BYZANTINE CHANT IN POPULAR TRADITION.

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The present essay is not so much a presentation of facts and of results as an attempt to ask some questions to a material which, for many reasons, has not yet been sufficiently studied. Most of my questions may seem quite simple, may-be somewhat naïve. But for my actual purpose I have preferred to avoid subtlety and intricacy.

Basically speaking, we have two kinds of sources to consult if we want to know something about Byzantine Chant. we have the musical manuscripts themselves, with their vast treasures of melodies used by the Byzantine church at her ser-These manuscripts cover a period of more than 1000 years and enable us to see - at least in outlines - how melodies changed and developed from, say, the early 10th century to the present day. There are, however, serious limitations in this material which make it impossible to follow the development in detail. One such limitation - and this is highly characteristic of the field - is that many tunes were so frequently used that nobody ever felt the necessity of writing And even for the melodies which were transmitted in musical manuscripts, the musical notation was never intended to convey all the details of the actual singing. Originally the notation was nothing but a mnemonic device, an aid to singers who knew the repertory by heart and only needed some hints to be put on the right track. And although an ever growing precision had produced readable melodies already at the end of the 12th century - i.e. lines of music which we can understand and transcribe - it is still true that the written tradition of Byzantine Chant always presupposed and demanded the support of an oral tradition.

The essay is a revised version of a paper read at the Tenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (Birmingham, March 1976), a symposion dealing with "The Byzantine Underworld: Heroic Poetry and Popular Tradition".

And this leads me to the second kind of sources for our knowledge of Byzantine Chant - the living tradition of the Orthodox Church of our own days. I firmly believe that we can learn a good deal about the ways and habits of earlier generations of singers from observing what their successors do now-adays. But I must confess my scepticism as to how far back in time we can get by this kind of reasoning; neither can I make up my mind as to how safe and precise we can expect our conclusions to be in these matters.

There is no need for me to be more detailed. Suffice it to say that when we speak of 'Byzantine Chant', this term covers an enormous and fluctuating corpus of tunes and singing habits - a stream of musical traditions which has flown without interruption from the early Middle Ages to the present day. Ranging from the cantillation of Biblical texts and prayers, through syllabic and quasi-syllabic melodies to highly complicated melismatic settings of, say, the Cheroubika, Byzantine Chant has only one common feature which makes it reasonable at all to speak of all this as an entity: the fact that it was used by the Church for her religious services. Byzantine Chant is church music.

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In the context of a symposion on 'the Byzantine Underground', the second key word in the title of this essay should refer to 'what was going on in the underground, below the surface, among ordinary people who were not professionally engaged in producing and performing Byzantine Chant'. And here comes my first set of questions: How wide or how narrow shall we make our definition of a 'popular' tradition? Are we to think in terms of 'ecclesiastical' versus 'lay' tradition? Or will it be useful to make some kind of social distinction as well, reserving the notion of popularity to people below some level of society - for instance to the common population of towns, of villages, and of rural districts? In a way, of course, I am in favour of the latter solution, though I fully

realize that this does not make it easier for us to carry out an intelligent investigation.

No matter how we define our 'popular tradition', we cannot avoid another question of definition, the when. What period are we talking about? Ideally, of course, we ought to concentrate on the Byzantine period, limiting our investigation to phenomena which can be studied in sources from the 15th century or earlier. But I am afraid that this limitation in time would put a drastic end to our inquiry! Fortunately, however, chances are that the fall of Constantinople did not mean any substantial change in the relationship between church and population – at least not in the field which we are now discussing.²

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In 1973 I spent a couple of weeks in Brussels, working on Byzantine musical manuscripts and taking most of my meals in a small Greek restaurant. The owner of the restaurant had lived in Belgium for more than 20 years. When he heard that I worked on ecclesiastical music, he told me that as a boy he had been a member of the choir of his village church in Greece. Did he still remember some melodies? Yes, of course! What about 'H παρθένος σήμερον, the Christmas Kontakion by Romanos? Well, he was afraid that he did not remember the text any longer - but he knew the tune, of course. So I had to write the text for him on a beer mat, and with this in hand he gave his personal interpretation of the famous Chrismas Kontakion. I still have a tape with this piece of 'Byzantine Chant in Popular Tradition' - also a Trishagion which he remembered from those days.

