

traitors of the Finnish nation and collaborators with the Russians, at least in the popular imagination³⁷⁶. Assisted by the Finnish government, the Finnish Orthodox church turned from Moscow to Constantinople and gained autonomy from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1923.

A new living contact with the Byzantine tradition of Constantinople could have brought new influences into the Finnish church singing. However, in the struggle of the Finnish Orthodox to “Finnicize” their tradition, they did not look for stylistic change but concentrated on translating and publishing more material based on the old St Petersburg harmony.

The first half of the 20th century was particularly unfortunate for the great majority of the Finnish Orthodox who lived in Karelia. As a result of the Second World War and the partition of Karelia between Finland and the Soviet Union in 1944, about 90% of the Finnish Orthodox church’s property, buildings, lands, and also all monasteries, were lost. The Karelian population was evacuated and re-settled all over Finland, in areas that had never known Orthodoxy nor welcomed it. Understandably, in this situation people needed to hold on to the past, their traditional way of church singing and other customs, and not look for change.

PART II: The Future **by Jaakko Olkinuora**

The introduction of Byzantine singing in the church of Finland

It was, however, already in the 1950s that an interest in a renewal of church singing arose. The western scholarship had “found” the Byzantine tradition and the publication of the *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae* (MMB) had begun. This was an inspiration for the Finnish compilers of a new Vigil anthology in 1957:³⁷⁷ for the first time in history, a collection of liturgical singing in Finnish included a Byzantine section, accompanied by a careful description of the style of performing. “The Byzantine melodies unite us in the divine service to sing with the past generations (...). They strengthen in us the feeling of the unity and timelessness of the Church and help us find a true spirit of prayer,” wrote the compiler who was responsible for the Byzantine adaptations into Finnish.³⁷⁸

Unfortunately, these Byzantine *Antiphons* proved too challenging for most singers and

³⁷⁶ The civil war of Finland in 1918 had divided the nation into two parties: the Whites – the land-owning class who wanted to promote Finnishness and Protestant values in the country, and the Reds – the poor working class in towns and countryside, often siding with the Socialist ideas and joined by the Russian soldiers who were still in Finland. Since the Orthodox were often regarded as “Russians”, they were suspected of supporting anti-patriotic values and thus often regarded as enemies. Some Orthodox churches were attacked during the civil war, some priests were threatened, and at least one teacher of Orthodox religion executed among the Reds.

³⁷⁷ *Sunnuntaivigilia kahdeksansävelmistöineen*. OKJ 1957.

³⁷⁸ The name is not mentioned in the publication, but probably it was professor Heikki Kirkinen. He is known to have adapted both Byzantine and Znamenny melodies into Finnish.

generally unattractive – not because they were monodic but because of their transcription which was based on Tillyard's transcription in MMB.³⁷⁹

The MMB transcriptions (which, by the way, were probably adopted in liturgical use only in Finland) were problematic in many ways: for instance, the various accentual symbols were transcribed into staff notation using symbols that could hardly be understood without first learning the system of transcription. These special symbols were used also in the Finnish adaptations. However, the singers did not feel comfortable with them. Moreover, the transcription aimed at a free rhythm. This caused bizarre accentuation of the Finnish language and almost unnatural musical phrases. The adaptation method was partly to blame: the melody was maintained as close to the Greek melody as possible, although the Finnish text greatly differed from the original text in the number of syllables, for example. This eventually led to the misuse of the melodic formulae which were broken into small pieces. This shows that the adaptors did not actually have any knowledge of the Byzantine notation.

**ILLUSTRATION 2: Antiphon
(Anabathmoi), Tone 1. Vigilia 1957.**

The adaptations of Byzantine singing into Finnish in the 1960s-70s did not rise above the attempt with the *Antiphons*. These new adaptations included a *Cherubic hymn*,³⁸⁰ the Resurrectional Canon of the plagal 1st tone³⁸¹ and the *Akathistos* to our Sweetest Jesus³⁸². The origin of the *Akathistos* is a mystery: the text is translated from Slavonic but the melody is claimed to be the Byzantine “plagal 3rd tone”, which does not refer to any Slavic or post-Byzantine melodic tradition. Since the adaptations were made with little knowledge of the system of Byzantine church music or the neumatic notation, it is possible that the *Akathistos* melody was adapted from a MMB transcription of some other liturgical hymn.

