

THE PALAEOGRAPHY OF BYZANTINE MUSIC:  
A BRIEF INTRODUCTION WITH SOME PRELIMINARY  
REMARKS ON MUSICAL PALIMPSESTS

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**Resumen:** La denominación «música bizantina» suele aplicarse a la *Psaltikē Technē*, es decir, al canto de la Iglesia Ortodoxa y de otras comunidades cristianas de rito bizantino, practicado en lugares como Grecia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, etc. Las fuentes principales para su estudio comprenden la tradición musical escrita, las obras de carácter teórico y la tradición oral; al primer tipo de fuente –anterior a la reforma de los Tres Maestros, realizada en la Constantinopla de 1814– se dedica esta contribución.

Se conservan más de 7.000 manuscritos musicales bizantinos, considerándose como el más antiguo el *Heirmologion* Lavra B 32, de c. 950. Los *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae* se consagraron a la investigación de fuentes escritas hasta 1500, mientras que la escuela tradicional griega dedicó una especial atención a la tradición oral y también a los manuscritos de cronología post-bizantina. Ambas escuelas intercambiaron resultados especialmente desde las décadas finales del siglo xx. Un esquema (sección 3) muestra cuál fue la evolución histórica, en sus grandes fases, de la notación musical bizantina. Se ofrece seguidamente información sobre las fuentes fragmentarias (algunas papiráceas) y los sistemas locales de notación, así como sobre la notación efonética y las notaciones melódicas.

La contribución concluye con un breve estado de la cuestión en lo referente a palimpsestos litúrgico-musicales, partiendo del inventario de Moran (1985). Los manuscritos consultados preservan en su escritura inferior los siguientes tipos de notación: notación efonética (Lavra Theta 46 [láminas 1-5, *m. pr.* quizá del siglo x] y Atenas, Santo Sínodo de Grecia 108 [láminas 6-9, *m. pr.* quizá del siglo xi], notación-theta y paleobizantina (*Matritensis* 4848) y notación media temprana (*Koutlounousiou* 86). El paleógrafo sigue buscando descubrimientos reveladores de la notación musical de épocas aún más antiguas, transmitida todavía, en cierta medida, gracias a la labor de muchas generaciones de cantores.

## 1. PROLEGOMENA

Byzantine music represents one of the most important and fascinating aspects of the spiritual and cultural heritage of the Eastern Roman Empire (324-1453).

When speaking about Byzantine music in a broader sense, both the ecclesiastic and the secular music of Byzantium are envisaged. However, due to the restricted number of written sources for the latter one, the term Byzantine music is currently applied to the *Psaltikē Technē*, the chant of the Orthodox Church and other Christian communities following the Byzantine rite, both in Byzantium and different zones influenced by it<sup>1</sup>.

Byzantine chant survives until today, as part of the uninterrupted liturgical life of the Church, and flourishes in countries like Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and elsewhere. Byzantine music is also present in concert programs and entered university curricula in the Balkan and several other countries.

The main sources of Byzantine Chant comprise:

- a. the written tradition, consisting of musical manuscripts and prints<sup>2</sup>
- b. theoretical writings<sup>3</sup>
- c. the oral tradition, expressed by the actual practice of liturgical chant and documented in musical recordings<sup>4</sup>.

The present paper deals with the written tradition of Byzantine Chant and aims at giving an overall view of the different types of Byzantine musical nota-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hannick 1995, Hannick *et al.* 1997, Levy - Troelsgård 2001, Touliatos 2001, Τσιαμούλης - Ερευνίδης 1998.

<sup>2</sup> The first printed books with Byzantine neumes were the *Anastasimatarion* and the *Doxastarion* by Petros Peloponnēsios, in the edition of Petros Ephesios, in Bucharest 1820. Cf. the catalogue of the exhibition of old prints with Byzantine chant Αλυστζάκης 1997-1998, Χατζηθεόδωρος 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. a survey in Hannick 1978, with a more recent version in Greek (1994). Some of the most representative collections of theoretical texts can be found in: *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae / Corpus Scriptorum de Re Musica* 1985-1997, Gertsman 1994, Αλυστζάκης 1985: 220-286. To the oldest known theoretical texts belong: the famous neume-list in the ms Lavra Γ 67, f. 159, 10<sup>th</sup> /11<sup>th</sup> cent. and the anonymous treatise called *Hagiopolites*, probably redacted in the 12<sup>th</sup> cent.: cf. Floros 1970: III, facs. 1, Raasted 1983.

<sup>4</sup> Historical recordings of famous first chanters of the last century, like Iakovos Naupliotis, Konstantinos Pringos, Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas, father Dionysios Firfiris, Leonidas Sfikas, as well as the series *Μνημεία Εκκλησιαστικής Μουσικής* and *Σύμμεικτα Εκκλησιαστικής Μουσικής*, edited by Μανόλης Χατζηγιακουμής (ca. 70 CDs, forthcoming in Athens, Κέντρον Ερευνών & Εκδόσεων, since 2000) are of greatest relevance for the study of the performance practice of Byzantine chant. To the secondary sources of Byzantine music belong liturgical books without musical notation, theological and historical writings, lists with *officia*, iconographic sources, the folk music in the orthodox countries and musical traditions of related cultures (*e.g.* Gregorian Chant, Ethiopian Chant, Classical Near Eastern Music).

tion in their historical development, together with a first insight into some of the major problems connected with the deciphering of the notations before the Reform of the Three Teachers, Chrysanthos of Madyta, Chourmouziou Chartophylax and Grēgorios Protopsaltēs, in Constantinople 1814<sup>5</sup>.

