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Sameh Farouk Soliman

## Some hymns attributed to Saint John of Damascus present in the Coptic liturgy

The Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451) was considered to be the main reason for the creation of conflict between the Churches of Alexandria and Constantinople; the greater part of the Church of Alexandria announced its firm and complete adherence to St. Cyril's *one-nature of two* doctrine<sup>1</sup> and refused completely to accept what was determined by the Council of Chalcedon. As a way of expressing its protest against the abusive policy of the Byzantine Emperors the non-Chalcedonians of Egypt began to abandon the Greek language in the liturgical prayers and use the Coptic language instead. We do not know precisely when and how this happened. It was a long process, I imagine, since Patriarch Alexander II (705-730) still writes his Paschal Letter in good Greek.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, there is manuscript evidence to show that the Anaphorae of the three great fathers SS. Basil, Gregory and Cyril were still celebrated in Greek on certain occasions as late as the early part of the 14<sup>th</sup> cent., at least in the Monastery of St. Macarius in Nitria.<sup>3</sup> And despite the fact that the Council of Chalcedon had caused the division of the Egyptian church into two parts, the Chalcedonians — eventually to be named Melkites in Arabic — and the anti-Chalcedonians — the Copts in Arabic — liturgical contacts between Copts and Byzantines after Chalcedon continued to take place.<sup>4</sup>

This matter has been studied by many scholars. For example, Youhanna N. Youssef analysed the *Doxology Adam*, which, as he states, came from the Monastery of Saint Sabas, near Jerusalem, and entered into the Coptic

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic*, Oxford 2004, pp. 271, 299.

<sup>2</sup> L. S. B. MacCoull, "The Paschal Letter of Alexander II, Patriarch of Alexandria: A Greek Defense of Coptic Theology under Arab Rule," *DOP* 44 (1990), pp. 27-40.

<sup>3</sup> O. H. E. Burmester, "The Greek Kîrugmata, Versicles & Responses, and Hymns in the Coptic Liturgy," *OCP* 2 (1936), pp. 363-394.

<sup>4</sup> Youhanna N. Youssef, "Liturgical Connections between Copts (anti-Chalcedonian) and Greeks (Chalcedonian), after the Council of Chalcedon," *EL* 114 (2000), pp. 394-400.

Rite through the monastery of Saint Anthony in the Eastern Desert.<sup>5</sup> Fr. U. Zanetti, who studied the Coptic Manuscripts of the Monastery of Saint Macarius in the Scetis of Egypt, concluded that the *Consecration of Icons* is the same in both Churches.<sup>6</sup>

I find another ideal example of these liturgical contacts which is that of Saint John of Damascus (680-750), since some of his hymns were incorporated into the Coptic Rite. Although Saint John of Damascus belongs to the Chalcedonian Church and is not recognized by the Coptic Church among its saints the Coptic Church adopted some of his hymnographic works into its Rite.

Saint John of Damascus, a well-known figure in Byzantine Literature, was educated in Damascus, the Umayyad capital, and lived there until 730. He received a good classical education although he never set foot on territory ruled by the Byzantine emperor.<sup>7</sup> The Poetical School of Saint Sabas' Lavra, which was founded by him, continued its tradition through other Sabbaite poets,<sup>8</sup> so when Germanus, the Patriarch of Constantinople, the great poet of Byzantium and the contemporary of Saint John of Damascus, was informed of the *heirmoi* of St. John, he incorporated them into the composition of his Canons.<sup>9</sup> The significant role of the district of Palestine and the contributions of the monastery of Saint Sabas to the Renaissance of Byzantium during the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries have been fully discussed by Marie-France Auzépy.<sup>10</sup>

Four hymns, attributed to Saint John of Damascus, were adopted and introduced into the Coptic liturgy; two were adopted in the original Greek while the others were translated into Coptic; some underwent additions and omissions while others are still as they are in the Greek texts; some ceased to be chanted in the Coptic Church while others are still in use at

<sup>5</sup> Youhanna N. Youssef, "Note sur la date de la traduction d'une doxologie Copte," *Göttinger Miszellen* 166 (1998), pp. 91-93.

