

TRANSLATING LITURGICAL TEXTS AND MUSIC INTO THE VERNACULAR: THE HEIRMOI OF THE ENTRY AND THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS IN THE SLOVAK GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH¹

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DOI: 10.17846/CL.2026.19.1.52-69

Abstract: ŠKOVIERA, Samuel. *Translating Liturgical Texts and Music into the Vernacular: The Heirmoi of the Entry and the Annunciation of the Theotokos in the Slovak Greek Catholic Church*. The principle that every nation should praise God in its own language is foundational to every Byzantine church. Unlike the Roman Church, Byzantine missions to neighbouring nations included the deliberate translation of the entire rite into local languages. This is evident, among other sources, in the zealous debates of the Slavonic apostles Constantine and Methodius with Roman scholars who accepted only three liturgical languages. What these hagiographies do not mention is that alongside the translation of texts, music also needed to be addressed. Medieval Slavonic manuscripts with musical notation show that hymns were translated in tandem with liturgical music. This interplay of word and melody remains relevant today. While translation studies is a developed field, musicology lacks a branch to explore this parallel phenomenon in music. Consequently, each church tends to adopt its own approach.

This paper analyses this process within the Slovak Greek Catholic Church, focusing on Slovak translations and Slavonic musical traditions in the heirmoi of the canons for the feasts of the Entry and the Annunciation of the Theotokos. A detailed analysis may offer guidelines for developing a more systematic method for future translation projects – or for reassessing existing ones – helping to preserve both the living tradition of liturgical music and text, and their inherent unity.

Keywords: *Liturgical translation, Byzantine rite, Slovak Greek Catholic Church, Slavonic Chant, Carpathian Plainchant, Prostopinije, Heirmos*

1. Introduction

The translation of liturgical texts into vernacular languages is an ongoing phenomenon in various churches around the world. It was characteristic of the Byzantine rite long before the translation of the liturgy in the Roman Catholic Church started. The Byzantine Rite is also characterised, even today, in comparison to the Latin Rite, by the fact that almost all of the texts read aloud are chanted – whether they are prayers, liturgical dialogue, readings, or hymns. In translating the liturgy into vernacular languages, therefore, the musical component of the liturgy cannot be omitted. Nor, therefore, can we speak only of a translation but of a conversion of both the textual and the musical components of the liturgy. Despite the fact that this is such a fundamental part of the worship of the Byzantine rite, there is no uniform approach to conversion – translation and

¹ The study is part of the VEGA grant project No. 2/0116/24 *Multilingvizmus v cirkevnom speve*, which is being conducted at the Institute of Musicology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

musical adaptation.² Different churches approach the issue in different ways and with different attention to detail.

In this study we will focus on an approach to the conversion of liturgical hymns in the Slovak Greek Catholic Church. Before analysing this approach, we would like to underline a few basic concepts.

Let us begin with the question of why it is important to translate the liturgy into the native languages of the various ethnic groups at all (until recently a sensitive issue for the Latin rite). One biblical event may serve as an answer: the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. At the moment of the descent, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1-21), all those present began to understand each other, even though they spoke different languages. The diversity of tongues, which at the building of the Tower of Babel had led to division and misunderstanding, becomes at the moment of Pentecost a manifestation of unity in praise to God. It is as if by this act the diverse languages were blessed by the Holy Spirit. Thus, we can and should each praise God in our own language. This is how St. Basil the Great describes it:

“Let the tongue sing, let the mind interpret the meaning of what has been said, that you may sing with your spirit, that you may sing likewise with your mind.³ Not at all is God in need of glory, but He wishes you to be worthy of winning glory.” (St. Basil the Great. Homily on Psalm 28; Basil 1963, 210)

This short passage affirms the need to understand what we pray and sing so that the whole person, heart and mind, is involved.

The second question is why we sing at all. The Byzantine hymn *Cherubikon*, which is sung at the Divine Liturgy during the transfer of gifts, leads us to this question:

“We who mystically represent the Cherubim, and sing to the Life-Giving Trinity the thrice-holy hymn, let us now lay aside all earthly cares that we may receive the King of all, escorted invisibly by the angelic orders. Alleluia” (Taft 1975, 54)⁴

This means that the people in the church become like cherubim during the service, make an offering of praise to God in the form of singing. Singing is therefore the basic form of recitation in the services of the Byzantine rite. To be close to the angelic ideal, this form should be as perfect as possible, and thus the text and music should be unified, something that was given great emphasis in the Byzantine rite (Wellesz 1947, 309-10). Music is a kind of liturgical garment or medium for the sacred texts. Or to put it in other words: the liturgical offering (that is what we bring to the altar in the church by our minds, souls, bodies and hearts) has two wings: words and music. But there is still kept an internal hierarchy: The liturgical rite on the first place is filled with words (prayers, readings, petitions, hymns, etc.) that are garmented with music. One without another is incomplete.

