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## **List of Musical Signs According to the Georgian Neumatic Codices of the 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> Century**

### **Abstract:**

In Georgian neumatic system the homogenous signs are found with general graphics, but often with different details of shape. The difference is mainly related to the augmented size of the neumes, or to the prolonged ending of signs. Since the meaning of neumes is still kept in secret, it is impossible to ignore any of their graphic details. Possibly, each feature of the sign would have its unique purpose. Hence, the signs should be differentiated according to the detailed outlines from each other. It's difficult to differentiate an individual handwriting of various scribes from a deliberate change made by author. Therefore, the classification of signs is the top priority in order to separate independent signs from their graphic variations. The list of musical signs allows systematizing the symbols, identifying the core of neumatic system and classifying the variants produced by the basic neumes.

Despite the unification of Georgian neumatic system in the 10th -11th centuries, in the musical script of various monasteries distinguished can be the symbols with the outline characteristic only for them. The article reveals musical signs of rare outline, characteristic of different manuscripts, and presents a more or less complete list of musical signs.

### **Keywords:**

neumatic, list, signs, manuscript, graphic variation.

The methodology of musical paleography research, first of all, envisages the creation of the list of musical signs, which allows systematizing the symbols, identifying the core of neumatic system and classifying the variants produced by the basic neumes. Creation of the list of symbols is recommended basing on the neumatic codices of the same period or the hymns from the same chanting tradition. Due to scantiness of the 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> century Georgian neumatic monuments, symbols can be systematized only basing on period.

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Along with non-syllabic placement of symbols above and below the verbal text line a small number of signs is also considered a special feature of Georgian neumatic system. Indeed, compared to the Byzantine or Slavic neumatic script, where each syllable of the verbal text is packed with neumes, Georgian examples are relieved from the signs and a small amount of neumes is used, at one glance. However, in-depth study of Georgian system may dispel the myth of a small number of symbols. In general, the diversity of symbol configuration in neumatic script, poses problems for the researchers of neumatic system – whether a symbol, is a calligraphic version of a transcriber, or a graphic variant with its own meaning. In Georgian neumatic script, distinguished are similar neumes sort of – a nucleus of the system, which have common generalized graphics (two-, three-peak neumes, arcs, flag-shaped symbol above and below the text line).

Table. 1

UPPER SIGNS	LOWER SIGNS
<i>Line</i> 	<i>Line</i> 
<i>Arc-shaped signs</i> 	<i>Arc-shaped signs</i> 
<i>Flag-like signs</i> 	
<i>Double-peak shaped Signs</i> 	<i>Double-peak shaped signs</i> 
<i>Triple-peak shaped signs</i> 	<i>Triple-peak shaped signs</i> 
<i>Multi-peak shaped signs</i> 	<i>Multi-peak shaped signs</i> 

But they are often presented in different graphic variations, which is mainly related to the increased size of the symbol i.e extension of the ending. This could be considered as a calligraphic variant, but when such symbol variants are encountered in different monuments, quite often, it would be a mistake not to recognize them as independent neumes.

Table. 2

UPPER SIGNS	LOWER SIGNS
<i>Line</i> 	<i>Line</i> 
<i>Arc-shaped signs</i> 	<i>Arc-shaped signs</i> 
<i>Flag-like signs</i> 	
<i>Double-peak shaped Signs</i> 	<i>Double-peak shaped signs</i> 
<i>Triple-peak shaped signs</i> 	<i>Triple-peak shaped signs</i> 
<i>Multi-peak shaped signs</i> 	<i>Multi-peak shaped signs</i> 

It should also be noted that despite the unification of Georgian neumatic system in the 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> centuries, in the musical script of various monasteries distinguished can be the symbols with the outline characteristic only for them; these should also be included in the list of signs.

The article aims to identify individual, original neumes of this or that manuscript, which are not found or very rarely appear in other artefacts. It's focused on the intensely neumated manuscripts of the 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> centuries: Monk Iordane's Heirmologion (It dates back to the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century it belonged to private person – Yotham the church singer, but in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was preserved at Alaverdi Monastery - East Georgia. It is kept in the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, MS. Q-603), the Georgian manuscript #85 from the Athos collection, also dating back to the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries and the most famous collection – Mikael Modrekili's Annual Tropologion (in Georgian - Iadgari - late 10<sup>th</sup> century, from Shatberdi Lavra – Tao-Klarjeti, south Georgia. Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. MS S-425 ). A thorough study of its special neumes was conducted by Georgian ethnomusicologist and church singer D. Shughliashvili, some results of which will be presented here.

