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## SOME THOUGHTS ON THE DIDACTICS OF BYZANTINE MUSIC PALAEOGRAPHY

The discipline of Palaeography of Byzantine Music holds a crucial position within the curriculum of contemporary Byzantine Musical Studies. This presentation comprises a brief introduction, followed by thoughts concerning

- the teaching of music in Byzantium and during post-Byzantine times,
- the emergence of the discipline of Palaeography of Byzantine music and classical manuals of the subject: an incomplete journal,
- a new manual online,
- conclusions.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Introduction

Most of the themes in the realm of Byzantine music history, analysis, music theory a.o. would remain unexplored if Palaeography would not substantially contribute in their investigation (fig. 1).

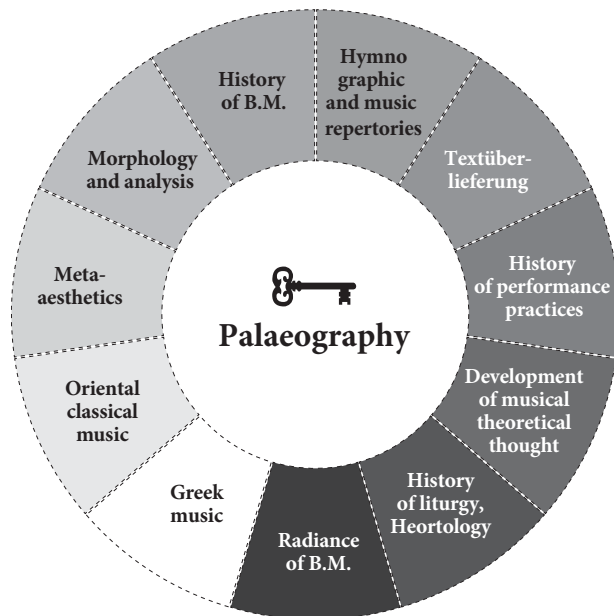


Fig. 1. *Palaeography as a key in the investigation of diverse thematic cycles in Byzantine Musical Studies.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In support of the English writing of this article, the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on historical principles*, edited by Lesley Brown, 2 vols., 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. repr. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) has been used, together with several on-line lexica.

<sup>2</sup> Fig. 1 is based on: Μαρία Αλεξάνδρου, *Παλαιογραφία Βυζαντινής Μουσικής. Επιστημονικές και καλλιτεχνικές αναζητήσεις*, πρώτη αναθεωρημένη έκδοση (Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Ακαδημαϊκά Ηλεκτρονικά Συγγράμματα και Βοηθήματα, 2017), p. 17: <https://repository.kallipos.gr/handle/11419/6487> (10.3.2018).

## 2. On the teaching of music in Byzantine and post-Byzantine times

One of the most impressive testimonia about music education in the Eastern Roman Empire stems from Nikolaos Mesarites (1163/4 – † after 1220), who describes the classes at the Holy Church of the Saint Apostles in Constantinople (founded by the emperor St. Constantine the Great):

“In the precincts of the church quarters were provided for the classes of a school. Here, the younger children were taught the elements of grammar, the elder, dialectic and rhetoric. In close connection with these subjects elementary training in music was given.”<sup>3</sup>

“On the other, western side you can see hymn-singers with children, almost babes, stammering, just taken from the breast. These infants open their mouths and talk wisdom and rehearse the praise of God the King of all, and of his saints, who imitate his Life and Passion. Going a little farther you will find boys with young men just emerged from boyhood, singing a well-shaped song and a well-sounding harmony with their throat, mouth, tongue, with their lips and teeth. They make conductor’s movements with their hands in order to guide the beginner in following the mode with his voice, that he may not slip away from the melodic line, drop out of rhythm, nor fall away from the other voices, nor sing out of tune.”<sup>4</sup>

The main didactic tool for teaching Greek liturgical music was, from the 13<sup>th</sup> until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, what is today widely known as the *Προθεωρία τῆς Παπαδικῆς*, or simply *Papadike*, that is a compendium of brief

<sup>3</sup> Summary by Egon Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition revised and enlarged (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 62. See also Wolfgang Buchwald, Armin Hohlweg & Otto Prinz, *Tusculum-Lexikon griechischer und lateinischer Autoren des Altertums und des Mittelalters*, dritte, neu bearbeitete und erweiterte Auflage (München & Zürich: Artemis Verlag, 1982), p. 521-522. For the medieval curriculum of the *Septem artes liberales*, comprising the *τρίοδος/trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, logic), and the *τετράοδος/quadrivium* (music, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy), cf. Κωνσταντίνος Φλώρος, *Η ελληνική παράδοση στις μουσικές γραφές του μεσαίωνα. Εισαγωγή στη Νευματική Επιστήμη*, μετφρ.-επιμ. Κώστας Κακαβελάκης, φιλολ. επιμ. Ν. Αβραμόπουλος (Θεσσαλονίκη: Ζήτη, 1998), p. 100. N.G. Wilson, *Οι λόγιοι στο Βυζάντιο*, μετφρ. Νικ. Κονομής (Αθήνα: Καρδαμίτσα, 1991), p. 39, with notes \* and \*\*, until p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Transl. Wellesz, *History*, p. 62. For the original Greek text, cf. August Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche. Zwei Basiliken Konstantins. Untersuchungen zur Kunst und Literatur des ausgehenden Altertums*, Zweiter Teil, Die Apostelkirche in Konstantinopel (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich’sche Buchhandlung, 1908), p. 20-21, unit 9: <https://archive.org/stream/grabeskircheund-00heisgoog/9.3.2017>. See also Wellesz, *History*, p. 62-63, footnote 3. Ευαγγελία Σπυράκου, *Οί χοροί ψαλτών κατά τήν βυζαντινή παράδοση*, Ίδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας, Μελέται 14, ἔκδ. Γρ. Στάθης (Αθήνα, 2008), p. 522-523.