<sup>6</sup> U. Zanetti, "La prière copte de consécration d' une icône," *Le Monde Copte* 19 (1991), pp. 93-98 and "Bohairic Liturgical Manuscripts," *OCP* 60 (1995), pp. 65-94.

<sup>7</sup> A. Louth, "John of Damascus and the making of the Byzantine Theological Synthesis," in *The Sabbaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present*, ed. by Joseph Patrich, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 98, (Leuven 2001), pp. 301-304.

<sup>8</sup> Πρ. Λεοντοπόλεως Σωφρονίου, "Μιχαήλ ὁ Σύγκελλος," *Νέα Σιών* 31 (1936), pp. 329-338.

<sup>9</sup> Πρ. Λεοντοπόλεως Σωφρονίου, "Ἀνδρέας Κρήτης ὁ Ἱεροσολυμίτης," *Νέα Σιών* 29 (1934), pp. 673-683.

<sup>10</sup> Marie-France Auzépy, "De la Palestine a Constantinople (VIII<sup>e</sup>-IX<sup>e</sup> siècles): Étienne le Sabaïte et Jean Damascène," *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 183-217. For the hymnographers of the Lavra of St. Sabbas see C. Hannick, "Hymnographie et hymnographes sabbaïte," in *The Sabbaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present*, ed. by J. Patrich, pp. 217-228.

the present day. Thus Saint John of Damascus can be considered the second known Byzantine hymnographer adopted by the Coptic Church, after Romanus the Melodus.<sup>11</sup>

### *First and Second Hymns*

Two of these four hymns by Saint John of Damascus were devoted to Feasts of the Virgin Mary and they are: Ἀνοίξω τὸ στόμα μου, Ode 1, Tone 4, Heirmos, and Τοὺς σοὺς ὑμολόγους, Θεοτόκε, Ode 3, Heirmos. These Heirmoi, which N. B. Tomadakis asserts are surely the work of Saint John of Damascus, are two of the seven of the famous Akathistos Hymnos of the Greek Church. N. B. Tomadakis states: “Ἐν τῷ Εἰρμολογίῳ οἱ εἰρμοὶ φέρονται ὡς ποίημα Ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ, τουτέστι τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ” = “In the Heirmologium, the Heirmoi are referred to as a poem of John the Monk, namely the Damascene.”<sup>12</sup> According to O. H. E. Burmester, these two Heirmoi were introduced with other Greek versicles into the Coptic Rite by the Patriarch Cyril IV (1854-1861),<sup>13</sup> but nowadays they are no longer chanted.

The text of the first hymn runs as follows:

Ἀνοίξω τὸ στόμα μου, \* καὶ πληρωθήσεται  
πνεύματος, \* καὶ λόγον ἐρεύξομαι \* τῇ βα-  
σιλίδι Μητρὶ \* καὶ ὀφθήσομαι \* φαιδρῶς  
πανηγυρίζων, \* καὶ ἄσω γηθόμενος \* ταύ-  
της τὰ θαύματα.<sup>14</sup>

Ἀνοιξω το στομα μου κε πληρωθησετε  
Πνευματος κε λογον ερευξομε τη βα-  
σιλιδι μητρι κε οφθωομε φεδρωσ πα-  
νηγυριζων κε ασω γηθωμενος ταυτης τα  
θαυματα.<sup>15</sup>

“I shall open my mouth / and it shall be filled with the Spirit; / and I shall pour out a word / to the Mother and Queen; / and I shall be seen / cheerfully celebrating; / and rejoicing I shall sing / her miracles.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Romanus the Melodus is the first hymnographer after the Council of Chalcedon whose hymn of the Nativity Feast *Ἡ παρθένος σήμερον* was adopted, in the Greek language, by the Coptic Church, see Youhanna N. Youssef, “Romanus Melodus in the Coptic Church,” *Bulletin of Saint Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society* 5 (1998-1999), pp. 41-44.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Σωφ. Εὐστρατιάδης, *Εἰρμολόγιον*, Chennevieres-Sur-Marne, Paris 1932 (Ἀγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη), pp. 99-100 and N. B. Τωμαδάκης, *Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ Ἰμνογραφία καὶ Ποίησις*, τόμ. Β', Θεσσαλονίκη 1993, p. 168.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Burmester, “The Greek *Kirugmata*,” pp. 393 n. 5 and 394 n. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Ὀρολόγιον τὸ μέγα, περιέχον τὴν πρόπουσαν αὐτῷ ἀκολουθίαν. Ἐκδόσις πρώτη, ἐν Ῥώμῃ 1876, p. 282. See also Πρ. Λεοντοπόλεως Σωφρονίου, “Ὁ ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Δαμασκηνὸς καὶ τὰ ποιητικὰ αὐτοῦ ἔργα,” *Νέα Σιών* 26 (1931), pp. 530-538 and 28 (1933), pp. 11-25; and cf. also Enrica Follieri, *Initia Hymnorum Ecclesiae Graecae*, I-V, Città del Vaticano 1960-1966 (ST 211-215), I, 12.