Liturgical hymns form the musical core of worship because they are the richest in terms of music and poetry. Gregorios Stathis defines them as follows:

² Principles for the musical adaptation of Slovak liturgical texts to melodies in the context of the Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia are presented in my recent publication (Škoviera 2025), especially in the chapter “Liturgický spev a text” (27-40).

³ Cf. 1 Cor 14:15.

⁴ See also a revised, updated, and expanded Italian edition published in collaboration with Taft's student Stefano Parenti (Taft and Parenti 2014).

“[...] the words of hymnography are wondrous Greek poetry written by the saints of the Church, as an outcome of their experiential relationship with God and the Theotokos.” (Stathis 2006, 5)

As Stathis points out, hymns are liturgical poetry, that is, they follow certain formal rules, unlike prose liturgical texts (such as prayers). In our case, the hymns are divided into strophes, the strophes into cola⁵ and the cola are governed by the number of syllables and the positions of the accents. Byzantine liturgical poetry often employs various poetic devices such as anaphora, contrast, parallelism, etc. In addition, hymns contain theological truths that are guaranteed by the spiritual life of the hymnographers, as described by Stathis. As such, the translation of the hymns is not a simple prose translation, nor is it a looser poetic translation, both of which are standard for translators. In the case of liturgical hymns, it is more a matter of remodelling, which should respect all their components – whether poetic, theological or prosaic – thereby preserving precision of meaning and aesthetic beauty.

When we come to musical adaptations, three conditions should be (or usually are) fulfilled: 1) preservation of theological and linguistic maxims, 2) preservation of musical and hymnographic tradition, and 3) preservation of melody. By the first point we mean that the musical component should be in harmony with the text⁶ and should preserve its propositional and theological clarity. By the second point we mean respect for the musical language of a given musico-liturgical tradition, which consists of some melodic units (formulae) or standard melodic progressions and grammar – rules for their use. By the third point we mean the preservation of the particular melodies of the hymns – not in the sense of a slavish retention of the tones and their rhythmic values, but with the degree of malleability that the melodies provide.

After this theoretical introduction, we can proceed to introduce the Church and the particular hymns.

2. Slovak Greek Catholic Church

As an example for the translation of hymns in the case of the Slovak Greek Catholic Church, we have chosen the form of *zadostoinik* (CSL. *зѧдостѡйникъ*),⁷ specifically two hymns: *zadostoinik* on the feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple (21 November) and the feast of the Annunciation (25 March).⁸

⁵ This term colon from the Greek *kōlon* (κῶλον) represents the shortest (basic) textual unit set to a single melodic formula. The *kōla* (pl.) may be further combined into larger units in the manner of psalm verses, which are made up of two or three shorter sections.

⁶ The musical component should follow the phonological and grammatical features of the text. In the case of Slovak, the most important categories are the accent (on the first syllable of the word) and the quantity of vowels (short and long).

⁷ There is no analogous one-word term in English or Greek terminology. The term *zadostoinik* comes from Church Slavonic, meaning “in place of *Dostójno jést*”, i.e. *Axion estin*. In the liturgical books it is given with the heading *Εἰς τὸ Ἐξαίρετως*, i.e. “On the *Especially*” which is the first word of the priest’s exhortation, followed by the singing of the hymn *Axion estin*: *Ἐξαίρετως τῆς Παναγίας, ἀχράντου, ὑπερευλογημένης, ἐνδόξου, Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας*. [Especially for our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary.] The counterpart of the term *zadostoinik* is greek ἀντὶ τοῦ «Ἄξιόν ἐστιν».

⁸ We list the feasts in this order according to the liturgical year of the Byzantine rite, which begins on September 1.

The *zadostoinik* is a hymn sung at the Divine Liturgy, which on some feasts⁹ replaces the hymn *Axion estin*,¹⁰ a part of the ordinary of the Divine Liturgy. The *zadostoinik* is usually the heirmos of the 9th hymn of the canon of the feast in question, together with the verse that is sung before the heirmos (if it has one; in this study we will deal only with the heirmos). Although the genre of heirmos occurs in the Divine Office, especially on the matins (*orthros*), in the case of the *zadostoinik*, it also occurs in the Divine Liturgy.

In the Slovak Greek Catholic Church, where the regular celebration of the Divine Office is not as widespread (the standard service is the Divine Liturgy)¹¹ the *zadostoinik* is the only liturgical position in which the heirmos genre occurs in the liturgy. Thus, if in some parishes matins are not served, the cantor (lead singer of the church) – and therefore the congregation – has no chance to encounter the hymnographic and musical richness found in matins. The position of the *zadostoinik*, however, makes it necessary to sing some of the heirmoi within the Divine Liturgy.