We have here a good illustration of a phenomenon which must always have been quite common, also in the Middle Ages:

^{2. &#}x27;Throughout all its vicissitudes the Church was determined to keep its flock conscious of the Greek heritage.... The Greeks might be languishing by the waters of Babylon; but they still had their songs to sing' (Steven Runciman, The Great Church in Captivity, Cambridge 1968, p.410).

Ordinary, common people know part of the repertory of church music, not only because they belong to a congregation and hear the tunes during services, but also because many of them have functioned as members of a choir.

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It is not easy to measure the popularity of church music in the past. We are often told about the enormous part which the orthodox church played in the centuries of the Turcocratia, and I am quite willing to believe that part of this was due to her music. Nowadays you may find atheist Greeks who nourish a decidedly nationalistic pride in their church music. They are, simply and without reservation, proud of this inheritance from the past. Was this, also, the attitude of former days? Or was it the other way round? Is it only in our days that the singing of the Church to some people seems so queer and peculiar - compared to their folk-music - that it is despised and laughed at, rather than admired? Questions, which I for one should like to have answered. But what kind of sources would tell us the answers?.

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Until now, my questions on 'Byzantine Chant in Popular Tradition' have dealt with hypothetical cases in which ordinary, common people - those not professionally engaged in producing and performing Byzantine Chant - might be supposed to sing Byzantine church music; and I have also - however superficially - considered the people's attitude vis-à-vis the singing of the Church. The chanted pieces which I had in mind were written and composed for ecclesiastical use, but had been 'taken over' by laymen and were being sung outside church. Distinct from this situation is another kind of borrowing, where the music of the church and the texts of church poetry have inspired people to act and sing in their dayly life, using the musical and poetical language of the church for non-liturgical or paraliturgical purposes. Fortunately we do not have to resort to analogies and hypothetical cases to illus-

trate this kind of ecclesiastically inspired popular singing. Our reasoning can here be supported by actual cases, preserved in oral and/or written tradition.

A suitable example is a song which is found in manuscripts from the 17th and 18th centuries, 'O χορτάσας λαὸν έν τῆ ἑρήμφ. I shall deal with this case at some length, mainly because the written sources can here be supplied with the findings of ethnomusicology. In the oldest copy accessible to me (Copenhagen, Ny Kgl. Saml. $4466,4^{\circ}$, fol. 266v) 3 the text runs as follows:

τὸ παρὸν ψάλλεται έπὶ τραπέζης $\tilde{\eta}$ χος $\tilde{\eta}$ δ

*Ο χορτάσας λαὸν έν τῆ ἐρἡμφ καὶ ὁμβρήσας ὕδωρ αὐτοῖς ἐκ πέτρας καὶ ἐν Κανᾶ τῆς Γαλιλαίας τὸ ὕδωρ εἰς οἶνον μεταβαλών 5 αὐτὸς τὸν οἴκον τοῦτον στερέωσον αὐτὸς τὸν ἄρτον πλήθυνον αὐτὸς τὸν οἴνον εὕλόγησον καὶ τὸν ὑποδεξάμενον ἡμᾶς μισθὸν οὑράνιον δώρησαι 10 καὶ ἡμᾶς πάντας ἐλέησον ὡς άγαθὸς καὶ φιλάνθρωπος τερερερερε.... (10 lines) καὶ ἡμᾶς πάντας ἐλέησον ὡς άγαθὸς καὶ φιλάνθρωπος:--

According to its headline, the piece is to be sung "at table". It is a prayer, in which Christ is addressed as the one who in the desert provided the Jews with manna and water, and who at

^{3.} J. Raasted, A 17th Century Manuscript of Byzantine Music, Recently Acquired by the Royal Library in Copenhagen (Ny Kgl. Saml. 4466,4°) (Actes du XIVe congrès international des études byzantines, Bucarest, 6-12 septembre, 1971, publiés par les soins de M. Berza et E. Stanescü. III, 1976, pp.565-73. This musical anthology was written between the years 1678 and 1687 and was evidently intended for use in the Principalities, the Ungrowalachia.

the wedding in Cana changed water into wine. In this chanted prayer Christ is asked to treat "this house" in a similar way, amply providing it with bread and wine – and to give heavenly remuneration to the host (τὸν ὑποδεξάμενον ἡμᾶς, "the one who has received us"). At the end, the tune includes a fairly long 'Teretism' (a singing on meaningless syllables), whereupon the refrain is repeated.

