In a recent article on the ninth kontakion of Romanos Melodos, Hunger\(^1\) offers this important perspective on the interpretation of the hymns of this outstanding Byzantine poet-priest: ‘Wenn man freilich dem Ziel des Dichters und dem tieferen Sinn seiner Kontakia nachgehen will, muss man insbesondere die Leitmotive aufsuchen. Selbstverständlich trägt die Behandlung der Sprache ... besonders aber die Rhetorik ... viel zum Gesamtbild des Hymnus bei. Es steht aber ausser Frage, dass für den dichtenden Priester Romanos diese äusseren Schmuckmittel ... keineswegs die Hauptsache bildeten. Für den Prediger steht das Religiöse und die Pastorale zweifellos im Mittelpunkt’.

This perspective also serves as general point of departure for this article on kontakion 10, ‘On the Sinful Woman’. After a short introduction and outline of the kontakion, the reader is presented with an analysis of the hymn’s message, its theme and the various motifs expressive of this theme. This is followed by a concluding section of selected notes on certain words, phrases, and passages. The presentation of notes such as these seems to be not without some significance. This is confirmed by the excellent notes provided by Grosdidier de Matons in his five-volume edition of the hymns in the Sources Chrétiennes series. For these notes offer the reader important information towards a more effective reading and ultimate enjoyment of the hymns. Yet, excellent as these notes are, they still cover only a small section of each hymn. And with the ‘genuine’ hymns of Romanos now being published in a critical edition of such high merit, I believe the time is ripe for scholars to provide some basic commentaries on the hymns. The present study is but a small contribution towards fulfilling this need.

1. Introduction

In kontakion 52.\(\alpha\).\(\dagger\)ff Romanos, referring to repentance, uses the image of ‘the hospital of repentance’ \(^1\) (τὸ ἱατρεῖον τῆς μετανοίας — cf. also kontakion 21.\(\alpha\) and 19.\(\beta\)), which has been opened for those who through their own will have become ill (τοῖς γνώμη ἄφρωστοι ἥγεσθαι, line 1). In this ‘hospital of repentance’, he reminds the audience that several biblical
figures have found a cure, and he mentions the harlot (line 3), Peter (line 4), David (line 5), and the people of Nineveh (line 6). To each of these, except David, Romanos has contributed a hymn, *inter alia* the hymn under discussion.

The Lucan narrative of the sinful woman or harlot, in itself a moving event, has been successfully expanded and interpreted by Romanos in kontakion 10. From the close of strophe δ' up to the beginning of ιβ' the poet has created two scenes each of which is both ‘vigoureux et original’ but also psychologically convincing. These two scenes are respectively (i) an interior monologue in which the harlot expresses both her remorse at her past life and her desire for a new life; and (ii) a scene in which she is engaged in a dialogue with the perfume seller, to whom she went in order to buy perfume for Christ, her new Lover. From strophe ιβ'3-ιγ'4 Romanos unfolds the events in Simon’s house, following his biblical model closely. Grosdidier de Matons refers to this as ‘une certaine incertitude dans la marche du récit où ... le poète, à partir de la strophe 13, se contente de paraphraser le texte de Luc avec une fidélité un peu scolaire ...’. I can find little evidence of this ‘incertitude dans la marche du récit’, and although he does keep more or less to the Lucan narrative, the focus is one of interpretation, i.e. taking to its fullest consequence the individual and universal redeeming significance of Jesus as this is presented in the image of the δανειστής and the χρεωφειλέται. Romanos lets Jesus even directly include Simon in his forgiving grace, which is absent from Luke, thus stressing its universal nature.

2. Outline

The following may serve as a basic outline of the kontakion:

A. Introduction α'.1-γ'.11

α'.1-6: reference to the harlot’s change of heart on hearing of the life-giving words of Christ.

α'.7-β'.11: the poet compares himself to her in the form of a confession regarding his remaining in his sins despite the fact that Christ is searching everywhere for him, and has dined at Simon’s house for his sake.

γ'.1-11: the poet returns to the harlot, who was once lost, but now has been saved.

B. Transitional passage δ'.1-5

By means of a typical formula Romanos directs his audience to Holy Scripture, in this case to contemplate the significance of Jesus and the harlot.
C. Narrative δ'.6–η'.4

δ'.6–η'.11: internal monologue of the harlot portraying her repentance and resolve to forsake her old ways and attach herself to Jesus.

θ'.1–α'.11: the scene at the perfume seller as elaboration on Luke’s statement κομίσασα ἀλάμβανεν μύρον.

ιβ'.1–ιτ'.4: the scene at the house of Simon with elaboration on the image of the δανειστής-ὀφειλέται.

D. Epilogue η'.5–11

The poet’s confessional prayer expressed in the image of the δανειστής-ὀφειλέται.

3. Message, Theme and Motifs

The penitential or κατανοωτικῶν-character of the hymn is beyond any doubt, and lies at the basis of the message of the hymn as a whole. This message is all about repentance and forgiveness of sins. Several passages in the hymn contain direct references to repentance and forgiveness. In prooimion 1.3, e.g., Romanos prays to Christ to save him from the filth of his deeds after having made also of him, like the harlot, a υἱὸν μετάνοιας. In prooimion II the phrase κατέχουσα ἐν κατανύξει ... ἐν μετάνοιας (1–2), said of the harlot, clearly reflects her remorse and repentance. This attitude is later repeated in δ'.8, emphasized by an effective use of punning assonance: ὄθησασα τὴν ἐννοιαν πρὸς τὴν μετάνοιαν.

The basic theme of the hymn, as is evident from the various motifs presented within the hymn (see below), has to do with man’s transformation, through repentance and divine forgiveness, from death to life, from darkness to light, from the old to the new, from the filth of man’s sin to the perfume and sweet odour of God’s life-giving words in Jesus Christ.

This theme of the radical change and movement from one type of lifestyle to another, which makes this hymn a fine example of the statement of Hunger4 — ‘In einigen seiner Kontakia ist Antithese im Leitmotive sozusagen schon mitgegeben’ — has been illustrated throughout the hymn by several motifs, four of which being further highlighted by a biblical allusion.

1. The motif of odour/perfume Romanos has naturally taken from an element which is inherent in the biblical story. In the very first strophe (α'.1–4) the poet picks up this motif: when the harlot heard that Christ’s ἀρώματα were sprinkled everywhere καθὰπερ ἄρωμα, giving πνεύμα ζωῆς to all those who believe, he states her reaction as follows: τῶν πεπραγμένων αὐτῆς τὸ δυσώδες ἐμίσησεν. The antithesis ἀρώματα: δυσώδες is obvious and clearly reflects the theme of radical transformation. This is confirmed in γ'.1 where the poet refers to ἡ ὀμή τῆς τραπέζης τοῦ Χριστοῦ which has
aroused her spiritual senses to repent and approach his table λίχνῳ δρόμῳ (line 5).

