Byzantine Chant

Chant vs. Song

Byzantine

After Byzantium,the Greek city that became Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. The term is used by historians to refer to a particular time and place.

byzantine

Complicated and clandestine;
full of intrigues.

Ancient Origins
Music of the Angels
Monasticism
The Three Teachers
Sakellarides
Roubanis

ἦχος - echos

tone or mode?

Octoechos

Eight Tones

First Tone
Second Tone
Third Tone
Fourth Tone

Plagal First Tone
Plagal Second Tone
Grave Tone
Plagal Fourth Tone

Byzantine Rhythm

One note per syllable.
(**heirmologic** style)

Short melisma, 2-4 notes per syllable.
(**sticheraric** style)

Ornamented long melismas.
(**papadic** style)

Meter

Based on text.
Accented syllables to unaccented syllables.
Frequent changes of meter.
2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/4

Tempo

Based on situation and nature of hymn.

The Scale (Genos)

8 Steps = Octave Scale

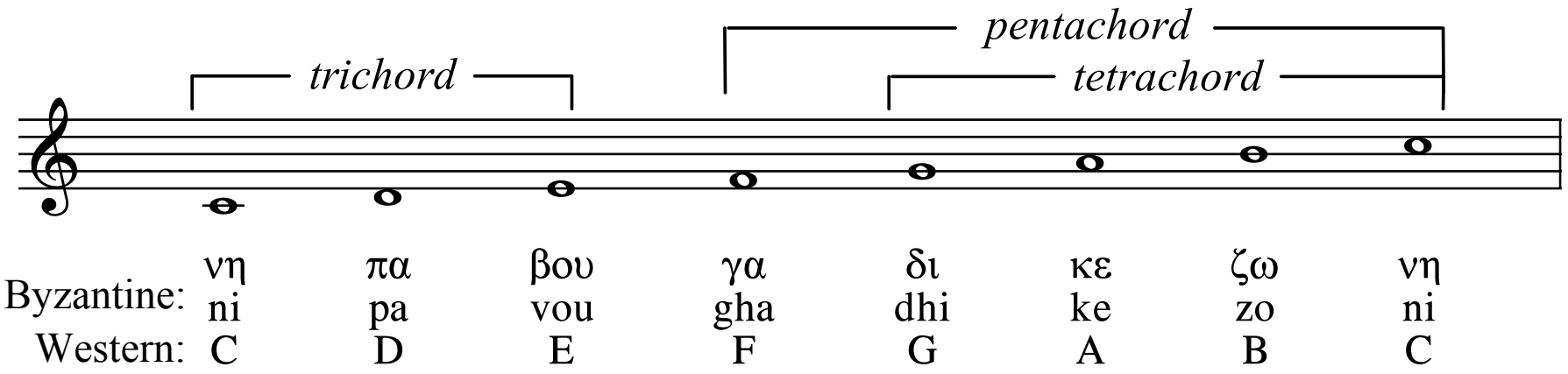
5 Steps = Pentachord

4 Steps = Tetrachord

3 Steps = Trichord

Micro-tunings

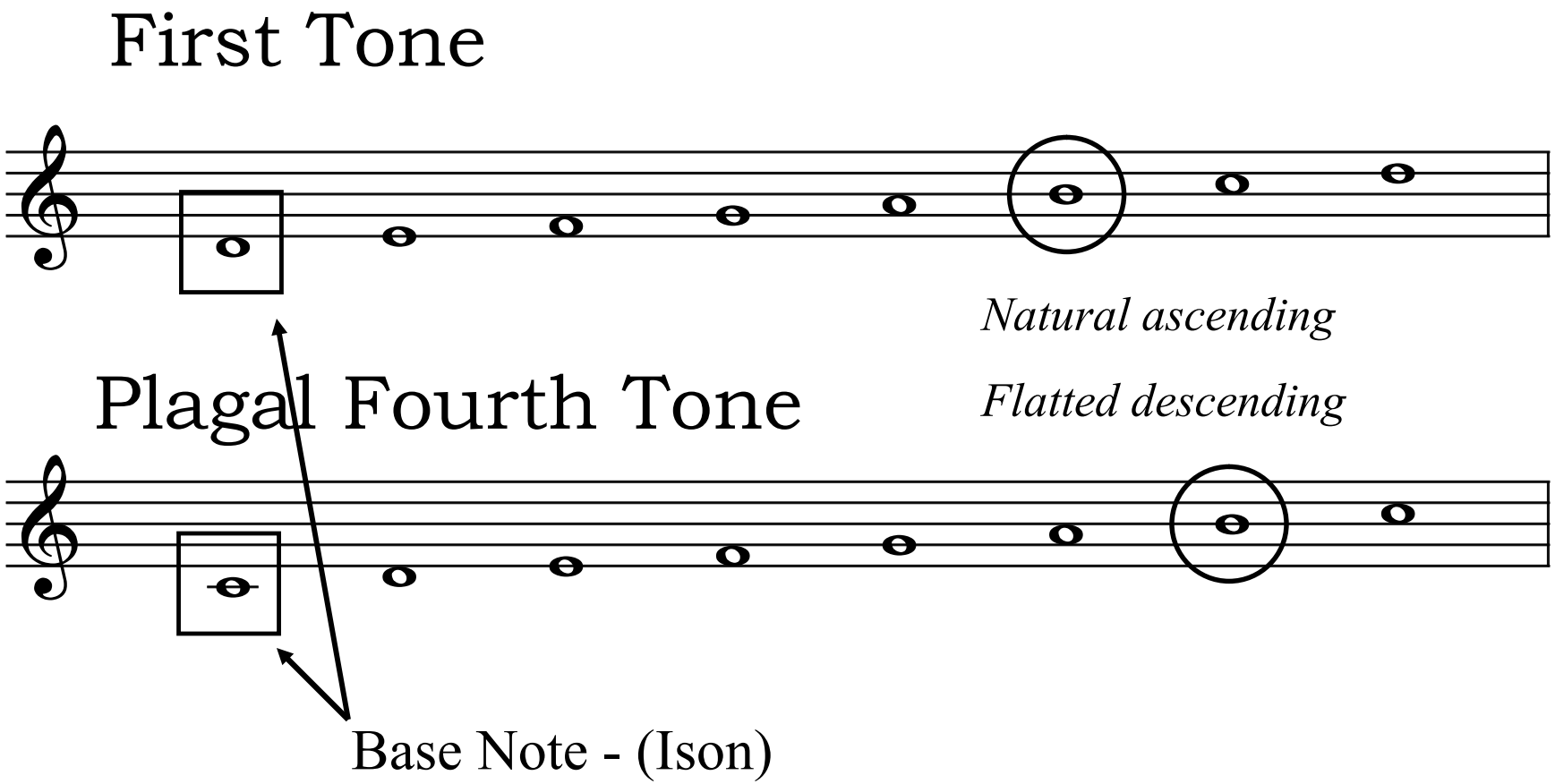
Not just whole steps and half steps.



In Notation: A fixed note system

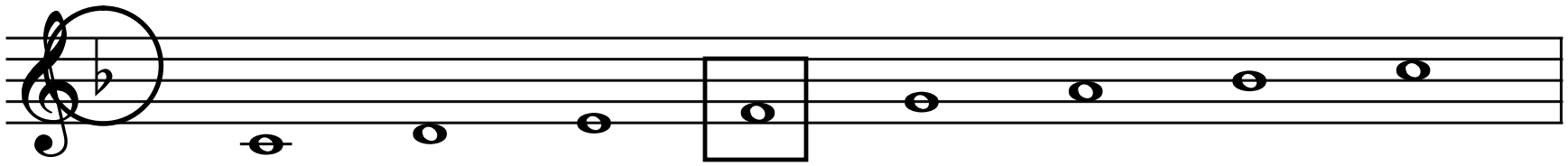
In Practice: “Slightly Moveable NI”

