

Musicology Today

Journal of the National University of Music Bucharest

Issue 4 (44) October-December 2020

Title: Is the Georgian Chant Tradition Continuous? A Neume-Based Assessment

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Source: Musicology Today: Journal of the National University of Music Bucharest / Volume 11 / Issue 4 (44) / October-December 2020, pp 297-315

Link to this article: musicologytoday.ro/44/MT44studiesTsereteli.pdf

How to cite this article: Zaal Tsereteli, "Is the Georgian Chant Tradition Continuous? A Neume-Based Assessment", *Musicology Today: Journal of the National University of Music Bucharest*, 11/4 (44) (2020), 297-315.

Published by: Editura Universității Naționale de Muzică București

Musicology Today: Journal of the National University of Music Bucharest is indexed by EBSCO, RILM, ERIH PLUS, and CEEOL

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Is the Georgian Chant Tradition Continuous? A Neume-Based Assessment

Keywords: Georgian polyphony, three-part chant, Georgian neumes, Medieval music, *Iadgari*

Georgian ecclesiastical music reached the 19th century in two ways: manuscripts with neumatic notation and the oral tradition. Nowadays, several bulky manuscripts dated from 10th-12th centuries, containing Georgian hymns and musical notation¹ are at our disposal.²

The second way proved to be more difficult: as the old notation did not allow precise fixation and reproduction of melodies, Georgian ecclesiastical music has been transmitted from generation to generation orally. In the 19th century, there were still to be found master chanters, bearing the knowledge retrieved from this musical heritage. By the efforts of Georgian society and contemporary professional chanters, hymns have been written into European musical notation. As a result, several thousands of hymns have been written on paper, several books of hymns have been published and part of the material has come down to us as manuscripts.³ European five-line nota-

¹ The oldest Georgian manuscripts, bearing texts with medieval neumes, nowadays are located in several book depositories. The most important and voluminous sources are kept in Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts (Tbilisi, manuscripts S-425 and A-603) and the library of St. Catherine's Monastery (Mount Sinai, manuscripts Sin1, Sin14 and Sin21).

² There are some later musical manuscripts, however, in this article, we consider only the earliest ones and their relationship with the hymns written down in the 19th century using the modern musical notation.

³ The essential part of the chants written down using European staff notation is to be found in Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, National Archive of Georgia and Folklore State Centre.

tional system was not capable of exactly reflecting the tuning of the melodies performed by master chanters (this problem became evident as soon as the process of writing down chants has begun), although the melody line and the polyphonic structure of Georgian chants were written with a certain level of accuracy. Thus, the heritage has been saved.

At the moment, thanks to the timely measures applied in the 19th century, old Georgian three-part polyphonic chants are sung in churches. It is natural to question: how old is this music? Is there any connection between the medieval Georgian documents with neumatic notation and the melodies heard today in Georgian churches? Was chanting tradition continuous during the whole period of 10th-19th centuries? Did at some point in the history of Georgia there emerged the necessity to create new hymns as the knowledge of the old music was completely lost?

The problem of the existence of the relationship between two sources is important in and of itself. Moreover, it is directly connected to the deciphering of Georgian neumes. In the studies dedicated to the deciphering of the neumes, I have revealed some shreds of evidence, indicating the existence of such connection (see Tsereteli 2004 and 2008), although the study still continues. To finally prove the relationship between the ecclesiastical music of the 19th century (and thus, between the music of nowadays) and that of the medieval period, and to completely decipher the neumes, the exhaustive research of medieval musical manuscripts and the hymns written down in the 19th century has to be performed.

As more and more of the material is being studied, new pieces of evidence indicating the continuity of the tradition are being revealed, forcing us to reject the hypothesis of the break caused by historical misfortune. Here we shall consider one such evidence, which we have revealed recently. We will deal with some of the heirmoi, but more specifically with their initial clauses. The most popular of them is the heirmos to the fourth ode of the well-known kanon written by Kosmas of Jerusalem and dedicated to Nativity of Christ – *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* (კვერთხი იესეს ძირისაგან). Let us have a look at its first clause in the manuscript bearing the Georgian neumatic notation and dated from the end of 10th and beginning of 11th centuries – A-603.⁴

⁴ The manuscript A-603 is located in Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts (Tbilisi). It contains more than 900 texts of heirmoi with medieval Georgian neumes and represents one of the most valuable sources for the study of Georgian ecclesiastical music. Part of this manuscript is lost.