In this Church, the proper liturgical chant is the called *Carpathian Plainchant* or *Prostopiniye*.¹² This liturgical musical dialect is not homogeneous: we find several layers within it, defined mainly by its origin and degree of simplification. While the chants for the Divine Liturgy are simpler, many of the chants for heirmoi belong to a more archaic and therefore less simplified layer.

It is necessary to mention one more characteristic feature of the Carpathian Plainchant. Many of the melodies for the proper (the changeable parts of the service) are sung to model tunes (melodic types), which usually consist of a few melodic formulae; these are easily adaptable to the text and are iterative, so that almost any text can be sung to these tunes, both in terms of the length of the verses and their number. The choice of a hymn tune for a particular text depends on the hymn form¹³ and the *ichos*.¹⁴ In contrast, many heirmoi preserve an older style of chant that is not as simply adaptable as the model iterative chants described above. Each verse of the hymn is set to a single melodic formula that is governed by verse length and syllable accents. Thus, singing such a hymn requires more demanding preparation – it is not sufficient to sing only according to the text (i.e. without notes) with the application of a universal melodic model to the text in real time, which is standard way of chanting for hymns with model iterative melodies.

3. The text of hymns and their translations

In the following lines we will deal with the text of the hymns mentioned above. The heirmoi of the 9th ode of the Entry and Annunciation can be considered liturgical twins, as they share most of their text – and consequently, their melody. They differ only in the final verse, which is adapted to reflect the specific theme of each feast (table 1).

⁹ These are mainly the great feasts of the Lord (e.g. Nativity, Epiphany, etc.) and the feasts of the Theotokos (e.g. Annunciation, Dormition, etc.).

¹⁰ Gr. Ἀξιόν ἐστιν, CSL. Достойно ѣсть.

¹¹ In the great majority of cases it is the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

¹² The term Plainchant is a translation of the Slavonic word *Простопѣніе*. For this type of chant see e. g. (Blahunková 2019; Marínčák 2015; Roccasalvo 1986; Reynolds 1979b; 1979a; 1980).

¹³ This type of chant is mainly associated with *troparia*, *kontakia*, *stichera* and *prokeimena*.

¹⁴ The *glas* or *ichos* (CSL. гласъ, Gr. ἵχος) is a category of liturgical singing of the churches of the Byzantine rite parallel to the Latin mode. On this category, see (Velimirović 2001; Jeffery 2001; Wellesz 1961, 71, 300-303). In addition to the *ichos* and form of the hymn, the choice of melody may be specified by the name of the automelon – the model hymn on which a given new hymn *prosomoion* was composed. This new hymn took over, in addition to the structure, the melody of the automelon. In the Carpathian Plainchant, several such melodies have been preserved, especially for *stichera*. On the technique of contrafacta in Byzantine hymnography, see (Troelsgård 2003).

As can be seen from the table, the Church Slavonic text faithfully follows the Greek original.¹⁵ Both heirmoi have six verses, the first three of which are divided into two cola and the last one into three cola.¹⁶

Slovak translations of hymns have a special status in the Slovak Greek Catholic Church. Mostly they are provisionals authorised by the local bishop for public use (*imprimatur*). Such texts are contained in the *Hore srdcia* hymnal/prayer book (Gradoš et al. 2002), which is currently the widely used basic collection of liturgical texts in the Slovak language for the Divine Liturgy. The translation we are working with comes from there (table 2).¹⁷

At the very first glance, the translation of the hymns raises points which need to be commented on. In the first place, it is evident that the translator(s) (or the editor(s) of the book) did not realise the connection of the two heirmoi, and therefore we see two completely different translations of different quality. This fact alone greatly affects the arrangement for singing, which should be almost identical for both hymns.

Let us, however, evaluate the translation in turn; first the heirmos for the Feast of the Entry. The first five lines follow the Church Slavonic text faithfully in terms of content, except for a minor inaccuracy: *ръка скверныхъ* “hand of the defiled” is translated as *poškvrnená ruka* “a defiled hand.” Next, the subject of the sentence – the 2nd person singular pronoun *ta* (whom the hand is not supposed to touch) – is also added to the translation, which is desirable for Slovak, although it does not come from the context.

This section follows approximately the same verse length and can be divided into cola. We see a more significant distortion of structure in the second colon of the third verse. This colon combines the meaning from the following verses, which creates an unevenness in the individual textual sections. To the word *hlasno* (“aloud,” from CSL. *немолчно*, “not being silent”), the translator adds *a s radostou* (“and with joy” – *съ радостію*) from the fifth verse, and consequently, originally a double phrase “*воспѣвають ... да вопіють*” is replaced by only one verb, *nech ... spievajú* (“let them sing”). The incorrect nominative/vocative case (*Bohorodička* instead of *Bohorodičke*, dative case “to Theotokos” – *Богородицѣ*) is probably a typographical error; if it were a deliberate vocative case, the word should have been separated by commas, i.e. *spievajú, Bohorodička, slová* (“they sing, O Theotokos, the words”). The result of combining these three cola is their disproportionate length, the loss of their original structure and poetic intent.