## 2. NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF BYZANTINE MUSICAL PALAEOGRAPHY

With its more than 7000 preserved musical manuscripts –the oldest codex, namely the famous *Heirmologion* Lavra B 32, dating from about A.D. 950<sup>6</sup>– Byzantine chant presents a thesaurus of a thousand-year-old written tradition which is unique in world music history<sup>7</sup>.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Byzantine musical manuscripts gained the attention of Western scholars<sup>8</sup>, and during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, researchers like J.-B. Thibaut, G. Violakis, O. Fleischer, C. Psachos, E. Wellesz, H. J. W. Tillyard, C. Høeg and I. D. Petrescu, did pioneer work in Byzantine musical palaeography<sup>9</sup>.

Tremendous research went on both in East and West, in order to discover and catalogue the Byzantine musical manuscripts, to decipher and analyse their contents.

However, there was a difference in methodology: Western scholars soon gathered around the prestigious forum of the *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae*<sup>10</sup>, investigated mainly the written tradition until A.D. 1500, with the help of Byzantine and postbyzantine theoretical treatises. On the other hand,

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Χρύσανθος ἐκ Μαδύτων 1832, Romanou 1990, Πλεμμένος 2002, Χατζηγιακουμής 1999: 97-110.

<sup>6</sup> The *Heirmologion* contains *heirmoi*, i.e. model strophes of the hymnographic genre called *kanon*, a polystrophic poem connected to the biblical odes. For the ms Lavra B 32, cf. Floros 1970: I 63 and III, facs. 13-18.

<sup>7</sup> From the estimated number of 7000-7500 musical mss, some 20% are dating from before A.D. 1453, and most of the others belong to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> cent. About 3500 codices are preserved in the monasteries of Mt. Athos, the others being kept in different other libraries in Greece, on Mt. Sinai, in the Vatican, in Paris, in Russia, Romania, Bulgaria etc. For the Athonite musical manuscripts cf. Στάθης 1975, 1976, 1993, and other 4 vols. forthcoming. Cf. also Γιαννόπουλος 2004: 65-90 and the bibliographical index with catalogues containing descriptions of Byzantine musical manuscripts kept in libraries all around the world, on p. 313-355.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Gerbert 1774: II, tables VIII-XIX, Sulzer 1781: II 430-547, Villoteau 1799. For a survey cf. Schlötterer 1971.

<sup>9</sup> Some of the most representative works of these scholars are the following (chronological order): Βιολάκης 1900, Fleischer 1904, Thibaut 1913, Ψάχος 1917 (2<sup>nd</sup> enlarged ed. by Χατζηθεοδώρου 1978), Petrescu 1932, Tillyard 1935, Høeg 1935, Wellesz 1949 (2<sup>nd</sup> rev. and enlarged ed. 1962).

<sup>10</sup> The *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae* were founded at Copenhagen in 1931, by C. Høeg, E. Wellesz and H. J. W. Tillyard: cf. Wellesz 1971.

exponents of the Greek traditional school emphasised the *sine qua non* of the oral tradition and the great importance of the post-Byzantine manuscripts, working according to the method of the so-called regressive collations (*anadromikos parallélismos*), i.e. starting from the received tradition and going back, step by step, until reaching the medieval sources<sup>11</sup>.

For the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a rapprochement between the two positions can be observed. The polemic tone of some writings from the first half of the last century gave place to a fruitful dialogue among scholars dealing with Byzantine music all around the world<sup>12</sup>. Today, Byzantine musical palaeography emerges as a developed discipline with highly interesting musicological issues.

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Ψάχος 1917, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.: 249. See also Stathis 1979.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Lingas 2003.

3. Byzantine musical notation: a schema of the most important notational types in their historical development  
 The main written tradition

Fragmentary and local notational systems

Century A.D.

3rd

- Ancient Greek alphabetic vocal notation: Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1786, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cent., fragment of a hymn to the Holy Trinity.
- Represents at once a) the last witness of ancient Greek music notation and style), b) the first document of Christian music (content), c) maybe the earliest Christian hymn using the ancient Greek 'Hochsprache' and prosodic metres (the hymn might be older than the papyrus itself)

4<sup>th</sup>

5<sup>th</sup>

6<sup>th</sup>

- 'Primitive' Palaeobyzantine notations:
  - *Shall Carr. Skoar 16*, provenience: Egypt, 6<sup>th</sup>7<sup>th</sup> cent., symbols:  $\ast$  -  $\circ$
  - *Papyrus Berolincensis 21319*, 6<sup>th</sup>7<sup>th</sup> cent., fragments of *troparia* for the Holy Virgin, with modal indication:  $\delta$   $\delta$  and the hook-shaped sigas  $\checkmark$  (pentonid)  $\vee$  as well as the symbols  $\ast$   $\wedge$
  - *Hermopolis notation*: diastematic notation documented in 5<sup>th</sup> cent. end of the 7<sup>th</sup>9<sup>th</sup> cent., symbols: mainly *oxeia*, simple / double  $\beta$  until  $//////$  as well as the signs  $\sim$   $\wedge$   $\vee$   $\int$
  - 'The Praiserton Palimpsest': Georgian ms *Garratt 24*, 11<sup>th</sup> cent., f. 63-70, man. pr.: fragment of Greek *Hermosologion*, provenience: Jerusalem (?), ante A.D. 800. Fol. 68v contains the word  $\delta\alpha\delta$ .

8<sup>th</sup>

notice the musico-poetical punctuation marks and the *oxeia* indicating a melisma. Later ms have at this point the musical formula called *abonotinos eos*, e.g. the *Hermosologion Gromaferrata Eyll*, A.D. 1281, fol.36c:

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

$\delta\alpha\delta$   $\delta$   $\delta$

9<sup>th</sup>

- Epiphonetic notation:
  - > for the *lectio solennis* of the Holy Scripture (Gospel, Apostles, Prophets) or other texts.
  - > Manuscript tradition: 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> cent., with prehistory

already from the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. (?) according to C. Hoeg.