<sup>15</sup> Burmester, “The Greek *Kirugmata*,” p. 394.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. [http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical\\_texts/vaporis\\_akathist](http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/vaporis_akathist) [access: 01.12.2014].

The text of the second hymn runs as follows (in bold characters are the variants of the Coptic text which probably depends on another Greek recension):

Τοὺς σοὺς ὕμνολόγους, Θεοτόκε, ὡς ζῶσα καὶ ἄφθονος πηγὴ, θίασον συγκροτήσαντας, πνευματικὸν στερέωσον· καὶ ἐν τῇ θείᾳ δόξῃ σου \* στεφάνων δόξης ἀξίωσον.<sup>17</sup> **ἸΟΥΣ ΣΟΥΣ ὙΜΝΟΛΟΓΟΥΣ, ΘΕΟΤΟΚΕ ΩΣ ΖΩΣΑ ΚΕ ΑΦΘΟΝΟΣ ΠΗΓΗ ΘΙΑΣΟΝ ΣΥΣΚΡΟΤΗΣΑΝΤΑΣ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΝ ΣΤΕΡΕΩΣΟΝ, ΚΕ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΘΙΑ ΔΟΞΗ ΣΟΥ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΝ ΔΟΞΗΣ ΑΞΙΩΣΟΝ.**<sup>18</sup>

“Ο Theotokos, as a living and abundant fountain, strengthen those united in spiritual fellowship who sing hymns of praise to you. And in your divine glory, deem them worthy of crowns of glory.”<sup>19</sup>

### Third Hymn

The third hymn attributed to Saint John of Damascus is *Χαίρε καὶ εὐφραίνου πόλις Σιών*<sup>20</sup> and entered into the Coptic Rite in Coptic translation with some variant readings, additions and omissions. In the Greek Church it is chanted during the Vespers of Palm Sunday εἰς τὸ Λυχνικόν after the Προοιμιακόν, Tone Plagal 4.<sup>21</sup> In the Coptic Church, this hymn is chanted on Palm Sunday, after the reading of the Holy Gospel. The Upsala Manuscript, dated 1546 A.D., of *Miṣbāḥ al-zulmah wā idāḥ al-khidma*, the great encyclopedical work of Abū al-Barakāt Ibn Kabar (14<sup>th</sup> cent.) refers to this hymn in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter dealing with “what is proper to be read at the feast of Palm Sunday (ما يجب اعتماده في عيد الشعانين).” It says: “The prayer con-

<sup>17</sup> This is the text, e.g., of *Ὡρολόγιον τὸ μέγα*, Ἀποστολικὴ Διακονία, Athens 1952, p. 495; in *Ὡρολόγιον τὸ μέγα*, Rome 1876, 283, we read: Τοὺς σοὺς ὕμνολόγους, Θεοτόκε, \* ἡ ζῶσα καὶ ἄφθορος πηγὴ, \* θίασον συγκροτήσαντας \* πνευματικὸν στερέωσον, \* καὶ ἐν τῇ θείᾳ **μνήμῃ** σου \* στεφάνων δόξης ἀξίωσον. For further information about this Heirmos see Sameh Farouk Soliman: The Theotokos as Bacchos: A comparison between Euripides’ Bacchae and Saint John of Damascus’ Heirmos of the Acathestus Hymnus, Ode Three, a paper delivered at the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference of Byzantine Music and Hymnology with title *Byzantine Musical Culture*, Oct. 29-Nov. 2, 2011, Paeanea, Attica, Greece. The Conference was co-organized by the American Society of Byzantine Music and Hymnology (ASBMH) of the University of Pittsburgh and the European Art Center for the Study of the Culture and Civilization of the Eastern Roman State in Europe (EUARCE) (unpublished paper).

