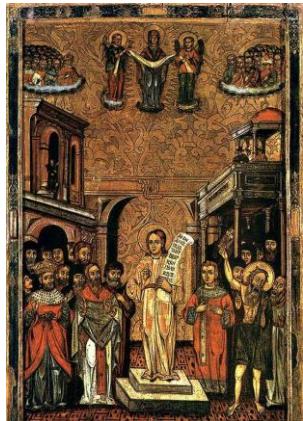


Romanos the Melodist and One of the Earliest Examples of Byzantine Hymnography

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Abstract: The paper deals with the old Georgian translation of the “Kontakion” – “Adam’s Lament” (“The Lost Paradise”) which is recognized as one of the earliest examples of Byzantine hymnography. This hymn is considered a predecessor of Romanos the Melodist and his school. According to the old Georgian sources, the author of this hymn is a founder of Byzantine hymnography – Romanos the Melodist.

Key words: *Romanos the Melodist, Kontakion, “The Lost Paradise”, Georgian hymnography.*

Romanos the Melodist occupies a distinctive place in the history of hymnography. He is considered a founder of Byzantine hymnography, whose creative work has greatly influenced the development of medieval Christian poetry. Numerous scholarly publications and researches were devoted to Romanos the Melodist's life and creative activity.

According to Professor K. Krumbacher “the future will perhaps acclaim Romanos for the greatest poet of all ages” [8, s. 336]. This idea has been strengthened at the subsequent stages of the study of Romanos work. Romanos is considered “the greatest of the Byzantine poets” [12, p. 3].

There is scanty information on Romanos Melodos' life. He was born at the end of the 5th century, in Syria. Romanos was ordained a deacon in the Church of the Resurrection in Beirut. The following relatively well-known period of his life is connected to Constantinople, where he went during the reign of the emperor Anastasius I (491-518). Romanos had to work in the period of three emperors Anastasius I, Justinian I and

Justinian the Great. His works reflect acute dogmatic and polemical issues characteristic of that epoch [19, p. 177-178].

The introduction of new poetic form – “kontakion” is associated with the name of Romanos in the Byzantine hymnography.

“Kontakion” consists from 18 to 30 or sometimes more troparia, which are structurally similar to each other. “Kontakion” is composed of a different number of strophes (3 to 30). It starts with a short troparion that is metrically independent from it. This is so-called “proomion” or “kukulion” – a kind of introduction which renders the goal of creating a hymn. Each troparion contains a refrain. “Kontakion”, as a rule, contains different types of acrostics [9].

Romanos composed more than 1000 hymns, of which 89 hymns have survived (in a full or fragmented form), 79 of them contain an acrostic of the author’s name [5, p. 20].

Romanos’ hymns seem to have been translated in Georgian earlier. Separate issues of his creativity are considered in Georgian scholarly literature. Nevertheless, Georgian translations of Romanos Melodos’ hymns have not yet been fully revealed and extensively studied.

Our special monograph will be dedicated to Georgian translations of the hymns of Romanos Melodos.

As shown by the study, the hymns of poetic form (“kontakion” or “ibakon”) introduced by Romanos appeared in Georgian hymnography as early as VII century. The ancient liturgical-hymnographical collection – “Jerusalemite Lectio-nary” contains the unsigned “ibakoi” on archaic liturgical period of the liturgical year – in the Holy Week [3]. Similar types of hymns enter untitled in “New Tropologion” [15] and Sin. 5 (1052) / Sin.75 (XI c.) manuscripts.

For the study of Romanos Melodos’ creativity and Georgian translations of his hymns of particular importance is universal liturgical - hymnographical collection – “Lenten Triodion” composed by George the Athonite (1009 – 1065), the great authority of Georgian Church, distinguished figure and translator, the saint of the Greek and Georgian churches. The manuscript – Paris. Georgica 5, which is of autographical significance, is protected in the National Library of Paris and contains “Lenten Triodion” under George the Athonite’s redaction [10, pp. 59-74].