We do not know when and where the text was originally written. Its inspiration is evidently to be sought in prayers for special occasions, of the following type: 4

ΕΥΧΗ ΕΠΙ ΤΡΥΓΗΣ ΑΜΠΕΛΟΥ.

'Ο Θεός, ὁ Σωτήρ ἡμῶν, ὁ εὐδοκήσας "Αμπελον κληθῆναι τὸν μονογενῆ σου Υἰὸν, τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν 'Ιησοῦν Χριστὸν, καὶ τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς ἀθανασίας πρόξενον ἀναδείξας, διὰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματός σου χάριτος αὐτὸς καὶ νῦν, Δέσποτα, καὶ τοῦτον τῆς 'Αμπέλου τὸν καρπὸν εὐλόγησον καὶ δὸς πᾶσι τοῖς μεταλαμβάνουσιν έξ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀγιασμὸν, καὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς προκοπήν τὸν δὲ συγκαλέσαντα ἡμᾶς, τῆς ἀληθινῆς σου ἀμπέλου μέτοχον ποίησον, καὶ ἀνεπηρέαστον τὴν ζωὴν αὐτοῦ διαφύλαξον, ταῖς αἰωνίοις σου καὶ ἀναφαιρέτοις δωρεαῖς κατακοσιῶν.

χάριτι καὶ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ μονογενοῦς σου Υἰοῦ, μεθ' οὖ εὐλογητὸς εἶ, σὺν τῷ παναγίφ, καὶ άγαθῷ, καὶ ζωοποιῷ σου Πνεύματι κτλ.

ΕΥΧΉ ΕΠΙ ΕΥΛΟΓΉΣΕΙ ΟΙΝΟΥ.

Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ἀγαθὲ καὶ φιλάνθρωπε, ἔπιδε ἐπὶ τὸν Οἴνον τοῦτον, καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς μεταλαμβάνοντας ἐξ αὐτοῦ, καὶ εὐλόγησον αὐτὸν ὡς ηὐλόγησας τὸ φρέαρ τοῦ Ίακώβ, καὶ τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωὰμ, καὶ τὸ ποτήριον τῶν ἀγίων σου 'Αποστόλων. 'Ο παραγενόμενος

⁴ In these prayers from the *Euchologion Mega* I have underlined the most striking parallels.

έν Κανᾶ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, καὶ εύλογήσας τὰς εξ ὑδρίας, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ εἰς οἴνον μεταβαλὼν, καὶ τὴν δόξαν σου φανερώσας τοῖς ἀγίοις σου Μαθηταῖς καὶ 'Αποστόλοις αὐτὸς καὶ νῦν έξαπόστειλον, Κύριε, τὸ ἄγιόν σου Πνεῦμα ἐπὶ τὸν Οἴνον τοῦτον, καὶ εὐλόγησον αὐτὸν ἑπὶ τῷ ὁνόματί σου τῷ ἀγίφ.

"Οτι σὸ εἴ ὁ εύλογῶν, καὶ ἀγιάζων τὰ σύμπαντα, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, καὶ σοὶ τὴν δόξαν ἀναπέμπομεν, σὸν τῷ ἀνάρχφ σου Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ παναγίφ, καὶ ἀγαθῷ, καὶ ζωοποιῷ σου Πνεύματι, νῦν. κτλ.

Our chanted prayer seems to have been widely spread. 5
The oldest copy which I have come across is in the MS Lesbos, Mon. Hyps. 48, palaeographically dated to the second half of the 16th century. 6

In Example 1 (see below p.78ff.) I have put together the main variants of three versions of the melody:

- A: Brussels, Inv.IV,515,fol.425r (18th cent.), where the headline runs as follows: είς εύθυμίαν ἀρίστου, ἀρχαΐον.
- B: Copenhagen, Ny Kgl. Saml. 2747,2°, fol.115r (late 18th cent.); headline: τοῦ αὐτοῦ (i.e. Μπαλασίου 'Ιερέως) είς φήμην ἀρίστου. ⁷
- C: Copenhagen, Ny Kgl. Saml. 4466,4⁰, fol.266v (late 17th cent.); headline: τὸ παρὸν ψάλλεται ἐπὶ τραπέζης.⁸

For the date of Ny Kgl.Saml. 4466,4°, see above, note 3.

