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THE TREZVONY TO ICONS OF THE MOTHER OF GOD IN PARTES POLYPHONY

“O fervent Intercessor”, “All-merciful Theotokos”, “Protection and Defender” – these are words from prayers dedicated to icons of the Mother of God, imbued with warm love and strong faith. They have found reflection in hundreds of hymns composed during the course of the long history of Russian liturgical chant. In the *partes* or part-singing [*partesnoe penie*] of the late 17th-18th centuries, reverence for the icons of the Most Holy Theotokos became expressed in individual hymns as well as in different chant cycles dedicated to them.

This article concentrates on one of the two main genres of the *partes* music: the so-called “continuous” style in which all parts chant the text in the same rhythm, without pauses, imitations, etc. The definition “continuous” (as opposed to alternating, or concert style) was introduced by V.V. Protopopov.¹ There are also analogous definitions, for example, polyphony with a permanently dense (musical) fabric (by N.A. Gerasimova-Persidskaya²), or Obikhod *partes* music³.

The chant book called *Trezvony* emerged in the 17th century, during the era of Znamenny chant. It “developed in parallel with another book, *Prazdniki* [Festal Menaion] and occupied a solid place in Old Russian musical culture as it approached the 18th century.”⁴ The name of the book derives from the word “*trezvon*” which, in the art of bell ringing, refers to the ringing of all church bells thrice (three separate sets) with two brief pauses. *Trezvony* is a variant of the *Sticherarion* that contains chants (mainly stichera) for certain great feasts, and also feasts of medium rank and lesser feasts⁵. The medium-rank feasts include, for example, the commemorations of St John the Theologian, St John Chrysostom, St Nicholas the Wonder-worker, St Sergius of Radonezh, and also certain highly esteemed icons of the Mother of God – of Vladimir, Kazan’, Smolensk, and Tikhvin.

1 See, for example, Протопопов В. В. Партесное пение // Музыкальная энциклопедия. Т. 4. М., 1978. С. 190-193.

2 Герасимова-Персидская Н. А. Партесный концерт в истории музыкальной культуры. М., 1983. С. 60.

3 See, for example, Ильин В. П. Очерки истории русской хоровой культуры. Вторая половина XVII – начало XX века | <http://www.opentextnn.ru/music/epoch%20/XVII/?id=3644>

4 Захарьина Н. Б. Русские богослужебные певческие книги XVIII–XIX веков. Синодальная традиция. СПб., 2003. С. 77.

5 Concerning the classification of feasts, see, for example, Аверкий (Таушев), архиепископ. Литургика // http://krotov.info/libr_min/19_t/tau/shev_04.htm

SOURCES

This research is based to a large extent on manuscripts from the Synodal chant collection at the Department of Manuscripts, State Historical Museum (hereafter: Sin. pevch. GIM), and on manuscripts from collection no. 283 (“Cultic music”) at the State Museum of Musical Culture of M.I. Glinka (hereafter: GTsMMK). With respect to the *partes* manuscripts, the latter collection does not constitute an independent collection by itself; it is rather a section of the Synodal chant collection that was extracted from it in the 1960s. In addition, I have consulted some manuscripts from the collections at the Russian National Library (RNB, the Capella collection and the collection of A.A. Titov).

The following table summarizes all information known to us today about the services (or separate hymns from them) dedicated to icons of the Mother of God in manuscript sources at the above-mentioned archives. The most widespread of these are the *Trezvony* for the Kazan’ icon (celebrated on 8 July, more rarely on 22 October), the Smolensk icon (28 July), and the Vladimir icon (generally celebrated on 23 June⁶). Seven manuscripts contain hymns for the Tikhvin icon, five for the icon of the “Znamenie” (the Sign), and two for the Iviron Mother of God. Only one version contains the service for the Georgian icon of the Theotokos.

Name of icon	Manuscript sources
The Kazan’ Mother of God	Sin. pevch. 103, 656, 721, 790, 920, 1056, 1095, 1111, 1308, 1315 (1, 2) GTsMMK , coll. 283, no. 458, 515, 533, 993/12 RNB, Manuscript dept., Capella coll. Q. 21 RNB, Manuscript dept., Tit. 3718
The Smolensk Mother of God, Hodigitria	Sin. pevch. 656 (two variants*), 723, 868, 942, 1056, 1065, 1315 (1, 2) GTsMMK , coll. 283, no. 412, 433, 444, 446, 836 RNB, Manuscript dept., Tit. 3718
The Vladimir Mother of God	Sin. pevch. 427, 791, 797, 920, 939, 1308, 1315 (1, 2) GTsMMK , coll. 283, no. 510, 458, 836 RNB, Manuscript dept., Capella coll. Q. 21
The Tikhvin Mother of God	Sin. pevch. 656, 723, 791, 1315 (1, 2) GTsMMK , coll. 283, no. 433, 458
The Mother of God of the Sign	Sin. pevch. 791, 920, 1315 (2) GTsMMK , coll. 283, no. 836 Scientific library of the Novgorod Kremlin**

6 The manuscript Sin. pevch. 1315 contains an inscription with three dates for the feast of the Vladimir Mother of God: 21 March, 23 June and 26 August (see part T 1 in the first set, f. 130). It needs to be explained that this document consists of two different incomplete sets of manuscripts which coincide only in part in their content. I shall refer to them as 1315 (1) and 1315 (2). The first set contains four parts (T 1, T 2, B 1, B 2), and the second – seven parts (D 1, A 1, A 2, T 1, T 2, B 1, B 2). The books in these sets differ in their physical appearance.

* The second variant is found only in the descant part. See Sin. pevch. 656-a, ff. 87-97.

**Information about this manuscript provided by Yu. Mel’nikova (Novgorod).