Characteristic feature for this manuscript, as well as for George the Athonite’s works in general, is great accuracy in attributing the authors of the hymns and their restoration in original form. In the enormous hymnographical repertoire, in conditions of a large number of manuscripts and testimonies, a great work done in identification of the lost and forgotten in the course of time authors, is one of the main features of George the Athonite’s creativity. A number of examples of this have been revealed by the study of “Menaion” and “Lenten Triodion” composed by him [10, pp. 69-72; 2, p. 18].

In the “Lenten Triodion” composed by him the authors are often indicted not only on completed the hymns but also on the separate segments of the compiled hymns. Perfect knowledge of old Georgian translations, on the one hand and modern Greek sources, on the other hand, gave him this opportunity.

“Lenten Triodion” under George the Athonite’s redaction is much more extensive than its contemporary Greek “Triodions”. The Comparison with the publications of Greek and Slavonic “Lenten Triodions” and the famous Greek-Slavonic manuscripts show that “Triodion” under George the Athonite’s redaction is a unique collection that had no analog in Greece and Georgia. The testimony of George the Athonite himself confirms the principles, style and methodology of his translation work.

In the “Lenten Triodion” under George the Athonite’s redaction, numerous hymns of 14 Byzantine hymnographers are preserved with the reference to the authors. Among them is Romanos the Melodist [10, pp. 72-73].

In the manuscript – Paris 5 containing the “Lenten Triodion” under George the Athonite’s redaction, 9 small form hymns appeared to bear the name of Romanos. Each of them had an inscription “ibakon.” Romanos’ “ibakon” is set on the following days:

Cheese fare Sunday, First Friday, Fourth Thursday, Fourth Friday, Great Monday, Great Tuesday, Great Wednesday, Great Thursday, Great Friday and Great Saturday. According to George the Athonite’s work rules, at the begining of each of them the author – “Romanos” is ascribed.

The comparison of “Lenten Triodion” – Paris 5 with previous Georgian manuscripts evidences that Georgian translation of these hymns belongs to George the Athonite himself. Apparently, his name is connected with the introduction of the whole cycle of the hymns of Romanos the Melodist in Georgian hymnography.

The structure of these hymns of Romanos included in Paris 5 deserves attention. In scholarly literature it is noted that in the course of time the length of “kontakia” occurred. The example of it is the “Patmos Kontakarion”, which is one of the oldest and distinctive manuscripts for studying Romanos’s works. Grosdidier de Matons dates the manuscript to the 11th century [5, p. 70]. This manuscript was specially studied by T. Arenzen and D. Krueger [1], who observed that the “kontakia” began to be truncated from the 10th century.

Romanos’ hymns are also represented in an abbreviated form in the “Patmos Kontakarion”. Reduction of Romanos’ extensive “kontakia” must have had practical liturgical purpose.

Georgian manuscripts, particularly, in the “Lenten Triodion” under George the Athonite redaction as well as in Sin. 5 (1052)/Sin. 75 (11thc.) manuscripts and Sinaitic Collection of

“New Tropologions” reflect just this period of the evolution of kontakia.

Romanos wrote the hymns for the entire liturgical year, on great ecclesiastical feasts and about the saints. In *Lenten Triodion* under George the Athonite redaction an appropriate “liturgical context” is found to Romanos’ kontakia which must be derived from Greek tradition. Thus, for example, interesting for us hymn – *Adam’s Lament* is set on Cheesefare Sunday which is dedicated to *Adam’s expulsion*. The hymn presents the expulsion of Adam from Paradise with great dramatization. This kontakion is considered the earliest example of the *lamentation genre* in theological poetry. It is noteworthy that this hymn included in the *Lenten Triodion* on the Cheesefare Sunday – directly before the start of the Lent in remembrance of the tragedy of the Fall. On the fourth Thursday of the Lent – the Glory of the Cross, the hymn of Romanos the Melodist created on the theme of Cross is set, etc.

The paper presents the Georgian version Romanos’ short size hymn – “ibakon” included in Paris 5 manuscript, which is set on Cheesefare Sunday and devoted to “Adam’s expulsion”. At the beginning of the hymn the name of the author–Romanos is indicated. The hymn consists of 7 troparia. Georgian translation of this hymn is published in Georgian version of the present paper.