<sup>18</sup> Burmester, “The Greek Kirugmata,” pp. 394.

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical\\_texts/vaporis\\_akathist](http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/vaporis_akathist).

<sup>20</sup> Πρ. Λεοντοπόλεως Σωφρονίου, “Ὁ ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Δαμασκηνὸς καὶ τὰ ποιητικὰ αὐτοῦ ἔργα,” *Νέα Σιών* 27 (1932) pp. 329-353, esp. p. 344.

<sup>21</sup> *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικὸν περιέχον ἅπασαν τὴν ἀνήκουσαν αὐτῷ ἀκολουθίαν τῆς Ἁγίας καὶ Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστῆς*. Ἔκδοσις τῆς Ἀποστολικῆς Διακονίας τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, ἐν Ἀθήναις 1993, pp. 351, 357.



tinues and a Canon for this day, Ραῶι οἴνοϋ ϸιων ἴβακι (i.e. for the Palm Sunday), shall be recited.”<sup>22</sup>

The text of this Hymn runs as follows (in bold the variants between the two texts):

Χαῖρε καὶ εὐφραίνου, πόλις Σιών, τέρπου καὶ ἀγάλλου ἡ Ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ<sup>23</sup>. Ἴδου γὰρ ὁ Βασιλεὺς σου παραγέγογεν ἐν δικαιοσύνη, ἐπὶ πώλου καθεζόμενος, ὑπὸ παίδων ἀνυμνούμενος. Ὡσαννά ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις εὐλογημένος εἶ, ὁ ἔχων πλήθος οἰκτιρῶν, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς.

Ἦλθεν ὁ Σωτὴρ σήμερον, ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν Ἱερουσαλήμ, πληρῶσαι τὴν γραφὴν· καὶ πάντες ἔλαβον ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ βαῖα, τοὺς δὲ χιτῶνας ὑπεστρώννουν αὐτῷ, γινώσκοντες, ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν, ὃ τὰ Χερουβὶμ βοᾷ ἀπαύστως. Ὡσαννά ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις, εὐλογημένος εἶ, ὁ ἔχων πλήθος οἰκτιρῶν, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς<sup>24</sup>.

Ραῶι οἴνοϋ ϸιων ἴβακι : διερογοτ ογοϷ θεληλ : εμηππε γαρ πεοτρο ερηνοτ : εϷταλνοτ εϷεν οτϷηϷ : ετϷωϷ δαϷωϷ ἵνε νιαλωοἱ : Ϸε Ὡσαννα δει νηετῶσι : φαι πε ποτρο ἡΠιϷλ.

Δοξα Πατρι...

ἘταϷῖ ἵνε πενοϷ ἸηϷ ΠϷϷ : εἴβακι ἵνε Ἰλημ : εϷωκ εβολ ἵνιϷραφι : ἵνε νιϷωτπ ἡπροφῆτῆϷ : ἀνιαλωοἱ φαι ἵϷανβαι Ϸε Ὡσαννα δει νηετῶσι : φαι πε ποτρο ἡπιϷλ.

Κε ἵτην...<sup>25</sup>

“Rejoice and be glad, O city of Sion; / exult (Zech 2:14) and be exceedingly joyful, **O Church of God [C om.]**.<sup>26</sup> / For behold, your King has come / **in righteousness [C om.]**, seated on a foal, / and the children sing His praises: / Hosanna in the highest, / **blessed are You Who shows great compassion, / have mercy upon us [C: This is the king of Israel – Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit]. / Today the Savior [C: Our Lord Jesus Christ]** has come to the city of Jerusalem [C om.], / to fulfill the Scriptures [C add. of the chosen Prophets]; / and all have taken [C: the children take] palms into their / hands and spread their garments before Him, / knowing that He is our God, / to Whom the Cherubim sing without / ceasing [C om.]: Hosanna in the highest, / **blessed are You Who shows great compassion, / have mercy upon us [C: This is the king of Israel]**.”<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Cf. L. Villecourt, “Les observances liturgiques et la discipline du jeûne dans l’Église Copte. IV,” *Mus* 38 (1925), pp. 261-320 [125-184], on p. 302 [166]. Arabic text in Anba Samuel Bishop of Šibin al-Qanaṭir (ed.), *Miṣbāḥ al-zulmah wā idāh al-khidma*, Cairo 1998, vol. 2, ch. 18, p. 145.

