

Chanting in Soft Chromatic Tones

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Course Outline

- What is a Chromatic Scale?
- The Soft Chromatic Scale
- Tone 2 Soft Chromatic syllabic examples
- Simple analysis of Tone 2 syllabic patterns
- Ke/A in the Soft Chromatic scale and its various transcriptions
- Tone 2 Sticheraric examples
- Ison for Tone 2
- Tone 6 Soft Chromatic examples
- Tone 4 Soft Chromatic examples
- Tone 1 Soft Chromatic example

What is a Scale?

A *scale* in Byzantine music is typically composed of eight notes. The steps between notes can be of varying degrees: semitone, whole tone, and tone-and-a-half. Each scale is composed of two tetrachords separated by a whole tone. A *tetrachord* is a scale of four notes, with the first and last note of the tetrachord being in the interval of a fourth. The Western C Major Scale is an example of a familiar scale comprised of two tetrachords separated by a whole tone:

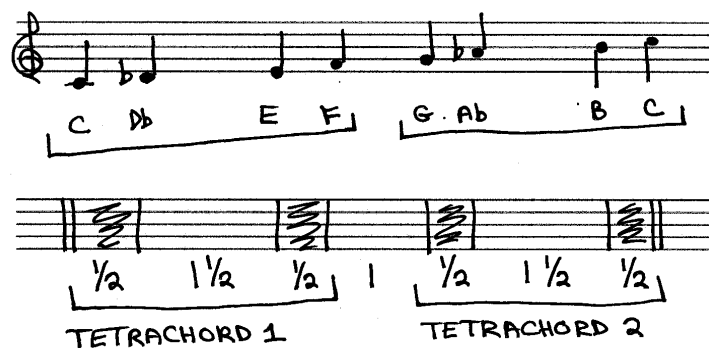
The C Major Scale



What is a Chromatic scale?

In Byzantine music, the defining characteristic of a *Chromatic* scale is that the tetrachords are made up of the following three intervals: semitone, tone-and-a-half, semitone (short, wide, short):

Chromatic Scale based on C



The Chromatic scale can be derived from the Major scale by flattening the 2nd and 6th notes. The wide intervals of a tone-and-a-half give this scale an Eastern or Middle Eastern quality not found in Western music.

Soft Chromatic – Tone 2

BASIS APICHIMA

Neh ah-nes

TETRACHORD 1

TETRACHORD 2

NI PA VOU SA DHI KE ZO NI

↑

Tone 2/Mode 2 (soft chromatic)- apolytikia and kathismata hymns. "Slow" kekragaria (Lord, I Call) and pasapnoaria (Let Everything That Breathes) are also chanted in the soft chromatic tuning.

The half flat on KE (A) reflects the microtonal tuning of the soft chromatic system. In the Kazan settings it is written/sung mostly as a full flat but sometimes as a full natural and in the majority of Greek harmonized hymns the trend is the reverse. These comments apply to all hymns that are chanted in the soft chromatic tuning (see Tone 4 and Tone 6).

Primary Ison note

Ne. This is Tone Two. To ZO* it can as-cend and it can rest

on VOU but it ends _____ on THI.

*ZO is the highest structural and, albeit rarely, cadential point but NI is the often the highest melodic note.

FLIGHT PLAN

EXAMPLES STARTING

(A) I cried un-to the Lord with my voice (B) I cried un-to the Lord with my voice

MEDIAL CADENCE

(A) with my voice un-to the Lord (B) with my voice un-to the Lord (C) with my voice un-to the Lord

FINAL CADENCE

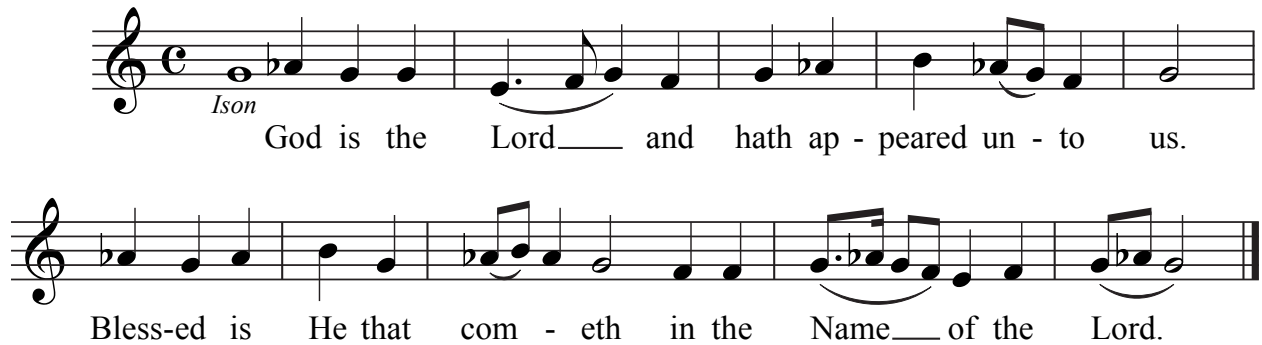
(A) did I make my sup-pli-ca-tion (B) did I make my sup-pli-ca-tion

