

The Use of Compound Time Measures of Rhythmic Syllabic Compositions in Byzantine Chant: Is it advisable?

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This paper attempts to address the issue of rhythm in Byzantine chant, as it has developed in recent years, in the practice of assigning compound (concise) time measures to syllabic forms of compositions. The question of using simple or compound time measures of rhythm is one that has to date, to our knowledge, only briefly been touched upon by Byzantine music scholarship. Thus, when one examines, the vast array of music scores published and/or produced and disseminated by different forms of electronic means a vague picture emerges that leave one wondering what is or what should be the case. Although both simple and compound time measures are used by church musicians and composers, it is not at all clear which of the two is to be preferred and why. It is precisely this perplexing question that this paper will try to deal with and attempt to shed new light by offering a precursory answer.

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