Diatonic Genre



Enharmonic Genre

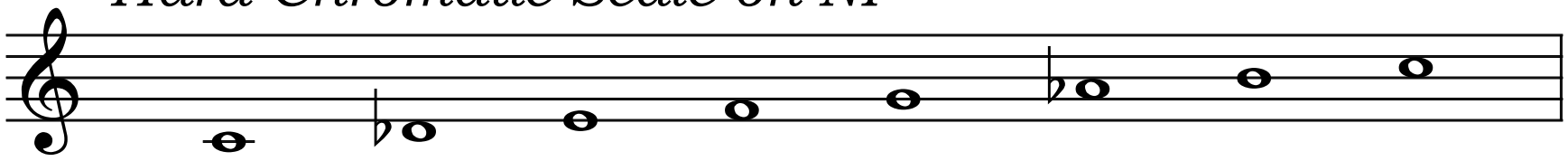
Third Tone and Grave Tone



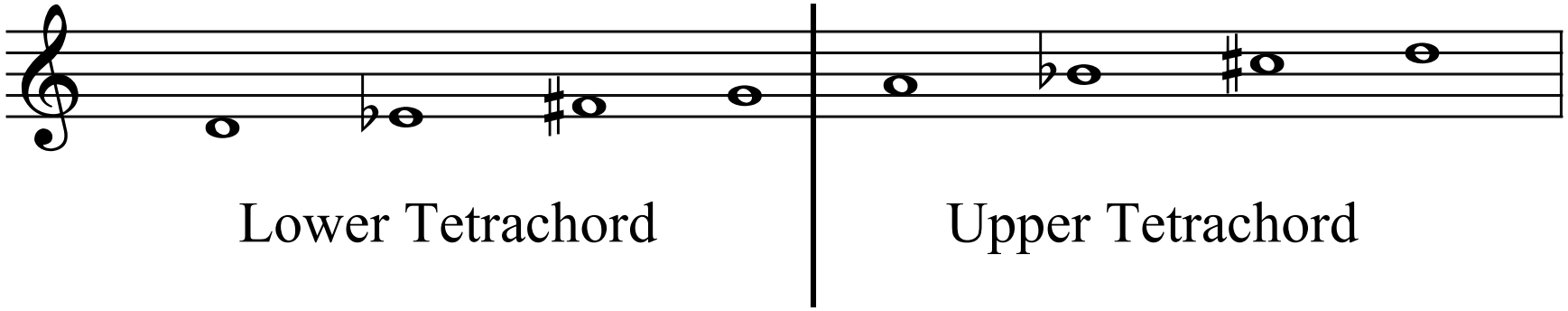
Chromatic Genre

Second Tone and Plagal Second Tone

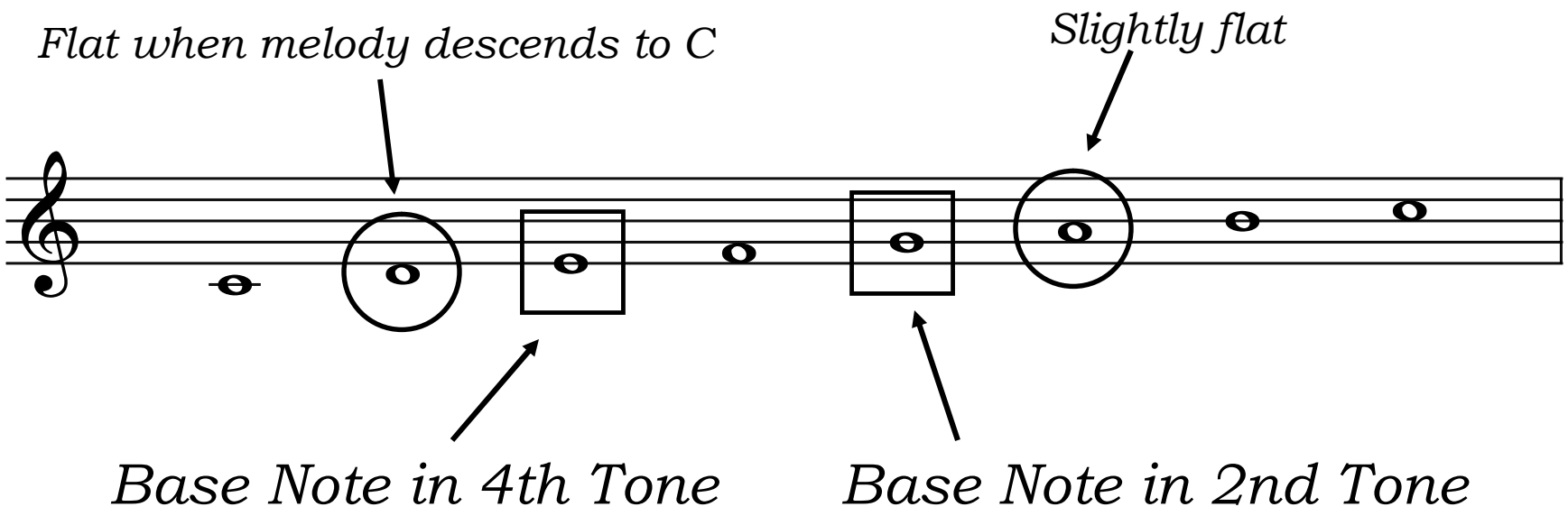
Hard Chromatic Scale on NI



Hard Chromatic Scale on PA

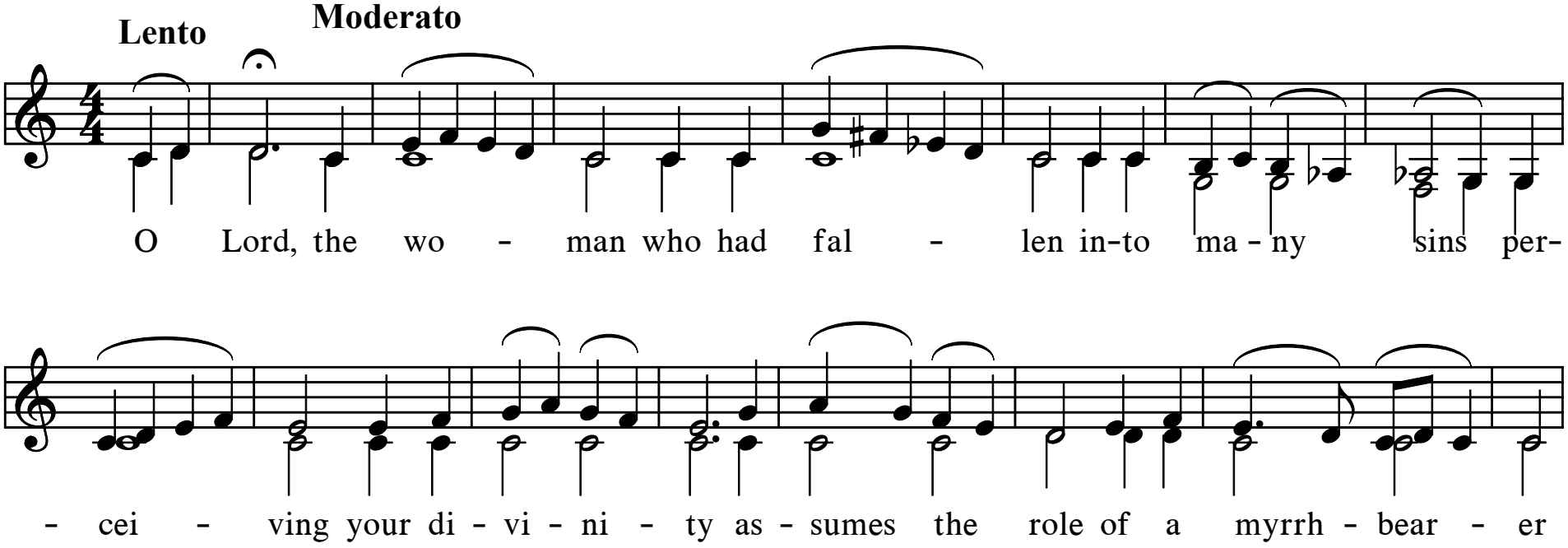


Soft Chromatic Scale



Modulations: A melody may modulate to another genre, not to another key.

Word Painting: The melodic line follows the character of the words.



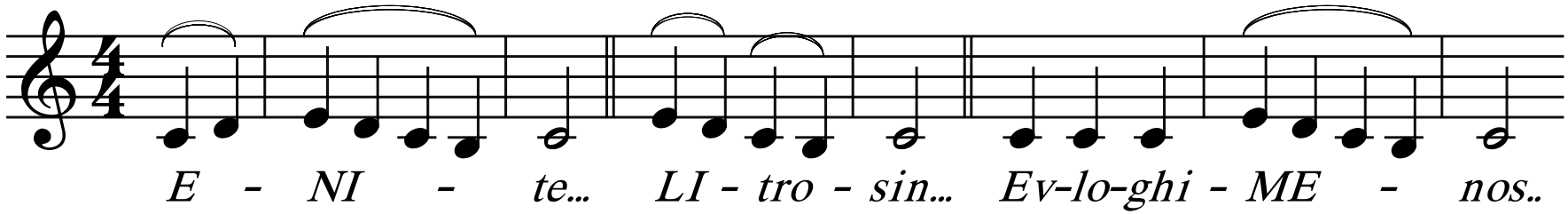
COMMON BYZANTINE MODES

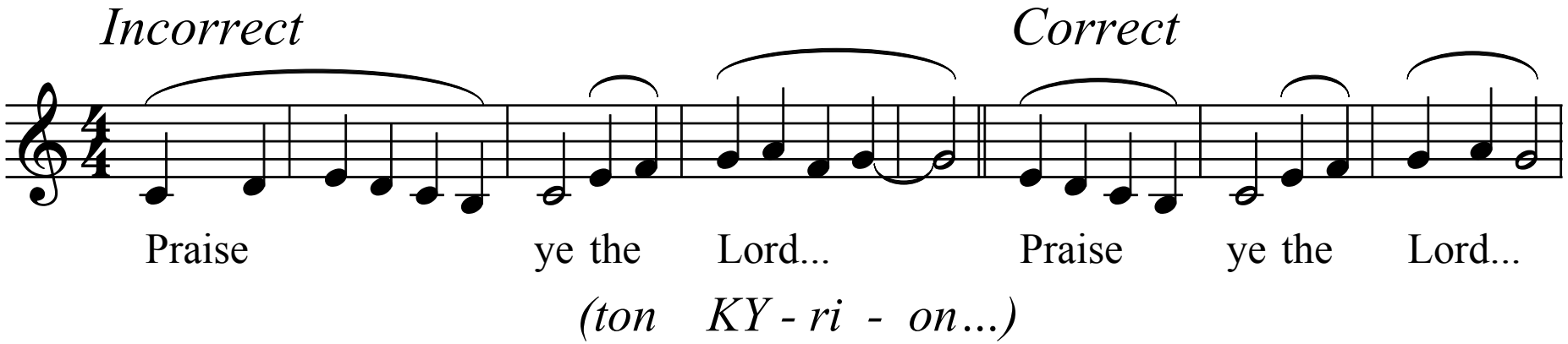
Tone	Rhythmic Style	Scale(s)	Tonic note/Ison	Dominant notes
First	Heirmologic	Diatonic	D	G
First	Sticheraric	Diatonic	D	F
Second	Heirmologic*	Soft or Hard Chromatic	G or D	E, B, or G, A
Second	Sticheraric	Soft Chromatic	G	E, B, C
Third	Heirmologic	Enharmonic	F	A, D, C
Third	Sticheraric	Enharmonic	F	A, D, C
Fourth	Heirmologic*	Diatonic	E	G, D
Fourth	Sticheraric*	Diatonic	D and E	D, G
Plagal First	Heirmologic	Diatonic	A	C
Plagal First	Sticheraric	Diatonic	D	A, G, C
Plagal Second	Heirmologic	Soft Chromatic	G	E, B
Plagal Second	Sticheraric	Hard Chromatic	D	G, A
Grave	Heirmologic	Enharmonic	F	B♭, G, C
Grave	Sticheraric	Enharmonic	F	B♭, G, C
Plagal Fourth	Heirmologic*	Diatonic	C or F	G, E or A, G
Plagal Fourth	Sticheraric	Diatonic	C	G, E