Manuscript A-603 is the book of model melodies, i.e. heirmoi. Here the hymns are classified into modes of octoechos and kanon odes (we follow Egon Wellesz and use the term *modes* for the Echoi of octoechos). Texts of heirmoi are neumed by medieval Georgian musical notation. In the table below, we present the neume symbol arrangement (sometimes named here by the term scheme alternatively) of the first clause of the hymn *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* (Kiknadze⁵ 1982: 154-155; see Table 1).

Heirmos <i>From the Rod of the Root of Jesse, the first clause</i>	Syllables								
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Neumes	✓				✓				✓

Table 1. *The neume pattern of the first clause of the hymn From the Rod of the Root of Jesse.*

The numbering of columns in the table indicates syllables in the clause, although the numbering is reverse: for our purposes reverse numbering will be more convenient. Note, that the text is not important for solving the problem we are dealing with right now: important to know only the overall number of syllables and the distribution of the neumes upon them. Each cell in the table corresponds to one particular syllable. Thus, there are nine syllables in this clause. In the cell beneath the number nine one can see the sign ✓. This means that in the manuscript A-603, reverse 9th syllable of the first clause of the hymn *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* is bearing this sign. The reverse 5th and the very last syllable are marked by the same sign as well. Reverse 8th, 7th, 6th, 4th, 3rd, and 2nd cells are empty, meaning that corresponding syllables have no signs on them, they are neume-free.⁶

There are three more heirmoi in the manuscript A-603 having first clauses of exactly nine syllable-long and identical neume patterns. Namely, they are: *O Thou Who Alone* (შენ მხოლოდ რომელმან უწყი; Kiknadze 1982: 146-147), *The Magnificent Beauty of Your Divinity* (ბრწყინვალედ შვენიერებასა; Kiknadze 1982: 166-167) and *At the Wrath of the Tyrant*

⁵ This book represents the facsimile edition of the manuscript A-603 (see note 4). It features the texts of the heirmoi and detailed investigation as well.

⁶ It is characteristic for medieval Georgian musical manuscripts, that some (often significant) amount of syllables in the clause are neume-free.

(გულისწყრომასა მძლავრისასა; Kiknadze 1982: 184-185). See neume symbol arrangement of first clauses for all of the four heirmoi in the Table 2.

Heirmos	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<i>From the Rod</i>	✓				✓				✓
<i>O Thou Who Alone</i>	✓				✓				✓
<i>The Magnificent Beauty of Your Divinity</i>	✓				✓				✓
<i>At the Wrath of the Tyrant</i>	✓				✓				✓

Table 2. The neume patterns of the first clauses of four heirmoi.

All of the four hymns belong to the first mode. The identity of neume distribution and the equity of clause lengths (i.e. overall number of syllables) encourages us to conclude, that for each of these four cases we are dealing with the same melody.

Now let us investigate musical manuscripts of the 19th century. The heirmos *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* can be found in several of them (Gvakharia et al. 2013: 158). Below we reproduce the beginning of the hymn from one of the manuscripts – Q-673⁷ (for ease of reading, the text has been transliterated into the Latin alphabet; see Ex. 1).

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of the heirmos 'From the Rod of the Root of Jesse' from manuscript Q-673. The score is in 2/4 time, B-flat major, and consists of three systems. Each system has a vocal line (soprano), a piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs), and lyrics. The lyrics are: 'kve - r - tkhi i - e - ses dzi - ri - sa - gan ...'.

Ex. 1. The beginning of the heirmos *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* from the manuscript Q-673.

⁷ Manuscript Q-673 is a good copy draft manuscript compiled by Ekvtime Kereselidze in the 1910s from original transcriptions made by Pilimon Koridze in the 1880s and 1890s. The source singers were masters of the oral chant tradition associated with the Gelati monastery in central Georgia, and with the Shemokmedi monastery in southwest Georgia. The manuscript is currently held in the National Manuscript Centre in Tbilisi, Georgia.

One can observe three parts given in the picture, representing the three-part polyphonic nature of this particular chant. This is the typical case, as Georgian ecclesiastical music is polyphonic.⁸ For the rest of the paper, we will be discussing the topmost voice only, because two other voices depend on it and that is the inherited melody which most likely should correspond to the medieval neumes.