-> Stages of evolution (G. Engberg):

- pre-classical system: 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> cent.

- classical systems: 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> cent.

- degenerated systems: in use of the 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> cent.

• Melodic notations:

-> for the musical notation of *trapezia* and hymns

used in the offices of the Byzantine rite

-> Stages of evolution:

A. Palaeobyzantine: middle of 10<sup>th</sup>-end of 12<sup>th</sup> cent.

-> families: [palaeobyzantine 'Urnotation']

↳ **Chartres** and **Coislin**

**Coislin** (*hagiopolitike*)

(from the ms Paris,

BN Coislin 220; probably

World War at the Bibl. Municipale

Chartres; connected to Constantino-

ple and Mt. Athos)

-> Phases of development:

- O. Strunk: archaic, relatively and fully developed

notation

- C. Florus: Chartres I-IV, Coislin I-VI

11<sup>th</sup>

12<sup>th</sup>

-Cypro-palestinian notation:

parchment fragment from the archive Kapadokhos, nr. 1,

end of 12<sup>th</sup>-beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> cent., double or threefold

accentuation of certain words by using the signs ↙ ^ ↘

to indicate different melodic movements

13<sup>th</sup>

14<sup>th</sup>

15<sup>th</sup>

16<sup>th</sup>

17<sup>th</sup>

18<sup>th</sup>

19<sup>th</sup>

20<sup>th</sup>

21<sup>st</sup>

B. Middle Byzantine: ca. 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 12<sup>th</sup> -middle of 19<sup>th</sup> cent.

-> Phases of development:

- early ('Round notation'): ca. 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> cent.

- late: 1<sup>st</sup> half of 14<sup>th</sup> cent.-middle of 19<sup>th</sup> cent.

- exegetic: ca. 1670-middle of 19<sup>th</sup> cent.

C. Neobyzantine ('The New Method' or 'The New System' of musical notation): since 1814-today

-> Phases of development:

- Chrysanthine: since 1814

- enlarged, in the codification of Karas: since 1982

## 4. SOME COMMENTS

### 4.1. On the fragments and local notational systems

The *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus* 1786 witnesses the connection between palaeochristian music and the ancient Greek musical tradition<sup>13</sup>.

The *Papyrus Berolinensis* 21319 belongs to the earliest documents carrying modal indications (2<sup>nd</sup> plagal tone) and presents some noteworthy hook-shaped signs<sup>14</sup>.

The extant sources of the first christian millennium give a faint image of the great oral tradition of that period<sup>15</sup>.

### 4.2. On the ekphonic notation

Some of the major themes connected with the investigation of the *lectio sollemnis* of scriptural texts and its so-called ekphonic or lectionary notation have been:

- the systematisation of the musical signs and their usual or exceptional groupings
- the critical edition of the *Prophētologion*, work going on for the texts of the New Testament
- the roots of the ekphonic system and its connection with the Alexandrine system of prosodical signs on the one hand, and with the tradition of cantillation in the synagogue on the other.

In trying to decipher the ekphonic notation and to approach the old sound-picture, *i.e.* the music codified by the ekphonic symbols, scholars found support a) in theoretical sources, b) through comparison with the Palaeobyzantine and Middle Byzantine notation and c) in quotations from the Holy Scripture within the hymnographic repertory. During the Postbyzantine period and until today, the *lectio sollemnis* is transmitted orally and this received tradition with its range of variations is of highest relevance in order to decipher the Byzantine documents.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Wellesz 1962: 152-156, Ασπιώτης 1997: 181-182, Καράς 1992: 13-14 and tables I-II.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Sarischouli 1995: 48-64 and table IV.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. a conspectus of the early documents of Byzantine Chant in Παπαθανασίου - Μπούκας 2002a, 2003. On the Hermoupolis-Notation cf. Παπαθανασίου - Μπούκας 2002b, 2004. For the Cypro-palestinian notation cf. Παπαθανασίου 2003. For the Theta notation and similar notations cf. Raasted 1995a, 1979.

Besides that, the comparison with other cantillation traditions, such as the Latin, Jewish, Arab, can contribute to a deeper understanding of the Byzantine tradition of *ekphōnēsis*<sup>16</sup>.

#### 4.3. On the melodic notations

The investigation of the melodic notations carried out during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by plethora of brilliant scholars like O. Strunk, J. Raasted, C. Floros, S. Karas, Gr. Stathis and many others, elucidated various problems connected with a) the graphical shapes, the names and the musical function of the Byzantine neumes and b) the modal system<sup>17</sup>.

There is still a lot of fascinating work to be done, *e.g.* in order to achieve a more detailed description of the Middle Byzantine notation<sup>18</sup>, inside the rough categories «early», «late», «exegetical» and in connection with the musical repertory (heirmologic, sticheraric, psaltic, asmatic, papadic).

However, the major issue concerning the notations before the Reform of 1814 envisages the *melos*, the intended sound picture, the «full sonic detail»<sup>19</sup> of the old musical pieces, and could be expressed through the concept of *poiōtēs*, *i.e.* quality

— of the modal system, including the discussions about genders (diatonic, chromatic, enharmonic), scales and the concrete size of the intervals, about the solmisation practice (*parallagē*), the use of *phthorai* and the

<sup>16</sup> Critical editions: Høeg - Zuntz 1939-1970 and Engberg 1980-1981. For the neumatic system cf. Høeg 1935, Engberg 1995, Martani 2001a. For the hermeneutics of the ekphonic notation cf. Floros 1970: II 208-213, Panțiru 1971: 9-15, Hannick 1976, Martani 2001b. For the connection with the Hebrew tradition cf. Engberg 1966, Revell 1979. On the actual practice of *ekphōnēsis* cf. Engberg 1981, Αλυσζάκης 2001.