2. In β'.7–9 Romanos relates that Jesus has made the table of Simon a θωοστήριον by reclining at it and giving remittance of debt to his debtors. This motif, of course, is provided by Christ Himself in the Lucan account, but the application of this parable to Himself and mankind is merely suggested in Luke 7:47–50 in Jesus' words of forgiveness directed at the harlot. Romanos, however, states this explicitly and extensively in δ'.5–η'.4, and it becomes, in the end, the basis for the poet's final confession and prayer in η'.5–11. Note also how Romanos effectively links to this image (i) that of τὸ κεφάλαιον and τόκος (η'.7–9), taken from Jesus' parable of the talents (Luke 19:11–27 = Matth. 25:14–30), and (ii) the pseudo-Pauline image of the χειρόγραφον (η'.4) in a slightly altered version (cf. Col. 2.14).

3. In strophe γ'.2–4 the theme of radical transformation from one life-style to another Romanos has expressed in the form of four antithetical pairs, one of which is subsequently illustrated by the first of the four biblical allusions mentioned above.

3.1 In line with the polar movement of the theme, the harlot is referred to as the one who was once lost, but now saved: τὴν πρώην μὲν ἄσωτον, νυνὶ δὲ καρτερικήν, reminding us of the parable of the prodigal son of Luke 15:11–32, while the word used for 'lost', ἄσωτον, features constantly in post-biblical literature as technical term for the prodigal son. Also of interest is the fact that in his κατὰ στῦγον prayer, lines 47–48, the prodigal son (ὁ ἄσωτος) and the harlot (ἡ πόρνη) are again closely connected by Romanos.

3.2 The second antithetical pair is expressed as follows in line 3: τὴν ἐν ἀφήνῃ κόνα καὶ ἐν τῷ τέλει ἀμώδα. This motif is obviously based on the narrative of the γυνὴ Χαναναῖα of Matth. 15:21ff, which the poet explicitly expands in lines 6–8. In this episode Jesus uses the antithetical image of the sheep vs. the dogs τὰ πρόβατα (= τὰ τέκνα) — τὰ κυνάρια (= the non-Jews). From this antithesis Romanos moves associatively in lines 6–8 to the antithesis of τὰ ψυχά (which the γυνὴ Χαναναῖα was begging for) vs. ὁ ἄρτος (which the harlot took), concluding with the image of lines 7–8, and also expressive of the theme of repentance-forgiveness, viz. πλέον πεινάσασα ψυχὴν κενὴν ἐχόρτασεν ὅπως πατεύσασα: in her state of repentance the desire to save her soul (expressed by the metaphor of χορτάζω) constitutes for her a 'greater hunger' than the healing of the daughter of the γυνὴ Χαναναία.

3.3 The third pair constitutes the antithesis δούλην–θυγατέρα (cf. also προοίμιον I.1 ὁ πόρνης καλέσας θυγατέραν) and relates to the image of John 8.34–36 in which Jesus uses the opposition δούλος–υἱός in speaking of the disciples being freed from the slavery of sin, which Romanos has
3.4 The fourth pair refers to the change from πόρνη to σώφρον, the latter word pointing to the important concept of the virtue of temperance and sexual purity, the key motif of kontakion 44. This change the poet has anticipated in α'.9-11 in which he contrasts his own endurance in a life of sin with the harlot’s repentance: ἡ πόρνη σώκετι ἡμενεν πόρνην. Another popular biblical motif used by Romanos is the polar movement from light to darkness — cf. among many NT passages e.g. John 8:12; 12:46; Eph.5:7-8; Col. 1:13; 1 Thess.5:5; 2 Cor.6:14; 1 John 2:8b etc. In strophe β'.2 Romanos, introducing the story of Jesus and the harlot, expresses the wish to ascertain how ἐλαμψεν εὖ αὐτῇ ὁ Κύριος, which he then presents in an almost classic formulation in γ'.3/4: Ἑως ἀρτι ἤς ἐν τῷ σκότει, καὶ ἥλθες ἰδεῖν με τὸν ἡλιον! The context of this formulation is not without significance: the woman imagines that Christ will not reproach her thus (which in fact He does not), but for Romanos it becomes an effective opportunity for expressing his theme by means of this well-known biblical image. Finally in γ'.2 the woman refers to this opportunity for repentance and new life as ἡμέρα μοι ἐλαμψε, taken from Is.61:2, again pointing to the concept of Jesus and his coming to earth as the new age of light and life.

5. This latter example from γ'.2 forms part of another motif, the καρδία-motif, which was already expressed in strophe β'.9-10 in the opening lines of the harlot’s interior monologue: in these lines she admonishes her soul not to remain any longer in the filth of her deeds, for: ἵδον καρδίας δν ἐξήτεισ· ἐπέστη ὁ καθαλὼν σε. This she repeats in η'.1-2: ἤδον καρδίας ἐρημαζεν δν ἰδεῖν ἐπόθησα· ἡμέρα μοι ἐλαμψε καὶ δεκτός ἐνακτῶς· ἐν τὸν Σμύρνων αὐλίζεται ὁ θεός μου. In both instances the motif of καρδία is explicitly interpreted, in line with the central message of Paul’s thought (cf. Gal.4:4; 2 Cor.6:2; cf. also Eph.1:10), as the realization of the new salvational era in Jesus Christ, bringing salvation and forgiveness to those who repent of the filth of their sins. In kontakion 56.γ'.1 Romanos explicitly defines it as the καρδίας μετανολας. This motif is then further illustrated by the second biblical allusion: comparing herself with Hannah she will also, whatever criticism is directed against her, approach the Lord and seek, not a child from God, as Hannah did, but her unique soul she has lost!