theoretical paragraphs, lists of neumes, diagrams and didactic poems, dispatching different levels of initiation into the psaltic art.<sup>5</sup>

The three steps in the learning-process of a piece written in middlebyzantine notations were, according to theoretical texts of the late- and post-Byzantine period, the following ones: *metroponia*, *parallage*, *melos* (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup>

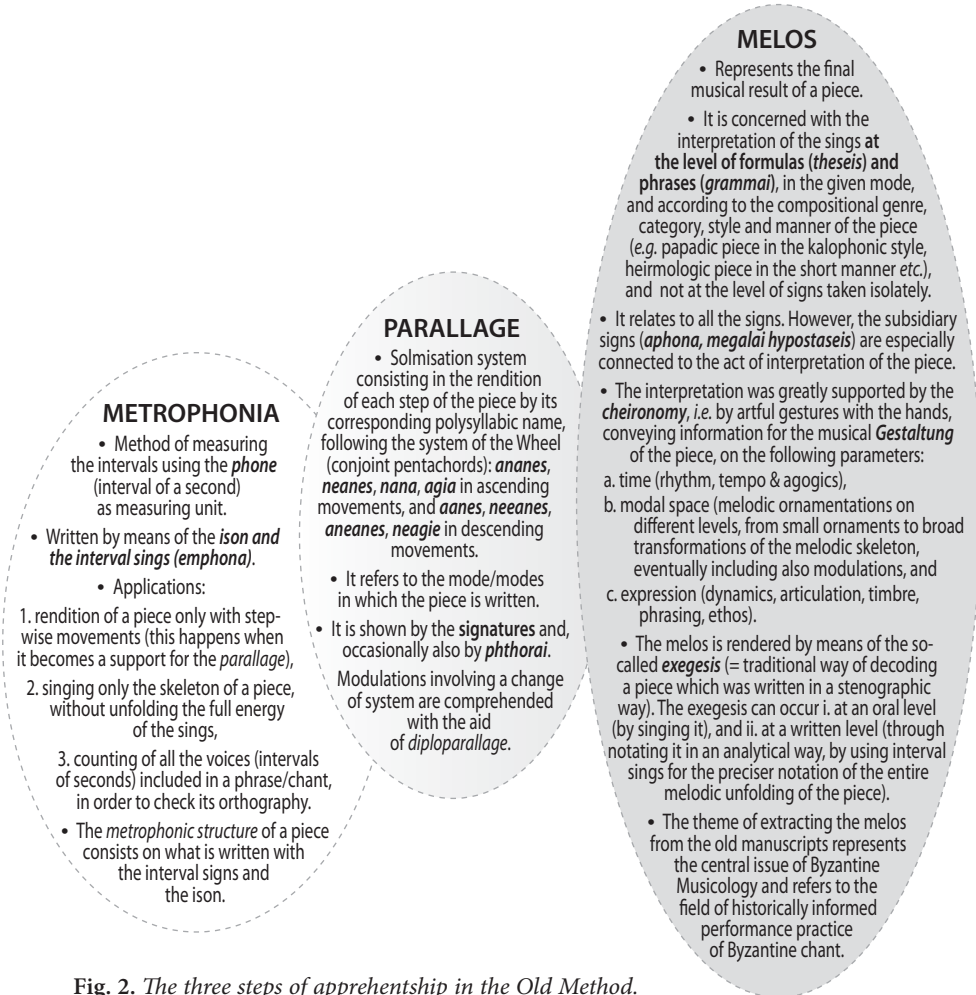


Fig. 2. The three steps of apprenticeship in the Old Method.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Maria Alexandru and Christian Troelsgård, “The development of a didactic tradition – The elements of the Papadike”, in *Tradition and Innovation in Late- and Postbyzantine Liturgical Chant*, Proceedings of the Congress held at Hernen Castle, the Netherlands, 30 October – 3 November 2008, edited by Gerda Wolfram and Christian Troelsgård, *Eastern Christian Studies* 17 (Leuven – Paris – Walpole MA: A.A. Bredius Foundation, Peeters, 2013), p. 1-57.


<sup>6</sup> Based on Αλεξάνδρου, *Παλαιογραφία*, p. 472-476: 476.

As Panagiotēs Chrysaphēs the New (flourishing around 1650–1685)<sup>7</sup> admonishes in his famous *Didactic poem for the pupils*, the learning-process of Byzantine chant was a complex and long-lasting one:

*“The one who wants to learn music  
and to be praised  
needs a lot of patience,  
needs many days,  
honour for his teacher,  
money in his hands;  
then the pupil shall learn  
and he shall be accomplished.”*<sup>8</sup>

The theoretical and practical know-how, together with the artistic expertise and the liturgical experience of Byzantine chant was transmitted through the centuries in an uninterrupted succession of masters-pupils. J. Raasted traced the ‘golden chain of tradition’ from Chrysaphēs the New to the Three Teachers of the Reform (Constantinople, 1814-15),<sup>9</sup> by observing corresponding rubrics in Athonite musical manuscripts (fig. 3):

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Μανόλης Χατζηγιακουμής, *Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική του Ελληνισμού μετά την Άλωση (1453–1820). Σχεδιάγραμμα ιστορίας* (Αθήνα: Κέντρον Ερευνών και Εκδόσεων, 1999), p. 41-44.

<sup>8</sup> Translated from Chrysaphēs’ autograph Ξενοφώντος 128, A.D. 1671, f. 6r: cf. Γρηγόριος Στάθης, *Τὰ χειρόγραφα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικῆς, Ἅγιον Ὅρος, Ἱερά Σύνοδος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος*, Ἰδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας, vol. I (Athens, 1975), plate at the beginning of the catalogue, and vol. II (Athens, 1976), p. 57-68. H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, H.St. Jones, and R. McKenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon, With a Supplement 1968*, repr. of 9<sup>th</sup> edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). Further bibliography about Chrysaphēs’ *Nouthesia* is gathered in Αλεξάνδρου, *Παλαιογραφία*, p. 22, click symbol , slide 8.

