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GEORGIAN UNPITCHED MUSICAL NOTATION IN THE 10TH CENTURY YELI TROPOLOGION

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Abstract: *The Historical and Ethnographic Museum of Mestia houses a unique Georgian manuscript, the Yeli Iadgari (Tropologion of Yeli). This 10th-century hymnographic collection, written on parchment, features unpitched musical notation. The notational signs appear on folios 5v - 22v of the manuscript, including hymns for the Heirmoi and Theotokia.*

Despite its significance, the manuscript and the neumatic notation system it contains have yet to be studied scientifically by a musicologist. The Yeli Tropologion belongs to the group of Great Yadgaris, which also includes Mikael Modrekili's Yadgari, a well-known source for studying Georgian medieval neumatic notation.

This paper presents the initial results of a comparative study of the musical notation systems found in two different manuscripts from the same period. The introduction of this new source into scholarly circulation opens exciting prospects for the study of ancient musical notation. The research is supported by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia, under the leadership of Prof. Tamar Chkheidze, as part of the Fundamental Research Grants program (No. FR-22-7504) titled "Holy Week Chants in Georgian Church Tradition." The study was presented in Granada, at the Annual International Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference (MEDREN-2024).

Keywords: *Georgian chant, Unpitched notation, Tropologion of Yeli, Heirmoi, Theotokia.*

It is known that materials about the musical aspect of the chants of the Middle Ages are rare, and most of the primary sources of this content belong to the 19th-20th centuries. The notated manuscripts depicting the musical side of the hymns belong to the last and previous centuries. The opinion is shared among the local and international musicological space that the hymns transferred to the European system reflect the ancient, medieval tradition. The tradition was firmly preserved in the binary form of oral-written transmission by the Georgian Church, and at this time, it was only fixed.

In the paper, I will not discuss the origin of the chants transmitted to the score, their archaic nature, or the argumentation of the systematicity and continuity of the tradition of chanting art. These issues are substantiated among previous generations of scientists, as well as in my colleagues' and my work¹.

¹ The study of Georgian unpitched notation and the continuity of oral-written chanting traditions is explored in the works of Georgian musicologists. [please see: 1,2,3,4;5;6;7;8; 20;21;22;23].

The paper is dedicated to the peculiarities of Georgian musical writing of the Middle Ages². In particular, the paper presents the first research results on the musical signs revealed in the 10th-century Georgian manuscript - *Yeli Tropologion*. The manuscript has not been the subject of scientific study by musicologists until now³. The entry of a new source into the scientific circulation created new perspectives for studying ancient musical writing.

The discussed manuscript is preserved at the Historical Ethnographic Museum of Mestia (Svaneti⁴), Georgia. The research was carried out in the framework of the grant project "Passion Week Hymns in the Georgian Liturgical Tradition" supported by the Shota Rustaveli Scientific Foundation of Georgia. During the scientific expedition carried out within the project, we made digital copies of the manuscript and gave them to the museum as a gift. As a result of digitalization, our research process turned out to be more effective⁵.

This unique Georgian manuscript of the 10th century is known among the Georgian scientific circle as "Yeli Iadgari". It is a hymnographic collection performed on parchment. The manuscript is not completely neumatic, musical signs are concentrated only in one section in red colors. However, signs of text division (dots, double dots) accompany the whole text of Heirmologion.

The manuscript is a compilation of the Iadgari type. The Iadgari is a collection of the Palestino-Sinaitic tradition and contains the hymns of Minea, Lent, and Octoechos, as well as *Heirmoi* and *Theotokia* verses. Collections of this type are no longer found in the liturgical practice of the 11th century. As it is known, at the turn of the 10th-11th centuries, when the Georgian Church finally moved to the Constantinople rite of service, the Iadgari lost its function, the numerous hymnographic repertoire of the Iadgari was disintegrated and it moved to the collections separated from the Yadgari - Mineon, Paraklitons, lenth, Heirmoi and Theotokia [9].

The focus of our study is a specific section of the collection - the Heirmologion and Theotokion - because it is in this part that the verbal texts of the hymns are paired with musical notation. Before we delve into the specifics of the manuscript's musical notation, it is important to briefly review the relationship between the collections of Heirmoi developed within the liturgical practice of Georgia that have survived to the present day.

Extensive research on the codicological and hymnological aspects of the Heirmoi has contributed a significant body of knowledge and expertise to the scientific literature [9,10,11,12]. The presented work takes into account existing scholarly research.

As a result of studying the 10th-15th century manuscripts of Heirmoi and Theotokia, scientists identified three redactions of this collection. The basis for the classification is the number, sequence, and composition of the hymns included in the Heirmologion. All scientists working on the Heirmologion agree that the I redaction, the shortest one (containing up to 400 hymns), is almost unchanged, repeats as the original and primary versions in the II and III redactions of Heirmologion. [13].

² Nonetheless, we couldn't ignore the examination of notated hymn versions from the later period (19th-20th centuries) that contained the same verbal texts, as they proved essential for the research findings.