<sup>23</sup> The phrase: ἡ Ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ is missing in the translated Coptic text. We note here that the Greek text, at the first line, addresses the “City of Sion” and after that he changes his address to be for the “Church of God” as the “New Sion,” while the Coptic text still addresses the City of Sion.

<sup>24</sup> *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, pp. 351, 357 and Enrica Follieri, *Initia Hymnorum Ecclesiae Graecae*, V, 57.

<sup>25</sup> See ترتيب أسبوع البصخة بحسب طقس الكنيسة القبطية الأرثوذكسية، لجنة التحرير والنشر بمطراية بني سويف، 1995, pp. 68-70.

<sup>26</sup> The variants of the Coptic text (C) are given between brackets.

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.denver.goarch.org/liturgical/triodion/holy\\_week/ps\\_apodosis.pdf](http://www.denver.goarch.org/liturgical/triodion/holy_week/ps_apodosis.pdf).

Here we add six verses of the current Coptic text<sup>28</sup> which are not found in the Greek text because, it seems, the version for Palm Sunday in the Coptic Church may be taken from a preceding recension of the Greek hymn:

Δθανοτην φωρω ηνοτηβως : ειζεν πι-  
ωιτ υπερωμο : εινα ητερωμοι ερηνη εχ-  
ωοτ : ηζε Ιης πιηαζωρεο : ερε ελκκοτзи  
ωυ εβολ : γε Ψαηνα εεν ηηετβοι : فاي  
πε ποτρο ηπλραηλ.

Κε ητη ... ληηη.

Ποτε αζωκ εβολ ηφοοτ : ηζε ηηιωη  
ηπροφητια : γε εβολεηη ρωοη ηελκκοτзи  
ηαλωοη : Ηθοκ ακεβετε πιμοο : ετωυ  
εβολ ηζε ηιαλωοη : γε Ψαηνα εεν  
ηηετβοι : فاي πε ποτρο ηπλραηλ.

Κε ητη ... ληηη.

Ποτε αηζοο ηζε ΔαηηΔ : εεν ηχωη ητε  
ηηβαλμοο : γε εημαρωοη ηζε ηηεθηηοη :  
εεν φραη ηΠοο Φη : ερε ηιαλωοη εωο  
ερωη : γε Ψαηνα εεν ηηετβοι : فاي πε  
ποτρο ηπλραηλ.

Κε ητη ... ληηη.

Εταη ηζε Ιης εδοτη ελεροηαηηη : η  
βακη ηηρε ηθοοηηηη : εβε ηηηηη εηκωη  
ερωη : ερε ηιαλωοη ωυ εβολ : γε Ψαηνα  
εεν ηηετβοι : فاي πε ποτρο ηπλραηλ.

Κε ητη ... ληηη.

Ποτε ηηοηηαι ηαηομοο : αημοε εεν  
οηηηηη ηηχοε : πεχωοη ηπεηοο Ιης : γε  
μαροηαηωοη εεν ηαιωυ : ηζε ηηκοηη  
ηιαλωοη : γε Ψαηνα εεν ηηετβοι : فاي  
πε ποτρο ηπλραηλ.

Κε ητη ... ληηη.

Πεξε Ιης ηηηηοηηαι γε εγωηη αηωαηηα-  
ρωοη : ηζε ηηκοηη ηιαλωοη : ηαηωυ εβολ  
ηζε ηηωηη : οηοε ηηοηηωο εηοη : γε Ψαηνα  
εεν ηηετβοι : فاي πε ποτρο ηπλραηλ.

Κε ητη ... ληηη.

والبعض فرشوا ثيابهم على الطريق أمامه لكي يسير عليها  
يسوع الناصري، والصغار يصرخون قائلين: "أوصنا في  
الأعالي، هذا هو ملك إسرائيل".