6. Another motif, one permeating the whole of this hymn, especially the first part, and cleverly taken by Romanos from the concept of the woman as harlot, πόρνη, is that of a love affair. She will forsake her old lovers to cling to her new Lover, Jesus Christ: ἀπέρχομαι πρὸς αὐτὸν, δι᾽ ἐμὲ γὰρ ἠλθεν ἀπόφημι τοὺς ποτε, τὸν γὰρ νῦν πάνυ ποθῶ, καὶ δὲς φιλουντά με μυρίζω καὶ κολακεῖω (ε’.1-3). The first nine lines of strophe ε’ present this motif extensively, culminating in line 9 with its classic formulation of the hymn’s theme of polar movement: ἄναχωρῶ τῶν ἄρχαλον ἱνα δρέσω τῷ νέῳ. Grosdidier de Matons translates this line as follows: ‘je romps avec
le passé pour plaire à l’ami nouveau’. The phrase ‘le passé’, however, is too weak a choice and destroys the antithesis between old vs. new lovers, for τῶν ἀρχαίων clearly refers back to τοὺς ποτὲ of line 2, whereas νέος is interpreted in anticipation by line 6: οὖτω φιλῶ τῶν ἔραστήν μου. This motif, which also finds expression in the extensive use of the word love throughout the hymn (especially ποθῶ: cf. ’.2,4,5,6; ἡ’.1; θ’.4,5; ϛ’.2,3; ω’.6), is subsequently illustrated in the remaining two biblical allusions involving (i) Rahab and (ii) the David-Melchol episode. (i) In strophe ζ’ the harlot contrasts herself with Rahab who was saved, but let the spies go. She, however, will cling to the one she loves (ἐγὼ δὲ ὅν ἡγάπησα μένω κατέχομαι). One must concede that this is not a happy or well chosen example. (ii) Much more in line with this theme is the allusion to Melchol who saw David and fell in love with him, and was thus prepared to abandon the royal palace of her father, king Saul, in order to follow David in his poverty. She likewise has come to despise riches unrighteously gained as harlot (τῶν ἀδικον κλούτον ω’.9) to pay all she has to obtain the perfume for the One she dearly loves (ποθῶ καὶ στέργῳ ω’.6), and who will purify her soul. But whereas Melchol saw David, she did not as yet see Christ, but being the Son of David, He is εὐσπητος! And so strong is her love for Him that she will spend all to gain Him. In the scene with the perfume seller, in which the David allusion is contained, Romanos especially focuses on this love of the harlot, letting her stress the preciousness of her Lover, including the well-known OT motif of the incomparability of God (’.8–11: see notes on this passage), which also has antithesis as its basic concept.

7. A final important motif expressive of the theme of the hymn as a movement away from sin to forgiveness, is the baptism motif developed in strophes ’.10–’.11. The motif is introduced at the end of strophe ε’. Following the elaborate love motif of this strophe, the harlot declares: συντόμως ἀποτάσσομαι ἐμφυαῖσα / τῷ βορβόρῳ τῶν ἔργων μου. This reference to the baptismal liturgy is then further developed in the following strophe (ζ’), especially by means of the word φωτισθῶ of line 1 (φωτίζω = to baptize); also by the reference to the house of Simon being converted into a φωτιστήριον (line 6), and the reference to the κολυμβήθρα (line 9), which will consist of her κλαυθμός, ἐλαεῖον and μύρον. Important in this motif, of course, is its relation to the main theme: lines 7–8 perfectly express what baptism signifies to the person baptized: the cleansing of sins, while lines 9–10, with reference to the baptismal font, are effectively linked to the refrain, again expressive of this movement away from sin: καὶ λούομαι καὶ σμήχομαι ἐκφεύγω / τοῦ βορβόρου τῶν ἔργων μου.

4. Selected Notes

Prooimion I

1 θυγατέραν: not according to biblical accounts, as Grosdidier de Matons
The only woman addressed as such was the one with an issue of blood (Matt. 9:22), but for Romanos the antithesis πόρνη — θυγατέραν is important in the light of the theme of the hymn. In strophe γ'.4 he again refers to her as θυγατέραν with reference to her present situation in contrast to her previous position as slave of sin. The antithesis δούλη — θυγατέρη, based on John 8:34–36 (cf. also John 15:15), therefore suggests that we should understand θυγατέραν in this instance not as literal appellation, but in another sense, as the polar position of πόρνη. A similar antithetical expression is to be found in kontakion 54.7: καὶ ὅπως καὶ τὰς πόρνας ἐπαιδεύεσθε χάριν μετανοεῖς, in connection with which Grosdidier de Matons writes: 'et les prostituées, par un jeu de mots éthymologique sur ἐπαιδεύεσθε, sont devenues enfants de Dieu (παιδες)', a remark which confirms my observation on the salvational sense of the antithesis πόρνη—θυγατέρη in this hymn.

Χριστὸς ὁ θεός: this is the title most favoured by Romanos in his prooimia, whereas Σωτήρ figures the most frequently in the final strophe of his hymns. 3 τοῦ βορβόρου τῶν ἔργων μου: in the refrain of the hymn the genitive form τοῦ βορβόρου is used 15 times, whereas the dative form τῷ βορβόρῳ is used 5 times. In all but three instances it is preceded by a verb or a verb with an object: ῥῦσαι με; λύτρωσαι με (4x); ἐκφεύγω; ῥῦσαι πόρνην; ῥῦσασθαι με; καθαρίσας τὴν φυγὴν μου; ἐξελέο με; ἐσωσάς με; ἄνες, ἄφες followed by τοῦ βορβόρου, and ἐπιμένω, ἐμμένεις, ἐμφυσώσα (2x), μὴ ἐμπέσω followed by βορβόρῳ. The three exceptions are prooimion II (τῆς αἰσχύνης τοῦ βορβόρου), and strophes ζ' and θ', which have an identical pattern: ἐκ τῆς ὀλῆς or ἱλός τοῦ βορβόρου. It is possible that Romanos has intended in these three instances to emphasize the utterly sinful situation of the woman. In nine instances, including the prooimia, the refrain forms part of a prayer for deliverance, thus stressing the antithetically based theme of the hymn. For this refrain see also kontakion 9.8–9: τὸν σαγγευσάντα με; ἐκ τοῦ βορβόρου τῶν πονηρῶν μου, and his κατὰ στίχον prayer 49–50: ῥῦσαι με / ἐκ βορβόρου τῶν ἔργων καὶ σῶσόν με. For the moral sense of βορβορος cf. Kretch: βορβορος 'als “moralischer Schmutz” ist in dieser Sinngabe bereits bei Platon, Phaid. 69c, angelegt ... ', where we have: ὅς ἂν ἀμιῆτος καὶ ἀτέλεστος εἰς ὁ χείλεται, ἐν βορβώρῳ κλίσεται, ὃ δὲ κεκαθαρμένος ... μετὰ θεῶν ὀδήσει. Cf. also Clemens Alexandrinus, Protr. X92,4, GCS 12, p. 68 (Stahlin), and M. Abineau, ‘Le thème du ‘Bourbier’ dans la littérature grecque profane et chrétienne', Recherches patristiques, Amsterdam 1974, 225–254.

Prooimion II

1 κατέχουσα ἐν κατανύζει: the prominent position of this phrase allied with κ- alliteration, is no doubt intended: to stress the penitential character
of the hymn as well as the attitude of the woman. In strophe ζ'.7-8/10 she contrasts herself with Rahab in a similar way: ἐκεῖνη μὲν ἀπέλυσεν... ἐγὼ δὲ δὲν ἦγάπησα μένῳ κατέχουσα... κρατᾷ, in which μένῳ + participle strengthens the force of her love. This construction is also used in strophe η'.6; this time she compares herself with Hannah: μένῳ κἀγὼ προσευχομένη, stressing her earnest yearning for salvation.