<sup>17</sup> For the main written tradition cf. the publications of the *MMB*, Copenhagen, since 1935, with the collaboration of C. Høeg, H. J. W. Tillyard, E. Wellesz, O. Strunk, G. Zuntz, G. Engberg, J. Raasted, Chr. Hannick, Chr. Thodberg, G. Wolfram, Chr. Troelsgård, A. Bugge, M. Palikarova-Verdeil, M. Velimirović, N. Schidlowsky a. o., *Série principale (Facsimilés)*, vols. I-XII, *Série Subsidia*, vols. I-IX and *Série Transcripta*, vols. I-IX; cf. Ψάχος 1917, Στάθης 1992, 1975. For the Palaeobyzantine notation cf. especially Strunk 1966, Floros 1970, 1998; cf. also the papers on the Acta of the Congresses about Palaeobyzantine Notations held in Hernen: Troelsgård (forthcoming), Raasted - Troelsgård (eds.) 1995, Troelsgård - Wolfram (eds.), Troelsgård (forthcoming) 1999, Wolfram (ed.) 2004. For the Middle Byzantine notation and the modal system cf. Tillyard 1935, Troelsgård (forthcoming), Raasted 1966, Αλυσζάκης 1985; cf. also Troelsgård 1997, as well as the *Acta Musicae Byzantinae*, Centrul de Studii Bizantine Iași, since 1999. For the Neobyzantine notation and the modal system cf. Χρύσανθος ἐκ Μαδύτων 1832, Καράς 1982, Αγγελόπουλος 1998, Giannelos 1996, Zannos 1994, Μαυροειδής 1999.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Hannick 1995: 300.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Davies 2004: 495.



modulations they indicate, about the practice of *isokratēma* (vocal *bourdon*-like accompaniment)

— of the neumes, especially the so-called *megala sēmadia*, involving questions about rhythm, ornamentations of different levels, expression (dynamics, articulation, timbre, phrasing, character).

All these elements, as being beyond the *posotēs* or *metrophōnia*, the quantitative dimension of a musical piece, were mainly confined to orality and are connected with the practice of *cheironomia*, the art of conducting, and *exēgēsis*, the traditional way of decoding the old notation<sup>20</sup>.

Thus, the interaction between *graphē* and *zōsa phōnē*, between written and oral tradition, remains one of the most prominent themes of Byzantine musical palaeography.

## 5. SOME DESIDERATA OF THE STUDY OF BYZANTINE LITURGICAL AND MUSICAL PALIMPSESTS

The study of Byzantine liturgical and musical palimpsests could begin with an actualization of the inventory compiled by N. Moran in 1985 and proceed to the edition of the most important findings.

A preliminary research of some palimpsest of Meridional Europe, which started in Summer 2004, already revealed the great impact of this kind of sources on the study of Byzantine musical palaeography<sup>21</sup>.

The musical sources consulted, preserve in the *scriptio inferior* the following types of notation:

<sup>20</sup> Georgiades 1939, Huglo 1963, Moran 1986, Στάθης 1982, 1983, 1972, 1978, Καράς 1976, 1990, 1993, 1989, Αποστολόπουλος 2002, Arvanitis 1997, 2003, Αγγελόπουλος 2004, Alexandru 2000.

<sup>21</sup> I should like to thank Prof. Dieter Harlfinger and Prof. Ángel Escobar for the invitation to collaborate at the project «Rinascimento virtuale», as well as the communities of the Holy Monasteries Megisti Lavra and Koutloumousiou on Mount Athos, Mr. George Manassis, ministerial official from the Centre for the Preservation of Athonite Heritage, Ministry for Macedonia & Thrace, and Father Thomas Synodinos, Chancellor of the Holy Archbishopric of Athens and Entire Greece. Many thanks also to Mr. Daniel Deckers, for sending us photographs from the *Matritensis* 4848.

a. Ekphonic: Lavra Theta 46<sup>22</sup> (**plates 1-5**) and Athens, Holy Synod of Greece, nr. 108<sup>23</sup> (**plates 6-9**)



1. Lavra Theta 46, m.pr. 10<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), foglio di guardia at the beginning of the ms, recto, upper part.

<sup>22</sup> *Paraklētikē* of the 14th cent., on paper, 608 folia, 210x130 mm, with two palimpsested *folia di guardia* of initially larger dimensions. The two folia show in the older layer a majuscule writing in two columns, provided with ekphonic signs (of the pre-classical system?), probably readings from the Holy Scripture, 10<sup>th</sup> cent. (?). Cf. also Moran 1985: 58.

<sup>23</sup> Collection of homilies («Jahrespanegyrik») of the 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> cent., on parchment, 189 folia, 230x190 mm, with the first 8 folia palimpsested. The old manuscript, of greater dimensions, presented in the *manus prima* a minuscule text, maybe from a *Prophētologion*, with ekphonic notation (classical system?), 11<sup>th</sup> cent. (?). See especially plate 8 with the double *oxeiai* and *bareiai* which usually belong to the final cadence of a pericope. Cf. also Moran 1985: 57 and Δουβουιώτης 1912.