³ There is a long experience in studying the manuscript from hymnological and liturgical aspects. The extremely important research results are, of course, taken into account in the present article. [please see: 9, 10,11,12, 25,29].

⁴ Svaneti is one of the most beautiful mountainous regions of Georgia, where a specific attitude has been formed in the direction of protection and preservation of historical monuments, cultural heritage, and religious relics. The strong Christian faith of the residents preserved and saved many liturgical manuscripts of the Middle Ages, unique examples of church art, wall paintings - frescoes, unique examples of icon painting, carving, and Christian architecture.

A unique manuscript depicting the history of early Christian liturgical practice, and one of the oldest redactions of the Jerusalem Rite⁴, was discovered in one of the villages of Svaneti, in Latali by the famous Georgian scholar, liturgist, and philologist Korneli Kekelidze in 1910. It is not an accidental coincidence that one of the three manuscripts containing intensive and systematic musical signs (A-603, S-425, *Yeli Yadgari*) was preserved in Svaneti.

⁵ We would like to thank the museum for agreeing to digitize the materials and for granting permission to use it for research and publish them as illustrations.

II redaction is presented in the Tropologion (Iadgari) of Mikael Modrekili (S-425), copied 978-88; III redaction exists in the codex: A 603 (late 10th century); A 85 – 13th century), K 22 (13th century), K 564 (15th century Kutaisi Historical and Ethnographical Museum) [9;12; 13].

Scholars have differing opinions regarding the codex of I redactions Heirmologions and *Yeli* tropologion dating. By the opinion of P. Ingorokva and E. Metreveli, the first redaction is preserved (as a necessary part of the composition) in Palestino-Sinaitic Tropologions: Sin. 1, Sin. 14, Sin. 64-65, Sin. 59, and *Yeli Iadgari*. P. Ingorokva names the main manuscript of the I edition of the Georgian Heirmologion - the *Yeli Heirmologion*. He has noted an important feature that indicates its antiquity – the *Yeli* manuscript (as well as Sin. 1 and Sin. 14) does not yet include a separate group of heirmoi for the stichera, characteristic of later manuscripts. E. Metreveli has determined that these manuscripts should be considered part of the same edition, showing only minor differences. According to his observation, Sin. 1 and Sin. 14 preserved the original form of this edition, as they have the smallest number of stichera, while the *Yeli* manuscript is slightly longer, and Sin. 65 shows more significant additions. So, E. Metreveli names *Yeli Iadgari* as a Collection written at the X-XI centuries' boundaries [12].

L. Khevsuriani on the comparative studies of Palestino-Sinaitic Tropologions defined, *Yeli*'s manuscript reflects a new stage in the development of the Heirmologion in the 60s of the 10th Century. Considering the expansion and development of the Heirmoi collection, *Yeli Heirmologion* stands between Sin. 1-Sin. 14 and Sin. 65. So, L. Khevsuriani concludes, *Yeli Heirmologion* appears not as a 'branch' of Sin. 1, as P. Ingorokva suggested, but as a transitional collection between the two previously mentioned main stages of the development of the Heirmologion". [11:93]. This conclusion is reinforced by the findings of the study on the Musical Notation System of *Yeli Iadgari*.

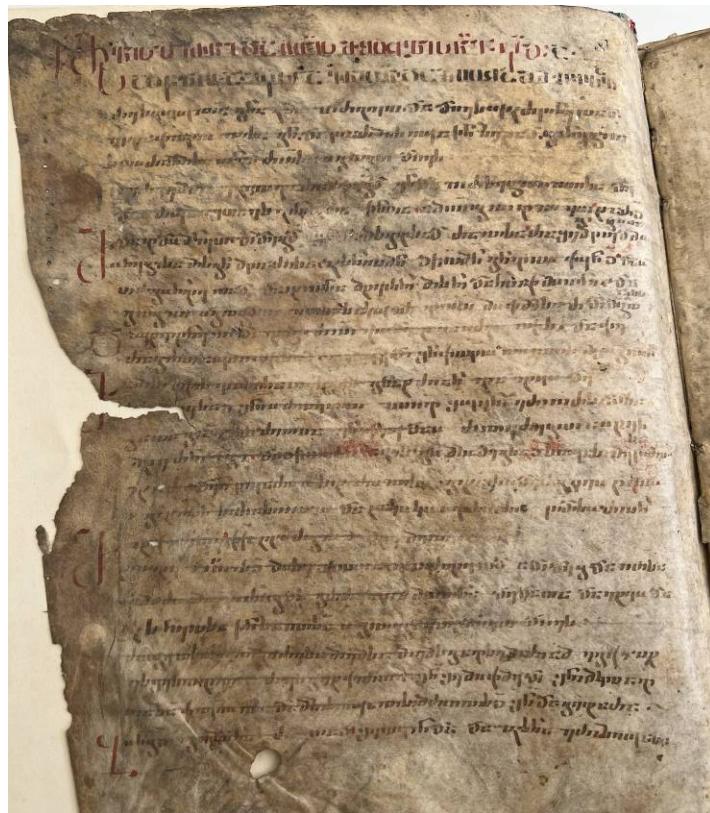
Another distinctive feature of the manuscript confirms that the *Yeli Iadgari* is beyond the codex of the first redaction. The manuscripts of the first edition share a particular characteristic: each Heirmos is accompanied by the beginning of its Greek original or equivalent, rendered in Georgian transcription. This feature is also observed by E. Metreveli, although, despite the absence of this technique in the *Yeli Iadgari*, the scholar still attributes the manuscript to the first edition [064/ metreveli]. [metreveli]. As for *Yeli Iadgari*, the Heirmoses are presented without reference to the originals.