ἐν κατανύξει: ‘with’ or ‘in contrition’. A.R. Dyck (‘On Cassia, Κύριε, ἦ ἐν πόλλαῖς, Byzantion 56[1986]64) correctly points to the comparison involving the concept or motif of darkness between Cassia’s hymn and the present hymn of Romanos on the harlot. However, he erroneously includes the phrase ἐν κατανύξει in this comparison, stating: ‘including the metaphor of night, used to described the woman’s state: Romanos, prooemium Π.1: ἐν κατανύξει...’ But -νύξις in the word κατανύξεις is related to νύσσω (νυξ), and not to νύξ (night!)

2 τῷ εἴδοτι τὰ κρύφια: Romanos in his hymns constantly focuses on this feature of God, taken from Ps.7:9-10. See e.g. its extensive treatment in kontakion 44.ιζ'.5-14. A related phrase also often used is ἐτάξεων δὲ καρδίας καὶ τούς νεφροὺς — see commentary on strophe θ'.6.

3-5 Πῶς... πῶς: an effective use of anaphora in a context of remorse and repentance emphasizing her past life of sin in contrast to her present desire for salvation. This πῶς-question further presents us with an interesting aspect of Romanos’ ‘Religiosität’: faced with the miraculous work or presence of God, man expresses his doubt and wondrous hesitation. For this see also Hunger11 on kontakion 9.ζ'–η' and kontakion 1.β'; 29.ζ'.6, υ'.6–9.

ποὺς ὁμοιαν — ποὺς νεύμασιν: whether we read ὁματία/βλέμματι with Q.Tom.O, or follow the reading of Grosdidier de Matons, this antithesis, stressed by homoioteleuton in both possibilities, is of utmost importance in this context, and reminds us of a similar biblical thought in connection with Israel (Is.3:16), which, incidentally, gives strong support for the reading of the French edition. In this connection Bandy’s correction to Carpenter,12 who has omitted τῷ ὁματία from her translation, must be supported.

6 η σὲ παροργίσασα: in Col.3:5–6 the author relates God’s ὀργή to πορνεία as the first among several sins!

7 Ἀλλὰ δέξα... πρὸς δυσώπησιν: ἀλλὰ indicates a strong adversative tone: despite her past life of filth and sin, she will offer Christ her μῦρον to reconcile Him. πρὸς δυσώπησιν is her positive reflection on her hesitant πῶς σὲ δυσωπήσω... of line 5. The importance of the phrase τὸν εὐσπλάγχνον (cf. also τὸν κτίσιν μου — the recognition of the fact that she belongs to God as His creation) should be noted: it reflects the basis of her hope for salvation, and Romanos significantly concludes his hymn with the prayer for forgiveness of sin with reference to Christ as ὃς εὐσπλαγχνος. See note on η'.10.
7–8 μύρον... / ... ἀφεσιν: for this connection see also kontakion 44 prooimion I (French edition), line 8: ὡς μῦρα κομισώμεθα ... τὴν συγχώρησαν. Since the baptism-motif features strongly in this hymn (strophes ε'-ζ'), this connection of μύρον with post-baptismal unction13 is of particular relevance for this hymn.

8–9 τῆς αἰσχύνης/τοῦ βορράδου: in the light of my note on the refrain above, Bandy14 has good cause in criticizing Carpenter’s omission of τῆς αἰσχύνης from her translation.

Strophe α’

1/3 τὰ ἡμιτά τοῦ Χριστοῦ / πνοήν ζωῆς χορηγοῦντα: for this connection see John 6:69: ἡμιτάτω ζωὴς αἰωνίου ἔχεις (Peter’s confession) and also John 14:6 ἐγὼ εἰμί... ἡ ζωή. Notice the effective use of assonance in ἡμιτάτω-ἀφώματα and antithesis in πόρνη... τοῖς πιστοῖς πάσι.

4–6 ἐμπαθειν... / ... ἐννοοῦσα... / ... σχοπούσα: an example of the so-called ὑστερον-πρότερον style: the end result, τὸ δυσώδες ἐμίσησεν, is put in first position for greater effect, especially with its close antithetical association15 with ἡμιτάτω – ἀφώματα – πνοὴν ζωῆς. The three expressions with their rhyme effect on /7) are particularly expressive of her remorse and repentance. Note that αἰσχύνη (line 5) echoes τῆς αἰσχύνης of prooimion II.8.

8 ὅν εἰς εἰμι: Romanos’ confession is expressed in typically Pauline fashion — cf. e.g. 1 Cor. 15:8–9 and especially 1 Tim. 1:15: ἀμαρτωλοῦς... ὅν πρῶτος εἰμὶ ἐγώ. A similar formulation is used in τι’4, said of Simon: ὅν εἰς ὑπάρξεις.

9–10 πτοιδείσα ἡ πόρνη οὐκέτι ἐμείνε πόρνη/πτοουμένος ἐκμένω: the triple play on words and the use of antithesis emphasize firstly the polar movement of life-style on the part of the woman, and secondly the opposing attitudes of the woman and the poet. In kontakion 44, which has as theme Joseph’s temptation, this fear-motif (i.e. the fear to sin against God) appears several times in connection with the refrain — cf. 44. prooimion III.3; γ’16; η’15–16; ι’15–16; ι’15–16; ι’15–16;

2 οὐ μνήσκομαι κτλ: This phrase expresses exactly the opposite attitude of that displayed by Joseph in 44.γ’16 (τὴν φοβηθὲν ἐνθυμομένος κρίνων). Carpenter16 curiously translates the phrase οὐ μνήσκομαι ‘nor do I remember’!

3 οὕτω... εὐσπλαγχνῶν: in contrast to the attitude of the sinful woman — Πῶς σε δυσωπήσω τὸν εὐσπλαγχνον. In ι’10 the poet indeed takes this into account. See final note.

4–5 ζητῶν με... πλανώμενον / πάντα τόπον ἐξερευνᾶ: notice the extensive use of antithesis expressive of Jesus’ searching love and the poet’s
wilful (γνώμη) going astray. Romanos probably had in mind the para-
ble of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3–7) and the passage in which the Gospel
refers to Jesus’ pity for the people resembling a flock without a herdsman
(Matth. 9:36).

5–6 δ’ ἔμε / δ’ ἔμε: an effective use of anaphora underlining the
homiletic perspective of the hymn.

