reforming eighteenth century *Anastasimatarion* of Peter Lampadarios, usually from the reworked edition published by Joannis Protopsaltes in the mid nineteenth century. An older, much more melismatic style of melody is represented by the work of Jakovos Protopsaltes, whose long, lyrical settings, though of great beauty are relatively rarely heard. Short melodies of the *Kyrie Ekekraxa* and the *Pasa Pnoi* were published in the *Anastasimatarion* of Joannis Protopsaltes. They are melodies of quite extraordinary beauty. In many churches it is customary to use the Short melodies on weekdays and the Slow melodies for Saturday evening and Sunday Morning. If the short melodies are used, they should be sung at a rather slower pace than the verses that follow.

### **GJ DOXASTIKA**

In both Hesperinos and Orthros the sequences of stichera end with one or more Doxastika, and a similar Doxastikon-Theotokion completes the verses of the Aposticha. Doxastika are normally sung to Slow melodies of some complexity. Short settings also exist, and, though they are rarely used, they are very beautiful. Whichever version is used, the Doxastikon should be sung expansively, at a slower pace than the verses which precede it.

### **HJ CHERUBIKON & KOINONIKON**

The music of the Divine Liturgy varies in pace. At two points, the preparation for the Great Entrance and the Communion of the Clergy, slow, extremely elaborate chants are normally used, in the Tone of the day. Both of these chants reflect the identity of this Liturgy, here in this temple, with the angelic worship of the Court of Heaven. The chant of both Cherubikon and Koinonikon should be slow, serene, recollected. In both cases, however, shorter melodies also exist which require a different, plainer style of execution.

### **IJ GREAT DOXOLOGY**

The Great Doxology is a very ancient Christian hymn. It is sung antiphonally. A great variety of both Short and Slow melodies are in use. This hymn stands at the end of Orthros, as the culminating act of glorification of God. The great Doxology should be sung in an exultant (*diastaltikon*) style and at a pace suitable to a celebratory chant.

### **JJ TRISAGION**

The Trisagion hymn stands before the Scriptural readings which form the focal point of the Liturgy of the Word of the Synaxis. The cry "Holy, Holy, Holy" is the cry of the angels about the Throne of God, to which in the Liturgy our voices are joined. The hymn is normally sung in Tone II, the customary echos of the Synaxis, but can be sung in any echos. The Trisagion should be sung in an exultant manner, the Dynamis even more so. The Dynamis should be a powerfully exultant piece, lifting the hearts and minds of the people, readying them to hear and receive the inspired word of the scriptural readings.

### **KJ PSALMS**

The chanting of the Psalms has given ecclesiastical chant its name, *Psalmodia*. The psalms are chanted in a number of different ways: in **direct psalmody** the singer or singers chant the psalm as a single continuous poem, in **antiphonal psalmody** to singers or two choirs chant alternate verses of the Psalm, in **responsorial psalmody**



one singer or choir sings the verses of the psalm, while the rest of the singers respond with a refrain.

The sung psalms of Hesperinos and Orthros, including the psalm *Eleison Me O Theos* are normally sung antiphonally: the Prokeimena, when sung in their full form, are examples of responsorial psalmody. The Antiphons of the Liturgy are originally antiphonal psalms, though a refrain has come to be attached to the Psalm Verses. Normally Psalms are sung to simple, rapid melodies which vary little from verse to verse. Sometimes slow melodies are used, especially for the Polyeleos and the Anoixantaria.