On the one hand, in tropologion of Michael Modrekili, are distinguished unusual graphic variants of the basic symbols of the system, such as e.g. multi-peak grapheme above the line, its last elongated peak is again followed by short arcs, also with elongated ends.

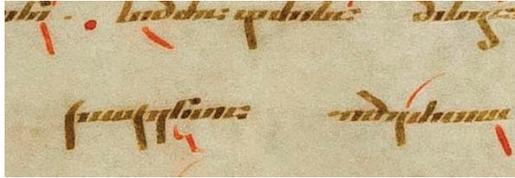
Fig. 1



*Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. S-425, 7v*

Or lines under the verbal text, which differ from each other in inclination.

Fig. 2



*Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. S-425, 3v*

Also a symbol which is kind of unique. What is its originality? It is known that the Georgian system of neumes is characterized in two types of symbol arrangements – above and below the verbal text. In Mikael Modrekili's *Iadgari* "this unique symbol encompasses both spaces – from below the line up to above the line. It is somehow a combined variant of the arc below the line and multi-peak symbol above the line" (Shughliashvili 2018, 341). It should be noted, that this neume is unusual not only for other monuments, but also for the manuscript of Michael Modrekili itself. But, it should be included in the list of symbols because of its existence.

Fig. 3



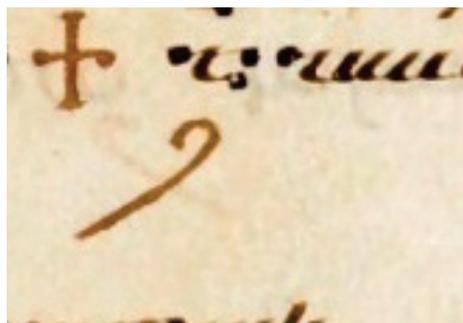
*Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. S-425, 7v*

As for the other manuscripts, the outstanding Georgian musicologist, Shalva Aslanishvili highlights important graphemes in Hirmologion of monk Iordane. Notable among them is the original neume similar to Byzantine sign apostrophos, or double apostrophoi, it can be called a comma-like symbol as well.

Fig. 4, 5



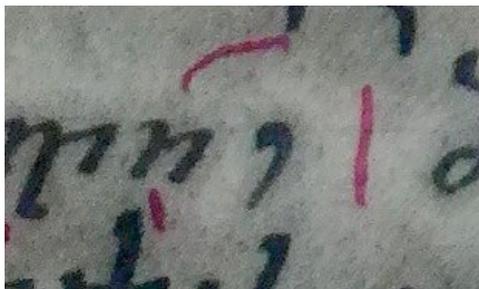
Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. A-603, 21r



Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. Q-908, 279v

A grapheme of similar outline can also be found in Georgian nautmatic monuments from later period 19<sup>th</sup> century (Q-1509), but here it is placed at the end of the phrase and has a clear, cross-cutting function between the phrases, also noteworthy is a combination of black comma-like symbol and red vertical line as a kind of modification of the red and black dividing dots in the monuments of the 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> centuries, division into verbal stanzas is indicated by the black comma-like symbol, into musical stanzas – by the red line.

Fig. 6, 7



Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. Cod. 1509, 21

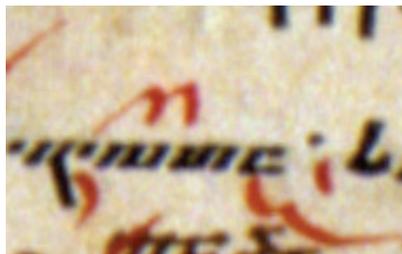


Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. Cod. S-425, 8v

So, in later MS, comma-like neume carries the dividing function whilst in Iordane's manuscript apostrophos is included in the neumes. The symbol apostrophos holds an important place in Byzantine semi-ography, both in neumatized script and in the echphonetic notation. The apostrophos of echphonetic system probably indicates a fairly low pitch of the sound, without accents, but in the system of neumes it denotes descending second. It is also noteworthy that in echphonetic system the apostrophos is written below the line, whilst in neumatic – above the line. In Iordane's manuscript it is placed below the line, like an echphonetic symbol.