Sometimes a hymn in different manuscripts is given in different tonalities, with the notes having either double or half duration notes, with a variety of melodic lines. Besides, in some manuscripts, all three parts of the hymn are written, and in some of them – only the first part. Despite such differences, the first investigated clause is given always with a similar melodic line. After a) removing second and third parts, b) removing barlines, irrelevant for ecclesiastical chant built up of clauses, c) some minor simplifications, d) halving the duration of notes, and e) transposing the melody line to more convenient tonality, we come to the following result (see Ex. 2).



Ex. 2. *The melody line (first part) of the first clause of the heirmos* From the Rod of the Root of Jesse.

The scores of the rest three of the hymns given in Table 2 are available as well (Gvakharia et al. 2013: 94-95, 109-110, 280). For all of them melodic line of the first clauses is identical to the one given in Ex. 2.

Thus, the investigation of the origins of the four sacred chants has revealed the following evidence: firstly, the neume patterns of their initial clauses are identical in manuscript A-603, dated from the 10th-11th centuries. Secondly, in every 19th-century manuscript, the same melodic line is to be found. For instance, take a look at the beginning of the heirmos *O Thou Who Alone* from the manuscript Q-688⁹ (see Ex. 3)¹⁰ and compare it to the topmost part in Ex. 1.

⁸ In Georgian ecclesiastical music, the first part (*Mtqmeli*) is the main, determinant one, while the second part (*Modzakhili*) and the third one (*Bani*) depend on it. Knowing the melody of the first part made possible perfect harmonization of sacred chant in the process of live performance.

⁹ Information given in the note 7 is relevant for this source as well.

¹⁰ The text is transliterated into the Latin alphabet and second and third parts are omitted.



Ex. 3. *The melody line (first part) of the first clause of the heirmos O Thou Who Alone from the manuscript Q-688.*

It is clear that we are dealing with the fact that indicates the relationship between medieval musical manuscripts and musical scores of the chants. Let us assume, that at some point in the history of Georgia (say in 16th-17th centuries) connection to the old musical tradition was interrupted, old melodies were lost and recreation of sacred hymns became necessary. How, then, can we explain just revealed coincidence under such an assumption? If the melodies of four heirmoi have been created independently of the medieval tradition, then why their first clauses have the same melodies? As they had the same melodies in the 10th century as well, the following question would be rightful: are we dealing with the random coincidence? The possibility of pure chance cannot be rejected completely, but below we reveal two more heirmoi with similar medieval neume pattern arrangements and the same melodies (only the first clause). These two new cases will make the doubtful hypothesis of pure chance look even more far-fetched.

When discussing medieval musical manuscripts, we cannot bypass the most important and substantial in size source – Iadgari of Miqael Modrekili (manuscript S-425, 10th century).¹¹ Before considering the details of this important hymnographical source, let us examine its textual organization.

The manuscript has two sections: 1) It begins with the section, that was supposed to contain dozens of pages, most of which got lost. Here the heirmoi, classified in modes and odes (similarly to A-603), are given. Texts are written without titles and have neumes on them. This section can be considered as a reference book of heirmoi, i.e. hymn-models. 2) Second part contains several hundreds of pages. Dedicated to important Christian feasts, the works of foreign and Georgian hymnographers are given here. Among them, naturally, are, kanons. Most of the texts bear musical notation – the neumes.

¹¹ The manuscript S-425 is located in Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts (Tbilisi). There is no doubt that this is the most important musical source from the Middle Ages. It contains hundreds of heirmoi, Georgian translations of the works of foreign hymnographers, and original hymnographic compositions of Georgian authors. Most of the texts bear medieval Georgian musical signs – the neumes. The manuscript was written in the period of 978-988. Currently, it contains 272 (37,5 x 29,5 cm) sheets of parchment. Most of the manuscript is lost.

Now let us get back to the heirmos *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse*. The text with the musical notation of this particular hymn is absent from the first part (so-called reference part) of the manuscript S-425: seems like the page bearing it is one of the lost ones. In return, there are several kanons in the second part, having this very hymn, indicated by the incipit, as a heirmos for the fourth ode. The table below shows the neume symbol arrangements of the initial clauses of troparia included in these odes (see Table 3).