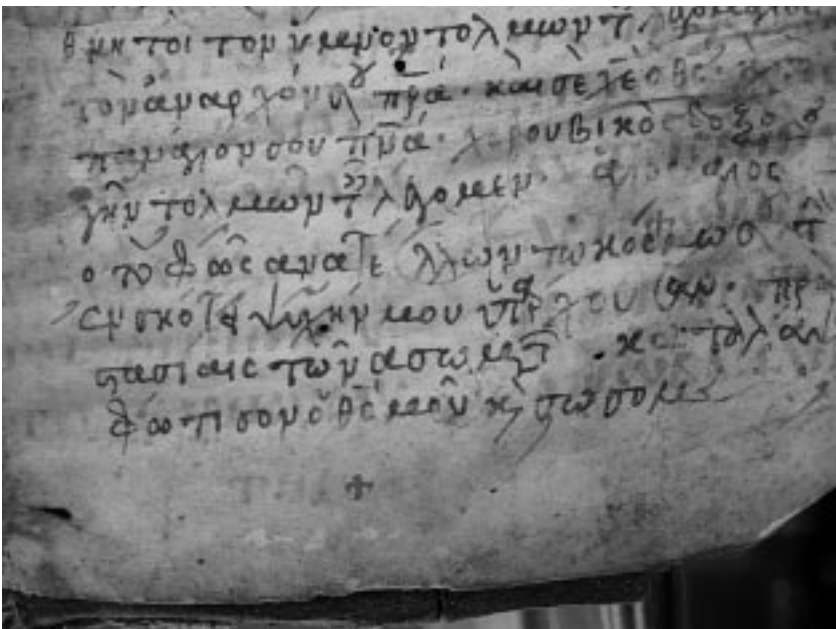
2. Lavra Theta 46, m.pr. 10<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), foglio di guardia at the beginning of the ms, verso, upper part.



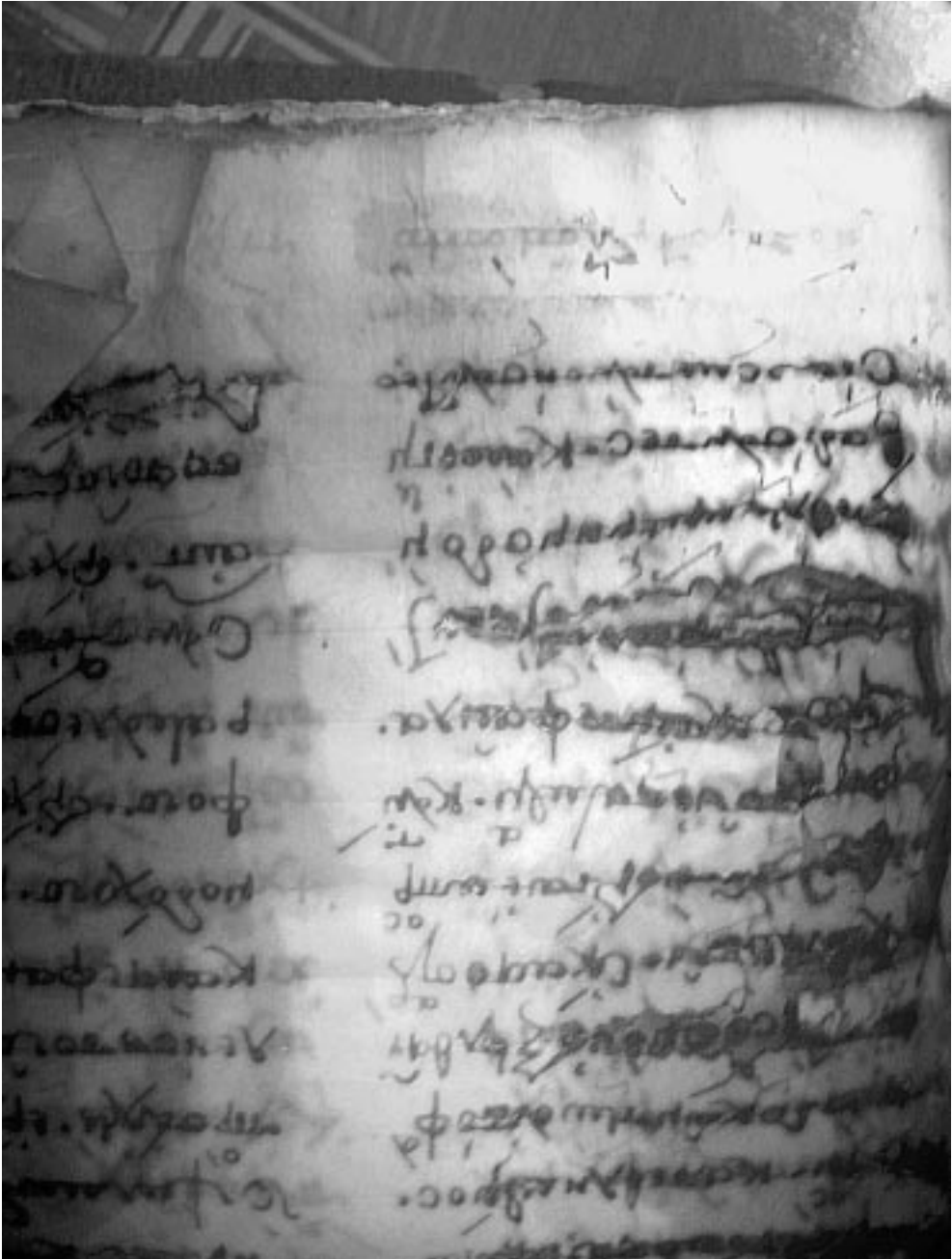
3. Lavra Theta 46, m.pr. 10<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), foglio di guardia at the beginning of the ms, verso, lower part.