The semantics of the apostrophos in Georgian manuscript is still unknown, however, certain regularities are evident from a purely visual point of view. It is found only in the second tone and in combination with only two signs – double-peak neumes above and below the line.

Fig. 8



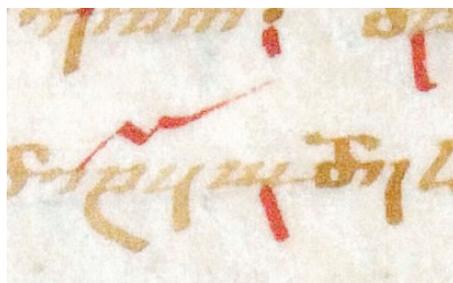
Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. Codex A-603, 28r

In this combination the two-peak neume above the line belongs to special neumes, in configuration it differs from the double-peak symbols of the same manuscript by an obtuse angle and closed ending.

Fig. 9, 10



Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. Cod. A-603, 21r

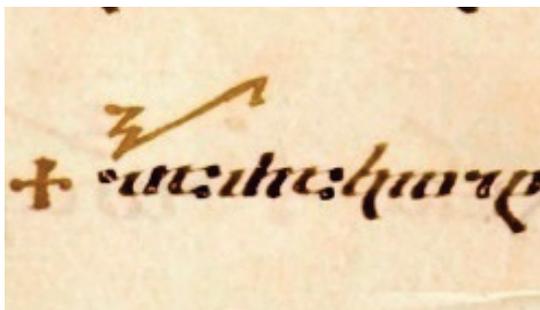


Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. Cod. A-603, 89r

Sh. Aslanishvili likens this symbol to Byzantine *paraklitike*. However, it is difficult to agree with the graphic similarities between this neume and Byzantine ekphonic sign – *paraklitike*. At his disposal Aslanishvili could have had an example in which the graphic version of the *paraklitike* resembled the sign in Iordane's manuscript. In the list of ekphonic

signs of the Gelati Gospel, the *paraklitike* is given by the following graphic variant.

Fig. 11



*Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. Q-908, 279v*

It is interesting how the corresponding fragments of these original symbols of Iordane's manuscript are presented in other sources. Basing on the comparative analysis, according to Aslanishvili's opinion: "This double-peak symbol is a modification of the standard Georgian double-peak neume" (Aslanishvili 1991, 43). However, comparison with the Athonite manuscript did not give us such unambiguous results. Manuscript # 85 of the Athonite Collection is preserved in the form of black and white photos at the Georgian National Center of Manuscripts. In addition, the Central Archive holds a fragment of an Athonite manuscript – the original, which was identified recently. As for the double-peak symbol above the line, which is of interest to us, its parallel neumes are different graphemes – in one case – a multi-peak symbol above the line.

Fig.12

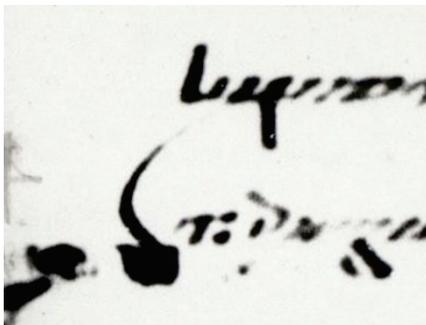


*National Archives of Georgia. Fund of Manuscripts 1446, Cod. #172, 4*

But it is mostly replaced by an arc above the line, which with its unusual location on the verbal text, is an "exclusive" symbol of the Athonite

manuscript. Arc above the line is one of the most common signs in all manuscripts. But in the Athonite source along with the common variant, it is found with an unusual angle of inclination – almost perpendicular to the line (instead of tilting to the right).