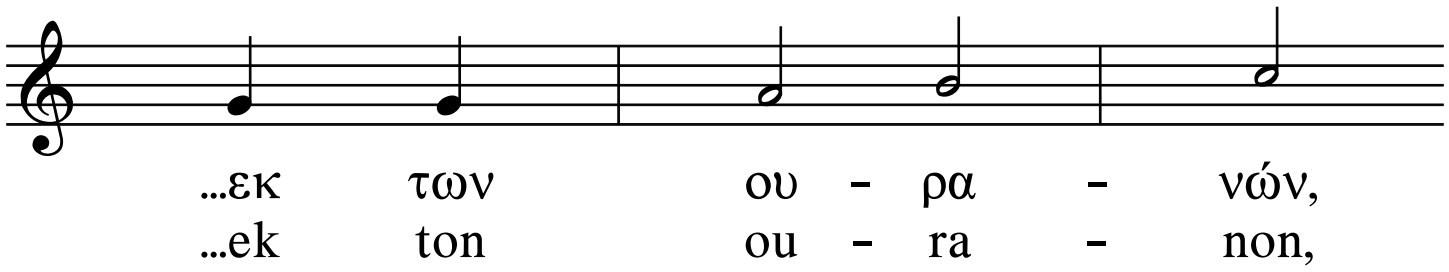
* Indicates that the mode has important exceptions or explanations.

Melodic Formulas Based Upon Syllabic Patterns

Most important identifying feature of a Tone.
Accented syllable gets downbeat, higher pitch, added length, or melisma (extra notes.)







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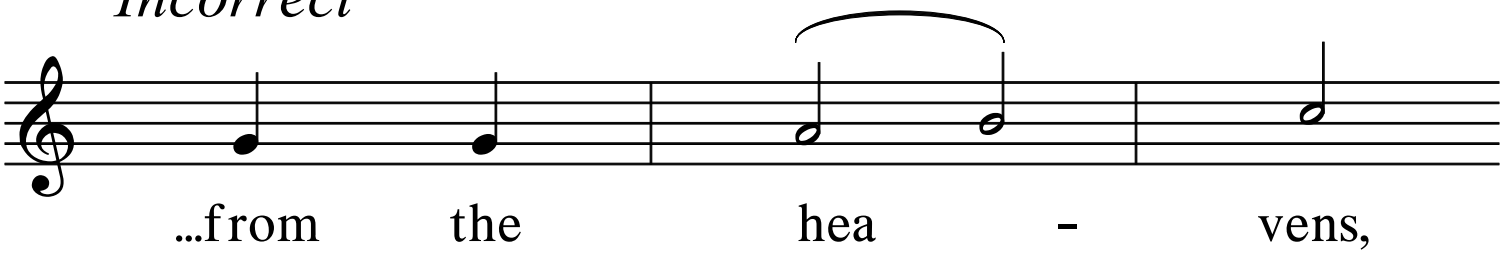