6 Φαρισαίῳ συναριστᾷ ὁ τρέφων πάντας: the phrase is expressive of Ro-
manos’ love for antithesis, here in the form of ἀντιμεταβολή, and emphasized
by the chiastic arrangement of the phrase.

7 τράπεζαν θυσιαστήριον: this juxtaposition is not without significance.
Composed for Holy Wednesday, it reminds the audience of Christ’s sacrifice
for man’s sins, a sacrifice which forms the basis for the forgiveness of his
sins and the acceptance into the new life.

Strophe γ’

1 τῆς τράπεζης τοῦ Χριστοῦ: the table of the Pharisee has become the
table of Christ. With this symbolical interpretation Romanos anticipates
his narrative. For this type of technique see also Hunger17 on kontakion 9
prooimion line 3.

2–4 Carpenter’s18 failure to extend this antithetical pattern up to line
4, thus treating line 4 as if δούλη-θυγατέρα, πόρνη-σώφρονα are equally
applicable at the same time, has been rightly pointed out by Bandy.19
For this New Testament motif of formerly lost but now saved, see e.g. 1
Tim. 1:13.

7 πάλας: Grosdidier de Matons20 expresses doubt as to the chronologi-
cal correctness of this reference and suggests an allusion on the part of
Romanos to Elijah and the widow from Sarepta reported earlier in Luke
4:25–26 (not, as he indicates, in 6:26). He reasons as follows against πάλας:
‘Luc rapport l’histoire de la pécheresse avant d’autres épisodes ... eux-
mêmes rapportés par Marc et Matthieu avant l’histoire de la Chananeenne’. We
should not, however, press Romanos, or any other post-biblical author,
for that matter, into such a rigid chronological system of harmonizing bib-
lical events. Romanos’ reference to the γυνῇ Χαναναίᾳ is also too clear-cut
as to allow another possible allusion to Elijah and the widow of Sarepta.

9 οὐ χραιγῇ ... σαγή δὲ μᾶλλον ἐσώθη: cf. Matth. 15:22: καὶ ... γυνῇ ... 
ἐξελθοῦσα ἔφραζεν as well as verse 23: ἀπόλυσον αὐτήν, ὅτι χράζει ὄψιθεν ἡμῶν . The antithesis χραιγῇ-σαγη (the latter expanded by χλαυθμός, cf.
Luke 7:38: χλαίουσα, ἥρξατο βρέχειν: also 29.4, and 56. pro.3; α’.3) is
marred by Carpenter’s omission of μᾶλλον. Notice the rhyme effect of
η-sound and the paralleling pattern of line 9.
Strophe δ'

9 "Αγε ... δ' ψυχή μου: a formula Romanos often uses of himself and expressive of the κατανοωτικόν character in his hymns, especially occurring in the prooimia. Grosdidier de Matons\(^{22}\) refers to it as a genre of prooimion. This formula is most probably based on the same formula used in the penitential psalms, e.g. 42:12; 43:5. The technique of internal monologue (see also strophe η'.7 σιγὴ βοῶσα and Pitra's remark 'Romano placet silentium loquax', surely suggested to the poet by biblical examples as referred to above, still requires further investigation, as Grosdidier de Matons has remarked elsewhere\(^{23}\). The fictional recreation of thoughts and feelings of his biblical characters, often at a critical stage in their lives, thus entering into the psychology of the character in question (see δ'.1: τὴν φονέα δὲ τῆς σοφῆς ἔρευνήσα ἤθελον), was characteristic of the genre of ἡθοποιία\(^{24}\).

Ιδοὺ καίρος ὅν ἐχήτεις: see also η'.1–2: 'Ιδοὺ καίρος ... δὲ ἤτοι ἐπόθησα ... δεκτὸς ἐναυτός. For this motif see Isa.61:2, and Paul's interpretation of this καίρος as the salvational advent of Christ (2 Cor.6:2, cf. also Hebrews 3:7; 4:7ff). Romanos effectively applies this to the woman's longing for salvation. Cf. also 56.1γ'.1 καίρος μετανοίας.

10 τί ἐμπένες/τῷ βορβόρῳ: in the preceding line the harlot has referred to the καίρος of her salvation, and her question of line 9 is most probably related to the negative command following the reference to the 'today' of our salvation in Hebrews 3:7–8: σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἄκουσίτε, μὴ σκληρύντε κτλ. See also Hebrews 2:3.

Strophe ε'

1 δἰ' ἐμὲ γὰρ ἡλυθεν: Romanos has already anticipated this motif in β'.5–6 with its anaphoric use of δἰ' ἐμὲ. It emphasizes the basis of God's love and man's salvation.

3 ὡς φιλονύτα με: in line with the phrase δἰ' ἐμὲ γὰρ ἡλυθεν, it reminds us of the nature of God's love, beautifully expressed in e.g. 1 John 4:7ff. Cf. especially verse 10: ἐν τούτῳ ἐστίν ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐχ ὅτι ἤμεις ἡγαπήσαμεν τὸν θεόν, ἀλλ' ὅτι αὐτὸς ἡγάπησεν ἡμᾶς!

4 δικαίως: the Oxford edition has δικαίων (Q), on which Grosdidier de Matons rightly comments in the apparatus criticus: 'δικαίων leg. O, quod non intellego'. δικαίως makes sense in the context, lines 5–11 being an extensive elaboration of the concept presented by δικαίως, which Grosdidier de Matons translates '—mais de la bonne manière—'. The harlot will persuade Jesus by loving Him in His way (6), by conducting herself as He wishes and likes (6–7), i.e. with contrition and repentance, by the silence of her tears (γ'.9–10). The reading δικαίως is confirmed by the identical reading in a similar context in strophe θ'.5: τοῦ δικαίως φιλομενοῦ καὶ καθαρῶς.
5 ἀλλοιοῦμαι: this verb is symbolic of the hymn’s theme of radical change from sin to repentance and remission of sin.

ἀλλοιοῦμαι πρὸς τὸν πόθον τοῦ ποιητοῦ: this line, and a few others of similar nature, presents a grammatical problem. It concerns foremost of all the function of πρὸς + acc. Two additional examples will suffice: (i) kontakion 44. prooimion III (French edition) line 1: ἀναλαξία τόν νέον ἐξαπατῶ πρὸς ἡδύτητα; (ii) kontakion 10.α’.3/4: ἔτρωθην, /πρὸς τὴν ἱδέαν τοῦ ἔχοντος φόβιν ἀνείδεον.

Bandy, in his review articles on Carpenter’s translation, translates the three functions of πρὸς as follows:

10. ε’.5: ‘I alter myself in conformity to the love of Him whom I love’ (my italics);
10.α’.3/4: ‘and I have been smitten to see Him who has …’ (my italics);
44. pro. III.1: ‘Intemperance seduces the young in the direction of pleasure’ (my italics).