Fourth ode, heirmos <i>From the Rod of the Root of Jesse</i> , first clauses		Syllables										
Kanon	Troparion	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Prefeast of the Nativity ¹²	I			∖				∕				∕
	II	∖						∕				∕
	III			∖	∖		∖	∕			∕	
	IV			∖				∕				∕
	V			∖				∕				∕
The day before Nativity ¹³	I			∖				∕				∕
	II			∖				∕			∕	
	III		∖	∖				∕				∕
Prefeast of the Epiphany ¹⁴	I			∖				∕				∕
	II										∕	
	III							∕				∕
Resurrection ¹⁵	I			∖				∕				∕
	II				∕			∕				∕
	III			∖				∕				∕

Table 3. *The neume patterns of the first clauses of troparia modeled according to the heirmos From the Rod of the Root of Jesse.*

In the first column, kanons are named. In the second one numbering of troparia in the fourth ode is given. Across the following columns, neume symbol patterns are presented in the usual manner (see Table 1 and its description). Highlighted cells indicate the first syllables of the clause. One can see, that lengths of clauses (overall number of syllables) vary between 9 and 11. In some cases, initial syllables are neume-free.

¹² Gvakharia 1978: 49. This work represents the calligraphic copy of the manuscript S-425 (see note 11).

¹³ Gvakharia 1978: 73.

¹⁴ Gvakharia 1978: 129.

¹⁵ Gvakharia 1978: 347.

Let us emphasize some important circumstances. Firstly, all of the patterns given in Table 3 represent versions of one melody. This statement is based on the general principle of kanon creation. According to this principle, texts of the troparia are modeled on the pattern of heirmos text, and their melody – on the pattern of the heirmos melody. As the patterns given in Table 3 represent the first clauses of troparia modeled on the same heirmos (i.e. *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse*), we can claim that all of them must represent variants of one melody.

Secondly, note the differences between patterns. Sometimes it is caused by numbers of syllables (see clauses with 10 and 11 syllables), though there are differences in nine syllable length clauses as well (as already mentioned, the initial clause of *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* is consisted of nine syllables). To sum up, the theme is one, while variants are several. To simplify further discussions let us collect all of the unique patterns in one table (see Table 4).

Unique patterns		Syllables										
No.	Manuscript	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1	S-425			∖				/				/
2	S-425	∖						/				/
3	S-425			∖	∖		∖	/			/	
4	S-425			∖				/			/	
5	S-425		∖	∖				/				/
6	S-425										/	
7	S-425							/				/
8	S-425				/			/				/
9	A-603			/				/				/

Table 4. *Nine unique neume patterns related to the first clause of the heirmos From the Rod of the Root of Jesse collected from two medieval sources.*

We see nine different patterns in Table 4. The first eight of them are from the manuscript S-425. Pattern no. 1 is the most common: it is applied to seven clauses out of 14 (see Table 3). All of the rest are found only once. It is quite reasonable to suppose, that had a lost page of the manuscript S-425 come down to us, the first clause of this heirmos would have borne exactly this pattern. Pattern no. 9 belongs to manuscript A-603.

The difference between the neume symbol patters originated from two sources (patterns nos. 1 and 9) is the neume at the first (i.e. reverse ninth)

syllable. Reverse fifth and the last syllables have identical signs on them. It must be noted, that the positioning of signs is identical in both variants. Manuscript S-425 is dated from the 10th century and A-603 – from the end of 10th and the beginning of 11th centuries. Thus, the time difference between the two is one century at most. Besides, the notations observed in these sources (number of neumes, shapes of signs, positioning on syllables) are the same. Hence, we can conclude that patterns nos. 1 and 9 deal with similar melodies. This implies that all of the nine unique patterns of Table 4 represent one melody.

In summary, after observing the traces of heirmos *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* in two musical sources of 10th-11th centuries, we have collected 15 neume patterns of first clauses representing various versions of one melody (one case from Table 1 and 14 cases from Table 3). These cases reveal nine unique patterns (see Table 4).