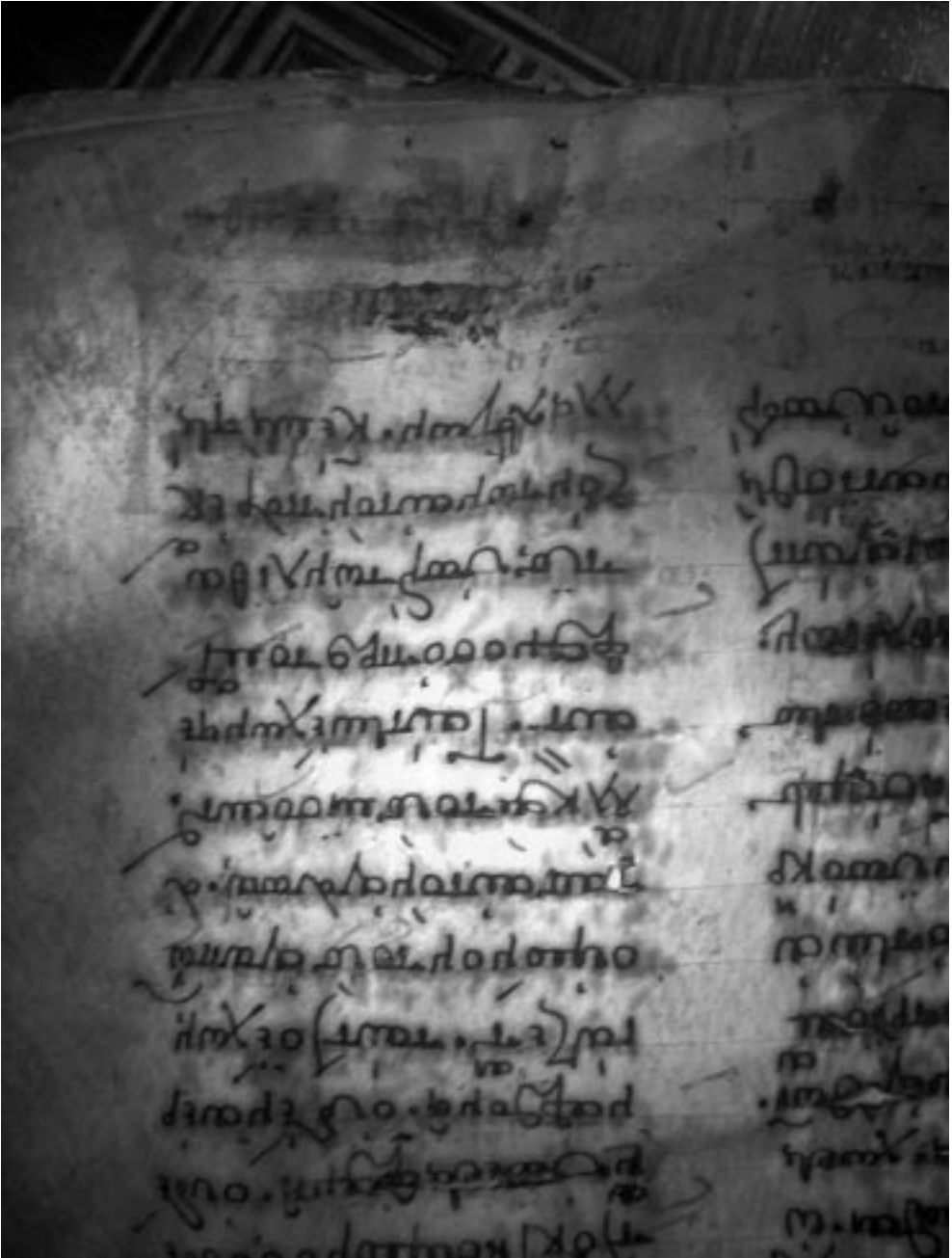
4. Lavra Theta 46, m.pr. 10<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), foglio di guardia at the end of the ms, recto, upper part.



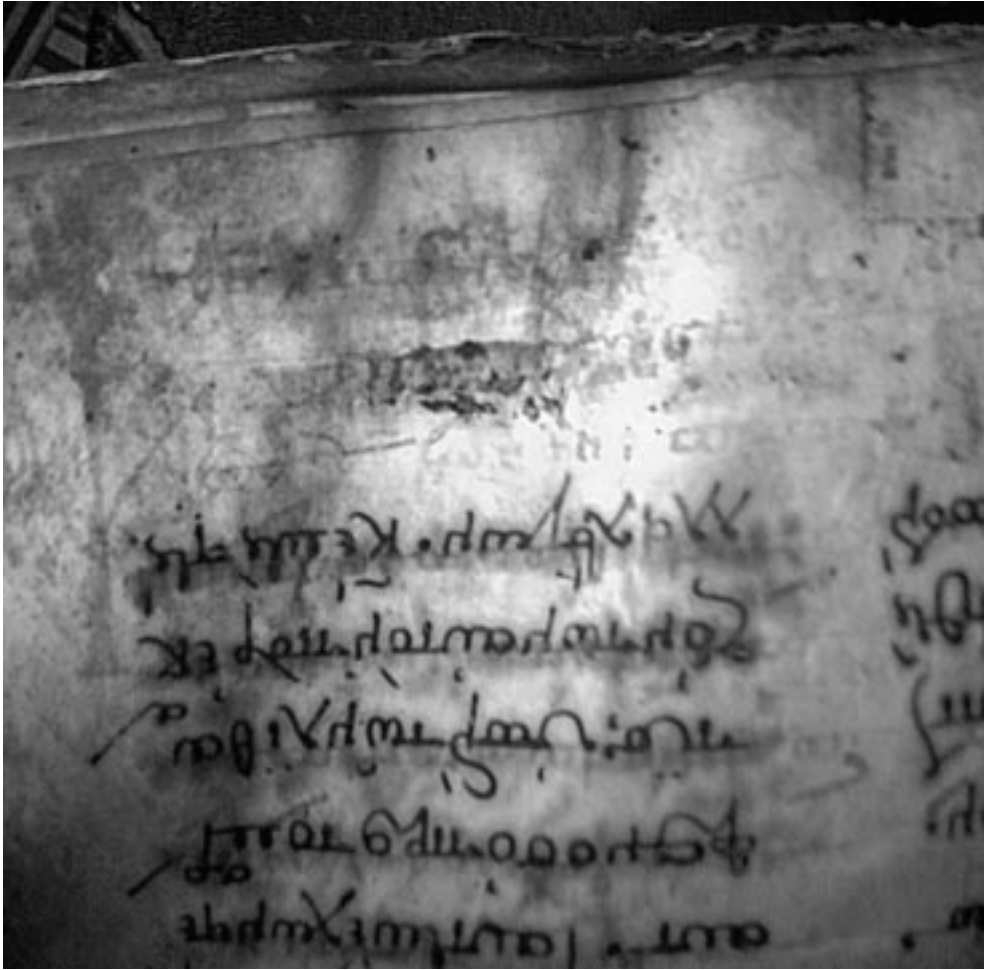
5. Lavra Theta 46, m.pr. 10<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), foglio di guardia at the end of the ms, recto, lower part.