The liturgical practice has developed two categories of Heirmoi. The Heirmoi for nine odes for the hymn cycle – Canon, which presents a musical-metrical model, for the different canticles of the hymnographic Canon. The second type of Heirmoi is the chants of *Stichera*⁶, according to whose rhythmic-melodic model the chants of *Lord I have cried* and other *Sticheras* of Vesper Service were created.

Traditionally, in the *Iadgari* collection, the section on *Heirmoi* and *Theotokia* is placed at the beginning of the codex. This is logical, as other hymns are often modeled after the *Heirmoi*, which frequently serve as an incipit or an original model for new hymns, such as the *Automela-Prosomoia* couple.

The manuscript we studied contains only Heirmoi for Hymnographical Canon (and not for stichera), which are arranged according to the liturgical *echos*, following the order of the odes. This section appears on folios 1v-37r of the codex (ex. 1a,1b).

⁶ References to Greek beginnings were found not only in the Heormoi but also in the canticles and *stikheras* in the Sinai manuscripts. From the mid-10th century to the end Century, incipits in Iadgari seem to lose their significance and gradually disappear [Metreveli], as evidenced by the Yale Iadgari. This is also confirmed by the Iadgari of Mikael Modrekili, where incipits are only found with seven hymns of the first *echos* in the section of Heirmologion.

Example N 1a⁷Example 1b⁸

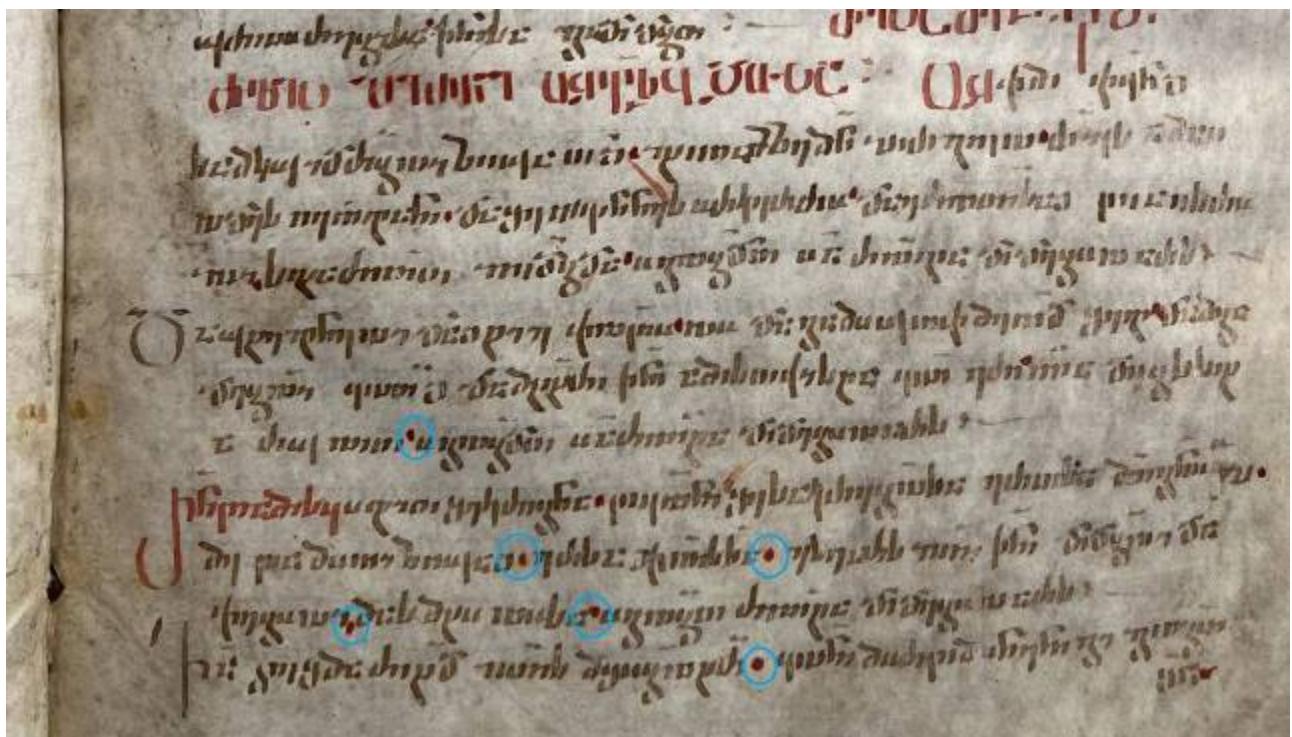
Musical signs are attached intensively to folios 10r-13r and given in red ink. The neumatic hymns are of the second liturgical *echos* and begin with the Canticle Five — **The Prayer of Isaiah**

⁷ Yeli Iadgari. Folio 1v.