<sup>9</sup> For more details about the Reform of the Three Teachers (Chrysanthos of Madytos, Chourmouziōs Chartophylax, and Gregorios Protopsaltes), cf. Γρηγόριος Στάθης, *Τὰ πρωτόγραφα τῆς ἐξηγήσεως εἰς τὴν Νέαν Μέθοδον σημειογραφίας*, Α’ Τόμος, *Τὰ προλεγόμενα*, Ἰδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας (Αθήνα, 2016), p. 193-209.

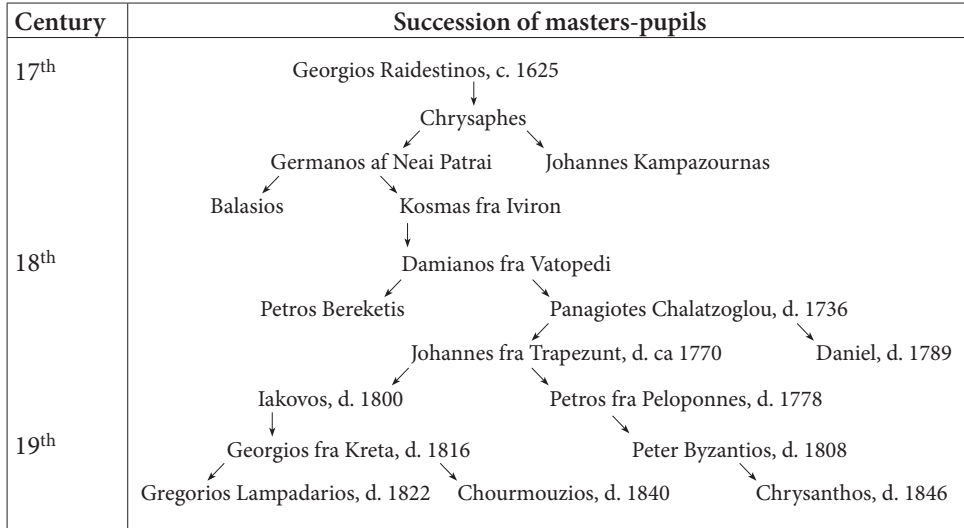


Fig. 3. The line of tradition of Greek liturgical chant, mirrored through major representatives from the 17<sup>th</sup>-beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Source: Jørgen Raasted, "Traditionens gyldne kæde. Byzantinsk kirkemusik i fortid og nutid", *Byzantinsk Konst och Kultur* 3 [1983], p. 12-16: 16).

### 3. On the Palaeography of Byzantine Music

The discipline of Palaeography of Byzantine music can be defined as a main branch of Byzantine Musical Studies, which investigates manuscripts containing Byzantine music. It focuses on the deciphering and systematic description of the different musical writing systems used for notating liturgical chant and other kinds of music codified in Byzantine neumes, from the first Christian millennium until the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Chrysanthine notation was implemented (since 1814/15) and widely disseminated through music print (since 1820).

In the medieval and post-medieval East, which fostered the entire evolution of Byzantine neumes, there was a sustained interest in having smooth transitions from one notational stage to the other. However, there seems to have been "little room for antiquarian interest",<sup>10</sup> both in practical and theoretical sources of the ecclesiastic chant. The concern of different teachers through the centuries for the older types of musical writing seems to be motivated by the necessity of having transcribed layers of the older repertoires in the newer notations and by their

<sup>10</sup> Jørgen Raasted, "Modernization and conversion. Two types of notational change and their consequences for the transmission of Byzantine music", in *International Musicological Society, Report of the Eleventh Congress, Copenhagen 1972*, edited by H. Glahn, S. Sørensen, and P. Ryom, vol. II (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1974), p. 775-777: 775.

historical consciousness to safeguard the tradition of the chanting art,<sup>11</sup> rather than by an academic interest on old notations *per se*.

In the West, systematic efforts in describing the Old System of Byzantine neumes and modes, by using musicological narration and the staff notation as an important tool for the transfer of musical information, seem to go back to the time of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (A. Kircher).<sup>12</sup>

The dream of finding the ‘key’ of the old Byzantine notation became a strong desideratum among Greek chanters by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a time when the New Method had been implemented and the generation of old singers trained in both the Old and New systems passed away. A vibrant expression of this endeavor is found in the preface to the *Pandekte* by Ioannis Lampadarios and Stephanos, First Domestikos of the Great Church (Constantinople, 1850, vol. I, p. δ’, note α’): “For that notation with its musical signs had many and outstanding virtues, like the shortness, and the capacity to easily memorize and learn the tradition. But now, alas! The signs are lying voiceless and dumb, buried in many libraries of monasteries, like in tombs... Will somebody among the Greeks appear, as a new Champolion for this hieroglyphic writing, able to define exactly and scientifically the force and meaning of those (musical) signs? May the Lord grant it!”<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Κοινωνικά παλαιῶν διδασκάλων, ἤτοι κοινωνικά μελισθέντα ὑπὸ παλαιῶν διδασκάλων καὶ ἐξηγηθέντα ἐκ τῆς παλαιᾶς εἰς τὴν νέαν γραφὴν παρὰ Χουρμουζίου Χαρτοφύλακος, μέρος Α΄, ἐκ τοῦ χειρογράφου 705 Μετοχίου Παναγίου Τάφου ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει 1829, ed. Δημήτριος Περσυνάκης, Ψαλτικὴ παράδοση 1 (Θεσσαλονίκη: Ἐνωμένη Ρωμηοσύνη, 2014), p. 17-18.*