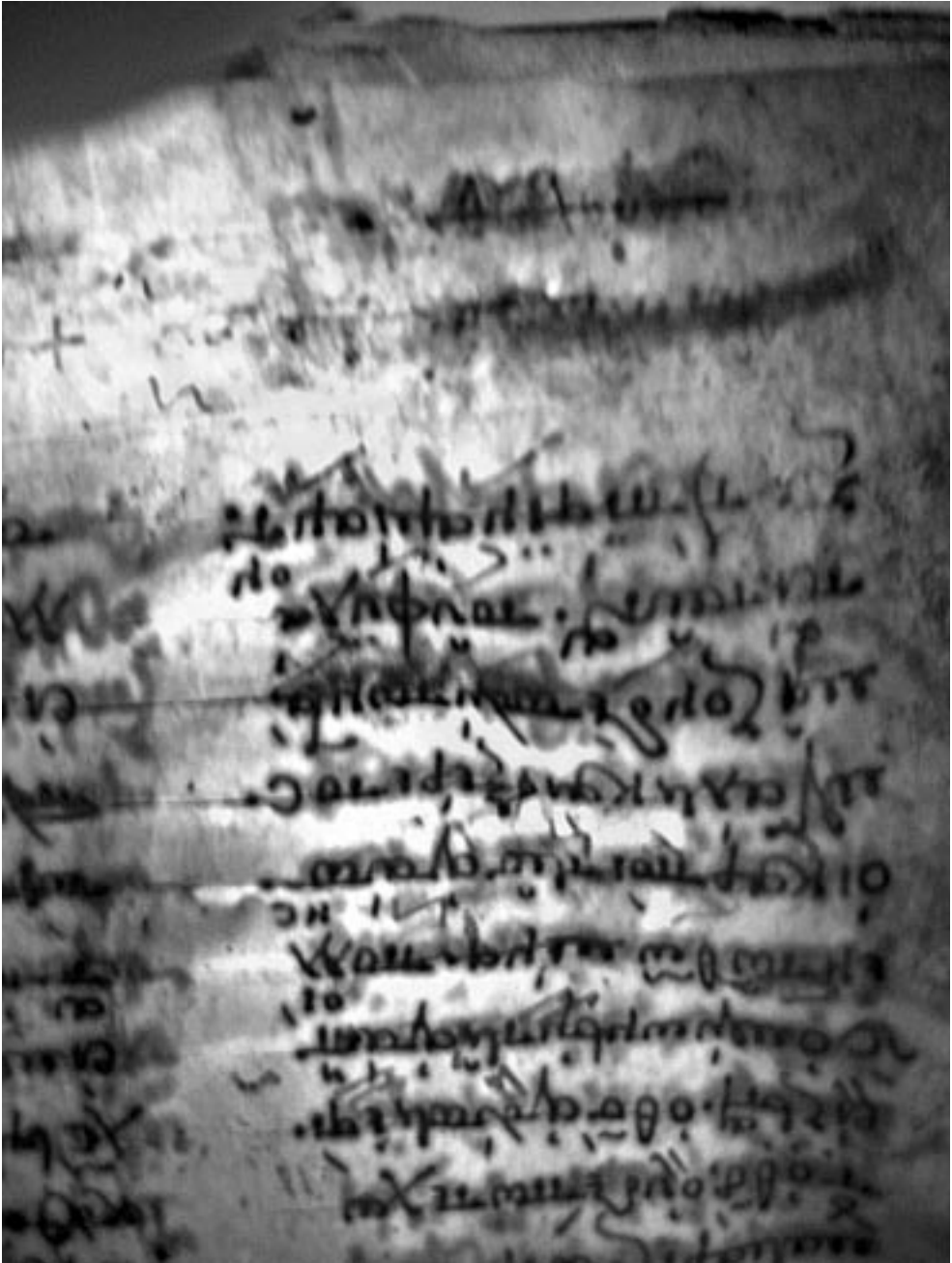
6. Athens, Holy Synod of Greece, nr. 108, m.pr. 11<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), f. 4r, left column, lower part.



7a. Athens, Holy Synod of Greece, nr. 108, m.pr. 11<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), f. 5r, right column, lower part.