⁸ Yeli Iadgari. Folio 37r.

[ღამითგანსა *Gamitgansa*]. The second *echos* chants are reflected from the folio 8r. You will notice that in hymn texts with rare⁹, or no musical signs attached, the text uses division (punctuation) marks that depict musical caesuras. (ex.2).

Example N2¹⁰



According to the research of the Georgian scientist Jghamaya, almost all of the mentioned manuscripts of Heirmoi and Theotokia heirmoi for stichera are missing. Therefore, it is natural to agree with Jgamaia's opinion [9], that we are not allowed to speak about whether these manuscripts contained Stichera verses or not. More or less complete fragments of the Stichera are contained in Sin. 65 and Mikael Modrekili's Yadgari (S 425), the most complete source in the Georgian tradition depicting the neumatic codex. Research on Yeli Iadgari found that the Heirmologion section does not contain the Stichera verses.

Thus, about 400 (384) heirmoi are identified, in the manuscript we are studying. Here is a table showing the number of *Heirmoi* and their *Theotokiai*, referring to hymns and codex folios (ex.3).

⁹ In the manuscript, some musical signs are in black as well.

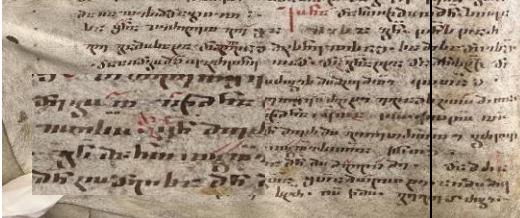
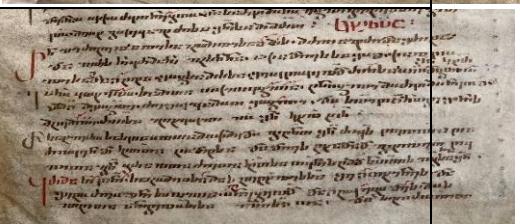
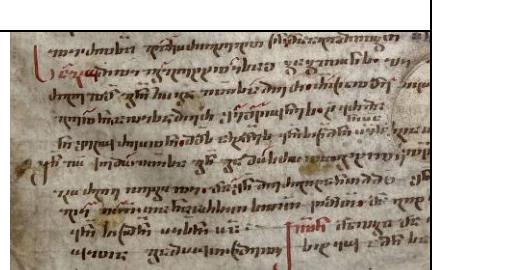
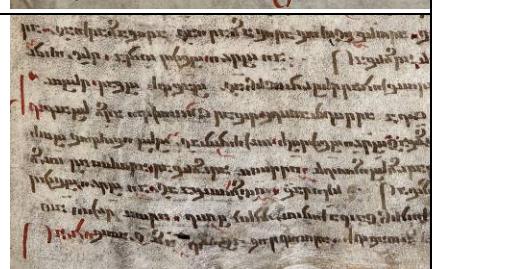
¹⁰ Yeli Iadgari. Folio 8r.

Example N3

	Canticle	Heirmoses 384	Theotokions 386	Contains neumes	Contains musical frase division signs Red dots	folio numbers
1	Canticle One — The (First) <u>Song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-19)</u>	48	47	—	completely	1v, 2r, 8r, 8v, 14r, 14v, 17r, 17v, 24r, 24v, 26v, 27r, 29r, 29v, 31v, 32r, 32v
2	Canticle Two — The (Second) <u>Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-43)</u>	—	—	—	—	—
3	Canticle Three — <u>The Prayer of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10)</u>	46	46	—	completely	2r, 2v, 3r, 8v, 9r, 9v, 14v, 17v, 18r, 18v, 24v, 27r, 29v, 32v, 33r
4	Canticle Four — <u>The Prayer of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 3:1-19)</u>	44	44	—	completely	3r, 3v, 9v, 10r, 15v, 18v, 19r, 19v, 24v, 25r, 27r, 27v, 30r, 33r, 33v
5	Canticle Five — <u>The Prayer of Isaiah (Isaiah 26:9-20)</u>	46	46	2 Heirmos, 2 Theotokion (10v)	completely	3v, 4r, 4v, 10r, 10v, 15r, 15v, 19v, 20r, 20v, 25r, 27v, 28r, 30r, 31v, 33v, 34r
6	Canticle Six — <u>The Prayer of Jonah (Jonah 2:2-9)</u>	46	45	6 Heirmos, 5 Theotokion (10v, 11r)	completely	4v, 5r, 10v, 11r, 15v, 20v, 21r, 25r, 25v, 28r, 30v, 34r, 34v
7	Canticle Seven — <u>The Prayer of the Three Holy Children (Daniel 3:26-56)</u>	45	46	6 Heirmos, 7 Theotokion (11r, 11v, 12r)	completely	5v, 6r, 11r, 11v, 12r, 15v, 16r, 21r, 21v, 25v, 26r, 28r, 28v, 30v, 31r, 34v, 35r, 35v
8	Canticle Eight — <u>The Song of the Three Holy Children (Daniel 3:57-88)</u>	53	54	9 Heirmos, 9 Theotokion (12r, 12v, 13r)	completely	6r, 6v, 7r, 12r, 12v, 13r, 16r, 16v, 21v, 22r, 22v, 23r, 26r, 28v, 29r, 31r, 31v, 35v, 36r
9	Canticle Nine — <u>The Song of the Theotokos (the Magnificat: Luke 1:46-55);</u>	56	58	—	completely	7r, 7v, 8r, 13r, 13v, 14r, 16v, 17r, 23r, 23v, 24r, 26r, 26v, 29r, 31v, 36v, 37r