God is the Lord

Second Mode

Ἦχος ̲̅Ϡ̅̅̅̅ ΔϷ

Rassem El Massih
April, 2015



Ison
God is the Lord____ and hath ap - peared un - to us.
Bless-ed is He that com - eth in the Name____ of the Lord.

(The chanter begins first with "God is the Lord..." and repeats it after each of the verses.)

CHANTER: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Verse 1: O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his holy name.

Verse 2: All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.

Verse 3: This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Resurrectional Troparion

Contemporary
Byzantine Chant
Tone 2

B. Kazan
arranged
by C. Marge

S & T

A & B

When Thou _____ didst sub- mit Thy-self _ un-to death, O Thou

death-less and im- mor- -- tal one, then Thou didst des - troy _ Hell with Thy

God- - ly pow'r, and when Thou didst raise the dead _ from be

neath _ the earth, all the pow'rs of hea- - ven did cry a - loud _ un-to

Thee, O Christ _ Thou giv- - er of Life, glo- - - ry to Thee.

December 11th - 17th

Sunday of the Forefathers (Ancestors) of Christ

Apolytikion

Byzantine Chant Tone 2

Chadi Karam

Un. E Un. G

Thou hast jus - ti - fied by faith thē an - cient Fore - fa - thers,

and through them Thou hast gone be - fore and be - trothed un - to Thy - self the

E Un. G

Church of the Gen - tiles. Let the saints, there - fore, take pride in

glo - ry; for from their seed sprout - ed forth a no - ble fruit,

Un. E

and it was she who gave birth to Thee with - out seed.

G *Un. G

Where - fore, by their plead - ings, O Christ God, save our souls.

Final Ending

*Un. F G

save our souls.

Verses on Psalm 140

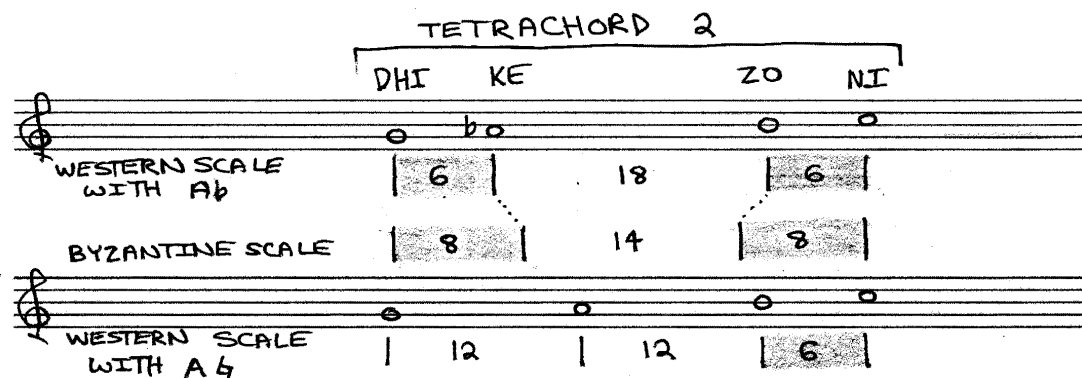
- + Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.
- + Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- + With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- + The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.
- + For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.
- + They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

KE (A) in the Soft Chromatic Scale and its various transcriptions

When the soft chromatic scale is written in Western notation, we often times see KE written as an A-flat, but other times as an A-natural (e.g., compare Kazan to St. Anthony's monastery). Why is this? There are multiple reasons.

1. In the original Byzantine microtonal soft chromatic scale, KE actually falls in between an A-flat and an A-natural, so there's a choice on how to transcribe it.

The diagram below shows the second tetrachord of the soft chromatic scale transcribed onto the Western 12-tone scale. The numbers represent the number of microtones in each interval. There are 12 microtones to every full step, making 6 microtones to a semitone on the Western scale, and 18 microtones to a tone-an-a-half on the Western scale.