The observations we made above lead us to following task: let us assume that set of neume patterns is given and suppose it is known, that all of these patterns represent versions of one melody. Assume, on the other hand, that one more neume pattern is given as well. Can we, without knowing the meanings of medieval Georgian neumes, make a judgement of whether this separated pattern reflects some version of the melody represented by the given set or not? Of course, if the pending neume symbol arrangement exactly coincides with one of the known patterns, then we shall have a basis to suppose, that it reflects the same melody. However, we should not restrict ourselves with the criterion of exact match, otherwise we shall miss the melody behind the pattern, which despite not matching any of the known patterns, looks very similar to them.

To elaborate melody identification criterion, let us point out the invariant characteristics of the set of neume arrangement patterns given in Table 4. First of all, note the overall number of syllables: here, in most cases, we have nine syllables, just like in heirmos. However, 10 and 11 syllable-long clauses can be found too. As it was already mentioned, patterns in Table 3 represent variants of one melody (see above). Seems like a slight excess in the number of syllables is permissible. If so, then shortage in syllables should be permissible as well, because text must always be coherent and this necessary restriction would not always allow the hymnographer to match the length of the troparion clause to that of the heirmos. Thus, to determine whether the hypothetical neume symbol arrangement (to be assessed) represents the same melody, the length of the clause should vary between 7 and 11. If the length of the clause is significantly more or less (e.g. 15 or 5) than that of heirmos (9 in this

case), then one can never claim that such an arrangement reflects the version of the same melody.

After consulting the neume patterns again, it becomes clear, that they consist of one, two, or three clusters of neumes. Each cluster is a combination of at most two signs on adjacent syllables. The first cluster occupies syllables 8-11. It might consist of the signs 9 or 1. Besides, if both of them are present, the first one precedes the second.

The second cluster always occupies positions 5-6. Similar to the first cluster, it might consist of at most two signs and always stroke precedes the curve.

The third cluster can have only one sign: \curvearrowright . This neume, being a member of the third cluster, accompanies the last syllable, or the one preceding it.

The description of general characteristics of neume patterns from Table 4, that involves the determination of boundaries of clause lengths, positioning and structure of clusters, establishes the melody identification criterion.

Now let us search manuscript S-425 for the rest of three heirmoi given in Table 2. None of them is found in the reference section of the manuscript. Let us, then, take a look at neume arrangements of first clauses of troparia, modeled by them (see Tables 5-7).

Kanon	Trop.	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Feast of St. Silvester ¹⁶	I							\curvearrowright				\curvearrowright
	II							\curvearrowright				\curvearrowright
	III							\curvearrowright				\curvearrowright
Feast of St Gregory of Nazianzus ¹⁷	I						\curvearrowright					\curvearrowright
	II							\curvearrowright				\curvearrowright
	III							\curvearrowright				\curvearrowright
	IV							\curvearrowright			\curvearrowright	

Table 5. *Third ode, heirmos O Thou Who Alone, initial clauses of troparia.*

¹⁶ Gvakharia 1978: 122. This work represents the calligraphic copy of the manuscript S-425 (see note 11).

¹⁷ Gvakharia 1978: 249.

Kanon	Trop.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Epiphany ¹⁸	I					↗				↗
	II									↗
	III									↗
Resurrection ¹⁹	I				↗					↗
	II				↗					↗
	III		↘							↗

Table 6. *Fifth ode, heirmos* The Magnificent Beauty of Your Divinity, *initial clauses of troparia.*

Kanon	Trop.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Epiphany ²⁰	I					↗				
	II					↗				↗
	III					↗				↗
Resurrection ²¹	I	↘				↗				
	II	↘				↗				↗
	III	↘				↗				↗

Table 7. *Seventh ode, heirmos* At the Wrath of the Tyrant, *initial clauses of troparia.*

All of the patterns just presented in the three tables above satisfy the requirements of the melody identification criterion. Therefore, we can suppose, that they reflect versions of the same melody. This statement is additionally supported by Table 2: it collects four neume patterns of initial clauses, from the source A-603, of the heirmoi of interest and they are identical. Finally, musical manuscripts of the 19th century claim the same: everywhere we find the same melodies for the initial clauses of these heirmoi. Having said all of the above, the hypothesis, claiming that this coincidence is a result of pure chance, start to seem far-fetched. Let us go further, however, and consider one more heirmos *When the Israelite Youths Were Cast* (სახმილსა რა შეთხეულ იქმნეს), found only in the manuscript S-425, represented by troparia modeled according to it (see Table 8).