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^{5.} Μανόλης Κ. Χατζηγιαχουμῆς, Μουσικὰ χειρόγραφα Τουρχοχρατίας (1453 –1832), I, Athens 1975, p.456 lists eleven occurrences. Until the index volume to the Athos catalogues of Gr. Stathis has been published (Τὰ χειρόγραφα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικῆς, Athens 1975 ff.), we have to rely on a general impression, that the song is frequently found in manuscripts from the Holy Mountain.

Hatziakoumes, op. cit., pp. 40-42.
 This is an embellished version of the tune, a Kallopismós. It is found in many manuscripts, including the Brussels anthology from which my Version A has been taken. In the Brussels copy its headline says: ἔτερον, ἐπαλωπίσθη ὑπὸ τοῦ κύρ μπαλασίου. For Ny Kgl. Saml. 2747,2°, see my forthcoming article in Fund og Forskning.

Now, as the two copies of Version B are virtually identical. chances are that further copies of Mpalasios's Kallopismos would come equally close to the melody which is contained in Ex.1; for there is no reason to assume any special connection between the two manuscripts which I have inspected. Evidently, in this case we have to do with a typical example of a written tradition. If, however, Mpalasios's melody is considered not in its actual shape, but as a witness to its unembellished Vorlage (B*), the differences between A, B*, and C just as evidently reflect the instability of an oral tradition. withstanding this instability, the musical style remains the same in all three versions, and at times they agree in their choice of musical formulas (e.g. in lines 1 and 5). the formulas are well known from the medieval Sticherarion; the very beginning is thus one of the typical opening formulas of the Fourth Plagal Mode.

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In the manuscript transmission of the melody to 'O xopτάσας we have met an instability which ought to reflect some kind of oral tradition, side by side with an entirely written tradition. This in itself makes 'O χορτάσας an interesting Even more interesting is it to see that the oral tradition has continued up to the present century, though the text is no longer sung to a tune related to the Fourth Plagal melody of my manuscripts. The Greek Folklore Research Center in Athens has a recording from the island of Samos. Amargianakis, who drew my attention to this and other recordings, informs me that the Samos version is in the Deuteros Mode and is related to the Proshomoion Ποίοις εύφημιῶν στέμμασιν. Mr. Amargianakis furthermore sent me two recordings from Crete, both of them performed by the same singer, but not identical in details. The Cretan recordings are in the chromatic mode of the Second Plagal; I have transcribed one of

^{9.} See, e.g., The Hymns of the Pentecostarium, transcribed by H.J.W. Tillyard (MMB Transcripta VII, Copenhagen 1960), Nos. 100 and 118.

them in Example 2. Of course, this melody has nothing at all to do with the Fourth Plagal melody of Ex.1; but Amargianakis is no doubt right in his characterizing this tune as being inspired by contemporary church music. At numerous places the text from Crete differs from that of my older sources, especially in the second half of the prayer. This instability of text is another effect of an oral tradition.

The Cretan version:

Χριστέ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν ὁ χορτάσας λαὸν έν τῆ ἐρήμφ καὶ ὁμβρήσας αὐτὸν ὕδωρ ἐκ πέτρας καὶ ἐν Κανᾳ τῆς Γαλιλαίας τὸ ὕδωρ εἰς οἶνον μετέβαλες 5 σὰ κύριε τὸν οἴκον τοῦτον στερέωσον τὸν οῖτον πλήθυνον τὸν οἴνον εὐλόγησον καὶ τοὺς ἐγκαλέσαντας ἡμᾶς τοῦ οἴκου τούτου 10 ἀξίωσον κύριε πλούσια τὰ ἑλέη σου:-

According to Mr. Amargianakis, who is a Cretan by birth, 'Ο χορτάσας is hardly sung any more on Crete. But when his father was a young man, it was still used at one specific occasion, namely at wedding dinners - when the married couple had returned from church, before the dinner started.