The recent scholarly edition of Romanos’ works belongs to Grossidier de Matons. This edition contains the authentic texts of hymns attributed to Romanos known for today [4].

This hymn is not included in this publication because Romanos is not considered its author.

This hymn is not included in the works of P. Maas and C. A. Trypanis either [12].

Its text is published by P. Maas under the title “Das Verlorene Paradies” [11, ss. 18-20]. The “kontakion” is anonymous in this edition.

In P. Maas’s edition, the hymn has acrostics and consists of 23 troparia. The first troparion is a “poomion” and it is not included in acrostics.

In P. Maas’s view, the unknown author of this hymn lived earlier than Romanos.

This “kontakion” is regarded as one of the “oldest ancestors” of Romanos and his school [11; 7, p. 14].

According to the “Lenten Triodion” under George the Athonite’s redaction, the author of this oldest hymn who was considered a predecessor of Romanos and his school is Romanos himself. At the same time, the manuscript preserves the old Georgian translation of the hymn, which consists of 7 troparia.

The comparison of the Georgian translation with the text published by Maas shows that the similarity is obvious, but this is not an exact, a word-for-word translation of this text. In the Georgian translation, the troparia of a hymn are more extensive and artistically perfect. George the Athonite seems to

have had just such Greek original at hand. This must be a reflection of Medieval Byzantine tradition of the mid 11th century. The structure and metric dimension of the Georgian translation of the hymn must reflect the same tradition.

The first troparion of the Georgian translation of this hymn undoubtedly represents the “poomion” or the prologue strophe which is evidenced by the following: 1) The last two lines, with a little difference, are repeated in the rest troparia; 2) The “prooimion” is of different content. It starts with a prayer of supplication to the Savior, where he begs to give him the “gift of a word” – the inspiration for writing a hymn.

Adam’s expulsion from the paradise is presented in the hymn with dramatization characteristic to Romanos. Mourning is even more aggravated by the angel who slammed and “banned” the gates of Paradise.

The scholarly literature marks the dialogue form characteristic of Romanos’ hymns. It is so in this hymn too. In the 4th troparion of the hymn, Adam appeals to Paradise and asks for help. This is one of the most emotional passages of the hymn.

The next (V) troparion also represents an appeal to Paradise and here comes the theme of the Holy Scripture. cf.: Genesis 3: 18. In the following (VI) troparion of the hymn the paraphrase of the corresponding section of the Holy Scripture is given: cf. Genesis 2, 17.

The refrain characteristic of the “kontakia” is repeated in every troparion of the hymn. It is interesting to note that the last troparion of the hymn generalization occurs and the supplication is expressed not only on behalf of Adam but of the mankind.

In the manuscript Paris 5, the hymn is referred to as “ibakoi” and is set on the Tone 8 and the Hirmos is also indicated: “Don’t be excluded”.

It is interesting that the same Tone and the same Hirmos are often indicated at other “ibakoi” of Romanos preserved in the “Lenten Triodion” under George the Athonite’s redaction.

As a rule, in Paris 5 the Hirmoi are indicated at the beginnings of “ibakoi” – the hymns having an inscription with the name of Romanos. This fact attracts attention, because by the time of Romanos’ activity the metre based on the correspondence of Hirmoi – troparia had not yet existed.

Today it is difficult to say when and by whom the “arrangement” of Romanos’ kontakia according to this new rule occurred. It is noteworthy that the “Patmos kontakarion” which also dates to XI century, Romanos’ “kontakia” in the same rule are set on Hirmoi metres [1].

As it was obvious from the comparison with previous manuscripts, the arrangement of Romanos’s kontakions according to the new rule – putting on the Hirmoi – is attested

for the first time in Georgian hymnography in the manuscripts under George the Athonite's redaction.

The strict observance of rhythmic and melodic signs of the hymns, which was associated with great difficulties, is one more peculiarity of George the Athonite's working method. As it turned out, he did a special work from the viewpoint of establishing the texts and signs of rhythmic division of the hymns written by Georgian hymnographer Ioane Minchkh included in "Triodion" [10, p. 79].