الآن وكل أوان، آمين.

حينئذ كملت اليوم النبوة العظيمة: "من أفواه الأطفال  
الصغار أعددت سُبْحاً" والصغار يصرخون قائلين: "أوصنا في  
الأعالي، هذا هو ملك إسرائيل".

الآن وكل أوان، آمين.

حينئذ قال داود في كتاب المزامير: "مبارك الآتي باسم الرب  
الإله" والصغار يصرخون قائلين: "أوصنا في الأعالي، هذا هو  
ملك إسرائيل".

الآن وكل أوان، آمين.

لما دخل يسوع إلى أورشليم، ارتجت المدينة كلها من أجل  
الجموع المحيطين به، والصغار يصرخون قائلين: "أوصنا في  
الأعالي، هذا هو ملك إسرائيل".

الآن وكل أوان، آمين.

حينئذ اليهود المخالفون إمتلأوا غيرة عظيمة وقالوا للرب  
يسوع: "فليسكت هؤلاء من هذا الصباح" والصغار  
يصرخون قائلين: "أوصنا في الأعالي، هذا هو ملك إسرائيل".

الآن وكل أوان، آمين.

فقال يسوع لليهود: "إذا سكت هؤلاء الصغار، لصرخت  
الحجارة وسبحتنني قائلين: "أوصنا في الأعالي، هذا هو ملك  
إسرائيل".

الآن وكل أوان، آمين.

<sup>28</sup> See ترتيب أسبوع البصخة بحسب طقس الكنيسة القبطية الأرثوذكسية pp. 68-70.

“Some spread their garments / on the way before Him, / that Jesus the Nazorean / may walk upon them / while the children were proclaiming: / ‘Hosanna in the highest, / this is the King of Israel. / Now and forever, Amen.

Then, today the great prophesy/ is fulfilled: / ‘Out of the mouth of little children / You have prepared praise,’ (Ps 8:3 LXX, Mt 21:16) / while the children were proclaiming: / ‘Hosanna in the highest, / this is the King of Israel.’ / Now and forever, Amen.

Then, David said / in the book of the Psalms: / ‘Blessed is He who comes / in the name of the Lord God’ (Ps 118:25), / while the children were praising: ‘Hosanna in the highest, / this is the King of Israel.’ / Now and forever, Amen.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, / the entire city was shocked / because of the multitudes who surrounded Him, / while the children were proclaiming: / ‘Hosanna in the highest, / this is the King of Israel.’ / Now and forever, Amen.

Then, the impious Jews / were filled with great envy / and said to our Lord Jesus: / ‘Let the little children keep silent / with these proclamations: / Hosanna in the highest, / this is the King of Israel.’ / Now and forever, Amen.

Jesus said to the Jews, ‘If these children / should keep silent, / the stones would cry out / and praise Me: / Hosanna in the highest, / this is the King of Israel’. Now and forever, Amen.”<sup>29</sup>

#### *Fourth Hymn*

The fourth hymn is *Ἀνάστασιν Χριστοῦ θεασάμενοι* which is known in the Coptic Church as **ⲧⲈⲚⲚⲁⲢ** or “The Canon of the Resurrection.” This “Canon” is found in the Coptic and the Greek Churches where it is a part of the *Easter Day Canon*.

Yassa ‘Abdil Masīh studied this Canon in an important article. As he notes,<sup>30</sup> Abū al-Barakāt Ibn Kabar, in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of his book *Miṣbāḥ al-zulmah wā idāḥ al-khidma*, dealing with “what is proper to be read at the Midnight of the Sunday of the Holy Easter” (ذِكْرُ مَا يُعْتَمَد لَيْلَةَ أَحَدِ الْقِيَامَةِ الْمَقْدَسَةِ), refers to this canon saying: “The canon of Resurrection **ⲧⲈⲚⲚⲁⲢ** **ⲈⲧⲀⲚⲀⲨⲤⲀⲒⲤⲒⲤ** **ⲠⲓⲪⲤ** shall be recited,”<sup>31</sup> which proves that this hymn was in use during Ibn Kabar’s lifetime († 1324).