<sup>12</sup> Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis sive ars magna consoni et dissoni in x. libros digesta* (Romae: Ex typographia Haeredum Francisci Corbelletti, 1650), p. 72-79: [https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5Qaf59vZsxsdsJ4CiAdrj3nffKdbοRm51Yik0οQ8B3T0B6LSb4GVDBοMCKV\\_jw7kpx-xi6aHGmZRVQAY5-MuFTCRxcCYTrx3VS04M2BdwasS7TX1SV\\_15pmu0xPx7b8TjZ5X8s8qEznl8SwjzGvuthncz3IpXII56AOSpCt9wb7\\_HAdG5D0IqzLU6Rff76MNa94WSJww0VZ4m5wtQ56JxZZvJuY38qDSxrs7LFbQhUMwOPI4VALJiugkg\\_\\_HqbHxiAvdxhEcf8ipVj\\_9Gowio0suSF7fis4zmsTOIIXAj-MT4QXBwejRQ](https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5Qaf59vZsxsdsJ4CiAdrj3nffKdbοRm51Yik0οQ8B3T0B6LSb4GVDBοMCKV_jw7kpx-xi6aHGmZRVQAY5-MuFTCRxcCYTrx3VS04M2BdwasS7TX1SV_15pmu0xPx7b8TjZ5X8s8qEznl8SwjzGvuthncz3IpXII56AOSpCt9wb7_HAdG5D0IqzLU6Rff76MNa94WSJww0VZ4m5wtQ56JxZZvJuY38qDSxrs7LFbQhUMwOPI4VALJiugkg__HqbHxiAvdxhEcf8ipVj_9Gowio0suSF7fis4zmsTOIIXAj-MT4QXBwejRQ) (10.3.2018).

<sup>13</sup> «Ἐἶχε γὰρ ἡ γραφὴ ἐκείνη ἢ διὰ τῶν σημαδίων ἢ σηματοφώνων πολλὰς καὶ ἀξιολόγους τὰς ἀρετάς, οἷον τὸ σύντομον φέρε, τὸ εὐμνημόνευτον καὶ τὸ εὐμαθὲς τῆς παραδόσεως. Νῦν δὲ ἀρεταί, φεῦ! ἄφωνα καὶ κωφὰ σημεία τεθαμμένα εἰς πολλὰς μοναστηρίων βιβλιοθήκας ὡς εἰς νεκρικοὺς λάρνακας (...) Ἄρα φανήσεται τις ἐκ τῶν ὁμογενῶν νέος τῆς ἱερογλυφικῆς ταύτης γραφῆς Σαμπολιὼν ὁ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ τὴν σημασίαν τῶν σημαδίων ἐκείνων ἀκριβῶς καὶ ἐπισταμένως προσδιορίσων; δῶ! Κύριος»: quoted after Γρηγόριος Στάθης, *Ἡ ἐξήγησις τῆς παλαιᾶς βυζαντινῆς σημειογραφίας καὶ ἔκδοσις ἀνωνύμου συγγραφῆς τοῦ κώδικος Ξηροποτάμου 357 ὡς καὶ ἐπιλογῆς τῆς Μουσικῆς Τέχνης τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Κώνστα Χίου ἐκ τοῦ κώδικος Δοχειαρίου 389, Ἰδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας, Μελέται 2, εκδ. Μητροπολίτης Κοζάνης Διονύσιος & Γρηγόριος Στάθης (Αθήνα, 1978), p. 16-17.*

One of the first non-Greek musicologists claiming centrality of medieval music paleography for the entire edifice of Musicology, was Oskar Fleischer:

“Musicology without the research on the musical art of the Middle-Ages is a house without fundamentals and will remain – because of its inability to describe its own roots – a pseudo-science.”<sup>14</sup>

During the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century and until the most recent years, a whole range of manuals and studies about Byzantine neumes has been produced in different languages, offering important support to the didactics of music palaeography. A first attempt to trace some common elements and differences among various palaeography manuals and other writings concerning Byzantine neumes could be summarized in the table below (fig. 4).

Types	Selected works (an open list)
1. Overviews, in a diachronic narration (towards holistic approaches), from the beginnings of Byzantine notation until nowadays. Can be supported by an emic approach and stand in direct connection with performance practice. Themes concerning cultural identity can also be addressed.	• A. Gastoué <sup>15</sup> • K. Psachos <sup>16</sup> • rev. J.-B. Thibaut <sup>17</sup> • rev. L. Tardo <sup>18</sup> • rev. I. D. Petrescu <sup>19</sup> • rev. Gr. Panțiru <sup>20</sup> • Gr. Stathis <sup>21</sup>

Fig. 4. Towards a typology of manuals and other studies with didactic orientation about Byzantine musical palaeography.

<sup>14</sup> “Musikwissenschaft ohne die Erforschung der mittelalterlichen praktischen Tonkunst ist ein Haus ohne Fundamente und bleibt, als der genetischen Darstellung unfähig, eine Scheinwissenschaft”: Fleischer, *Tonschrift*, foreword (Vorbemerkung).

<sup>15</sup> Amédée Gastoué, Introduction à la paléographie musicale byzantine: Catalogue des manuscrits de musique byzantine de la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris et des bibliothèques publiques de France (Paris: Impressions artistiques L.M. Fortin, 1907), first part.

<sup>16</sup> Κωνσταντίνος Ψάχος, *Ἡ παρασημαντικὴ τῆς βυζαντινῆς μουσικῆς, ἤτοι ἱστορικὴ καὶ τεχνικὴ ἐπισκόπησις τῆς σημειογραφίας τῆς βυζαντινῆς μουσικῆς ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων χριστιανικῶν χρόνων μέχρι τῶν καθ’ ἡμᾶς* (1<sup>st</sup> ed. Athens: Σακελλαρίου, 1917, and 2<sup>nd</sup> enlarged ed. by Γ. Χατζηθεοδώρου, Athens: Εκδόσεις Διόνυσος, 1978).

<sup>17</sup> Jean-Baptiste Thibaut, *Monuments de la Notation Ekphonétique et Hagiopolite de l’Église Grecque*. (St Petersburg, 1913. Reprint with *Appendix*, Introduction by Oliver Strunk. Hildesheim, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1976).