He seems to have done similar work with the Georgian translations of numerous hymns translated from Greek included in "Lenten Triodion". An example of this is Romanos Melodist's hymn under consideration. At the beginning of the hymn, in accordance with the rule, Hirmos – "Don't be excluded" is indicated. In the seventh troparion of the hymn the signs of rhythmic division are correctly indicated. Not only "ikoses" are subjugated to this dimension but also the first troparion – "prooimion" which has different size in ordinary "kontakia".

Thus, the translation of this hymn is of special interest also from the viewpoint of the study of its rhythm and melody.

This hymn of Romanos the Melodist appeared to be included in the existing publications of the Greek and Slavic "Lenten Triodions" [18, p. 105; c. 140-141]. Here, the hymn is also performed on Cheesefare Sunday, and it is not presented separately but included after the 6th ode of the Hymnographical Canon of Christopher the Protosecret.

In these publications of Greek and Slavic "Lenten Triodions", this hymn of Romanos is included without ascribing the name, in the same way as the majority of short size hymns. At the first troparion of the hymn ("The teacher of the ignorant and giver of wisdom"), "kondak" is written and at the rest troparia – "Ikoses". There is also difference in the hymn structure: in the "Lenten Triodion" under George the Athonite's redaction the hymn contains 7 troparia, and in Greek and Slavic "Lenten Triodions" – 5: the 5th and the 6th troparions lacking.

The publications of Greek and Slavic "Lenten Triodions" are based on the late tradition of manuscripts, and the "Lenten Triodion" under George the Athonite's redaction is compiled in the 11th century, on the Black Mountain, one of the most powerful centers of the Christian culture of that time by the person, who at the same time, labored on Athos and was thoroughly familiar with modern Byzantine tradition.

According to the testimony of "Lenten Triodion" under George the Athonite's redaction the author of this anonymous hymn which recognized as one of the earliest examples of Byzantine hymnography is Romanos the Melodist.

Thus, the considered hymn once again testifies to the unique significance of the old Georgian translations in the study of creative activity of even such a well-known author, the founder of Byzantine hymnography as Romanos the Melodist.

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DAS VERLORENE PARADIES

Akrostichis: εἰς τὸν προτόπλαστον (sic) ||'Αδάμ.||
 ἴχος πλάγιος β'
 ἰδιόμελα

Τῆς σοφίας ὁδηγέ,
 φρονήσεως χορηγέ,
τῶν ἀφρόγων παιδευτά
 καὶ πτωχῶν ὑπερασπιστά,
στήριξον συνέτισον
 την καρδίαν μου δέσποτα.

συ δίδου μοι λόγον δ τον πατρός λόγος·
5 ιδού γαρ τα χειλή μου οὐ κωλύσω ἐν τῷ κράτειν σοι·
ἔλειμον ἔλέγον τὸν παραπεσόντα.

α' Ἐκάθισεν Ἀδάμ τὸτε καὶ ἔλλαυσεν ἀπέναντι
τῆς τρυφῆς του παραδείσου γερσί τύπτων τας ὄψεις
καὶ ἔλεγεν· /: Ἐλείμον ἔλέγον τὸν παρα-
πεσόντα:/

β' Ἰδών Ἀδάμ τον ἄγγελον ὀθίσαντα καὶ κλίσαντα
τηγ του θείου κήπου θύραν ἀνεστέναξε μέγα
καὶ ἔλεγεν· /: Ἐλείμον . . .:/

γ' Συνάλγησον παράδεισε τῷ κτήτορι πτωχεύσαντι
καὶ τῷ ἥχῳ σου των ψύλλων ἵκετευσον τον πλάστην,
μη κλείσῃ σε· /: Ἐλείμον . . .:/

δ' Τα δένδρα σου κατάκαμφον ὡς ἔμψυχα καὶ πρόσ-
πεσον
τῷ κλειδούχῳ, ἵνα οῦτως μείνῃς ἀνεῳγμένος
τῷ κράτοντι· /: Ἐλείμον . . .:/

ε' Ὁσφραίνομαι του κάλλους σου καὶ τίκομαι μην-
σκόμενος,
πως ἐν τούτῳ ηὑφρανόμην ἀπὸ τῆς εὐσομίας
των ἀνθέων· /: Ἐλείμον . . .:/