However, in the original Byzantine microtonal soft chromatic scale, the intervals are slightly different, consisting of 8, 14, and 8 microtones, meaning that the short intervals are a little wider than a Western semitone and that the wide interval in the middle is more narrow. Note how KE falls in between A-flat and A-natural on the Byzantine scale.

2. Even though the Byzantine music theory underpinning the soft chromatic scale is the same everywhere, in practice, KE is sung a little differently depending on the geographic region. For example, in the Middle East, KE is sung closer to an A-flat while in Greece, it is often sung closer to an A-natural.
3. Some composers write the soft chromatic scale with KE being an A-natural to allow the chanter to interpret KE according to their tradition. In other words, the writing of A-natural is not a direction to sing KE on the sharper side. Rather, it's intended to be completely neutral and unbiased as to the placement of KE between A-flat and A-natural, inclusive. For example, someone wanting to sing KE as an A-flat would see the "A" in the music and always interpret it as an A-flat.

Kontakion

Usual Sunday

Byzantine Chant Tone 2

Holy Transfiguration Monastery
(Adapted)

G

O pro - tec - tion of Chris - tians that can - not be put ___ to shame,

E

me - di - a - tion un - to the Cre - a - tor most con - stant:

Un. G

O de - spise not the sup - pli - ant voi - ces of those who have sinned;

but be thou quick, O good one, to come un - to ___ our aid, who in

E G

faith ___ cry ___ un - to thee: Hast - en ___ to in - ter - ces - sion, and

speed thou to make sup - pli - ca - tion, thou who dost ev - er

pro - tect, O The - o - to - kos, them that

F G

hon - or thee. ___

PSALM 140

18

Byzantine Tone 2

Basil Kazan
(1915 - 2001)

Slow

Ison

O _____ Lord, I have cried out un - to _____

thee. Hear _____ thou _____ me. Hear _____ thou

me, _____ O _____ Lord. O _____ Lord,

I have cried out un - to _____ thee, hear _____

thou _____ me. Give _____ ear to the voice _____

of _____ my sup - pli - ca - tion, when I

cry _____ out _____ un - to _____ thee. Hear _____ thou _____

me, _____ O _____ Lord.

19 Psalm 140

Tone 2
Basil Kazan

Slow

Let my pray'r _____ be _____ set _____ forth be - fore _____ thee

as _____ the _____ in - - cense, and _____ the _____ lift - ing up of

my _____ hands as the _____ eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

Hear _____ thou _____ me, _____ O _____ Lord. Set a watch, O

Lord, be - fore my mouth, and a pro - tect - ing door a - bout my lips.

In - cline not my heart to e - vil words to make ex -

-cus - es in sins... ...with men _____ that work in - iq - ui -

-ty, and I will not com - mu - ni - cate with the choic - est of

them. The just _____ man shall cor - rect me in

Fast

The Theotokion at the Praises.

(The "A"s are to be sung as A-flat.)

Both now...

Second Mode

Intonation: #7

Καὶ νῦν

Both now_____ and ev - - - er, and un -

to the a - - - ges of_____ a - - -

ges. A - men.____

Theotokion of the Praises

Σήμερον ὁ Χριστός

Un. G

To - day Christ is_____ come to be bap - tized

Un.

in_____ the_____ Jor - - - dan;_____ to - day

G E

John touch - eth the head_____ of_____ the_____

Un. G

Mas - ter. The pow - - - ers of Heav -

F Hard Chromatic

en_____ are_____ a - mazed, look - ing up - on the mar -

C

vel - - - lous mys - - - ter - - - y.

G F E

The sea_____ be - held_____ and_____

Hard Chromatic

fled; Jor - dan saw and turned
back; and we who have been en - light - - - -
ened cry out: Glo - - - -
ry to God Who hath ap - peared, and hath
been seen up - on earth, and hath en - light - - - -
ened the world.

Trisagion Hymn

Second Section - Long Version

11-A

Unison, ISON = G

mf A - - - - ghi - - - os _____

o _____ The - os. _____

Is pol - la _____ e - ti Dhes - po - ta.

A - - - - - - - ghi - - - -

os _____ Is - - - -

chi - ros. _____

Is - pol - la _____ e - ti Dhes - po - ta.

f A - - - - - ghi... _____ A - ghi - os

The Bishop, standing in the holy doors, facing west, intones: "O Lord, O Lord: Look down from heaven and behold, and visit this vine, and perfect that which thy right hand hath planted."