<sup>18</sup> Lorenzo Tardo, *L’antica melurgia bizantina nell’ interpretazione della Scuola Monastica di Grottaferrata* (Grottaferrata, 1938).

<sup>19</sup> Rév. Père I.D. Petresco, *Études de paléographie musicale byzantine* (Bucarest: Éditions musicales de l’Union des Compositeurs de la République Socialiste de Roumanie, 1967). Ioan D. Petrescu, *Studii de paleografie muzicală bizantină*, vol. II, ed. Titus Moisescu (București: Editura muzicală, 1984).

<sup>20</sup> Grigore Panțiru, *Notația și ehurile muzicii bizantine* (București: Editura muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor, 1971).

<sup>21</sup> Στάθης, *Πρωτόγραφα*, vol. I, part 1, «Ἱστορικὴ καὶ παλαιογραφικὴ θεώρηση τῆς σημειογραφίας τῆς ἑλληνικῆς Ψαλτικῆς Τέχνης», p. 75-192.

Types	Selected works (an open list)
2. Studies and monographs dedicated to single periods or types of musical neumes. Often supported by an etic approach to Byzantine notations and with a strong historical and/or ethnomusicological interest in Byzantine neumes. <sup>22</sup>	• A. Kircher • G.-A. Villoteau <sup>23</sup> • O. Fleischer <sup>24</sup> • H. J. W. Tillyard <sup>25</sup> • C. Høeg <sup>26</sup> • Chr. Troelsgård <sup>27</sup> • I. Papatthasiou & N. Boukas <sup>28</sup>
3. Comparative studies in neumatic notations.	• C. Floros <sup>29</sup>
4. Atlases with samples of selected manuscripts displaying different evolutionary stages of Byzantine musical notations	• O. Strunk <sup>30</sup>
5. Concordances of neumes and formulas in the Old and New System	• Gr. Stathis <sup>31</sup>

Fig. 4. *Towards a typology of manuals and other studies with didactic orientation about Byzantine musical palaeography.*

<sup>22</sup> On ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ approaches (from inside vs from outside one culture) in Ethnomusicology, and extended to the research of medieval chant, cf. Peter Jeffery, *Re-Envisioning Past Musical Cultures. Ethnomusicology in the Study of Gregorian Chant* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 54.

<sup>23</sup> Guillaume André Villoteau, *De l'état actuel de l'art musical en Égypte, ou Relation historique et descriptive des recherches et observations faites sur la musique de ce pays*, Description de l'Égypte, vol. xiv, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Paris: Panckoucke, 1826). Cf. also [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4f/Guillaume\\_Andr%C3%A9\\_Villoteau.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4f/Guillaume_Andr%C3%A9_Villoteau.jpg), [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guillaume\\_Andr%C3%A9\\_Villoteau](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guillaume_Andr%C3%A9_Villoteau) (19.11.2014).

<sup>24</sup> Oskar Fleischer, *Die spätgriechische Tonschrift* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1904).

<sup>25</sup> H. J. W. Tillyard, *Handbook of the Middle Byzantine Musical Notation*, MMB, Subsidia I.1 (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1935, second impression with a postscript by Oliver Strunk, Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1970).

<sup>26</sup> Carsten Høeg, *La notation ekphonétique*. MMB, Subsidia I, fasc. 2. (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1935).

<sup>27</sup> Christian Troelsgård, *Byzantine Neumes. A New Introduction to the Middle Byzantine Musical Notation*, MMB, Subsidia IX (Copenhagen: Tusculanum Press, 2011).

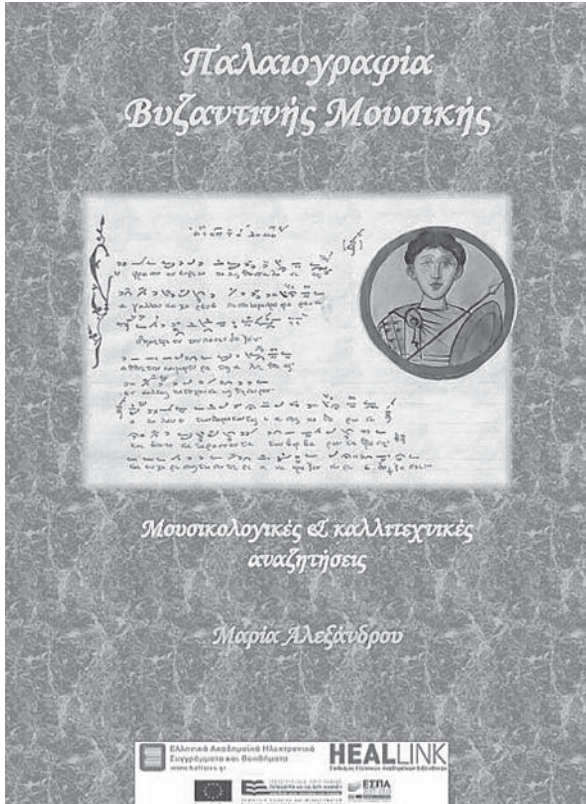
<sup>28</sup> Ioannis Papatthasiou and Nikolaos Boukas, “Early diastematic notation in Greek Christian hymnographic texts of Coptic origin. A Reconsideration of the Source Material”, in *Palaeobyzantine Notations III*, Acta of the Congress held at Hernen Castle, The Netherlands, in March 2001, edited by Gerda Wolfram, *Eastern Christian Studies* 4 (Leuven, Paris, Dudley MA: A.A. Bredius Foundation, Peeters, 2004), p. 1-25.

<sup>29</sup> Constantin Floros, *Universale Neumenkunde*, 3 vols. (Kassel: Bärenreiter Antiquariat, Kassel-Wilhelmshöhe, 1970). Id., *The Origins of Russian Music. Introduction to the Kondakarian Notation*, revised, translated, and with a Chapter on Relationships between Latin, Byzantine and Slavonic Church Music by Neil K. Moran (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, 2009). Constantin Floros, *The Origins of Western Notation*, revised and translated by Neil Moran, with a Report on “The Reception of the Universale Neumenkunde, 1970-2010” (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, 2011).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Oliver Strunk *Specimina Notationum Antiquiorum*, Folia selecta ex variis codicibus saec. x, xi, & xii phototypice depicta, Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae, Facsimiles VII, Pars Principalis & Pars Suppletoria, (Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaards Forlag, 1966).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Στάθης, *Ἐξήγησις*, p. 50-81, 101-113.