The next table contains the data for hymns with neumas. It shows that 48 chants in the second *echos* are accompanied systematically by neumes (ex. 4).

Example N4

	Canticle in echos 2	Heirmoses	Theotokions	Contains musical phrase division	folio numbers	Image from the Codex
1	Canticle Six — The Prayer of <u>Jonah</u> (<u>Jonah 2:2–9</u>)	2	2	completely	10v-11r	
2	Canticle Seven — The Prayer of the <u>Three Holy Children</u> (<u>Daniel 3:26-56</u>)	6	6	completely	11r-v, 12r	
3	Canticle Eight — The Song of the <u>Three Holy Children</u> (<u>Daniel 3:57-88</u>)	6	7	completely	12r-v, 13r	
4	Canticle Nine — The Song of the <u>Theotokos</u> (the <i>Magnificat</i> : <u>Luke 1:46–55</u>);	9	10	completely	13r-v, 14r	

We also studied a version of this hymn in the notated chants later transcribed into European 5-line notation at the end of the 19th century. This observation yielded a compelling result: We discovered that the division of 10th-century neumatic hymn texts into musical phrases and cesuras is similarly reflected in the later notated chant versions. In most cases, the structure is consistently presented in the same way across the notated versions. In the table below are presented heirmoi, notated versions of which exist in Georgian manuscript collections.¹¹

¹¹ Manuscripts (with shelf numbers Q 684, Q 687, Q 689) are kept at the Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of the Manuscripts. Scattered among these manuscripts, Heirmoi are published in different volumes of the collection - **Georgian Chant Anthology** by Sveton Jangulashvili (ed.), Levan Veshapidze (ed.), Rusudan Tsurtssumia (ed.), Tamar Chkheidze (ed.). Volumes 6 (2018); 7 (2016); 8 (2016); 16 (2020).