Carpenter translates thus:
10. ε’.5: ‘I am changed by my love of the Loved One’ (my italics);
10.α’.3/4: ‘and I have been nourished (sic) by the vision of …’ (my italics);
44. pro. III.1: ‘Intemperance seduces youth because of its great pleasure’ (my italics).

Grosdidier de Matons translates these lines as follows:
10. ε’.5: ‘le désir du désiré me transforme’
10.α’.3/4: ‘et la vision m’a blessée de celui …’
44. pro. III.1: ‘L’intemperance abuse la jeunesse par sa douceur’ (my italics).

Although Grosdidier de Matons translates the two examples from kontakion 10 in the active form, they both no doubt represent the passive introduced by ‘par’, as in the case of 44. pro. III.1. He is thus in agreement with Carpenter. Of course, the particular function of πρὸς in 10. ε’.5 will also determine whether we take ἀλλοιοῦμαι as medium (Bandy) or passive (Carpenter and Grosdidier de Matons). Lampe lists an active and passive, the latter = become different; suffer change, while he lists under the passive also a metaphorical translation equivalent of change one’s attitude towards, so that Bandy’s translation is not without foundation.

In 10. ε’.5 and 44. pro. III.1 the context argues for both alternatives (or three possibilities in the case of 44), while the context of 10.α’.3/4 favours Bandy’s view of πρὸς + acc. = purpose (‘with a view to see’). Grosdidier de Matons on this line, however, argues against the view presented by Bandy: ‘Il s’agit de vision intérieure, naturellement’ referring to both strophe
8 peristélloimai: Bandy\textsuperscript{35} translates this as if it were ἐμαυτὸν περιστέλλω (‘putting on a grave countenance’), which \textit{LSJ} lists for Ae. Gaz. \textit{Ep.} 12 (v/vi AD). Lampe lists a medium (‘withdraw from/avoid’) and a passive ‘withdraw’, which corresponds to Grosdidier de Matons’ translation: ‘je cherche le silence et la retraite’\textsuperscript{36}

9 τῶν ἀρχαίων ... τῶ νέω: for the often expressed concept of the old vs. the new in New Testament thought, see e.g. \textit{Eph.}4:22ff; 2 \textit{Cor.}5:17, and \textit{Col.}3:9b–10.

10 ἀποτάσσομαι: For this baptismal formula see also 53.ι.’9 and τε’.8–9, as well as Grosdidier de Matons \textit{Hymnes} III, note 1, page 29; \textit{Hymnes} V, note 1, page 356; and also note 1, page 362.

Strophe ζ’


2 ἐγγίζω ... τῷ Χριστῷ, καὶ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῶ: this line forms an effective combination of two biblical expressions, the former in \textit{James} 4:8 ἐγγίσατε τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐγγίζει ὑμῖν), and the latter in 1 \textit{Peter} 2:6 = \textit{Rom.}9:33 = 10:11 (καὶ ὁ πιστεύω ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῇ) — see also \textit{Ps}. 34:6. Cf. further \textit{Rom.}5:5: ἡ δὲ ἐλπὶς οὐ κατασχύνει. For other similar passages in Romanos see 33.α’.6 and 56.η’.3.

7–8. These lines form a classic expression of the significance of Christian baptism. Notice the extensive parallel structure and rhyme effects.

9 κολυμβήθραν: See also kontakion 9.pro.line 4, strophes ζ’.8–9; ιδ’.1–3 with Hunger’s comments (Das Lebenspendende Wasser).

Strophe ζ’

1/2/5 ἐδέξατο / τῆς δοχῆς / ἐξυνοδοχεῖ: such associative play on words is typical of ancient poetry in general and Romanos in particular.

2/3 εὗρε ζωήν / τῆς γὰρ ζωῆς τύπος: Rahab was not only saved, but became an important link in the ancestral line of Jesus (\textit{Matth.}1:5), indicated by Romanos by means of his play on words ζωήν–ζωῆς (Christ), and emphasized by the use of the rhetorical κλίμαξ.

3–4 τύπος / τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ... ὄνομα: both names, Joshua (which reads Ἰησοῦς in the LXX) and Jesus, mean θεοῦ σωτήριον, the \textit{locus classicus} for the latter being \textit{Matth.}1:21: τέξεται δὲ ὕλον καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν, αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ. By means of this typology
Romanos refers indirectly to Rahab's acceptance into Jesus' ancestral line because of her faith (ὅς πιστή).

4 τὸ τίμιον ὄνομα: as Bandy has shown, Carpenter has omitted τίμιον as well as μου, both being of great importance in the context of the woman's love for Jesus. This comes to light especially in her dialogue with the perfume seller (strophes θ'-ι'), in which there is an extensive play on the concept of 'preciousness' — see below on strophe ι'.

5 παρθένον ἐκ παρθένου: the oxymoron stresses the miraculous birth of Christ.

9 ὡς κατάσκοπον κλήρων ... ὡς ἐπίσκοπον πάντων: notice the antithetical parallelism with homoioteleuton and play on words. For the same play on words but in another context see 53.6. For ἐπίσκοπος πάντων see Grosdidier de Matons, Hymnes III, note 1, page 30.

Strophe ι'

4-10 Grosdidier de Matons finds the allusion to Hannah 'assez étrange', and with reference to the woman's silentium loquax, is of the opinion that it is 'surtout cette prière silencieuse' that justifies this allusion. There are, however, several other aspects of importance for Romanos in this allusion: (i) in both instances the person in charge has exercised criticism at the behaviour of the woman in question, while the behaviour in both instances was related to divine aid; (ii) Romanos has established an effective line of thought and verbal association from Hannah's literal ὑπερωφάνεια to the harlot's spiritual ὑπερωφάνεια (her soul being lost) and finally to Elizabeth's ὑπερωφάνεια (line 10). Both Hannah's and Elizabeth's ὄνειδος (see Luke 1:25) have been taken away: for this the harlot also prays, her ὄνειδος being of a spiritual nature; (iii) in the process Romanos did also effect an intricate play on words: Ὑπερωφάνεια ἐκμισνούμενη - Ἐμμανουήλ — and add to this the indirect reference to Ἐλισάβετ — an extensive play on sound and on the name of God in all four instances, as well as the parallelism of line 9 together with yet another play on words: ἀπεξεχθήν - ἀνάνδρου. To conclude: this allusion, with its extensive associations, becomes for the harlot an additional source of strength as well as a motivation for action — set out by Romanos in the very first line of the next strophe: νευροῦται κτλ ....

7 σιγή βοῶσα: a silent speech or internal monologue — indicated in the form of a paradox! — imbedded in an already existing silent speech which has been initiated in strophe 8'.8-9.