Fig. 13

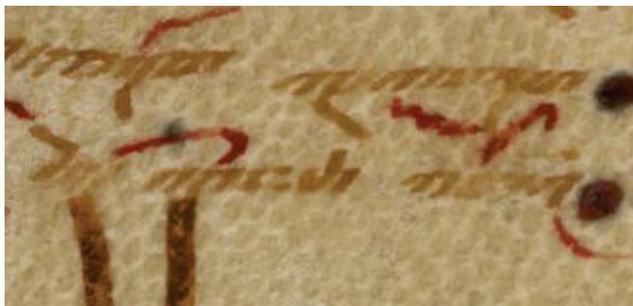


*Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. #85, 18r*

As I have mentioned, it periodically appears as a parallel neume to the two-peak symbol characteristic of Iordane's manuscript.

A hook-like neume can also be considered one of the “properties” of the Athonite manuscript – tilted to the right at different angles.

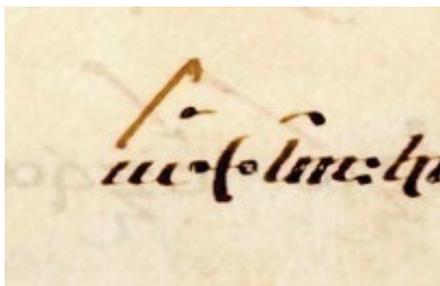
Fig. 14



*National Archives of Georgia. Fund of Manuscripts 1446, Cod. #172, 3*

It is likely that variability of the inclination angle also has particular meaning, but this is a topic of separate research. This hook-like neume resembles Byzantine echphonetic sign – Oxia (Oxia indicates an increase in pitch and its maintenance until the end of the phrase).

Fig.15



*Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. Q-908, 279v*

Besides, in the Athonite manuscript, special mention should be made of the neume similar to Georgian letter 'i' ('i') or an open ring.

Fig. 16



*Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Cod. #85, 39v*

Interestingly, according to Sh. Aslanishvili, the hook-like symbol and open ring are documented in Iordane's manuscript, but as the researcher notes, unlike the basic neumes, "these symbols are written in black ink and presumably, is a later entry" (Aslanishvili 1991, 43). As for the Athonite manuscript, both of these graphemes, like other neumes, are written in red colour and does not differ from the rest, i.e. it belongs to the main layer of the list of symbols.

Thus, the variability of the signs allows to assume that in the 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> centuries, despite the practice of intensive copying of hymnographic collections, the hymns were not copied accurately, but considered were the elements characteristic of each monastery. In other words, the existence of a unified system of neumes did not preclude the existence of individual neumes of local traditions. This fact indicates to the diversity of chanting schools built on a single basis. Finally, basing on today's research, the list of Georgian musical signs of the 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> centuries can be presented as follows:

Table 3.

UPPER SIGNS	LOWER SIGNS
Line 	Line 
Arc -shaped signs 	Arc -shaped signs 
Flag-shaped signs 	
Two-peak signs 	Two-peak signs 
Three-peak signs 	Three-peak signs 
Multi-peak signs 	Multi-peak signs 
Hook sign 	Apostrophos 
open circle 	
THE SIGN COVERING BOTH SPACES 	

Finally, in most cases was revealed the connection of different signs with Byzantine graphemes. I think, a parallel study of Byzantine musical paleography may turn out to be a key for understanding original Georgian neumes.

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## Екатарине Ониани

### Листа музичких знакова према грузијским неуматским кодовима из 10. и 11. века

У грузијском неуматском систему постоје хомогени знакови са заједничком графиком, али често са различитим детаљима у облику. Разлика се, углавном, односи на увећање неума или на продужени наставак знака. Пошто се значење неума још држи у тајности, немогуће је игнорисати било који од њихових графичких детаља. Могуће је да свака карактеристика знака има нарочиту сврху. Стога, знакове треба разликовати према детаљима у облику. Тешко је разликовати индивидуални рукопис различитих преписивача од намерних промена које је начинио аутор. Зато је класификација знакова врхунски приоритет да би се одвојили посебни знакови од њихових графичких варијација. Листа музичких знакова омогућава систематизацију симбола, идентификовање језгра неуматског система и класификовање варијанти које су основне неуме произвеле.

Упркос унификацији грузијског неуматског система у 10. и 11. веку, у музичким записима различитих манастира могуће је разликовати симболе са облицима карактеристичним само за њих. У чланку се приказују музички знакови ретких облика, карактеристичних за различите рукописе и презентује мање-више целовита листа музичких знакова.

#### Кључне речи:

неуматски, листа, знакови, рукопис, графичка варијација.