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CERTAIN COMPOSITIONAL
CHARACTERISTICS IN THE *HEIRMOS*
OF THE 8TH TONE

BASED ON RUSSIAN SOURCES FROM THE 12TH –
17TH CENTURIES

This article explores some of the compositional characteristics of the *heirmos* of the 8th Tone as presented by old Russian sources from the 12th – 17th centuries.

The main source from the earliest period of old Russian chant (11th – first half of the 15th century) was chosen from the three existing Heirmologia – the Voskresensky (GIM - Gosudarstvennyy Istoricheskiy Muzey - Voskr. 28) – which contains *heirmoi* from all tones, up to the half of the 7th Ode of the 8th Tone. Five Menaia from the group of ten existing Sophia Menaia, from the same period (GIM, Sin. 159-162, 168), and a Lenten Triodion (GIM, Sin. 319), were used as complementary sources. These singing books organized according to the daily liturgical sequence contain canons whose incipits from the *heirmos* serve as models (*podobny*) also for the troparia. The Heirmologia, Menaia and Triodion referred to here date back to the 12th century and evidently come from the scriptoria of Novgorod.

The main source from the diastematic period of old Russian Znamenny singing is a *razdel'norechnyj*¹ Heirmologion of the Pomorsk tradition from the 17th century, containing cinnabar marks (*pometry*), without *priznaki*², from the collections of the Spiritual Academy of Moscow, currently preserved at the Russian State Library (RGB – Rossiiskaya Gosudarstvennaya Biblioteka) in Moscow (MDA collection,

¹ *Razdel'norechie* – the system in use before the pronunciation reform of the 17th century. (editor's note)

² *Priznaki* – black signs indicating the position of tones within the three-tone system called *soglasie* (editor's note)

№ 231869). This Heirmologion was checked against two other *razdel'norechnye* Heirmologia: one cinnabar-marked from the third quarter of the 17th century (RGB, f. 218, № 1196), another without the marks from the 17th century (RGADA - Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Arkhiv Drevnikh Aktov - Sin. Tip. 299). These three later Heirmologia are practically identical and vary only in details that have no impact on the compositional regularity of the *heirmos*.

Apart from the sources containing complete hymns, I have also used material from the ancient Russian Azbukas, the theoretical-practical textbooks that deal with different elements of church singing, including the *popovkas* and the *irmosnyie stroki*³. Among these Azbukas, whose emergence dates back to the 15th century, to the period of formation and flourishing of original Znamenny singing, two books of the 17th century were chosen: *razdel'norechnye* Azbuki containing neither cinnabar marks nor *priznaki*, from the collection of RGB (f. 379 № 15, from the mid-17th century and f. 210 № 1, from the second quarter of the 17th century).

Diastematic notation was introduced into Russian church singing during the course of the 17th century and the system of cinnabar marks became established towards the last third of the century. This century also saw the correction of the liturgical books, aimed in part at bringing the liturgical texts closer to the language norms of the 17th century, particularly as far as pronunciation and some other parameters are concerned. As a result of this correction, the compositional-melodic aspect of singing was inevitably affected, and this also subsequently affected notation.

By looking at a singing tradition that was not affected by the fate of the liturgical books of the 17th century (it seems that the Heirmologion from the MDA collection did not originally contain cinnabar marks but these were added later), this paper may arrive at a more accurate comparison of

³ Hereafter, the term "lines of the *heirmos*" will be used to translate *irmosnie stroki*. Questions concerning the organization of the *irmosnyie stroki* and the correspondence between late Russian Heirmologia and the Azbukas will be looked at by M. Makarovskaya in her doctoral dissertation, soon to be published.

material reflecting the diastematic tradition with the adiaستمatic tradition of an older period.

The basis of the compositional regularities of the heirmologic singing of the late Russian period obviously lies in the *popevka*⁴. The question of defining the concept of formula and the level of the formula structure's correspondence in the *heirmos* between early and late Russian monodic singing has been raised by several Russian scholars since the 19th century.⁵ The analysis of the structure of *heirmos* in this paper suggests identifying the formula as invariant of the melodic-textual line of the *heirmos* (*stroka*).

This method corresponds to the old Russian Azbukas' approach to the *heirmos* structure which consider the formula within the *heirmos*'s line as its equivalent. The Azbukas used in this paper were evidently created at the time when the lines of the *heirmos* were not yet placed in their own chapter. However, they tend to organize the order of the formulas in accordance with the order of the lines of the hymn (*stikhira* or *heirmos*), from the first line to the next, not dividing the line into "formula" and "non-formula" material.⁶

The line structure of the *heirmos* suggests approximately 5-7 lines (from 3 to 15) in which the textual phrase corresponds with the concluded melodic phrase; at the end of each line there is a pause to a greater or lesser degree. The correspondence between the text and the melodic line is usually based on the system of providing one syllable with one neume - one-staged, two-staged, three- or more-staged

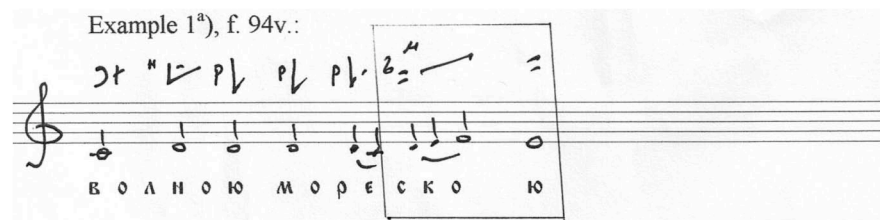
⁴ Hereafter, the term "formula" will be used instead of *popevka*.