¹⁸ Gvakharia 1978: 141.
¹⁹ Gvakharia 1978: 351.
²⁰ Gvakharia 1978: 141-142.
²¹ Gvakharia 1978: 352.

Kanon	Trop.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Feast of St Gregory of Nazianzus ²²	I		↗		↘	↗				↗
	II				↘					↗
	III	↗			↘	↗				↗
Resurrection (1) ²³	I	↗			↘	↗				↗
	II	↗			↘	↗				↗
	III	↗			↘	↗				↗
Resurrection (2) ²⁴	I				↘	↘	↗		↗	
	II				↘	↘	↗		↗	
	III								↗	

Table 8. *Eighth ode, heirmos* When the Israelite Youths Were Cast, *initial clauses of troparia.*

In this table, neume patterns of initial clauses of the first two troparia of the kanon Resurrection (2) do not meet the requirements of melody identification criterion. In particular, we see that the second cluster consists of three signs instead of two, and it occupies positions 4-6 instead of 5-6. On the other hand, however, the third pattern of the same kanon meets the criterion. We know for sure, that all of the patterns in Table 8 represent the same melody because these troparia have common heirmos as a model: this argument is of a higher priority compared to the one of meeting the criteria. Since the third pattern meets the criterion, it follows that it should represent the same melody as the patterns of Table 4 do. Hence, all of the rest neume arrangements of Table 8 should represent the same melody, despite the fact, that they do not meet the criterion.

Let us make few notes about the rest of troparia from the kanons dedicated to St. Gregory and Resurrection (1). An overall number of syllables and positioning of clusters perfectly meet the criterion, although there is a new neume 0 – long stroke, which we have not encountered yet. The appearance of a new sign is a critical event in general – without having some argument of high priority one cannot claim the identity of the melody if the neume pattern features some *new* symbol. In such cases, the criterion of melody identification definitely will not be met, because of the content description rule

²² Gvakharia 1978: 250.

²³ Gvakharia 1978: 350.

²⁴ Gvakharia 1978: 501.

violation for at least one of the clusters. However, if we take into account the argument of higher priority, as we did above, the melody of pattern containing the new symbol still might be identical to the original melody. In the cases like that the set of patterns will be enriched with newly revealed ones and the identification criterion will be edited accordingly. Thus, forthcoming schemas will be assessed according to the new criterion.

Let us get back to the heirmos *When the Israelite Youths Were Cast*. By evaluating neume schemas we concluded that its first clause should have the same melody as that of *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse* and the three other heirmoi (see Table 2). What do the scores show then? One can make sure that the melodies of this clause given in musical scores are similar to the one given in Ex. 2 (Gvakharia et al. 2013: 226).

Before we take a look at one more case, let us briefly characterize the eight-mode system (octoechos) and the relationship of Georgian musical tradition to the established theory. According to Egon Wellesz, byzantine sacred chants used to be built of the melodic formulae. The entire set of melodic formulae was divided into eight non-intersecting subsets. These eight subsets represented the core of eight modes: the hymn belonged to some of the modes if it was built of the formulae characteristic to that mode. Besides, the author of the hymn was free to define a succession of formulae (Wellesz 1962: 310, 325). Thus, ideally, hymns belonging to different modes would not have formulae in common. However, there existed some hymns in Byzantine ecclesiastical music, which bore standard, short melodies from the different modes. As a practitioner chanter, I can confirm that Georgian ecclesiastical music is in perfect concord with the all of the said above. More precisely, heirmoi belonging to one mode are usually constructed of the formulae from one set, and heirmoi belonging to a different mode, are built of the formulae from another set. At the same time, there are hymns which belong to some particular mode, but they contain formulae characteristic to some another mode.

The example from this latter category is the heirmos *Before Pharaoh Was Engulfed* (ლეღვათა დაანთქა პირველად). Five heirmoi considered so far belong to the first mode, but this one – to the second mode. The text of it is not given in the manuscript A-603. In the source S-425, in one of the resurrection kanons, we find three troparia modeled on the heirmos *Before Pharaoh Was Engulfed*. As usual, let us see texts with musical notation of their first clauses (see Table 9).