In the last verse we see an example where the verse structure is preserved, although the words within it are rearranged. Although such a solution may sometimes be necessary, at the beginnings and ends of hymns it is good to preserve the original arrangement of the words.¹⁸

Although the beginning of the heirmos faithfully follows the original structure of the hymn, the adaptation of the Slovak translation to the original melody can pose considerable obstacles, especially because of lines 3-5, where the translator has rearranged and shortened the text considerably.

¹⁵ A slight deviation is seen in the Church Slavonic text, where the word ἀμύητος (unconsecrated) is translated by *скверный* (defiled, unclean).

¹⁶ The division of the heirmos into verses and colas follows the textual-musical analysis of David Pancza (Pancza 2021, 69-77; 2008, 13-15).

¹⁷ The division of the hymn into lines is ours based on the original structure in the Greek/Church Slavonic original (as far as possible). The asterisks, which divide the hymn into verses, are part of the translation in the book *Hore srdcia* (Gradoš et al. 2002, 309, 368-396).

¹⁸ The beginning of a hymn often serves as a title, a characteristic designation. The automela are also referred to by their incipit. The end of a hymn, on the other hand, is often a typified phrase, a kind of remnant of the original refrain (*akroteleution*; e.g. Κύριε δόξα σοι “Glory to you, O Lord.”) that was used in the psalmody (Frøyshov 2013; Conomos 2012; Troelsgård 2001).

This addition could already be considered a new artistic creation. He renders the original **БѢЖЮ КЪАРХѢ** as *archa* (“ark”), likely to avoid repetition after introducing the new object in the second verse, and omits the word **УДЪШЕВЛЕННОМЪ** entirely. Furthermore, he translates **СКВѢРНЫХЪ** as *hriešnych* (“sinners”), which constitutes an unnecessary shift in meaning.

similarly, he has combined **воспѣвающе** and **да вопіютьъ** into the word *spievaj* “sing!” He interpreted **гласъ** as a *pozdrav* “greeting,” which makes sense for the Annunciation, but less so for the Entry, where it is rather a more general “exclamation of the angel.”

We can summarise that the translation of the heirmos of the Annunciation failed in terms of both content and form. In terms of content, it departs considerably from the original meaning,

Musically, the canon of both the Entry and A

Currently there is no official printed manual of liturgical singing in Slovak. Partially notated chants can be found in the aforementioned prayer book *Hore srdcia*, but these are

²⁰ Bokšaj's *Heirmologion* was published for the needs of the Eparchy of Mukachevo, which became the mother eparchy of the Eparchy of Prešov, and thus of the entire particular Slovak Greek Catholic Church today. On the *Heirmologion*, see (Kandráč 2021, 180-185; Marínčák 2015, 307-309).

only the ordinary parts of the Divine Liturgy. In this study we use Slovak adaptations from the KANTORzKE portal (KANTORzKE 2025), which tries to cover the needs of the cantors of the Košice Eparchy and publishes notated materials on-line. This portal is based on the older website of the Košice Cathedral Choir (Katedrálny zbor 2025), specifically the section for cantors. This choir is also behind the cantorial courses for the Košice Eparchy, which have support from the Church hierarchy (Kantorský kurz 2025; Kolesárová 2006). The introductory text on the KANTORzKE website states that the musical model for the adaptations comes mainly from the Papp's *Heirmologion* and from materials prepared for the aforementioned cantorial courses.²¹ For this reason, we also consider these materials to be the closest to the official ones and thus suitable for the purposes of this study.

Let us now consider the musical aspect of the heirmos of the Entry and Annunciation. The heirmos for both feasts is given in Papp's *Heirmologion* for the Feast of the Entry, where there is a separately notated last verse (fig. 1). We will not comment in great depth on the structure and development of the chant; however, we may note that the melody is an obvious developmental descendant of the melody in the older Ruthenian heirmologion manuscripts (Pancza 2021), and retains the distinctive character of the older Znamenny Chant: the character of the melody is more complex (it contains a minimum of recitation on a single tone), it uses three rhythmic values: the quarter (which is the smallest and basic value for a syllable), the eighth (which mostly appears in clusters preserving the even meter of the melody), and the half. The tune also preserves the division of the text²² and respects the accents in the individual words.

In musical adaptations to the Slovak text, we are again surprised to find that the heirmoi of the two feasts are not set to the same melody. Let us begin with the Feast of the Entry (fig. 2). This adaptation more or less respects the division of the text found in the book *Hore srdcia*. In contrast to the aforementioned prayer book, the author(s) of the musical adaptation divides the fourth verse (*nech hlasno...*) into two halves. It is interesting to point out that although the adapter has made this change, he has not corrected the error *Bohorodička* instead of *Bohorodiče* (as discussed above).