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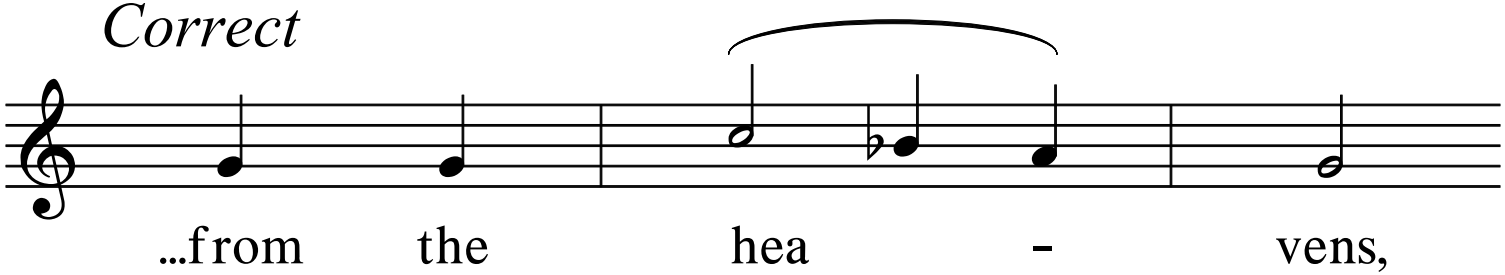
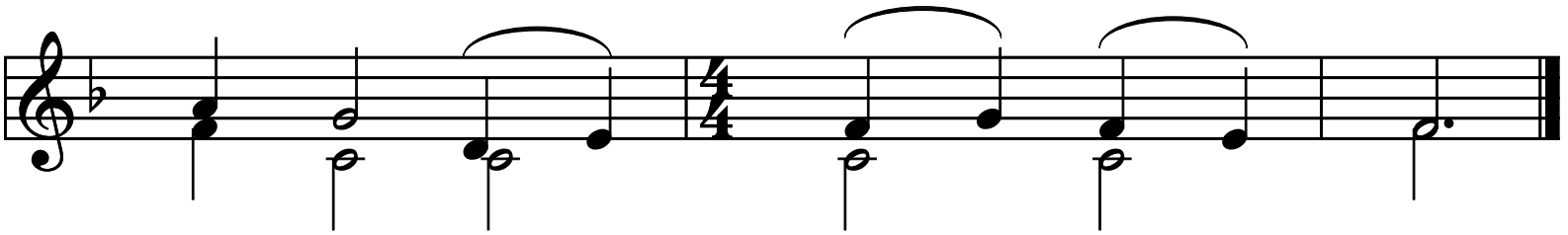


Cadence Formulas



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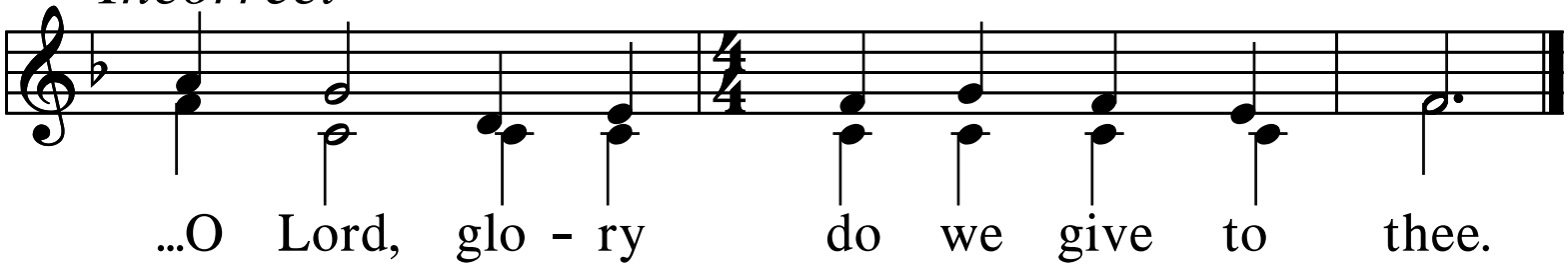