Kanon	Trop.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Resurrection ²⁵	I	\					/				/
	II	\					/				/
	III		\				/				/

Table 9. *First ode, heirmos Before Pharaoh Was Engulfed, initial clauses of troparia.*

Just one glance is sufficient to make sure that the schemas given in this table meet the melody identification criterion. Unfortunately, we cannot consult source A-603, as it does not contain this heirmos. But the fact, that criterion requirements are met, encourages us to suppose that the same melody is being dealt with. Again, if we search for this heirmos in 19th century musical scores, we shall find the same melody (see Ex. 2; Gvakharia et al. 2013: 261). It seems that the heirmos *Before Pharaoh Was Engulfed* was an exception in the 10th century and it proved to be exceptional in 19th as well: while being the hymn of the second mode, it begins with the formula characteristic to the first mode. This is one more remarkable circumstance!

Let us summarize everything said so far: there came down to us six heirmoi (five of them of the first mode and one of the second). On one hand, we have texts of them or of the troparia modeled by them, bearing the signs of medieval musical notation from manuscripts A-603 and S-425; on the other hand, the modern musical notational scores made in the 19th century are available for all of them. After scrutinizing nine syllable long initial clauses of six heirmoi we have found out, that they have similar neume symbol arrangements. Moreover, corresponding scores show similar melodies for all of them. This coincidence points to the connection between medieval and 19th century Georgian ecclesiastical music with regard to these six hymns.

We have already mentioned that hypothesis of random coincidence does not look convincing. But anyway, what makes us think that assumption, that it is only due to pure chance, that six phrases with similar medieval neumatic notation are represented by similar melodies in musical scores, is suspicious? Firstly, note that length of nine syllables is quite long in comparison to two-three syllables. Is it possible that the only reason for clauses having similar melodies, is their equal length? Several thousand sacred hymns, bearing a great diversity of melodic formulae, have come down to us in the form of

²⁵ Gvakharia 1978: 376-378. This work represents the calligraphic copy of the manuscript S-425 (see note 11).

modern musical scores. Taking into account the existence of such diversity, it is hard to believe, that equity of clause lengths would necessarily imply the similarity of melodies. Besides, we can present an example of the nine-syllable long initial clause belonging to the first mode, having a different neume arrangements and the corresponding scores showing different melodies. This one is the first heirmos of the famous Nativity kanon of Kosmas of Jerusalem (already discussed above) *From the Harsh Slavery* (მონღებლისა მისგან მწარისა). The text with neumes of this particular hymn, unlike six already considered heirmoi, is present in the reference part of Iadgari (S-425). This is what the schemas of the first clauses look like in both of the sources (see Table 10).

Source	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
S-425 ²⁶					↗		↘	↘	
A-603 ²⁷	↘						↘		

Table 10. *The neume patterns of the first clause of the heirmos From the Harsh Slavery from two medieval sources.*

It is obvious, that here we see completely different schemas. The corresponding melody looks like following (Gvakharia et al. 2013: 183; see Ex. 4).



Ex. 4. *The melody line of the first clause of the heirmos From the Harsh Slavery.*

As we see, the melody is different as well (compare to Ex. 2). This case confirms that only the equity of clause length (nine) does not imply the similarity of the melodies, and the neume symbol arrangement matters as well. In this case, a scheme is different and the corresponding melody is different too. The real indicator of the connection is how similar schemas are represented with similar melodies and different schemas, respectively, with different ones.

²⁶ Gvakharia 1978: 4. This work represents the calligraphic copy of the manuscript S-425 (see note 11).

²⁷ Kiknadze 1982: 124-125. This book represents the facsimile edition of the manuscript A-603 (see note 4). It features the texts of the heirmoi and detailed investigation as well.

Let us go back to heirmos *Before Pharaoh Was Engulfed*. Not only the first clause shows a connection to the medieval hymn, but it became evident that all of the first three clauses have schemas similar to the corresponding clauses of the heirmos *From the Rod of the Root of Jesse*; on the other hand, melodies are similar. Below we fully present this part of the hymn (see Ex. 5).

kver - tkhi l - e - ses dzi - ri - sa - gan
 ag - mo - gvi - tsen - di shen Qris - te mti - sa - gan tsmi - di - sa
 qal - tsu - li - sa da mag - na - rit ga - mo - khved

Ex. 5. *The melody line of the first three clauses of the heirmos From the Rod of the Root of Jesse.*

Here one can observe four clauses separated by bar lines. The corresponding medieval text, however, is divided into three clauses as two middle clauses of the score (Ex. 5) are merged. Now let us see patterns of neume symbols in the manuscript S-425. The texts of these particular hymns, as we already mentioned, are not present in this source, but there are troparia modeled by them. Let us take one troparion for each of the heirmoi and place together each of the first three clauses (see Tables 11-13).