<sup>29</sup> The Greek hymn has a last verse which is missed in Coptic: ‘Ο τοῖς Χερουβιμ ἐποχοῦμενος, / καὶ ὑμνοῦμενος ὑπὸ τῶν Σεραφίμ, / ἐπέβησ ἐπὶ πῶλου, Δαυϊτικῶς Ἀγαθέ, / καὶ παῖδες σε ἀνύμνουν θεοπρεπῶς, / Ἰουδαῖοι ἐβλασφήμουν παρανόμως, / τὸ ἀκάθεκτον τῶν ἐθνῶν, ἡ καθέδρα τοῦ πῶλου προετύπου, ἐξ ἀπιστίας εἰς πίστιν μεταποιούμενον. / Δόξα σοι Χριστέ, ὁ μόνος ἐλεήμων καὶ φιλόανθρωπος. Cf. Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν, pp. 351, 357, and Πρ. Λεοντοπόλεως Σωφρονίου, “Ὁ ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Δαμασκηνὸς καὶ τὰ ποιητικὰ αὐτοῦ ἔργα,” *Νέα Σιών* 27 (1932) pp. 329-353, esp. p. 344.

<sup>30</sup> Yassa ‘Abdil Masīh, “The Canon of the Resurrection ‘ⲧⲈⲚⲚⲁⲢ,’” *BSAC* 14 (1950-1957), pp. 23-35, on p. 24.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Anba Samuel Bishop of Šibīn al-Qanāṭir (ed.), *Miṣbāḥ al-zulmah wā idāḥ al-khidma*, vol. 2, ch. 18, p. 160; L. Villecourt, “Les observances liturgiques et la discipline du jeûne dans l’Église Copte. IV,” *Mus* 38 (1925), p. 295 [159].

The Coptic hymn corresponds to two items in the Greek Church. We do not know who the author of the second one is, the one which corresponds to the *Εὐλογητάρια Ἀναστάσιμα*, chanted every Sunday all the year round at the Morning Service, after the *Ψαλτήριον* and the *Πολυέλεον* or the *Ἄμωμον* in Tone Plagal 1.<sup>32</sup>

The first one, on the other hand, is the Greek hymn *Ἀνάστασιν Χριστοῦ θεασάμενοι* with few variants. This hymn is chanted on Sunday *πρωτῶς εἰς τοὺς Αἴνους*, Tone 3, after the reading of the Gospel of the *Ἑωθινός*,<sup>33</sup> at midnight at Easter, from Easter to the Ascension at Matins, on the Eve of the Ascension as well as on the Feast of the Holy Cross.<sup>34</sup> It is recited in the Coptic Church at every midnight service on all the Holy Fifty days after the Feast of the Resurrection and then every Sunday (i.e. Saturday night) until the fourth Sunday of the month of *Hātūr*, since we then start the month of *Kiahk*.<sup>35</sup>

In his book *Comparative Liturgy*, Anton Baumstark provides evidence about the origin of this hymn-writing: “the ideas and even certain expressions of which (i.e. the hymn) go back, as some fragments on papyrus show, to extreme antiquity and seem to belong to Christian Egypt as their native country.”<sup>36</sup> Although A. Baumstark did not give any further information, he surely knew some of the papyrus fragments of a liturgical nature for *Easter Day* that are available today.<sup>37</sup> On the analysis of many manuscripts,<sup>38</sup> Fr. Sophronius Evstratiades argued that the so-called *στιχηρὰ ἀνατολικά ἀνα-*

<sup>32</sup> Ἐγκόλπιον τοῦ Ἀναγνώστου: Ἱεραὶ Ἀκολουθίαι τοῦ Ἑσπερινοῦ, τοῦ Ὁρθροῦ καὶ τῆς Θείας Λειτουργίας, Ἐκδόσεις Ἀποστολικῆς Διακονίας, ἐκ. ΙΕ', Ἀθήναι 2000, pp. 44, 45.

<sup>33</sup> *Μικρὸν Τυπικὸν τῆς Μεγάλης τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἐκκλησίας*, Ἀθήναι 2003, p. 26.

<sup>34</sup> Yassa 'Abdil Masih, “The Canon of the Resurrection Tennau,” pp. 24-25.