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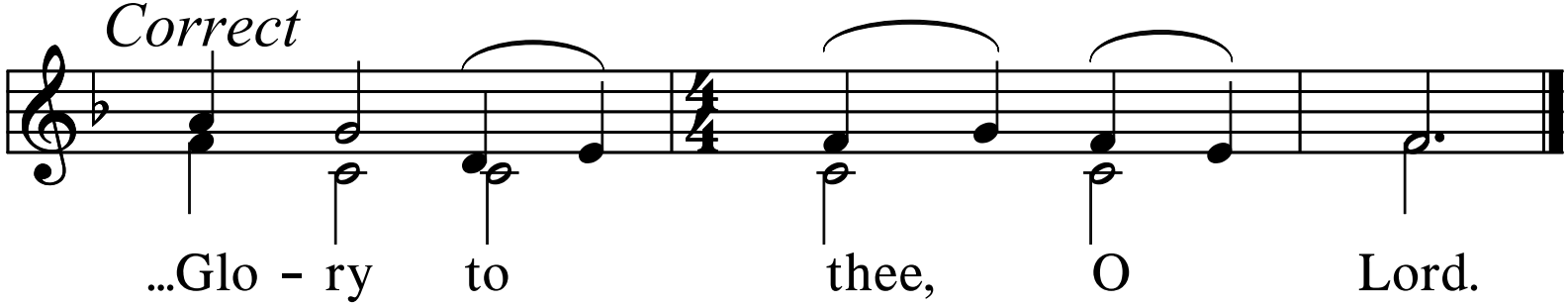
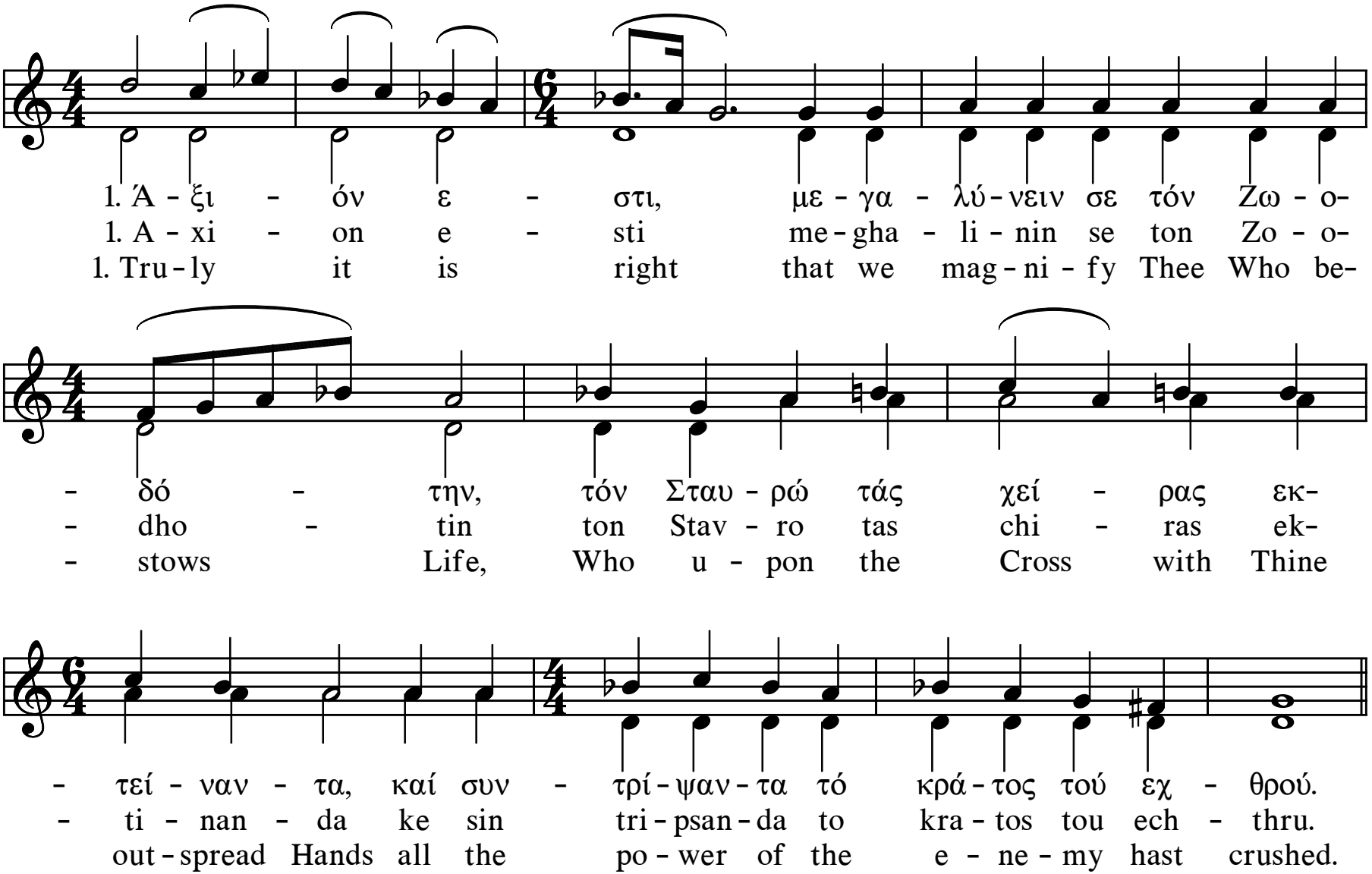
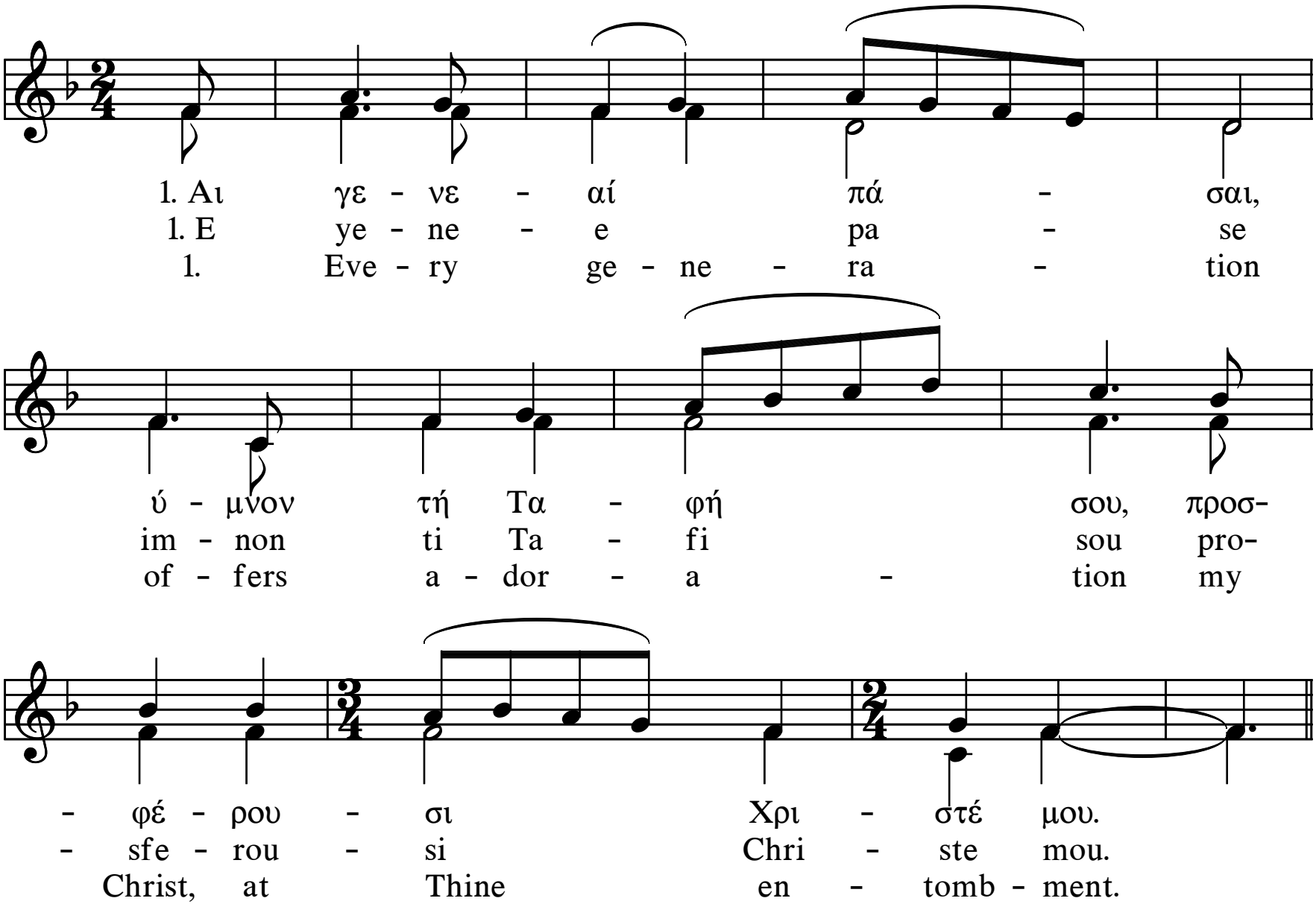



1. Ά - ξι - όν ε - στι, με - γα - λύ - νειν σε τόν Ζω - ο-
1. A - xi - on e - sti me - gha - li - nin se ton Zo - o-
1. Tru - ly it is right that we mag - ni - fy Thee Who be-
- δό - τη ν, τόν Σταυ - ρώ τάς χεί - ρας εκ-
- dho - tin ton Stav - ro tas chi - ras ek-
- stows Life, Who u - pon the Cross with Thine
- τεί - ναν - τα, καί συν - τρί - ψαν - τα τό κρά - τος τού εχ - θρού.
- ti - nan - da ke sin tri - psan - da to kra - tos tou ech - thru.
out - spread Hands all the po - wer of the e - ne - my hast crushed.


1. Αι γε - νε - αί πά - σαι,
1. E ye - ne - e pa - se
1. Eve - ry ge - ne - ra - tion
ύ - μνον τή Τα - φή σου, προσ-
im - non ti Ta - fi sou pro-
of - fers a - dor - a - tion my
- φέ - ρου - σι Χρι - στέ μου.
- sfe - rou - si Chri - ste mou.
Christ, at Thine en - tomb - ment.

Stan and Nancy Takis

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