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Popular tradition has thus preserved a paraliturgical piece of Byzantine Chant, for a more restricted use than formerly, but still sung to an ecclesiastical tune. And this is by no means an isolated case. Thus, among the 38 'quasiliturgical hymns' which Costas A. Ioannides edited in vol.33 of the Κυπριακά Σπουδαί (1969), there are several ones which

must have a similar story. Incidentally, one of them (No.33, an έγκώμιον τοῦ γάμου in political verses) has a structure which reminds us of 'Ο χορτάσας. Also here we find an initial invocation, a reference to the wedding in Κανᾶ τῆς Γαλιλαίας where Christ μετέβαλε τὸ ὕδωρ είς οἶνον, and a series of imperative prayers. According to Ioannides, this encomium was written in 1859; it is not clear to me whether this date concerns the text or the music, or both.

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I have postponed until now an old question which from time to time is put by scholars who are interested in possible relations between Byzantine Chant and Greek folk-song. phrase this question as follows: To what extent have melodic elements of Byzantine Chant been taken over by the people, to be used as elements of non-religious folk music? If I am not mistaken, the harvest of such elements has until now been extremely meagre. In an article on 'The Survival of Byzantine Chant in the Monophonic Music of the Modern Greek Church, 10. Markos Dragoumis has a paragraph on elements of Byzantine Chant in folk music. His results are certainly not very impressive: 'Byzantine melodic formulae', he says, 'are also encountered in some modern Greek folk-songs. Two such examples have already been cited by Tillyard. To these two more may now be added: The initial formula of a love song from the island of Casos ll... and the closing formula of the lament Σήμερα κάστρο χάλασε which is one well-known cadential formula of medieval Stichera in the Protos mode. 12 - I must confess that such comparisons do not impress me any more than the demonstration that the ancient tune which Seikilos copied on his marble column in the second century A.D. has survived in the Gregorian

^{10.} Studies in Eastern Chant I, 1966, pp. 9-36.

^{11.} According to Dragoumis, this formula is 'a slightly expanded version of a formula which occurs in the Byzantine setting of the Sticheron "Ότε τῷ σταυρῷ - and also elsewhere in Byzantine hymnody'.

^{12.} Tillyard's two examples are also cadential formulas, FE ED D and GFE FED D.

Antiphon Hosanna filio David. 13 It may be, of course, that these stray cadential formulas were really taken over from the music of the church - but it strikes me as something of a mystery that such simple melodic lines were considered worth imitating. Can it not be a mere coincidence? I should be much more impressed, if someone could produce from folk-songs clear instances of punctuating melismata (such as the Thematismoi or the Kylisma) or other melodic elements which have a specific and characteristic function in Byzantine Chant.

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The field of research which I have now approached from various points of view, is ill defined and difficult to handle. In a way, the real difficulty may be due to the fact that scholars are specialists. Obviously, the investigation ought to be carried out by ethnomusicologists who are thoroughly familiar with the popular tradition and who - immediately and by instinct - can sort out tunes and traditions which stand apart from non-religious folk-song. If such melodies are inspired by contemporary church music - as for instance the Cretan version of 'Ο χορτάσας - our Greek colleagues are better equipped to do this scholarly research than we are in the nonorthodox West. But as soon as we leave the last two centuries, odds are that most Greek ethnomusicologists will have to rely on the findings of Western scholars. And here the old disagreement between Greek and Western scholars as to the proper understanding of the medieval tradition is still a serious prob-This disagreement must be solved, before a final word can be said about Byzantine Chant in popular tradition - in Byzantine and Metabyzantine and Neobyzantine contexts.

^{13.} The two melodies are compared in Gustave Reese, Music in the Middle Ages, New York 1940, p.115. About Seikilos and the Antiphon, Willi Apel has the following to say (Gregorian Chant, Bloomington 1958, pp.36-37): 'However, in spite of a few striking details, the proof of identity is, on the whole, hardly more convincing than the attempt to derive the melody of God save the King from the Antiphon Unxerunt Salomonem. At any rate, it goes without saying that such an isolated case proves nothing.' The Seikilos stone is now kept in the National Museum in Copenhagen, cf. Egert Pöhlmann, Denkmäler altgriechischer Musik. Nürnberg 1970, pp.54-57. (= Erlanger Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kunstwissenschaft, Band 31).