Example N5

Canticle Number/ Georgian name and Echos	English name	Georgian texts (divisions following the Ieli ladgari)	Notated source ¹² version
V/ღამითგანსა ₂	We Shall Keep Watch from the Night	ღამითგან აღვიმსთობთ ჩვენ. გიგალობთ შენ ქრისტე ღმერთო. რამეთუ ნებსით. მამისათა გარდამოხედ სიმდაბლით ქვეყანად. სულთა ჩვენთა ცხოვრებისათვის.	Vol. 6, N10, pg. 60 Vol. 8, N55, pg. 110
V/ღამითგანსა ₂	O Thou, who hast redeemed us from the shadowed yoke of the Law.	დამხსნელი ბნელისად მის წესთა მათ წერილისა. პირველისა სჯულისათა. და (მომცემელი) ¹³ მორწმუნეთა მადლთა მისთა. ქალწულისაგან იშვა ქრისტე და მიმიძღვა ჩვენ ნათლად ღმრთებისა თვისისათა.	# 82, pg. 45 Q 669 # 82, pg. 228 Q 678 III # 34, pg. 32 Q 691 XVI # 34, 113r, H154
VI/ღადადვყავსა ₂	The Prophet Cried Out From the Belly's Fiery Depths.	წინასწარმეტველმან. მუცლისა სიმურვალე მზღვისა მხეცისა სამ დღე თავს იდვა და მოასწავა მეორედ შობად კაცთა ხსნისადვის ყოფადისა მუცლისა მისგან. ვეშაპისა მის რომელი მოკლა მხსნელმან	Q 666 / # 37 pg. 123
VI/ღადადვყავსა ₂	Jonah Engulfed in the Sea	იონა დანთქმულმან. ზღვასა შინა პირველ ვეშაპისაგან. წინასწარვე გამოსახა დაფლვად მხსნელისად. სამისა დღისა და აღდგომად უხრწნელად. და განუცხადა მან სახე დიდებულისა ვნებისად. ცხოვრების მომცემელი ყოველთა.	Vol. 6, N33, pg. 105.
VI/ღადადვყავსა ₂	Encircled by an Abyss of Sin	დელვამან ცოდვისამან მომიცვა მე. და მრავალთა მოწყალებათა შენთა მოვიკლტი. აღმომიყვანე სახიერ (დანთქმისაგან). ღმერთო ჩემო გვედრები.	Vol. 16, N14, pg. 31
VI/ღადადვყავსა ₂	I cried Out in My Sorrow	ღაღადვყავ დღეს ჭირსა ჩემსა უფლისა მიმართ ჩემისა. და მოავლინა სოფლად. და განხრწნისაგან იხსნა ცხოვრები ჩვენი.	Vol. 8 Part 1. N118, pg. 279
VI/ღადადვყავსა ₂	You Have Brought Me Up From The Depths	სიღრმეთაგან აღმომიყვანე. მეოხებითა წმიდათამთა. და მაცხოვნე მე ღელვათა მათგან ამის სოფლისათა მშვიდობით. ჭეშმარიტო განმგებელო.	Vol. 8 Part 1. N 166, pg. 330
VII/კურთხეულარსა ₂	He Who First Felt the Flame of His Calling	რომელმან პირველ ალი სახმილისა მის. მძღვრი დაშრიდა. და ღირსნი ყრმანი იხსნნა. აქა დღესა საშოო ქალწულისად დაიცვა შობასა მისსა. შეუწველად რომელსა უღადადებთ ჩვენ. ღმერთო კურთხეულ ხარ შენ.	Q 666 N39, pg. 131 Q 681, pg. 104, N39
VII/კურთხეულარსა ₂	The Holy Youth Were Thrown into the fiery Furnace	ყრმანი წმიდან სახმილსა ცეცხლისასა შეითხინეს და შეცვრეულნი სულითა უვნებელად დაიცვებოდეს. მოსვლითა ანგელოზისა ღმრთისათა. და სიხარულით (11v) განბრწყინვებულნი დაღადებდეს და იტყოდეს. კურთხეულ ხარ შენ უფროსად ამაღლებულო ღმერთო მამათა ჩვენთა.	Vol.16, Part 1. N110, pg. 308
VII/კურთხეულარსა ₂	The Godless Command of a Lawless Tyrant	ბრძანებამან უშაკულოვსა მძღავრისამან. უფროვსად მოტყინარე აღაგზნა სახმილი ყრმათათვის. და ღმერთმან ყოველთამან ასხურა ცვარი ზეცით სამთა მათ მგალობელთა რომელ იგი არს ღმერთი კურთხეულ უკუნისამდე.	Vol. 6, N78, pg. 194

¹² The sources noted in the table correspond to the volumes of the collection titled* Georgian Chant Anthology*, edited by Svimon Jangulashvili, Levan Veshapidze, Rusudan Tsurtsumia, and Tamar Chkheidze. The relevant volumes are 6 (2018), 7 (2016), 8 (2016), and 16 (2020).

¹³ The word in brackets here and elsewhere, where it occurs, has been added by us based on manuscript A-603.

VII/კურთხეულარსა ₂	For the Golden Icon	ხატისა მისთვის ოქროხა. რომელი იმსახურა. ველსა მას დეირისასა. სამთა ყრმათა შიში შეურაცხვეს მძლავრისა მის. და შეცვრეულნი ღაღადებდეს. კურთხეულ ხარ შენ უფალო ღმერთო მამათა ჩვენთაო.	Vol. 7, N 49, pg. 146
VII/კურთხეულარსა ₂	You, Who Dwelled In The Vigin's Womb	რომელი დაემკვიდრე ქალწულისა მუცელსა. და დაიცევ ქალწულად. განუხრწნელად უბიწოდ. კურთხეულ ხარ შენ უფალო მამათა ჩვენთაო.	Vol. 8, N 167, pg. 332
VIII ₂ /აკურთხევდითსა ₂	A Marvelous Mystery in Babilon	საკვირველი და დიდებული. ბაბილონს შინა სახმილმან. აჩუენა ცვარისა ცურევითა. რამეთუ ყრმანი იხსნნა ალისაგან შემწველისა. და მოსწყვიდნა ქალდეველნი. წამოსყოფითა. სულგრძელისათა. რომელსა ვაკურთხევთ ჩვენ. და აღვამაღლებთ მას უკუნისამდე.	Vol. 8, N 50, pg. 100 Vol. 16, Part.1, N111, pg. 311
VIII ₂	Of Old in Babylon by the Command of God	სახმილი იგი ცეცხლისად ბაბილონს. პირველად განიზოგა ღმრთისა მიერ. რამეთუ ქალდეველნი ალისა მიერ შეიწვენეს. ხოლო ყრმანი შეცვრეულნი. იტყოდეს ყოველნი საქმენი აკურთხევდით უფალსა.	Vol. 16, ნაწ. 1, N 17, pg. 40
VIII ₂	He Who Created Everything	რომელმან დაჰბადა ყოველივე სიტყვითა გამოუთქმელი. სიტყვამან საღმრთომან. (12 v) არარასაგან შექმნა მეტყველი. აკურთხევდით საქმენი უფლისანი უფალსა.	Vol. 7, N 50, pg. 149
VIII ₂	In That Calling Revealed To the Youths	სახუმილსა მას შინა ყრმათასა. წინასწარვე გამოსახე მშობელი შენი უფალო. და სახიობამან იხსნა იგინი ცეცხლისა მისგან შემწველისა. და იტყოდეს კიდენი სოფლისანი აკურთხევდით უფალსა და უფროვსად ამაღლებდით მას უკუნისამდე.	H154/2 ## 66 131v Q 691 XVI, # 66 pg. 57
VII ₂	The Youths Who Emerged From The Furnace	სახმილად გარდამოსრულსა. ყრმათა ებრაელთათვის ღმერთსა. რომელმან ცეცხლი ცვარად შეცვალა. აკურთხევდით საქმენი უფლისანი უფალსა და ამაღლებდით მას უკუნისამდე.	Vol. 8 part. 1. N48, pg. 97