**Palaeography  
of Byzantine Music.  
Musicological  
and artistic  
inquiries**

Musical examples in collaboration with the members of the Study Group of Palaeography of Byzantine Music, and the *Hymnodists of Thessaloniki* (I. Liakos).

<https://repository.kallipos.gr/handle/11419/6487>

**Fig. 5.** Some new support in the palaeographical study of Byzantine chant.

Palaeography of Byzantine music developed spectacularly since 1935, with a plethora of editions in the series *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae* in Copenhagen. From 1970 onwards, it found an ever growing impetus with the analytical catalogues of Byzantine musical manuscripts and various monographs authored by Grigorios Stathis and other scholars in the series of the Institute of Byzantine Musicology in Athens.<sup>32</sup>

Concerning the methodology of the palaeographical inquiries during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, one can observe two complementary tendencies:

- i. on the one hand, the investigation of the middlebyzantine and palaeobyzantine notations with the aid of theoretical sources close to the chronological frame given by the manuscripts of the Byzantine period, and

<sup>32</sup> For lists of publications, cf. Troelsgård, *Byzantine Neumes*, p. 138-142. <http://ibyzmusic.gr/ekdosis01.php> (10.3.2018).

ii. on the other hand, the focusing on the late post-Byzantine period (17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> cent.), with the aid of later theoretical sources and the received oral tradition.<sup>33</sup>

Simon Karas argued for a holistic approach of Byzantine music palaeography, viewed as the corroborative study of 1. musical manuscripts pertaining to all the periods of the development of Byzantine neumes, 2. theoretical treatises in a diachronical view, 3. oral tradition & recordings, 4. Greek folk music.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4. One more manual

A new manual in Greek language, presenting some diachronic narrations about the development of Byzantine neumes through the centuries, with many sources, tables, exercises, recordings, in an interarts approach, shall be briefly presented below.<sup>35</sup> It has been mainly prepared as a didactic tool to facilitate university courses on undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and could be allocated to the type 1 of palaeography manuals (cf. figs. 4-5).

#### Brief contents

*Prologues (by C. Floros, and by the author)*

*Chapter 1. Introduction: writings, definitions, place of the book in Byzantine culture, types of musical manuscripts, types of Byzantine musical notations*

In this introductory chapter, some basic concepts like “palaeography”, “palaeography of Byzantine music”, and “Neumatic science” (Neumenkunde) are defined. Furthermore, the development of Greek writing is outlined and some param-

<sup>33</sup> For more details, cf. Alexander Lingas, “Performance Practice and Politics of Transcribing Byzantine Chant”, in *Le chant byzantin: état de recherche. Actes du colloque tenu du 12 au 15 décembre 1996 à l'Abbaye de Royaumont*, Centrul de Studii Bizantine Iași, *Acta Musicae Byzantinae* 6 (2003), p. 56-76. Μαρία Αλεξάνδρου, *Εξηγήσεις και μεταγραφές της βυζαντινής μουσικής. Σύντομη εισαγωγή στον προβληματισμό τους* (Θεσσαλονίκη: University Studio Press, 2010), p. 70.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Σίμων Καρας, «Η ὀρθὴ ἐρμηνεία καὶ μεταγραφή τῶν βυζαντινῶν μουσικῶν χειρογράφων» (Αθήνα: Σύλλογος πρὸς Διάδοσιν τῆς Εθνικῆς Μουσικῆς, offprint 1990, from a paper given at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Thessaloniki, 1953), p. 140-149, plates 1-9, and notes p. α'-θ': p. 141.

<sup>35</sup> Warmest thanks should be expressed to the libraries and museums which generously supported the publication of this book with photographs of various manuscripts and icons, as well as to the members and collaborators of the Study Group for Palaeography of Byzantine Music from the School of Music Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, for preparing the recordings included in the manual, to Prof. Eustathios Makris and many other colleagues which encouraged the writing of this book.

eters for the description and classification of music writings are presented. This is followed by a first overview about Byzantine musical manuscripts (number, typology). The chapter ends with a table containing the different types and development stages of Greek musical notations. This table (p. 53-59) represents the spine for the entire musicological and didactical unfolding of the subjects included in the manual.

*Chapter 2. Elements of Greek Palaeography:  
majuscule and minuscule writings*

The second chapter invites the reader to gain a first insight in the world of Greek Palaeography and Codicology. It starts with a brief presentation of the different materials used for writing (papyrus, parchment, paper), the form of the manuscripts (scroll, codex), and other characteristic elements (binding, ruling types, palimpsests). Afterwards, the attempt is made to set the different types of Byzantine musical manuscripts in a liturgical context and to refer to the basic criteria for their analytical description. The main focus of the chapter lies in the presentation of the Greek alphabetic writing (majuscule and minuscule, with their different subcategories), the punctuation marks, and the prosodic signs. Besides, some auxiliary tables with abbreviations, ligatures and special symbols are added, in order to assist the reading and edition of texts found in Greek manuscripts. The chapter ends with exercises from manuscripts of the pre-Byzantine, Byzantine and post-Byzantine era.