First clause	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Trop. no. 1 (heirm. <i>From The Rod</i>) ²⁸		∖				∕				∕
Trop. no. 2 (heirm. <i>Before Pharaoh</i>) ²⁹	∖					∕				∕

Table 11. *The neume patterns of the first clauses of two troparia modeled according to different heirmoi.*

²⁸ Gvakharia 1978: 49-50. This work represents the calligraphic copy of the manuscript S-425 (see note 11).

²⁹ Gvakharia 1978: 376.

Second clause	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Trop. no. 1		↗								↗				↗			↗
Trop. no. 2		↗		↗			↗					↘	↘	↗			↗

Table 12. *The neume patterns of the second clauses of the same two troparia modeled according to different heirmoi.*

Third clause	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Trop. no. 1	↗					↗	
Trop. no. 2	↗					↗	

Table 13. *The neume patterns of the third clauses of the same two troparia modeled according to different heirmoi.*

As we can see, the schemas are similar. According to them the melodies should be similar and indeed, the scores confirm the similarity.

In which cases Georgian hymnographers or musicians were *borrowing* melodic formulae from the mode other than that of the hymn? Looking at the textual structures of these two heirmoi might give us some clue (see Table 14).

Clause	Number of syllables	
	<i>From the Rod</i> ³⁰ (Mode 1)	<i>Before Pharaoh</i> ³¹ (Mode 2)
1	9	9
2	18	19
3	7	7
4	7	8
5	10	6
6	7	7
7	10	-

Table 14. *The lengths (number of syllables) of the clauses of two heirmoi.*

³⁰ Text of the heirmos see in Kiknadze 1982: 155.

³¹ Text of the heirmos see in Kiknadze 1982: 16-17.

The table shows that the first and the third clauses are of equal lengths. As for the second, it is quite long, so the difference of one syllable is normal and not important at all. Thus, the textual structures of the first three clauses of these two heirmoi are very similar. It is possible that medieval musician took advantage of the circumstance and decided to utilize the sequence of three melodic formulae from the first mode, which probably was very popular and familiar to them. One might ask: is it possible, that there were no formulae in the set of characteristics to the second mode formulae suitable for the 9, 19, and 7 syllable-long clauses? For the time being, we are unable to answer this question. This task should be postponed to the time when the whole fund of melodic formulae of Georgian ecclesiastical music is exhaustively studied and each of them is classified to the appropriate mode.

Thus, six heirmoi have been considered here. Five of them belong to the first mode and one – to the second. Initial clauses of them have been investigated in the two very important medieval manuscripts and 19th-century musical manuscripts. In Georgian ecclesiastical music, the principle of hymn-construction is the same as that of the Byzantine: heirmoi of particular mode are built up of the melodic formulae characteristic to that mode. Although, this does not mean, that the order of formulae must be the same in every hymn throughout the mode. Therefore, in general, initial clauses of heirmoi belonging to the same mode can well represent different melodies. We pointed to one of such cases here (see discussions related to Ex. 4), but there are many other instances out there as well. It was found out, that initial clauses of five first mode heirmoi have similar neume symbol arrangements. At the same time, parallel musical scores are similar as well. The sixth heirmos (see Table 9 and related paragraph), belonging to the second mode, according to the hymn construction principle, should have been built up of the formulae characteristic to the second mode. There exist some exceptions though and this sixth heirmos is one of such exceptions: in musical score manuscripts, its initial clause melody is characteristic for the first mode. At the same time neume pattern of this clause is similar to the initial clauses of the rest five heirmoi. This means that the sixth heirmos was among exceptions in the 19th century and was exceptional in the Middle Ages as well. Finally, as we find that the diversity of possibilities for the initial clause melodies can be observed in both the medieval neumed texts and the 19th-century musical scores, especially observed in the exceptional or non-standard tonal realizations, we conclude that this correlation strongly supports a theory of continuous oral transmission between the medieval and 19th-century sources.

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