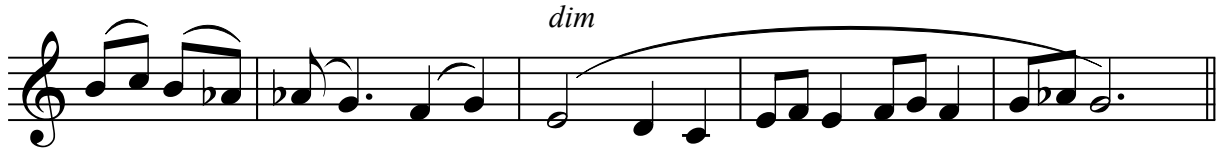
The Bishop again intones: "O Lord, O Lord: Look down from heaven and behold, and visit this vine, and perfect that which thy right hand hath planted."

11-A

Trisagion Hymn Second Section Long Version



A - - - tha - - - - - na__



ne__ A - tha - na - tos._____

The Bishop again intones: "O Lord, O Lord: Look down from heaven and behold,
and visit this vine, and perfect that which thy right hand hath planted."



Is pol - la__ e - ti Dhes - po - ta.



e - - - le - i - son_____ i - mas.____

Soft Chromatic – Tone 6

BASIS **SCALE**

TETRACHORD 1 **TETRACHORD 2**

NI PA YOU SA DHI KE ZO NI

Tone 6/Mode 2 Plagal (soft chromatic) - apolytikia, kathismata, anavathmoi, kanons and the following "quick" versions of hymns: kekragara (Lord I Call), aposticha and pasapnoaria (Let Everything that Breathes). The "slow" versions use the hard chromatic tuning from PA--see the scale of Tone 2.

Primary Ison note

Ne. Tone Six soft chro - ma - tic ca - dence notes are sim - i - lar

to Tone Two; but be a - ware the fi - nal ca - dence note is VOU.**

**However, the ornamental terminal cadence for a hymn group ends on THI.

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Byzantine chant melodies and texts
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God is the Lord

Plagal Second Mode (Tone 6)

Ἦχος λ β̣̣

Rassem El Massih
April, 2015

Ison
God is the Lord and hath ap - peared un - to us.

Bless - ed is He that com-eth in the Name of the Lord.

Canon of Holy Saturday
Eighth Ode



Be thou a - mazed, o hea - ven, and let the foun - da - tions of the



earth quake: for, be-hold, He who dwell-eth in the high - est hath



been ac - count - ed a - mong the dead, and hath been



guest in a hum - ble tomb. Where - fore, o ye youths,



bless Him; praise Him, ye priests; and ye na - tions, ex - alt Him more and



more un - to all the a - ges.

Glory to Thee, our God, Glory to Thee.



The pure tem - ple hath been des - troyed; then, ris - ing, He raised with



Him the fal - len Ta - ber - na - cle. For the sec - ond

Soft Chromatic – Tone 4

BASIS **SCALE**

TETRACHORD 1 TETRACHORD 2

NI PA YOU SA DHI KE ZO NI

Tone 4/Mode 4 (soft chromatic) - apolytikia and some kathismata (the other kathismata are special melodies in hard chromatic). See Tone 2 regarding use of the microtonal a-flats.

Primary Ison note

Ne. Tone Four A - pol - y - ti - ki - a are al - ways sung like Tone Two.

This is soft chro - mat - ic so ZO is nev - er flat. The

bas - is is THI but the fi - nal ca - dence is on VOU.**

God is the Lord

Fourth Mode

Ἦχος Ἀ Δι.

Rassem El Massih
April, 2015

Ison

God is the Lord and hath ap - peared un - to us.

Bless-ed is He that com-eth in the Name of the Lord.