Example 1: Ὁ χορτάσας λαὸν έν τῆ έρήμφ

A: ἀρχαῖον (Brussels IV,515, 425r)

B: Mpalasios (Copenhagen, Ny Kgl. Saml. 2747,2°,115r)

C: Copenhagen, Ny Kgl. Saml. 4464,4°, 266v.

NB. Main variants, only

A:
$$1 \stackrel{\rightarrow}{\rightarrow} \stackrel{\rightarrow}{\rightarrow} \stackrel{\frown}{O} \stackrel{\frown}{\chi} \stackrel{\rightarrow}{\chi} \stackrel{\rightarrow}{\chi} \stackrel{\frown}{\chi} \stackrel{\frown}{\chi} \stackrel{\rightarrow}{\chi} \stackrel{\rightarrow}{\chi}$$

B and C = A, with trivial variants

B = A

3 και εν κα να της γα λι λαι ας κ c c d e d d cba cba G

> B: και αι ε ε εν κα να της γα λλι ι λαι ας q dcba bcba G bc à d b d c b a

c: γαλ λη λαι αι ας δ΄
 d cb c de f d

B: τω υ υ δωρ a b c b a G

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Ex.1/2
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με τα α βα α λω ω ω ω ω ω ω ων δι c c e cd b c dcb cba cba G

B: με τα βα α λων ω ω ω με ων δ c e cd b c db cba cba G

C: $\mu \in \tau \alpha \beta \alpha \lambda \omega$ G G c b c d b c b a c b a G

5 au tog tov ol nov tou ou tov ote pe w oov of G G bc d c b c ef d a b a G

B: au tov tov ol nov tou ou ou tov G bc d d c b c de f d

C: QU TO OC TOV OL ROV TOU OU TWV
G G ab c d cb c de f d

6 αυ τος τον αρ τον πλη θυ νον δι d d e d a b a G G

B: αυ τος τον αρ τον πλη θυ υ υ υ υ υ νον ος G bc a bc d e cb cd cbc de edcb a

C: αυ τος τον αρ τον πλη θυ νον e d d d a b a G

7 QU TOG TOV OL OL VOV EU AO YN GOV S ab .G bc d f d a ba G G

B: QU TOV (!) TOV OL VOV
G bc a bc d

C: a au tog tov oi oi vov eu lo yn n n n n n oov Gab c d c b cde f d d e cb cdcb c de e dcb a

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Ex. 1/3
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τον υπο δε ξα με νον η μας τι
           και τον υ πο δε ξα με νον η ή ή η μα α με ας
            dccbbaa a c b
           και τον υ πο δε ξα με νον η η μα α με ας δ α ας d c c b b a a a cb a c c b c d fed fed
  μι σθον ου ρα νι ον δω ρη σαι δι
c d d e c b c b a G G
       B: μι σθον ου ρα α νι ον δω ρη σαι δ
d e d d b c a cb cb a G G
       C: μι σθον ου ρα νι ον δω ρη η η η
                                                         σαι
             d dede cbcdcbcdeedcb
        η μα ας παν τας ε λε η η σον δ
          ba G EF GaFE
       B: Mai η η μα α α ας η παν τας
G c c b c d e d e d
           E LE N n GO LE O O O LE OV S
                           ed e b cba cba
           d e cd b c
       C: μαι η μας παν τα ας (etc. = A)
       G b a G E F
α γα θος και φι λαν θρω πος δ
G a b G a G F Ga G G
11 ως
       Β: ως α γα θο ος και φι λαν θρω πος δ
d d d d G a cb cb aG G
       C: ως α γα θω ως (etc. = B)
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After line 11 follow several lines of Teretismata (6 in A, 13 in B, 10 in C), ending in B with the standard Plagios Tetartos intonation; A and C at the end repeat the melodies of their lines 10-11 - in A with a slight variation at the beginning, due to the omission of the first two words of 10.