The attitudes towards Byzantine music at that time were generally mixed. There were opinions that the MMB transcriptions were unnatural and too difficult to perform.

The image shows a page of a musical score for a liturgical hymn. The title is 'Eukaristia' (Communion) and it is attributed to 'Diakoni' (Deacon) and 'Pappi' (Priest). The score is in Finnish and includes lyrics such as 'Seisokaamme hyvin, seisokaamme pelvossa, ottakaamme vaari, rauhassa uhratkaamme pyhää uhri-a.' and 'Rauhan lau-pe-ut-ta, kii-tos-uh-ri-a.' The score is numbered 59 in the top right corner.

³⁷⁹ One must remember that Tillyard's transcription method was designed for scientific research, not church singing. More about Tillyard's method of transcription, look at H. J. W. Tillyard: *Handbook of the Middle Byzantine Musical Notation*. Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae Subsidia, vol. 1 Fasc. 1. Copenhagen 1935.

³⁸⁰ *Liturgia. Sävelmistö yksi- tai moniäänistä yhteislaulua tai pientä kuoroa varten*. PSHV 1960, 24-6. This Cherubic hymn was also published in the second edition of the "New Liturgy" in 1970, only in a four-part harmonized adaptation.

³⁸¹ This adaptation was created for the 5th national Orthodox Church Singing Festival in Finland.

³⁸² *Viisi akatistoshymniä*. 2nd edition 1981, OKJ, p. 30-32.

On the other hand, the “Greek neo-Byzantine” chant was, particularly in the MMB circles, regarded as dubious since it had become too “Turkish” and “oriental”.

However, the intention behind the Finnish adaptations was sincere, and also very pragmatic. One of the main leaders in the renewal campaign of church singing in Finland at that time was Archbishop Paul, formerly a singer monk from the Valaam monastery, who understood the hidden treasure of Orthodox hymnography and the Byzantine and Znamenny traditions. His musical ideas were in accordance with the general liturgical awakening in the Finnish Orthodox church – influenced by liturgical theologians such as Alexander Schmemmann – emphasizing that the divine service was a declaration of unity, a joint participation of the congregation as well as the clergy, and a dynamic tradition drawing on ancient sources.

The New Liturgy

A major attempt in this campaign was the compiling of a new Liturgy anthology as a part of the “back to the roots” orientation in liturgical theology. The melodies are based on the *Oxyrynchus* MS (transcribed by Egon Wellesz), Byzantine, Bulgarian-Byzantine and old Slavonic melodies or their fragments.³⁸³ Some of the melodies have their origin in private recordings made in the Ecumenical patriarchate.³⁸⁴ The Bulgarian-Byzantine melodies can be found already harmonized in a Bulgarian liturgical anthology.³⁸⁵ The *New Liturgy* was published in 1964 and actively promoted by Archbishop Paul during his lifetime.³⁸⁶ It is written in four-part harmony but its style differs from the St Petersburg tradition. In the course of harmonization, some of the Byzantine scales have lost their character, and usually *elkseis* - the attraction of voices - is omitted totally.

After its introduction in liturgical use, the *New Liturgy* got some very positive feedback. It was described as “simple” and “still very challenging”.³⁸⁷ Musicologist Johann von Gardner heard the liturgy on a recording and was very impressed. He described the music as very liturgical and even claimed that archbishop Paul has solved the problem of the musical form of the Finnish Orthodox Liturgy.³⁸⁸ Some negative feedback was also given, but it was mainly emotionally inspired – for example the *New Liturgy* was criticized, for instance, for introducing melodies that were not “Karelian enough”: instead of the Byzantine melodies, Archbishop Paul should have used the “1000 years old Finnish church music tradition”.³⁸⁹ This argument, of course, has no historical foundation. The *New Liturgy* has also been criticized for its excessive use of the sixth-

³⁸³ *Eukaristia liturgiasävelmistö*. 1st edition 1964, 2nd edition OKJ 1970.

³⁸⁴ These recordings were made by professor Heikki Kirkinen. They are at the moment situated in the Regional Archives of North Karelia, Joensuu, Finland.