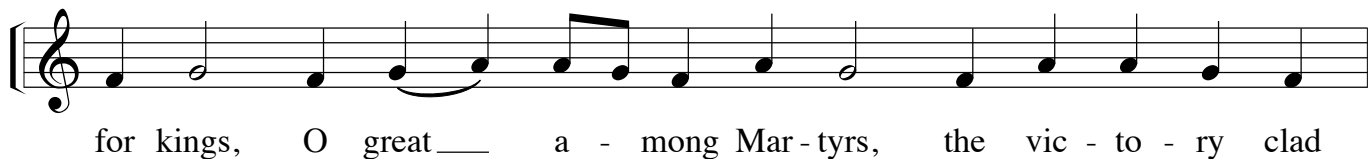
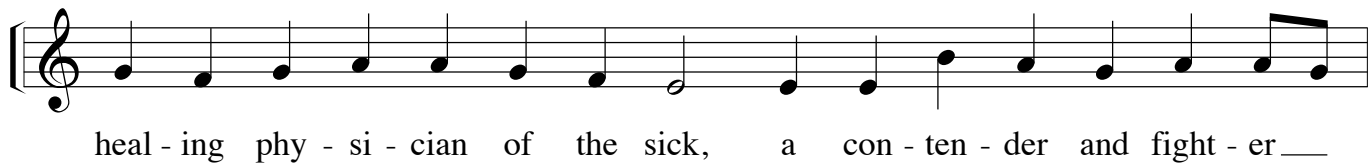
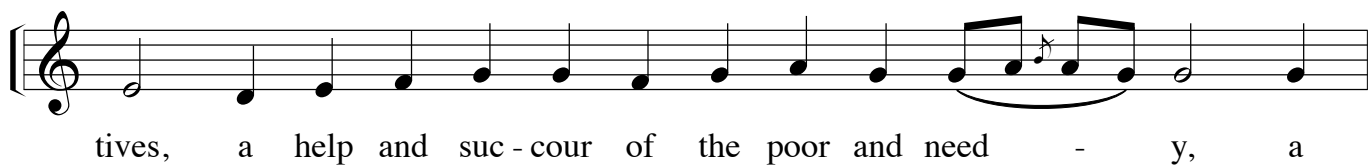
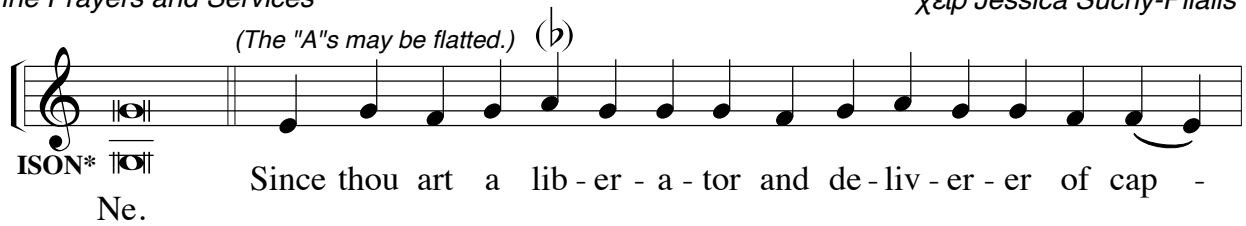
April 23rd

The Great-Martyr George the Trophy-bearer Apolytikion

Mode 4, Soft Chromatic - Thi = G

Text Source: S. Nassar
Divine Prayers and Services

χείρ Jessica Suchy-Pilalis



*The ison may remain on a low G throughout, or may follow the melody whenever the melody goes below G.

September 14 - *The Exaltation of the Cross*

Kontakion

Intonation: #10

Fourth Mode (Soft Chromatic)

Allegro ♩=150

Ὁ ὑψωθείς ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ



Thou Who wast raised_ up___ on the Cross_ of Thine



own will, O Christ our God,_ do___ Thou be - stow_



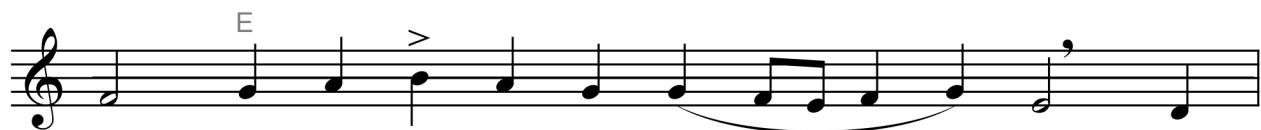
Thy com - pas - sions up - on this, Thy new com - mon - wealth named



af - ter Thee. Glad - den with Thy sov - 'reign might our most



Or - tho - dox hier - archs, and vouch - safe them vic - to -



ry o - ver eve - ry false teach - - - ing; and



as Thy help in war_ may they pos - sess the weap - on of peace,



the tro - phy in - vin - ci - ble._____

THE HOLY MYRRH-BEARER AND EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES MARY MAGDALENE

July 22
Apolytikion

First Mode
"The soldiers standing guard"

When Christ God had been born for our sakes_ from the

Vir - gin, thou faith - ful - ly didst fol - low Him, keep -

ing_ His stat - utes and heed - ing His sa - cred laws,____

O au - gust Mar - y Mag - da - lene. Hence,_ as

we____ to - day ob - serve thy ho - ly____ re - mem-brance,

we____ re - ceive____ the loos - ing of our sins____ and_ trans -

gres - sions through thy ho - ly prayers_ for us.