8 ψυχήν μονογενῆ ζητῶ ἄνεπε ἀπόλεσα: the antithesis ζητῶ-ἀπόλεσα relates to Jesus' parables of the lost sheep and the lost drachma — cf. Luke 15:1-10, especially the words ἀπόλεση, ζητεῖ and the phrase εὗρον τὴν δραχμὴν ἣν ἀπόλεσα (verses 8-9). The principle behind both is the preciousness of the lost object, expressed also in the joy felt for every sinner
who shows repentance. The presence of the concept of μετάνοια in these Lucan parables certainly confirms the idea that they were in the mind of Romanos. The preciousness of the soul is here emphasized on the part of the poet by the qualifying adjective μονογενῆς = unique. Kustas\textsuperscript{39} refers to the 'Christian stress on the uniqueness of the individual soul before its Creator'.

9 τῆς ἀτέχνου-τῆς ἀνάνδρου: for other examples of this figure of paradox see also Hunger (\textit{Antithese}, 23–25).

\textbf{Strophe θ'}

1 Νευροῦται: cf. Hunger's important note as to the position of this word: 'ein eher seltenes Wort findet sich in den echten Kontakia des Romanos, neunmal ... am Beginn einer Strophe (nr. 8.9.10.24.28.32.41.55.58). In den von den Herausgebern der Oxforder Ausgabe als unecht betrachteten Kontakia erscheint das Wort (νευροῦν) nur einmal (Nr. 67.η'.1); es dürfte hiermit ein zusätzliches Echtheitskriterium sein'.\textsuperscript{40} In most of these cases the verb νευροῦν is followed by an action of some kind — cf. 8.9.10.24.32.41.

4 ἐπάξιον μύρον τοῦ φίλου μου: In this and the following two strophes the focus is on the preciousness of Christ and the salvation He offers to the repentant believer. The woman has already referred to Jesus’ precious name in δ’.4 (τὸ τίμιον ὄνομα). This is reflected verbally in ἐπάξιον (θ’.4), τιμήματος (θ’.7), άξιον (θ’.4), ἄξιον (θ’.7), and ἀντάξιον τοῦ ἄξιωματος (θ’.8). In strophe θ’ this motif reappears in the idiomatic expression of lines 8–9 (see below), in the Old Testament concept of the incomparability of God in strophe ι’.9–10, and in lines 9–10 of strophe ι’: καγώ τὸν ἄξιον πλοῦτον ὑπερφορῷ καὶ ὄνομαί.

6/8 μου πάντα καὶ τοῦς νεφροὺς καὶ τὴν χαρίαν: Romanos usually has the complete phrase: ὁ ἐπάξιον δὲ τοὺς χτλ. (cf. Ps. 26:2), as e.g. in this hymn in strophe γ’.5 and 30.γ’.2–3 (cf. also kontakion 29.γ’.1; 30.γ’.2 and the refrain of 31 for other variations). In θ’.6 ὁ ἐπάξιον is substituted for τοῦ πυρόσαντος, while τοὺς νεφροὺς ... χαρίαν is used as content of μου πάντα. The fact that Christ has put her whole being aflame caused her to react in the same way: to give her all and everything to repay Him, as this is expressed in the phrase μέχρι δέρματος καὶ ὀστέων (line 8). This idiomatic expression, which is common in many modern languages, signifying that the person is reduced to the ultimate point of life, possessions or capability, is not listed in \textit{LSJ}, Lampe or Dimitrakou (Μέγα Ατζιχόν) as such, not even this occurrence in Romanos!

\textbf{Strophe υ’}

8–10 the locus classicus of this Old Testament motif is Ps. 89:7/9, not listed by Grosdidier de Matons. See also 32.δ’.11: ὅλη ἐστὶ πλήν σοῦ θεός.
Strophe \( \alpha \)

1/3,5–6: Note the extensive play on the concept of vision: εϊσοπτος — οὐχ ἑώρακα/ἰδέαν ... ἀνείδευν — ποτε ἱδούσα — μὴ κατιδούσα, by means of which the sinful woman stresses her love for Christ as being far greater than Melchol’s love for David. This is emphasized in yet another way: whereas she refers to Melchol’s love by means of the word στέργει, she uses the double combination of ποθῷ καὶ στέργῳ in referring to her own love.

4 ἰδέαν — φυσιν ἀνείδευν: Grosdidier de Matons \(^{41} \) finds φυσιν ἀνείδευν ‘une expression curieuse, mais sûrement innocente de toute intention polémique. Elle n’est là que pour fournir une sorte de jeu de mots avec ἰδέα’. But it should be pointed out that this antithetical play on words is very much indicative of the two natures of Christ, on which Romanos often dwells — see e.g. kontakion 20.\( \theta \)’. See also Korakidis \(^{42} \) who comments as follows on φυσιν ἀνείδευν: Εἰς τὴν περὶ οὕσιας τοῦ θεοῦ ὀρολογίαν τοῦ Ὁρμανοῦ περιλαμβάνεται καὶ ἢ διατύπωσις ὅτι ὁ θεὸς εἶναι “φύσες ἀνείδεως”, πλατωνικῆς προελέυσεως, ἦτης ἐκχρησιμοποίηθη καὶ ὑπὸ τινον Ἑλλήνων πατέρων κατ’ ἐπίδρασιν τῶν Νεοπλατωνικῶν ὡς συνάνυμος τοῦ νομτός, θύλας, ἀσχημάτωσις, χωρὶς μορφήν’. In strophe 8.4 of the present hymn the poet has another play on words involving ἰδέα: ἰδέαν πρὶν ἰδῃ.

9/10 ὠνοματ / τὸ μύρον τῷ καθαίροντι τὴν ψυχήν μου κτι: This statement (cf. also 8.10) is the positive reflection of her desire expressed in 7.8: ψυχῆν μονογενῆ ζητῶ ἤπερ ἀπόλεσα.

Strophe \( \gamma \)

1 Ὄ ἄγνως: a technique often employed by Romanos, interrupting his narrative by some kind of commentary. It is sometimes, as here, directed at his audience (homiletic apostrophe) or at one of his characters (narrative apostrophe\(^{43} \) ). ἄγνως is used in an extensive form of play on words: it represents Romanos’ ironical reflection on the judgement of Simon regarding Christ in 17.7: τὸν μὲν ὡς ἄγνωσαντα, a judgement repeated in ὡς ἐνόησεν (7.3), as opposed to ἐκαστός ἦμῶν οἶδεν (7.3), continued in ὡς ἐγὼ (7.4) and in εἰ ... ἐγνώσκειν (7.4). This is immediately, and again ironically, counterbalanced by ὁ ἔταξαν ... τοὺς λογισμοὺς in line 6!