³⁸⁵ *Sbornik carkovni pesnopenija za triglasen hor*, published by Petar Dinev in 1955. We are grateful for the help of professor Stefan Harkov, University of Shumen, in tracing the sources of these Finnish adaptations.

³⁸⁶ Later, this Liturgy has been published also in English (*The Eucharistic Liturgy*. OKJ, 1980 Kuopio). The *New Liturgy* has also been recorded twice: by the cathedral choir of Kuopio, 1970, and by the choir of the parish of Ilomantsi, 1997.

³⁸⁷ *Aamun Koitto* nr 18/1965, 205.

³⁸⁸ The archives of Archbishop Paul, folder 34, 1954 – 1986.

³⁸⁹ AK 2/1969, 17-18.

based harmony, making it monotonous. Instead, a monodic or two-part version of the Liturgy would have been preferred.³⁹⁰

The “neo-Byzantine” chant discovered

The second half of the 20th century saw some cultural exchange between the Finnish and Byzantine cultures. The problems of the MMB transcriptions were already recognized in the early 1970s, when Archbishop Paul participated in a symposium of Byzantine music in Greece.³⁹¹ He then realized that the Greeks disagreed with the MMB researchers and were at the moment starting their own scientific research of the Byzantine musical MSS.³⁹² Another living contact with the Greek Byzantine tradition was established by Hilikka Seppälä, the future professor of Orthodox church music in the University of Joensuu, who studied the Byzantine chant in Athens in the 1970s.

ILLUSTRATION 3: Eucharistic Canon. New Liturgy 1964.

As a result of these cultural exchange, the concept of Byzantine church music changed in Finland. The MMB transcriptions were replaced by adaptations of the contemporary Byzantine chant that was used in Greece. Among these adaptations were, for instance, *Kekragarion* (1st mode), *Great Doxology* (plagal 4th mode) and *Paschal Troparion* (plagal 1st mode).³⁹³ The melodies were taken from recordings and from the Greek transcriptions of the Byzantine chant – still, however, the adaptors knew nothing of the Byzantine notation. Consequently, the melodic formulae were broken and the use of *elkseis* was improvised and often incorrect.

Some Finnish theologians also studied in the Holy Cross seminary in Boston, USA. The introduction of the

ANTIFONIT
Bysanttilaiset sävelmät

I. sävelmä

Ah-dis-tuk-ses-sa-ni mi-nä huu-dan si-nu-a, Her-ra, kuu-le mi-nu-a, kun o-len vai-van al-la. E-ra-kois-sa, jot-ka e-lä-vät vie-rai-na maa-il-man tur-huu-del-le he-rää lak-kaa-ma-ton kai-puu ju-ma-lal-li-seen. Py-häl-le Hen-gel-le kuu-luu kun-ni-a ja y-lis-tys niin kuin I-säl-le Po-jan kans-sa. Kol-mi-nai-suu-den yk-sin-val-ti-ut-ta sen täh-den

³⁹⁰ Lehto, Jarmo: *Kiitetty ja kiistelty kirkkomuusikko. Ollos iäti muistettu arkkipiispamme Paavali*. WSOY. Porvoo 1989.

³⁹¹ Karjalainen, *Arkkipiispa Paavali – legenda jo eläessään* 1973, 145.

³⁹² This probably refers to the systematic catalogue of the Athonite MSS, compiled by professor Gregorios Stathes.

³⁹³ These adaptations have never been published, but some of the adaptors are known: Archbishop Paul, cantor Jyrki Härkönen and cantor Jarmo Lehto.

Holy Cross Liturgy Hymnal in Finland inspired some experimental Byzantine chant transcriptions and adaptations into Finnish but, again, their melodic formulae were violated.