*Chapter 3. Dating of the Byzantine manuscripts*

The third chapter deals with the so-called colophons, brief notes of the scribe, usually at the end of the codex, concerning among others, the date when the ms has been copied. After an overview of the Greek numeral systems and a brief reference to the diverse dating systems found in Byzantine sources, the two major systems used conjunctly in the Byzantine and early post-Byzantine periods are investigated:

1. the counting of the “*years from the creation of the world*, according to the Romans” (cosmological system which places the creation of the world on 1<sup>st</sup> September of the year 5509 B.C.), and

2. according to the *indiction* (historical system connected to the fiscal cycle of fifteen years applied since

A.D. 312 in the Roman Empire). Besides the more general context of the two systems, the peculiar arithmetic operations are shown, which lead

1. to the calculation of the correspondent years A.D. (from the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ), and

2. to the control of the correlation between the dating from the creation of the world and according to the indiction. The chapter ends with some paragraphs about the *monokondylia*, cryptograms, and a table with extrinsic and intrinsic criteria for the dating of manuscripts without colophons.

*Chapter 4. Ekphonic notation and actual practice  
of traditional ekphosis (lectio sollemnis)*

The fourth chapter represents an introduction to the study of the so-called *ekphonic* notation, witnessed in manuscripts of the 9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries and referring to the recitation of pericopes from the New and the Old Testament, a sort of Byzantine *Sprechgesang* used in the liturgical services. After a brief presentation of the various types of manuscripts with ekphonic notation (*Euangelion, Apostolos, Prophetologion*) and of different hypotheses concerning the origins and dating of the ekphonic practice and the corresponding musical notation, the reader is invited to study the Byzantine lists-didactic poems of the ekphonic notation. Emphasis is laid on the crystallized, classical system (11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> cent.), which represents a mnemotechnic system containing 15 pairs of signs. These are positioned at the beginning and end of each musical-rhetorical unit, in order to coordinate the recitation of the sacred text by using certain recitation formulas conveyed through oral tradition. Furthermore, a case study conducted by Sandra Martani is presented, which displays an extraordinary wealth of ekphonic neume-combinations in the *Euangelion Vindobonense* suppl. gr. 128. The chapter continues with samples referring to the critical edition of the *Prophetologion*, drawn from works by Carsten Høeg, S. Engberg and other collaborators of the *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae*. Finally, different attempts at deciphering the ekphonic notation are presented, which are grounded on the manuscripts, the theoretical lists of ekphonic neumes and the received oral tradition of the Greek *lectio sollemnis*.

*Chapter 5. Roots of melodic and ekphonic notations: sources of the first  
Christian millennium (papyri, parchments, early paper, palimpsests)*

This chapter contains an outline of the development of Greek musical notations from the 3<sup>rd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D., mainly based on fragments and local musical writings. The presentation begins with the famous Papyrus Oxryrhynchus 1786 (2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. A.D, with ancient Greek alphabetical vocal notation) and goes on with the Hermoupolis notation (Papathanasiou & Boukas), the Theta and Dipli notations (Raasted), the Sinaitic notation a.o., which confer important evidence about the roots of the neumatic notations developed in the next millennium.

### Chapter 6. Palaeobyzantine notations

Chapter six introduces the reader to the study of the so-called melodic notations, with a detailed presentation of the palaeobyzantine neumes (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> cent.). The great importance of this type of musical notation is given by the fact that for the first time large layers of the old, classical Byzantine style are confined to writing, thus giving an impressive picture of the *Ars antiqua byzantina*, relevant both for Greek, Syriac, Latin, and Slavonic medieval chant.

After a brief reference to main researchers of the palaeobyzantine notations (J.-B. Thibaut, C. Floros, O. Strunk, J. Raasted a.o.), the two families of the palaeobyzantine notation are presented: *Chartres* or *Athonite* and *Coislin* or *Hagiopolite*. The study begins with a series of plates from representative manuscripts of the various stages of development of these notations, from archaic to completely developed, and some exercises on the earliest extant theoretical texts of these two notational families (list of *melodemata* in Lavra Gamma 67, f. 159r, and list of neumes in the *Hagiopolites*). This is followed by a synoptic table of the palaeobyzantine neumes (Floros) and diverse exercises which aim to train skills of reading the hymnographic text and recognizing the palaeobyzantine neumes in mss of the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Chapters 7-11: Middlebyzantine notation

#### Chapter 7. Introduction: sources, tables of signs, transnotations

The seventh chapter introduces the reader to the middlebyzantine notation, a semiography which was in use for about 700 years (from around the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> cent.), originated from the palaeobyzantine Coislin notation and was followed by the New System. Its long-lasting development can be divided into different phases of evolution, like transitory, early, developed, fully developed, late, and exegetic. The study of the middlebyzantine notation starts with a look at the medieval primer of neumes, in samples of its early and late redactions ('Protopapadike' from the ms Petropolitanus graecus 495 written by Neophytos of Damasc, and 'Protheoria tis Papadikis' from the ms Docheiariou 338, autograph by Dimitrios Lotos, Precentor of Smyrna). This is followed by different colored tables containing the interval signs, the subsidiary signs, and the smaller categories of rhythmical signs and of modulation signs, inviting the reader to learn shapes, names and some basic functions of the middlebyzantine neumes. The chapter ends with the presentation of the first methodological steps in the study of mss with middlebyzantine notation, through the transnotation (transfer of signs from the Byzantine notation to staff notation or to Western alphabetical notation, without reference to the oral tradition). The study of the middlebyzantine notation is continued in the next chapters, until the end of the manual.

*Chapter 8. The system of the eight modes:  
historical and systematical approaches, diagrams (wheels, tree, kanonia)*

The eighth chapter considers the modal system on which Byzantine melopoeia is based. It is a system of eight modes, namely four authentic and four plagal ones, which originate in the ancient Greek harmonies (dorios, phrygios etc.) and which were systematized by St John of Damascus (8<sup>th</sup> cent.) and later theoreticians. In this chapter the historical background and theoretical bases (finals) of the modes are presented according to the Old System (i.e. the medieval and post-medieval notation and theory of Byzantine chant prior to 1814, when the Reform of the Three Teachers was initiated). The medieval modes are approached through their main optical and acoustical attributes, namely their signatures (*martyriai*) and intonation formulas (*echemata*). Afterwards, the reader passes to the most well-known diagrams of the Byzantine modal system, namely the *Composed Wheel* by St John Koukouzeles, the *Tree of Parallage* (solmisation), the *Canon of the eight modes* (Simple Wheel), as well as to the individual *kanonia* of the modes from the Anonymus in the ms Athens NLG 968. The chapter ends with exercises focusing on signatures and intonation formulas through the modes.