Below is one example of a coinciding structure of the chants in chronologically distant sources – In Yeli Iadgari (10th c.) and the notated version (19th c.).

Example N6¹⁴

Stanza 1 a /ბრძანებამან უსჯულოსა მძლავრისამან/

¹⁴ **The Godless Command of a Lawless Tyrant.** From: **Georgian Chant Anthology** by Semon Jangulashvili (ed.), Levan Veshapidze (ed.), Rusudan Tsurtssumia (ed.), Tamar Chkheidze (ed.). Volume 7, 2016.

Stanza 2. b /უფროსად მოტყინარე/ **Stanza 3.** /აღაგზნა სახმილი ყრმათათვის/

უ - ფრო - სად მო - ტყი - ნა - რე, ა -
უ - ფრო - სად მო - ტყი - ნა - რე, ა -
სად მო - ტყი - ნა - რე, ა -

ღა - გზნა სა - ხმი - ლი ყრმა - თა - თვის, და ღმერთ - მან
ღა - გზნა სა - ხმი - ლი ყრმა - თა - თვის, და ღმერთ - მან
გა - გზნა სა - ხმი - ლი ყრმა - თა - თვის, და ღმერთ - მან

d. Fianal stanza /არს კურთხეულ უკუნისამდე/

არს კურ - თხე - ულ უ - კუ - ნი - სა - მდე!
არს კურ - თხე - ულ უ - კუ - ნი - სა - მდე!

ars k'ur - tkhe - ul u - k'u - ni - sa - mde!

Unfortunately, at this stage, we do not have the opportunity to compare the manuscript with other Sabatsminda-Sinai manuscripts, as we currently lack access to color reproductions. Most of the manuscripts in our possession are available only as black-and-white photocopies, in which rhythmic punctuation and neumes are not always clearly visible. Consequently, detailed analysis of the notational signs is technically challenging.

The collection of Georgian manuscripts preserved at the Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai primarily consists of manuscripts dating from the 9th to the 11th centuries. A portion of these manuscripts (dating to the first half of the 9th–10th centuries) originates from Sabatsminda, while the remainder were produced and copied within the monastery itself. Although the manuscripts of this collection have been described on several occasions, they have not, until recently, been the subject of systematic scholarly study. We hope that within the framework of our project, we will gain access to the manuscripts, allowing us to undertake comparative research and thereby deepen our understanding of the developmental stages of the Georgian musical notation system.

To study the shape, meaning, and function of the signs, we launched a comparison analysis with the 10th-century Iadgari collection, the so-called Michael Modrekili Iadgari, the most complete source for the study of the medieval musical script, along with the codex A-603 collection.