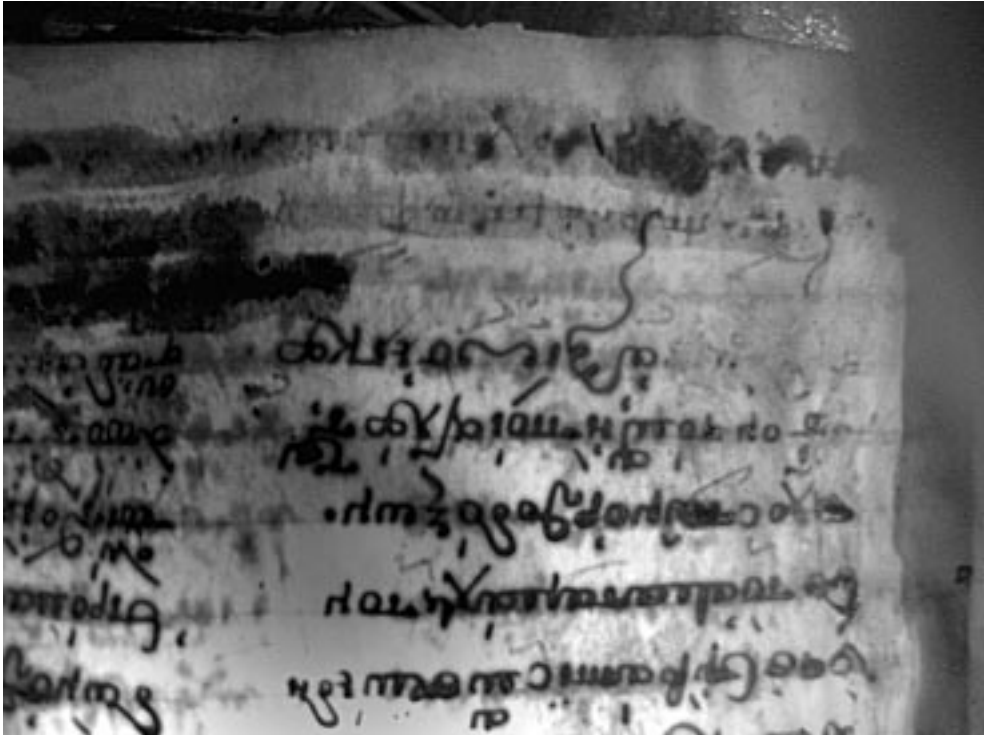


7b. Detail of 7a.



8. Athens, Holy Synod of Greece, nr. 108, m.pr. 11<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), f. 5v, left column, lower part.





9. Athens, Holy Synod of Greece, nr. 108, m.pr. 11<sup>th</sup> cent. (?), f. 6r, left column, lower part.

b. Theta notation and Palaeobyzantine notation: *Matritensis* 4848<sup>24</sup>.

c. Early Middle Byzantine notation: *Koutloumoussiou* 86<sup>25</sup>.

Encouraged by the important finding of J. Raasted in the Princeton-*Heirmologion* Garrett 24<sup>26</sup>, the palaeographer might dream to discover some

<sup>24</sup> Theta notation can be seen in the *manus prima* on f. 73r, containing the *stichêron* Ἐνθέοις πράξεσιν in honour of St. Gregory the Theologian, 25<sup>th</sup> January. F. 74v contains the *stichêron* Εὐφραίνου Αἴγυπτος for St. Makarios the Great (19<sup>th</sup> January), provided with Palaeobyzantine notation (Coislin V?), and followed by a rubric indicating the feast of St. Euthymios (20<sup>th</sup> January), together with the *stichêron* Εὐθυμείτε ἔλεγε τοῖς γεννητορσι. The palimpsest leaves belonged to a *Mēnaion/Stichêrion*, probably of the 11<sup>th</sup> cent.

<sup>25</sup> Psalter of the 14<sup>th</sup> cent., with 238 parchment folia, stemming from ca. 8 different older mss, adjusted to 157x105 mm. On f. 125r the *manus prior* shows the *stichêron* Χριστοῦ τὸν ἱεράρχην ὑμνήσωμεν in honour of St. Athanasios the Great (18<sup>th</sup> January), provided with Early Middle Byzantine notation. Moran (1985: 58) mentions also f. 28, 60, 126, 138, 143, 154, 161 as belonging to the same ms. It must have been a *Mēnaion* (maybe also parts of a *Triōdion*), probably from the 13<sup>th</sup> cent., with some of the *troparia* carrying neumes.

<sup>26</sup> Raasted 1992b. Cf. also point 3 of the present paper.

hidden documents of musical notation from the first millennium, showing the roots of ekphonic and of palaeobyzantine melodic notation, witnesses of the lost palaeobyzantine *Asmatikon* and *Psaltikon*<sup>27</sup>, or *troparia* which disappeared from the standard abridged repertory of the *Heirmologion* and *Sticherarion* during the 11<sup>th</sup> century<sup>28</sup>, maybe even early neumations of famous palaeochristian hymns like *Phōs bilaron* (*Lumen bilare*) or *Hypo tēn sēn eusplanchnian* (*Sub tuum praesidium*), which entered the written tradition at a much later point<sup>29</sup>.

In fact, studying Byzantine musical manuscripts means searching for everlasting beauty, as transmitted by generations of inspired singers.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Floros 1970: II 259-261, 265-272.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Strunk 1977a: 98, 198-199, Troelsgård 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Κορακίδης 1979, Dévai 1965, Καράς 1992: 15 and tables 3-4, Ρεμούνδος & Χορός Ιεροψαλτών "Οι Καλοφωνάριδες" 2004: 15-22 and CD, track 2, Μητσάκης 1986: 63-64.