⁵ A survey of theoretical directions on this problem is presented in the M. Shkol'nik's candidate's dissertation, *Problemy rekonstrukcii znamennogo rospeva 12-17 vekov (na materiale vizantijskogo i drevnerusskogo Irmologiya)* (Problems of reconstructing the Znamenny rospev of the 12th - 17th centuries, based on the materials from Byzantine and ancient Russian Heirmoslogia), Moscow 1996, pp. 167-174.

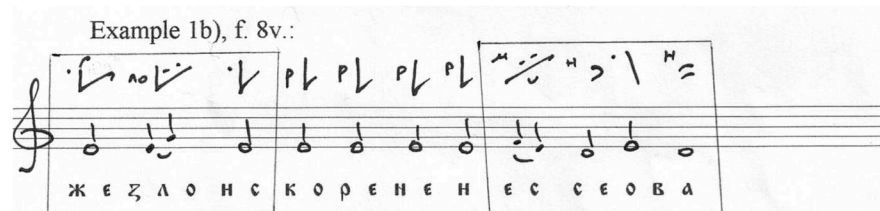
⁶ For example, in the Azbuka RGB f. 210 № 1, the section "The names of the lines" ("*imena strokam*") f.2v presents all lines with the text and neumes from the *heirmoi* of the 3rd Ode of the 1st Tone "Pervovechnomu" with the corresponding names of the line-formulas, with the exception of *kulizma*, which has not been included in this section, and the repeated *rafatka*.

(in descending order), combination of two or occasionally more neumes in the formulas with some elements of “hidden” interpretation (*taynozamknennost'*), or combinations of these neumes in “hidden” sequences - *litza* and *fity*.

Each formula contains an element that is recognizable and repeated in use in its basic or in a slightly changed form. This element can come at the end of the formula (*ryutka*⁷, 6th Tone, 1st Ode, *heirmos* “Volnoyu morskoyu”, example 1a).



It may also indicate its beginning, in which case the cadential element can be considered as belonging to the formula. It does not, however, often define the character of the formula, since it coincides with the cadences in various other formulas (*rafatka*⁸, 1st Tone, 4th Ode, *heirmos* “Zhezlo is korene”, example 1b).



⁷ Many formulas have certain names within one Tone in the Azbuka, whereas different variations of the name of that particular formula may be found in the same Azbuka, concerning other Tones; not to mention the differences between names in different Azbukas. In this respect, the names used in this paper point towards particular uses in particular sources. In this case, it is f. 210 № 1, f. 89v.

⁸ f. 210, № , f. 88v.

It may also appear in the second half, comprising up to 5 cadence neumes (*svetlaya peregibitsa*⁹, 8th Tone, 1st Ode, *heirmos* “Vooruzhena pharaona”, example 1c).

Example 1c), f.118r.:

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff. Above the staff are neumes. Below the staff is the Cyrillic text: Н З Р А Н Л А Ж Е Б Ъ Ж А Ц А. A rectangular box highlights a group of neumes corresponding to the text "Л А Ж Е Б Ъ Ж А Ц А".

One *stroka* may contain various formulas (in *kulizma s vozderszhkoy*¹⁰ one can see the combination of *kulizma*¹¹ or *kizma* and *vozderzhka*¹², 4th Tone, 4th Ode, *heirmos* “Hristoso prikhodyai”, example 1e).

Example 1e), f. 68r. :

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff. Above the staff are neumes. Below the staff is the Cyrillic text: П Р Н Д Ъ Т Е Н Н Е М Е Д Л Н Т Е. Two rectangular boxes highlight specific neume formulas: one over "М Е" and another over "Д Л Н Т Е".

The combination of two basic elements within one formula is not always indicated in the name, for instance, *tsarskaya peremetka*¹³, which is formed from *svetlaya peregibitsa*, includes – beside its descending five-neume cadence – the *polkulizma* that precedes it (8th Tone, 1st Ode, *heirmos* “More ogustevaya”, example 1d).

⁹ f. 379, № 5, f. 28r; found in the Azbuka f. 201 № 1 on f. 99r for the 2nd Tone with the name *mug*; known in other Azbukas as *viroza*.

¹⁰ f. 210, № 1, f. 104r.

¹¹ f. 210, № 1, f. 105r.

¹² f. 210, № 1, f. 104v.

¹³ f. 210, № 1, f. 10r.