The study of Byzantine chant in Finland

Professor Hilikka Seppälä was the Finnish pioneer of studying the Byzantine chant in Greece. She also became the first person in Finland to write a doctoral dissertation on the field of Byzantine church music in 1981.³⁹⁴ Her influence on the study of Byzantine chant in Finland has been remarkable. She became the professor of Orthodox Church Music in the department of Orthodox Theology in the University of Joensuu in the early 1990s. The theology and history of the Byzantine chant were included in the curriculum of the students of church music, and also the Byzantine notation was first offered as an optional course; nowadays it is obligatory. Professor Seppälä's research on the theory and theology of the Byzantine tradition provides valuable insights into the research of church music.³⁹⁵

In 2007, the first theoretical treatise of the Byzantine chant in Finnish, *Avain bysanttilaisen laulun maailmaan*, "The Key into the World of the Byzantine Chant", written by Hilikka Seppälä and myself (Jaakko Olkinuora) was published.³⁹⁶ The book consists of three parts: the first part discusses the history of the Byzantine notations. The second part is a practical manual of the Byzantine chant in Finnish with a CD containing the exercises. The third part is a translation of the *Eisagoge* by Archimandrite Chrysanthos.³⁹⁷ This guide to the Byzantine semiography hopefully increases the knowledge of Byzantine notation in Finland.

The contemporary practice of the Byzantine chant in Finland

In the late 20th century, the highest standard of Byzantine chanting in Finland was represented by the Constantinopolitan Archon Protopsaltes Nikolaos Nikolaides (1943-2006), the first-chanter of the Greek cathedral of Stockholm, Sweden. He frequently visited Finland and performed and taught the Byzantine chant in many institutes.³⁹⁸ The culmination of his work was the first publication ever to use the Byzantine notation with the Finnish language: a Liturgy composed by Nikolaides himself. The publication included the double-notated music for the Liturgy in the 1st Tone and a cassette of its performance. Despite the publicity received by the composition, it did not spread into wider use in the Finnish Orthodox Church.

Apart from Nikolaides, Byzantine influences have spread to Finland also directly from Greece and also from other countries. Worldwide, the Byzantine chant has

³⁹⁴ Seppälä, *Bysanttilaiset ekhokset ja ortodoksinen kirkkolaulu Suomessa*. Diss. Acta Musicologica Fennica 13, Suomen Musiikkiteollinen Seura 1981.

³⁹⁵ These include approximately 10 publications.

³⁹⁶ Jaakko Olkinuora & Hilikka Seppälä: *Avain bysanttilaisen laulun maailmaan*. Publications of Orthodox Theology in the University of Joensuu, n. 39. Joensuu 2007.

³⁹⁷ Χρυσάνθου ἐκ Μαδυτῶν, Εἰσαγωγή εἰς τὸ Θεωρητικὸν ἐκκλησιαστικῆς μουσικῆς. Συνταχθεῖσα πρὸς χρήσιν σπουδαζόντων αὐτὴν παρὰ Χρυσάνθου ἐκ Μαδυτῶν. Διδασκάλου τοῦ Θεωρητικοῦ τῆς Μουσικῆς. Ἐν Παρισίοις Ἐκ τῆς τυπογραφίας ΠΙΓΝΙΟΥ 1821, Ἀθῆναι 1977. 1. Ἐκδόσεις Γκαλέρι "Κουλτούρα".

³⁹⁸ About Nikolaos Nikolaides, see Seppälä, *Bysantin kirkkolaulusta ja sen taitajista*, University of Joensuu 2005, 44-54. See also www.isocm.com → News → Protopsaltes Nikolaos Nikolaides 1943-2006.

experienced a rise in popularity, which is demonstrated, for example, by the number of adaptations made into languages other than Greek. The work of Priestmonk Ephraim in St. Anthony's monastery in Arizona, USA, in particular, which includes the study of the adaptation methods and the melodic formulae, has also encouraged us in Finland. The introduction of the Byzantine chant in Finnish as adapted, composed and performed by Finns began with the founding of an ensemble called *Ortofonia*. I am personally in charge of this ensemble and its singing material. Our first CD was published in 2006, including adaptations of Byzantine composition into Finnish, and the second CD, including compositions directly into the Finnish language, was published this year, in 2007.³⁹⁹ These CDs have become quite popular in Finland and made Byzantine chanting more familiar among the Finns. This aim is also shared by the Finnish Society of Byzantine Music which was founded in January 2007. The future activities in the field of Finnish Byzantine singing include the publication of the *Anastasimatarion* by Ioannes Protopsaltes in Finnish and the metrical translation of the *Small Paraklesis* service, which will also be published as a CD performed by Ortofonia.