The melody chosen by the adapter is not proper to this heirmos, but is taken from the heirmos of the 9th ode of the Sunday canon (i.e. Resurrectional) of the 4th ichos (fig. 3). Since it is one of the simplest melodies for the heirmoi in Papp's *Heirmologion*, it has established itself in practice as the universal melody for any heirmos sung in the place of the *zadostoinik*.²³ The melody is simpler: except for the last note, it uses only two rhythmic values – a quarter and a half – making it close to the standard melodic language of the *prostopiniye*.²⁴

If we compare the melody in Papp's *Heirmologion* and the adaptation from KANTORzKE, we find only two minor differences in the rhythmic values: the original half value has been changed to a quarter in two cases: the third note in the first verse and the second note in the fourth verse. Conversely, the fourth note from the end in the fifth verse has been changed from quarter to half. The final difference found between these versions is the cadence of the last verse, where the adapter decided to change the syllable division: they combined the notes of the third and second

²¹ We would add that for the Košice cathedral (the Greek Catholic Cathedral of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos, Dominikánske námestie 575/2, Košice) uses a chant that is slightly different from that of Prešov in some melodies.

²² Less obvious is the division between the cola of the 2nd verse, where the melodic formula of the 1st verse is bridged into the next formula. On the other hand, the division between the 2nd and 3rd cola of the last verse has completely disappeared and been replaced by a formula with a simple recitation and cadence.

²³ This substitution is very likely related to the fact that most cantors are unfamiliar with the musical repertoire of the matins, as we wrote above.

²⁴ By this we mean in particular the basic chants for troparia, kontakia and stichera.

syllable from the end under one syllable, thus achieving an accentuation on the penultimate (i.e. first) syllable of the word *všetkých* “all.” These changes may reflect oral practice, but also an attempt to adapt the melody of the text.

Nevertheless, the textual accents were not followed everywhere in the melody. At the beginning of the third verse (*Ale ústa*, “but the mouth”) the accent is on the first syllable (a more appropriate accent would have been on the third syllable, i.e. beginning of the noun); at the end of the fourth verse *spievajú* the accent is on the second syllable instead of the first. In these cases, inspiration from other heirmoi of the same canon (Bokšaj – Malinič 1906, 17-19) or other hymns that use similar procedures would be appropriate.

Although the applied melody is not original to this text, after splitting the fourth verse the adapter achieved its formal suitability for this melody as well. Considering the deviations from the Church Slavonic model, this solution seems to be an acceptable compromise.

The situation with the Annunciation heirmos is different. Despite the fact that, according to our textual analysis, the text departs even more from the Church Slavonic text than in the case of the Entry, the adapter has chosen the melody inherent to the heirmos of the Annunciation, as we have seen it in Papp's *Heirmologion* (fig. 1). See also the Slovak adaptation (fig. 4) and a comparison of the Church Slavonic and the Slovak versions (fig. 5).

As we have seen above, the translation did not respect the original verse structure, which was mainly due to the loss of text in the verses 3-6. The consequence of this can also be seen when comparing the adaptation with the original: the adapter had to omit the fifth and sixth formula of the melody, which can be seen as a deviation from the musical tradition. Also, in order to make the syllables fit the melody better, the adapter divided the first verse between the noun and its adjective – *hriešna * ruka*, “sinful * hand” – which is not natural for Slovak.

When we look at the adaptation from the rhythmic side, we see a few differences from the original. In the very first colon on the syllables *-ko*, *-sme-* and *-la*, the adapter has changed the original pairs of eighth notes to quarter notes (thus doubling the original value); unfortunately we see no justification for this, and in fact it creates a departure from the original musical language and an imbalance in the alternation of the accented and unaccented parts of the melody. We see the opposite process on the first syllable *Ra-* of the penultimate colon: here the adapter has reduced the original rhythmic values by half.

In the following paragraph we will summarise how the adapter worked with the placement of syllables on the individual notes of the Church Slavonic original with regard to accents and vowel quantity. The adapter has tried to remain faithful to the model and has not significantly altered the original melody (except for the points concerning rhythm mentioned above). At no point do we see added melodic material. On the contrary, what we see here is mainly the joining together, the omission of some parts of the melody or their division into several syllables. The omission was made by the adapter in places where the recitation on one note appeared. This is noticeable in the eighth colon: the original four syllables of *rádostiju* became only one syllable *po-*; similarly, in the last colon. The merging of several notes that were originally assigned to separate syllables occurred in places where there was less text or where accent positions were changing.