ζ' Νον ἔμαθον ἀ ἔπαινον, νον ἔγνωκα ἀ εἴπε μοι
ὅ θεός ἐν παραδείσῳ, δτι Εὔαν λαμβάνον
λανθάνεις με /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ζ' Παράδεισε πανάρτε πανάγιε πανόλβιε,
δι' Ἀδάμ πεφυτευμένε, δι' Εύαν πεκλεισμένε,
πιως κλαύσω σε; /:έλεγμον . . .:/

η' 'Ρερύπωμαι, ἡφάνισμαι, δεδούλωμαι τοις δούλοις μου.
ερπετά γαρ και θηρία, ἀ ὑπέταξα φόβῳ,
πτοούσι με' /:έλεγμον . . .:/

θ' Οὐχέτι μοι τα ἄνθεα προσάγουσιν ἀπόλαυσιν,
ἄλλ' ἀκάνθις και τριβόλους ἡ γῆ μοι ἀνατέλλει,
οὐ πρόσοδον. /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ι' Τηγ τράπεζαν την ἄμοχον κατέστρεψα θελήματι
και λοιπόν ἐν τῷ ἰδρώτι τον προσώπου μου ἐσθίω
τον ἄρτον μου. /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ια' 'Ο λάρυγξ μου, ὃν ἔδυναν τα γάματα τα δγια,
ἐπικράνθη ἀπο πλήθους των ἀναστεγαγμών μου,
βοώντος μου. /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ιβ' Πιως ἔπεια; πιως ἔφιασα; ἐκ βήματος εἰς ἔδαφος
ἀπο θείας νονθείας εἰς ἀθλιαν οὐσιαν
κατήντησα. /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ιγ' Λοιπόν Σατόν ἀγάλλεσται γυμνώσας με της δόξης μου.
ἄλλ' οὐ χαίρεσται ἐν τούτῳ· ἴδοι γαρ ὁ θεός μου
ἐνδύει με. /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ιδ' Αὐτός θεός οἰκτείρας μου την γέμινωσιν ἐνδέει με·
δια τούτο μοι δεικνύει, διτι και παραβάντος
φροντίζει μου· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ιε' Σημαίνει μοι το ἔνδυμα την μέλλονταν κατάστασιν·
ο γαρ ἄρτι με ἐνδύσας μετ' ὀλίγον φορεί με
και σώει με· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ιζ' Ταχύ 'Αδάμ έγνωρισας το θέλημα των σπλάγχ-
νων μου·
δια τούτο οδ στερώ σε της ἐλπίδος σου ταύτης
κραυγάζοντα· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ιζ' Οδ θέλω ούδε βούλομαι τον θάνατον οδ ἔπλασα·
σωφρονίσας δε μετρίως αἰωνίως δοξάσω
τον κράζοντα· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

ιη' Νον ούν σωτήρ κάμε σώσου τον πόθῳ με ζη-
τούντα σε·
έγὼ κλέψαι σε ού θέλω, κλαπήγαι δέ σοι θέλω
και κράζειν σοι· /:έλεγμον έλέησον τον παρα-
πεσόντα· /

Ιω' Ανείκαστε πανάγιε πανάχραντε ἐπίβλεψον
οὐρανόθεν ὡς εύσπλαγχνος και σώζον με ἀναξίως
κραυγάζοντα· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

Αιέγειρον προς αῖνσιν το φρόνημα, ἀνάστηρον
τον ἐν κλίνῃ κατακείμενον, ὡς ἀναξίως σώτερ
κραυγάζει σοι· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

Αγάστηθι συνίστησον φιλάνθρωπε τον πταίσαντα
νυν ἀσώτως ἐν τῷ βίᾳ· προσέγγισον μοι σώτερ
τῷ κράζοντι· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

Μονάς τριάς ἀχώριστε ἀμέριστε πρεσβείας τῆς
θεοτόκου οἰκτείρησόν με και πάριδε ἀμαρτίας
των κραζόντων· /:έλεγμον . . .:/