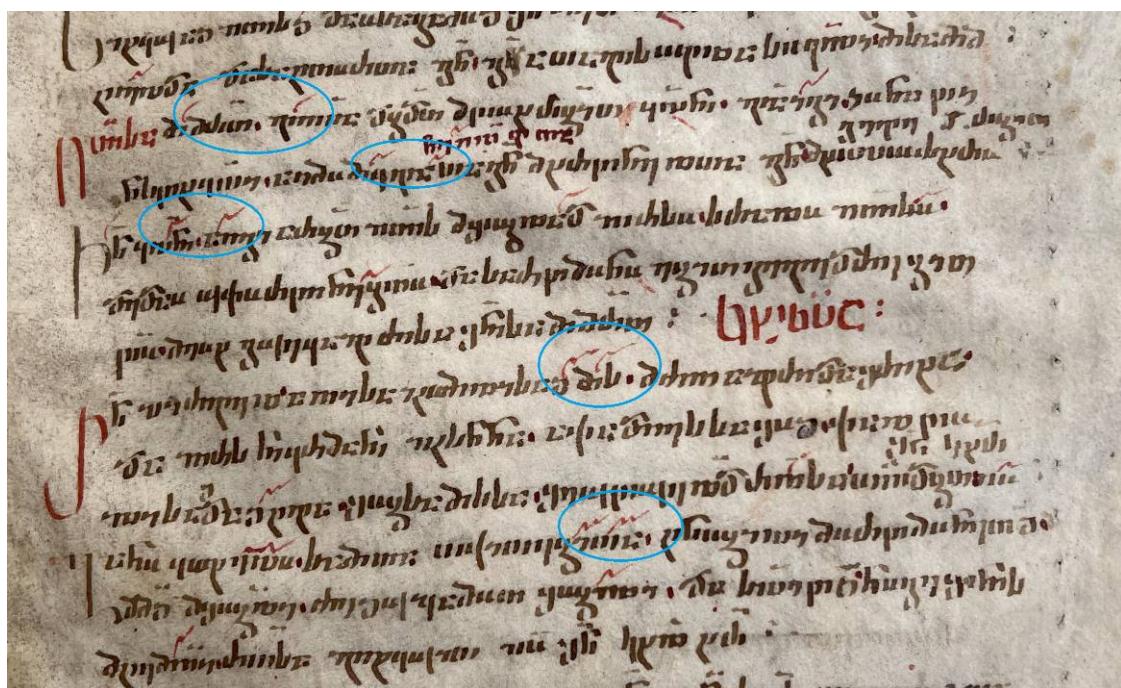
In the comparative research, the fact that the folios containing the Hirmoses of the 2nd *echos* with a parallel text have been lost¹⁵ and are unfortunately not found in the hirmologion section of the codex. Modrekili's heimologion section begins with the sticharion ***Lord I have cried*** of the first *echos*, followed by the heirmoses of kanon. The section of hymns of the second *echoes* begins with the stichera ***Lord I have cried*** (15 *stichera*). Unfortunately, it stops and continues with the 6th echos of the 3rd canticle - **The Prayer of Hannah**. As was mentioned, the Iadgari of Yeli does not include Stichera's heirmoi in any *echos*. In this context, a direct comparative study of the melodic-rhythmic models of the relevant heirmoi was impossible. However, considering the principles of medieval liturgical art, it was still possible to undertake an indirect comparison. In particular, a few Heirmoses of the Ieli's Iadgari have been included in the next (Minea) sections of the Modrekili's Iadgari in the form of an incipit, similar to the automela-prosomoia technique. Accordingly, there is the opportunity to compare with other chants, having as incipit the Heirmos of 2nd *echoes* (for instance, hymns of the Feast of Theophany [17]).

The comparative analysis conducted during the first stage of the study revealed that the graphics of signs in the Yeli Iadgari are not as well-formed as in the Iadgari of Modrekili. At the same time, this manuscript contains a large number of double signs¹⁶, which are characteristic of the ecphonetic system. It is marked by the simplicity of the signs and the scarcity of graphic units-symbols. The manuscript is not characterized by graphic variety; on the contrary, it is distinguished by small signs. It shows more similarities with the system of ekphonetic signs using the principle of pairing signs; The codex contains signs under the text as well, not on every syllable, placed at intervals, not on all syllables, and it is mostly placed on the penultimate syllable;

The comparative analysis conducted during the first stage of the study revealed that the graphic form of the signs in the *Yeli Iadgari* is not as refined as that in the *Iadgari of Modrekili*. At the same time, the manuscript features a significant number of double signs, which are characteristic of the ecphonetic system. It is marked by the simplicity of signs and a limited number of graphic symbols. The manuscript does not exhibit graphic diversity; on the contrary, it is distinguished by the use of a small number of signs. It shows greater affinity with the ecphonetic system, particularly through the principle of sign pairing. The codex also contains signs placed beneath the text, not on every syllable, but rather at intervals, most often on the penultimate syllable.

¹⁵ Mikael Modrekili's codex reached us partially; only one-third of 272 pages have survived.

¹⁶ The Pairs of identical characters are shown in the shape of an ellipse for clarity.

Example 7¹⁷

Thus, the study of the newly identified liturgical fragment containing musical notation provides further support for the hypothesis proposed by the distinguished Georgian philologist Elene Metreveli. According to her view, the Georgian system of musical notation originates from the ecphonetic script tradition and developed independently from its Byzantine counterpart [12].

The *Iadgari of Yeli* reflects an early phase in the evolution of Georgian musical notation. Its structural features reveal a closer affinity with the ecphonetic tradition, particularly in its use of double signs and limited graphic diversity. The manuscript is characterized by a simplified graphic system with small signs and a reduced number of notation units—features that align it with the principles of early ecphonetic notation rather than with the more complex systems found in later Georgian manuscripts.

Due to these characteristics, the *Iadgari of Yeli* can be regarded as a key monument reflecting the formative stage of the Georgian notational system. Accordingly, earlier divergent views regarding the manuscript's dating no longer hold ground. Analysis of the notation itself strongly indicates a dating to the mid-10th century, or possibly even earlier, rather than to the 980s, as previously suggested.

¹⁷ Yeli Iadgari. Folio 11r.

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Included five examples (images) and three tables

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