Strophe \( \delta \)

1/3 μεμπτέος μομφῆ: an effective play on words intended by Christ to point to Simon’s injustice.

4 σύγχρισιν: Jesus wants Simon to compare the attitude of the two debtors involved in the parable. The word σύγχρισιν is in this context a reminder of the rhetorical figure of σύγχρισις by means of which two characters are compared antithetically. See also 7.9–10, as well as kontakion

48
54, in which Romanos uses this rhetorical figure extensively by comparing Justinian to David, Solomon, and finally Constantine and Helen.

8 ὁ χρήσας ἐχαρίσατο ο̣ τι ἐχαρίσατο: an effective play on words absent from the biblical model. Romanos uses this same play on words in strophe με'.4: χρέος ὁ χρήσας κεχάρισται.

Strophe με'

9–10 Notice again the play on words and sound: φιλήσας καταφιλοῦσά με κράζει / ἀ Ἐχράτησο ..."

Strophe ιζ'

5 δανεισθής ... πέλω ἐγώ: reminiscent of the ἐγὼ ἐμμ formula in the Fourth Gospel — cf. also ιζ'.6 χρεωλύτης ... ἐγὼ ἐμμ.

5–9 ἀμιστερῶν ... / καὶ οὐ μόνον ἀμιστερῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πάντων / ἐγώ γὰρ πάσιν ... / τὸν δανεισθήν οὐν τοῦ κόσμου ... ὁ Σίμων: homiletically an effective technique by means of which the poet moves from individuality (τῶν ἀμιστερῶν) to universality (οὐ ἀμιστερῶν ... τῶν ἀνθρώπων πάντων: πάσι ... τοῦ κόσμου) and back to individuality (Σίμων), presenting as such Jesus as the Saviour of individual people (ἀμιστερῶν = Simon and the harlot), the Saviour of all mankind, and especially of Simon personally. This latter idea becomes the keynote for the extensive address or invitation directed at Simon in ιζ'.1–ιη'.4, and it is totally absent from the Lucan account. This also points against Grosdidier de Matons' judgement that Romanos has followed his biblical model ‘avec une fidélité un peu scolaire’ (cf. the introduction to this article).

Strophe ιζ'

3–4 καταδεικασμένην — εὐτελισμένην: Pitra, Carpenter44 and Bandy45 read these two participles as medium forms, i.e. ‘condemned herself’, ‘scorned herself’. I rather agree with Grosdidier de Matons who takes them as true passive forms ‘la condamnée ... la meprisee’. He justifies his view as follows: ‘mais il nous semble plutôt que le Christ vise la réprobation injuste et hypocrite que les Pharisiens font peser sur la pécheresse, alors qu’eux-mêmes sont loin d’être sans reproche’.46 The passive forms are more in agreement with both Simon’s reflection and Luke’s phrase ἐπὶ ἄμαρτολος ἐςτι (7:39): she was known in the community as a harlot!

7–8 νομίμως ... ἐξηράς-ἐλθέ ... πρὸς τὴν χάριν μου: this antithesis of law vs. grace, already stated by Jesus, forms the key motif not only of several Pauline passages (cf. e.g. Rom.6:14), but also of his letter to the Galatians as a whole.

9–10 θετὶ τὴν πόρνην — καθάπερ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν: the harlot becomes in the end the τόπος of the church in her denunciation of the old and her initiation
through baptism into the new life which God has given in Christ. For this typology see also kontakion 9.e'.5–6 and ζ'.1–2 with Hunger’s comments in ‘Das Lebenspendende Wasser’.

Strophe η'

3 ἡλευθερώθητε μὴ πάλιν ὑποταγῇτε: this is an example of the indicative-imperative motif in New Testament theology or ethics, a Leitmotiv in many Pauline passages as well as other NT passages, which has undoubtedly been taken from Jesus Himself (cf. e.g. John 8:11 — Jesus’ words to the adulterous woman: πορεύου καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μηρείτε ἀμάρτανε). The locus classicus for line 3 is Galatians 5:1 — Τῇ ἡλευθερίᾳ ὑμῶν, ἦ Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἡλευθέρωσε, στήρισε, καὶ μὴ πάλιν ἡγιῶ δουλείας ἐνέχεσθε. See also Rom.6:18/22.

4 τοῦ χειρογράφου σχισθέντος: for this image from Col.2:14, see also kontakion 16.υ'.9 (σχίσον τὸ χειρόγραφον), 56.θ'.4 (τὸ χειρόγραφον μου σχίσον), 26.8'.1 [Ῥήτη] το χειρόγραφον σου and especially the comments of Grosdidier de Matons on these passages in Romanos.

7 σὺν τόχῳ ... τὸ κεφάλαιον: see also kontakion 9.α'.7 (σὺν τόχῳ γὰρ τὸ δάνειον παρ’ ἐκάστου λαμβάνει) with Hunger’s comments in ‘Das Lebenspendende Wasser’.

8–11 Note the difference in punctuation and readings between O and SC: τοῦ τόχου : τὸν τόχον, O punctuating after μοι (8) and not after τόχον (9). Judging from the parable in Matth.25:14–30 and Luke 19:11–28 the reading and punctuation of the Oxford edition seem more in line with the Gospel versions: the master demands the capital plus the interest. This is confirmed by another passage in Romanos, kontakion 43. λθ'.3–5. Grosdidier de Matons’ translation (‘l’intérêt du capital’) runs against this line of thought and should therefore be rejected, and Bandy’s translation be recommended: ‘Having relieved me, since You are compassionate, of the capital of my soul and the interest of my flesh, release and free me from the filth of my deeds’.

10 ὡς εὐσπλαγχνος: with this phrase Romanos has gone the full circle of his hymn. In the second προοιμία, line 5, the harlot, in her remorse, refers to Christ as τὸν εὐσπλαγχνόν. The poet, contrasting his attitude of endurance in sin with hers, reflects on the fact that he does not take into account τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ εὐσπλαγχνίαν (β'.3). Here, at the close of the hymn, he prays to Christ as ὡς εὐσπλαγχνος, also to relieve him from his guilt, and to release him from his sinful ways. The poet, as representative of his audience and of himself, prays that he may experience the same transition from death to life, from sin to forgiveness of sins, as the harlot did.
NOTES


10. See also A.C. Bandy, ‘Addenda et Corrigenda to M Carpenter: “Kontakia of Romanos, Byzantine melodist”’, *Byzantine Studies* (1975) 162.


32. Idem, 35.
35. Bandy, *op.cit.*, 1975, 162.
37. Bandy, *op.cit.*, 1975, 162.
41. *Hymnes III*, note 1, 35.
46. *Hymnes III*, note 1, 41.
47. Bandy, *op.cit.* 1975, 163.
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