The attention to word accent is nicely seen at the end of the first stanza (*hriešna*), where the accent was on the antepenultima (*-lénnomu*), but the adapter, by combining the two original syllables, has achieved that the accent has been put in the right place the penultima. At the beginning of the next colon he joined the two notes thus achieving the accent on the two-syllable word *ruka*. We also find a redistribution in favour of the accent at the beginning of the fourth colon. However, this caused an inappropriate accenting at the end of the verse: the three-syllable word *Božieho* thus gained an accent on the penultima. This discrepancy could have been resolved by adding a single tone for the syllable *-ku* (the *b-flat* tone), while the syllable *Bo-* would have had

a sequence of three notes (*a – g – f-sharp*). The modification in favour of the accent at the end of the seventh colon on the word *Cirkev* should also be highlighted.

There are also places in the adaptation that do not respect the accent or even place the melodic accent on explicitly unstressed syllables (such as the enclitics *sa* and *si*). Already in the very first colon, the adapter has divided the original melodic phrase into three syllables *Ako sa* and placed the melodic accent on the last one. We see the accent again on the enclitic on the third syllable of the third verse *tak nech sa*. This could also be corrected by inserting a single *g* or *b-flat* tone to the beginning of the colon, which would move the accent to the first syllable of *nedotýka*. This verse suffers from one more imperfection at its end. To fit all the syllables into the verse, the adapter split a pair of eighth notes on the last two syllables of the word *živého*. This created two problems. First of all, the first of the two syllables is a long one, but it found itself on the shortest rhythmic value, which goes directly against Slovak phonology. Secondly, the adapter has departed significantly from the musical grammar of the Znamenny Chant by this division, which (with few exceptions) does not allow syllables to be sung to single eighth-notes.

5. Summary and conclusions

On the basis of our analysis, we can summarise that for a suitable musical adaptation, first of all, a suitable translation is necessary. If the liturgical-musical tradition is to be preserved, thereby not reducing the natural space for innovation, it is necessary to respect all relevant aspects of Byzantine hymnography and its liturgical context. These include, in particular, the plain propositional and theological meaning of the text, its hymnographic form (with its liturgical function and internal structure), its musical grammar, and the flexibility of the various melodic formulae, which is also manifested in its subordination to the phonology of the text of the given hymn.

However, in the case of the heirmoi presented here, we have to conclude that many of these aspects have not been respected. The very first condition for a faithful translation of the content of the hymns has not been respected: we see words omitted, meanings added or changed. This is also related to the original verse structure of the heirmos and its poetic character: the translation has distorted the layout of the verses (their number and length), some double expressions and other poetic devices present. If in some places these poetic features have been preserved, this was probably unintentional. We consider it a fundamental problem that the translators did not realise the unity of the two heirmoi, resulting in two significantly different Slovak texts.

The musical adaptation is directly related to the text. Like two different translations, we also find two different adaptations. Although the adaptation of the heirmos of the Entry chooses a simpler and more adaptable melody, it departs from the proper melody of the heirmos, which retains its continuity from Greek sources.²⁵ The adaptation of the Annunciation's heirmos already uses its own melody, but because of a formally inappropriate translation, two melodic formulae had to be omitted. Aside from this, the adapter worked with the melody in a rather rigid manner, without any knowledge of the musical language of the Znamenny Chant. We observe a significant clinging to the individual notes of the melody: the melodic aspect of the hymn is thus not understood formulaically, with its structure and flexibility, but only as a sequence of notes. When adapting such melodies, a broader knowledge of the repertoire (especially the use of the same formulae in other hymns) would be beneficial, ideally also knowledge of older versions of the given heirmos or

²⁵ As it turns out according to the analyses of D. Pancza, most of the heirmologic repertoire in the Znamenny Rozpev (and hence in its Ruthenian dialect) preserves its continuity from its Greek antecedents. For heirmoi of the canons of the Entry and Annunciation, see (Pancza 2021, 69-71).

other chants. This ignorance also resulted in inconsistent application of textual accents and vowel quantity in the melody.

This study has attempted to show, through the example of the heirmoi of the 9th ode of the canons for the feasts of the Entry and Annunciation of the Theotokos, various aspects of the conversion of the musico-liturgical tradition from the original language to the new language. It was shown that the translation of the text and the melodic adaptation must go hand in hand. The text must respect the melodic structure of the hymn and the characteristics of the melody, as well as the melody must respect the prosodic characteristics of the text.

However, both sides cannot be approached in isolation. Whether we consider a corpus of liturgical texts or a corpus of melodies (with their melodic vocabulary and grammar), in both cases we find complex systems. These span both the breadth of the present tradition of the rite (in the synchronic dimension) and the connection of that tradition to its past (in the diachronic dimension). Because of that, for a satisfactory outcome of the conversion a thorough musicological, liturgical and hymnographic research have to take place. May this study contribute its part to the development of a consistent methodology for the appropriate conversion of hymns (with their text and melody) into Slovak or other languages.

