

The Tone 2 Bolhar melody

The Tone 2 Bolhar (Bulgarian) melody is used at the funeral service, and in singing the hymns of the solemn Vespers procession called the litija.

Here is the second of the Hymns of Saint John Damascene, commemorating the faithful departed. It is sung at Vespers on Friday evenings in Tone 2, and at the funeral service.



O what a - gon - y must the soul en - dure when it is part - ed
from the bod - y. O how man - y tears does the soul shed
and there is no one to pi - ty it. Look - ing to the an - gels,
the soul en - treats in vain; reach - ing out to mor - tals, there is none to help.
There - fore, my be - lov - ed bro - thers and sis - ters, re - cog - niz - ing the
short - ness of our life let us beg Christ to rest the de - part - ed,
and to grant great mer - cy to our souls.

The form of the melody

This melody consists of two phrases, A and B, sung in alternation. An entire setting can end on either the A or B phrase.

The A melody is quite flowing. The slurs mark the phrasing, and may be broken up in a particular setting.



The B phrase is also flowing:



In the B phrase, the initial note may be repeated, or a reciting tone may be inserted on the first *so*:



Another example

At the Divine Liturgy, the following hymn after Holy Communion is appointed to be sung in Tone 2, and the Tone 2 Bolhar melody can be used:

We have seen the true light; we have re-ceived
the heav-en - ly Spir - it; we have found the true faith;
and we wor - ship the undi-vid - ed Trin - i - ty, for the Trin-i - ty
has saved us.

Now try singing the following litija hymn from the Vespers service for the feast of Saint Nicholas (December 6). Watch out for the next to last phrase, which adapts the A melody slightly in two different ways: it uses a reciting tone, and also repeats the last note, both in order to match the text correctly.

O ho - ly fa - ther Ni - cho - las, Christ has shown you to be the
mod - el of faith. Your hu - mil - i - ty in - spired all in your flock.
From My - ra, your pi - e - ty shines through - out the world.
You are known as the pro - tec - tor of wid - ows and or - phans.
Now we ask your unceasing prayer for the sal - va - tion of our souls.