The challenges of adapting the Byzantine chant into Finnish

What, then, are the challenges of adapting the Byzantine chant into Finnish? The problems are various: the translations, the adaptations of the existing independent melodies and the problems of the practice of Byzantine music.

All the liturgical texts of the year have been translated into Finnish, but some of them are still waiting for their official approval and publication. These translations do not follow the Greek metre (or any metre) and thus they make the use of the Byzantine *prosomoia* system impossible. It is worth evaluating whether it would be useful to create new metrical translations – such as have been made, for example, in the US⁴⁰⁰ – or whether each hymn should be composed separately. Another solution to this question would be the improvisation of the *prosomoia* melodies on the basis of the original melodies. This system is used by the Romanians, for example. In my opinion, however, the revision and “metrification” of the Finnish liturgical texts can be seen as a potential option, since, on the basis of the already existing translations, it would not prove too difficult or time-consuming.

When adapting the already existing independent Byzantine melodies into Finnish, one should naturally take into account the formulaic rules of the Byzantine chant. The Finnish language is a challenge for the adaptor, since the word stress is always situated on the first syllable of the word: in Greek, the stress is always on one of the three last syllables. Thus, some formulae beginning with non-stressed or ending with stressed syllables cannot be used in Finnish. Another challenge for the adaptor is the quantity of vowels: in the modern Greek pronunciation (which the Byzantine chant uses) the vowel quantity makes no difference, whereas in Finnish, the meaning of the word depends on the length of each vowel. However, these are only problems of adaptation and they can be solved in time. The development of the Finnish Byzantine chant depends mostly on other factors which cannot be ignored.

³⁹⁹ Ortofonia: *Pyhä Pyhä Pyhä* (2006), *Armon hedelmä* (2007), published by Gaudior ry.

⁴⁰⁰ Metrical translations have been made, for example, by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery and Fr Seraphim Dedes.

Conclusion

The promotion of the Byzantine chant in Finland in the 20th century was characterized by certain amateurism: the adaptations were made without adequate knowledge of theory or notation and, most importantly, apart from the visits of Protopsaltes Nikolaos Nikolaides, there were no singers who could have passed on the tradition of performance by their own example. Nevertheless, there was genuine interest in “returning” to the Byzantine sources. Now, in the 21st century, we have more knowledge: we have translations of theoretical works, manuals, adaptations made in accordance with the living tradition of Byzantine chanting, and numerous recordings and also actual contacts with singers all over the Byzantine world. The “return” is beginning to look possible – or is it?

As earlier mentioned, the Finnish church singing practice is based on the use of the choir singing in four-part harmony. These church choirs consist mostly of amateur singers, often elderly people who are understandably conservative with respect to church music. The introduction of the Byzantine chant would undoubtedly mean the replacement of these singers by a few trained chanters, since the challenge of learning the Byzantine notation and the musical scales would be too great for them. It is thus a very delicate matter and requires patience and good timing. Moreover, another challenge is still the relatively poor knowledge of the neumatic notation and the theory of the Byzantine chant. Much more education would be needed to create a generation of Finnish *psaltai* to perform the Finnish Byzantine chant in our churches.

The promotion of the Byzantine chant in Finland is also a matter of cultivating the public opinion. The need for change is recognized by many – including the clergy, the lay parishioners and the church musicians – but only few are ready to take up action. There is a fear of distancing the old church-goers from the church by introducing something completely new, especially as the Byzantine chant is regarded by some as too “oriental” and not suitable for the Finnish mentality. The concept of church music has in many occasions been reduced to a matter of taste – and for those favouring the “ancient Finnish tradition”, i.e. the 19th century St Petersburg style, the Byzantine chant appears as a genuine threat. The fear of change is, of course, understandable, but maintaining the status quo in church singing is no solution, either.

Traditions never change in a moment, nor should the change be promoted too fanatically. The answer lies in long-term education, sharing the information and showing by concrete examples that the Finnish Byzantine chant is an option which could help revive the spiritual quality of our church music. We do not aim at replacing the whole existing repertoire of the Finnish church music but we hope to guide the musical culture in our church closer to the older traditions, also to the Byzantine musical heritage – “back to its sources”.