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Prílohy / Appendix

	v.	Entry	Annunciation
Gr.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	Ὡς ἐμψύχω Θεοῦ κιβωτῶ, ψανέτω μηδαμῶς χεῖρ ἀμυήτων. Χεῖλη δὲ πιστῶν τῇ Θεοτόκῳ ἀσιγήτως. Φωνὴν τοῦ Ἀγγέλου ἀναμέλποντα, ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει βοάτω· Ὅντως ἀνωτέρα πάντων, ὑπάρχεις Παρθένε ἀγνή.	Ὡς ἐμψύχω Θεοῦ κιβωτῶ, ψανέτω μηδαμῶς χεῖρ ἀμυήτων. Χεῖλη δὲ πιστῶν τῇ Θεοτόκῳ ἀσιγήτως. Φωνὴν τοῦ Ἀγγέλου ἀναμέλποντα, ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει βοάτω· Χαῖρε Κεχαριτωμένη ὁ Κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.
CSL	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	Їꙗкѡ ѡдшевлѣннѡмѸ Божію кѣвѡтѸ, да никѡкоже кѡснетсѧ рꙋкѧ скверныхъ, оꙋстнѣ же вѣрныхъ Богородицѣ немѡлчнѡ гласъ ѡг҃҃ела воспѣвѡице, съ рѡдостію да вопіѡтъ: Истиннѡ вѣиши всѣхъ ѣси, дѣво чѣста.	Їꙗкѡ ѡдшевлѣннѡмѸ Божію кѣвѡтѸ, да никѡкоже кѡснетсѧ рꙋкѧ скверныхъ, оꙋстнѣ же вѣрныхъ Богородицѣ немѡлчнѡ гласъ ѡг҃҃ела воспѣвѡице, съ рѡдостію да вопіѡтъ: Рѡдѡица, Благѡдѣтнаѧ, Господь съ тобою.

Table 1. Irmosy na sviatok Vstupu a Zvestovania v gréckom (Gr.) a cirkevnoslovanskom (CSL.) jazyku rozdelené na verše (v.) a kóla / Heirmoi of the feasts of the Entry and the Annunciation in Greek (Gr.) and Church Slavonic (CSL.) divided into verses (v.) and cola.

	v.	CSL.	Sk.
Entry	1.	ІѦкѡ ѡдѡшевлѣнномѡ Бѡжїю кїѡѡтѡ,	Ako duchovného Božieho stánku *
	2.	да нїкакоже кѡснетсѡ рѡкѡ сквѣрныхъ,	nech sa ťa nikdy nedotkne poškvrnená ruka *
	3.	оустнѣ же вѣрныхъ Богородицѣ немѡлчнѡ	Ale ústa veriacich * nech hlasno a s radosťou spievajú Bohorodička
	4.	гласъ ѡггѣла воспѣвѡюще,	slová anjela: *
	5.	съ радѡстїю да вопїѡтъ:	---
	6.	Истиннѡ вѣшши всѣхъ ѣсї, Дѣѡ чїстѡ.	Čistá Panna, naozaj prevyšuješ všetkých.
Annunciation	1.	ІѦкѡ ѡдѡшевлѣнномѡ Бѡжїю кїѡѡтѡ,	Ako sa nesmela hriešna ruka dotknúť archy, *
	2.	да нїкакоже кѡснетсѡ рѡкѡ сквѣрныхъ,	tak nech sa nedotýka živého stánku Božieho. *
	3.	оустнѣ же вѣрныхъ Богородицѣ немѡлчнѡ	S nadšením spievaj Cirkev ---
	4.	гласъ ѡггѣла воспѣвѡюще,	pozdrav anjela: *
	5.	съ радѡстїю да вопїѡтъ:	---
	6.	Радѡйсѡ, Благѡдѡтнѡ, Госпѡдь съ тобѡ.	Raduj sa, Mária, Pán s tebou!

Table 2. Slovenský (Sk.) preklad irmosov na sviatok Vstupu a Zvestovania s ich cirkevnoslovan-skou (CSL.) predlohou rozdelené na verše (v.) a kóla – The Slovak (Sk.) translation of the heirmoi of the feasts of the Entry and the Annunciation with the Church Slavonic (CSL.) original divided into verses (v.) and cola.

9 *mf*

Já - ko o - du - šev - lén - no - mu Bó - ži - ju

Ki - vó - tu, da ni - ká - ko - že kós - net - ja

ru - ká skvér - nych; u - stñi že vír - nych

Bo - ho - ró - di - ci ne mólě - no, hlás Án - he - la vos - pi -

vá - ju - šče, srá - dos - ti - ju da vo - pi - jút: [is -

tin - no výš - ši vsich je - sí, Dí - vo čis - ta - ja.]