*Chapter 9. Metrophonia (interval counting) – Parallage (solmisation) – Melos (final musical result)*

The ninth chapter concerns the traditional didactics of Byzantine Chant in the Old Method, which reside in the three-steps-apprehension model, formed by *metrophonia* (complex way of interval-counting), *parallage* (solmisation system based primarily on the system of the Wheel, i.e. conjoint fifths, performed by using the small intonation formulas for each tone) and *melos* (the skilful interpretation of the chants, according to the oral tradition, involving complex decoding practices which vary along with the modes, genres and styles of the chant).<sup>36</sup> The chapter is based on theoretical sources, lists of neumes and didactic poems, such as «Χορός τετραδεκαπύρσειτος» and «Θεολόγε παρθένε». Another central issue in this chapter refers to the art of modulation (with the so-called *phthorai* and the *diploparallage*), and to chromaticism in practical sources and in music theory.

*Chapter 10. Cheironomy (art of conducting), subsidiary signs, and theseis (traditional melodic formulas)*

In the tenth chapter the study of the middlebyzantine notation is continued, by presenting some basic aspects of the so-called *cheironomy*, i.e. the traditional

<sup>36</sup> Cf. above, fig. 2.

Byzantine art of choir conducting. Cheironomy reached its zenith during the Palaeologan era, in connection to the kalophonic style. The cheironomy is investigated first through a historical perspective, according to music-iconographical and theoretical sources (mainly Gabriel Hieromonachos, 1<sup>st</sup> half of 15<sup>th</sup> cent.). This is followed by a systematic approach to cheironomy and by specific examples allowing for a clearer idea about the different gestures and their theological symbolism (according to Michael Blemydes and the Anonymous of the ms Sinai 1764). With the aid of the mss Kastoria 8 and Konstamonitou 86, the reader is introduced to the so-called hyperstases and to the great hypostases (also known as *megala semadia* = big sings). The study of the musical meaning of the big signs is accessed through the etymological explanations of the names of the signs by Gabriel Hieromonachos, and continued through the detailed investigation of the triptych *shape – name – musical meaning* (Floros), with the corroboration of three *instrumenta studiorum*:

- a) a synoptic table with the shapes of the big signs throughout their evolution from the palaeobyzantine to the newbyzantine notation,
- b) a glossary with the names of the neumes, containing information about etymology and explanations given by different theoretical sources of the Byzantine, post-Byzantine and newer period, and
- c) an alphabetic catalogue with formulas (*theseis*). Most of the melodic figures are related to specific big signs. The main source is the didactic poem *Mega Ison* by St John Koukouzeles, both in its original notation (late middlebyzantine, from the ms Athens NLG 2458, A.D. 1336), and in its slow interpretation (*exegesis*) by Chourmouziou Chartophylax (A.D. 1818).

*Chapter 11. Musical exegesis (traditional ways of rendition of the old notations, based on oral and written sources) in the heirmologic, sticharic and papadic genres*

The study of the middlebyzantine notation remains at a preliminary stage, without a reference to the technique and art of *exegesis*. This term designates the traditional ways of decoding the notation of the Old System through the experience of liturgical practice and oral tradition. The ways of musical rendition of the middlebyzantine notation at the lecterns of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Konstantinople can be traced *via* tens of thousands of pages with transcriptions written by Chourmouziou Chartophylax and Gregorios Protopsaltes – a golden key for Byzantine music palaeography, since they provide great parts of the melodic treasures of Byzantine and post-Byzantine times in the new analytic musical notation of the New Method. The chapter contains references to the first occurrences and some other important historical dates in the history of *exegesis*,

from Balasios the Priest (ca. 1670 [Stathis]) up to the Three Teachers, as well as a brief overview of the development of the music theoretical thought concerning exegesis, from Akakios Chalkeopoulos (beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> cent. [Stathis]) until nowadays. This is followed by a systematic approach to the phenomenon of exegesis, in the form of an open typology which contains:

- a) terminology: i. traditional: short and long exegesis, and ii. according to Arvanitis: syllabic and melismatic exegesis, the latter with the subcategories short, long and mixed melismatic,
- b) repertories where the different types of exegesis have been applied by the Three Teachers,
- c) furthermore, some new proposals of expanding short ways of exegesis to older layers of musical repertories are mentioned.

The chapter concludes with different examples of exegesis in the heirmologic, sticheraric and papadic genres, concerning both syllabic, syllabo-melismatic, moderately and highly melismatic textures, inviting the reader to explore the multifaceted art of exegesis, which represents the summit of the entire hermeneutical inquiry about the old Byzantine musical notations.

#### *Appendices*

- I. Newbyzantine notation, basic elements and ways of transcription to staff notation
- II. Glossary of neumes (etymology, explanations in palaeobyzantine, middlebyzantine and newer theoretical treatises)
- III. Catalogue of traditional melodic formulas from theoretical treatises.

#### *Keys of the exercises*

### **5. Conclusions**

Palaeography of Byzantine music, a highly relevant discipline for the history of European culture, can be thought of as a key giving access to vast musical treasures of the past. Manuals can but give a small glimpse of what is actually found in the musical sources themselves, most of which are still waiting to be systematically explored from a palaeographical point of view, and their music to be critically edited. Through thousands of exercises made with enthusiasm and patience through the years, new scholars can be trained in the field, thus carrying on the flame of tradition and enlightening minds and hearts of all those partaking in it.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Cf. in this context also Αθανάσιος Βουρλής, *Ἡ ἱερά ψαλμοδία ὡς μέσον ἀγωγῆς (Ἠθικομουσικολογικὴ μελέτη)* (Αθήνα, 1995).