Na Blahovišćenije vmisto pos'lidnych slov v skobkach, spivajetsja:

Rá - - duj - sja, bla - ho - dát - na - ja, Hós - pód s To - bó - ju

Obr. 1. Irmos Jáko oduševlěnnomu (ЇѤkw Ѡδσθεβλέννομς) deviatej piesne kánonu na sviatok Vstupu a Zvestovania v cirkevnej slovančine (Papp – Petraševič 1970, 155). / Fig. 1. Heirmos Jáko oduševlěnnomu (ЇѤkw Ѡδσθεβλέννομς) of 9th ode of the canon for the feasts of the Entry and the Annunciation in Church Slavonic (Papp – Petraševič 1970, 155).

Irmos, 4. hlas

A-ko du-chov-né-ho Bo-žie-ho stán - ku, nech sa ťa nik-dy ne-dot-kne
poš - kvr - ne - ná ru - ka. A - le ús - ta ve - ria - cích
nech hlas-no a s ra-dos-ťou spie-va - jú Bo-ho-ro-dič-ka slo-vá an-je - la:
"Čis-tá Pan-na, na-o-zaj pre-vy-šu-ješ všet - kých!"

Obr. 2. Slovenská adaptácia *Ako duchovného irmosu Jáko oduševlennomu* (Іѡκω ὡδὺσσεβλέννομῳ) deviatej piesne kánonu na sviatok Vstupu (Vstup 2025, 3). / Fig. 2. Slovak adaptation *Ako duchovného* of the heirmos *Jáko oduševlennomu* (Іѡκω ὡδὺσσεβλέννομῳ) of 9th ode of the canon for the feasts of the Entry (Vstup 2025, 3).

KÁ-meň ne - ru - ko - sič - nyj, ot ne - si - kó - my - ja ho - rý Te - bé, Ďí - vo,
kra - je - u - hól - nyj ot - si - čé - sja, Chris - tós so - vo - ku - pí - vyj
ras - to - já - šča - ja - sja jes - tes - tvá: ťim ve - se - ľá - šče - sja,
Ťa Bo - ho - ró - di - ce, ve - li - čá - jem.

Obr. 3. Irmos *Kámen nerukosičnyj* (Кáмень нерѹкосѣчный) deviatej piesne kánonu vzkriesenia 4. hlasu (Papp – Petraševič 1970, 70). / Fig. 3. Heirmos *Kámen nerukosičnyj* (Кáмень нерѹкосѣчный) of 9th ode of the Resurrectional canon of ichos 4 (Papp – Petraševič 1970, 70).

Irmos, 4. hlas



A-ko sa nes-me - la hrieš - na ru - ka dot-knúť ar - chy,
tak nech sa ne-do-tý - ka ži - vé - ho stán - ku Bo - žie - ho.
S nad-še - ním spie - vaj Cír-kev poz-drav an-je - la: "Ra - duj sa,
Má-ri - a Pán s te - bou!"

Obr. 4. Slovenská adaptácia *Ako sa nesmela* irmosu *Jáko oduševlénnomu* (Ἰᾶκω ὡδὸς οὐδυσσεύς) deviatej piesne kánonu na sviatok Zvestovania (Zvestovanie 2025, 3). / Fig. 4. Slovak adaptation *Ako sa nesmela* of the heirmos *Jáko oduševlénnomu* (Ἰᾶκω ὡδὸς οὐδυσσεύς) of 9th ode of the canon for the feasts of the Annunciation (Zvestovanie 2025, 3).

CSl. Já - ko o - du - šev - lén - no - mu Bó - ži - ju Ki - vo - tu,

Sk. A - ko sa ne - sme - la hrieš - na ru - ka dot - knúť ar - chy,

da ni - ká - ko - že kós - net - sia ru - ká skvér - nych.

tak nech sa ne - do - tý - ka ži - vé - ho stán - ku Bo - žie - ho

U - stní že vír - nych Bo - ho - ró - di - ci ne - mólč - no,

hlás Án - he - la vos - pi - vá - ju - šče, s rá - dos - ti - ju da vo - pi - jút: Rá - - dujsia

s nad - še - ním spie - vaj Cir - kev po - zdrav an - je - la: Ra - - duj sa,

bla - ho - dát - na - ja, Hos - pód' s to - bó - ju.

Má - ri - a, Pán s te - bou

Obr. 5. Porovnanie irmosov *Jáko oduševlénnomu* (Іѡкѡ ѡдѡшевлѣнномѹ) deviatej piesne kánonu na sviatok Zvestovania v cirkevnej slovančine (Papp – Petraševič 1970, 155) a slovenčine (Zvestovanie 2025, 3). / Fig. 5. Comparison of the heirmoi *Jáko oduševlénnomu* (Іѡкѡ ѡдѡшевлѣнномѹ) of the 9th ode for the feast of Annunciation in Church Slavonic (Papp – Petraševič 1970, 155) and Slovak (Zvestovanie 2025, 3).

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