<sup>35</sup> Old Rite and common usage is to chant it only in *Kiahk* Bright Sunday (Apocalypse Night). However, there is nothing in the hymn's tune or text that would make it exclusive to *Kiahk* or during the Apocalypse Night; it is just a continuation of the topic of the third canticle. Most likely, this became the rule because of the hymn's length.

<sup>36</sup> A. Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy*. Revised by B. Botte, English edition by F.L. Cross, Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1958, p. 101.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. J. Van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens*, Paris 1976, Index p. 417b: “Pâques.”

<sup>38</sup> Codex 263 f. 139 of the Bibliothèque nationale de Paris: “Στιχηρὰ Ἀνατολικά ψαλλόμενα ἀπὸ τοῦ προκειμένου ὧν ἡ ἀκροστιχὶς ἀβ ἐν δὲ τοῖς θεοτοκίαις Ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ.” Σαββαίτικὸν Κώδ. 221 φ. 2 & 3: “Στιχηρὰ κατ' ἀβ ἐν δὲ τοῖς θεοτοκίαις Ἰωάννου ἀμὴν,” cf. Κεραμέως, Ἱεροσολ. Βιβλ., τόμ. Β', p. 33. Codex I 84 Λαύρας: “Μουσικὸν Στιχηράριον σὺν Θεῷ ἀρχόμενον ἀπὸ τοῦ Τελώνου καὶ Φαρισαίου μέχρι τῶν ἁγίων Πάντων καὶ τὰ Ἀνατολικά τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ κυροῦ Ἰωάννου”; Codex Γ 72 φ. 57β: “Τῷ Σαββάτῳ τῶν ἀρτοκλασιῶν πρωτὶ Στιχηρὰ ἀναστάσιμα Ἀνατολικά Ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ” and Codex Γ 74 φ. 45β: “Τὸ ἐν τῇ Παρακλητικῇ τοῦ πλ. α' ἤχου Στιχηρὸν Ἀνατολικὸν ἀναγράφει εἰς Ἰωάννην τὸν Δαμασκηνόν.” Codices 220 Coislin f. 157β & f. 159α of the Bibliothèque nationale de Paris and B 32 φ. 196β & 197β Λαύρας: “Ἀκολουθία ἀναστάσιμος Ἀνατολικὴ ποίημα Ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ.”

στάσιμα wrongly attributed to the Patriarch of Constantinople Anatolius (Κώδ. Γ 86 φ. 245β Λαύρας) are the work of John of Damascus.<sup>39</sup> The wrong attribution to Anatolius is due to the homonymity between ἀνατολικά and Ἀνατόλιος. They are called ἀνατολικά for their origin, that is to say the ἀνατολή, i.e. Jerusalem,<sup>40</sup> in the attempt to distinguish them from other poems from different sources referred to in the Codices as “Byzantine,” “Sicilian” and “Sinaiticus,” etc. Thus, according to Evstratiades, Ἀνάστασιν Χριστοῦ θεασάμενοι is a work we can attribute to John of Damascus.<sup>41</sup> This fact was not mentioned by Yassa ‘Abdil Masih.

We give here the Greek text along with a Coptic translation and compare them in order to show the variants, the additions, the omissions and the differences between the two texts.

Ἀνάστασιν Χριστοῦ θεασάμενοι \* προσκυνήσωμεν Ἅγιον Κύριον, \* Ἰησοῦν τὸν μόνον ἀναμάρτητον. \*

Τὸν σταυρόν σου, Χριστέ, προσκυνούμεν, \* καὶ τὴν ἁγίαν σου Ἀνάστασιν \* ὑμνοῦμεν καὶ δοξάζομεν. \*

οὐ γὰρ εἶ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, \* ἐκτός σου ἄλλον οὐκ οἶδαμεν, \* τὸ ὄνομά σου ὀνομάζομεν. \*

Δεῦτε, πάντες οἱ πιστοὶ, προσκυνήσωμεν \* τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἁγίαν Ἀνάστασιν. \* ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἦλθε διὰ τοῦ Σταυροῦ \* χαρὰ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ. \*

Διὰ παντὸς εὐλογοῦντες τὸν Κύριον, \* ὑμνοῦμεν τὴν Ἀνάστασιν αὐτοῦ. \* Σταυρόν γὰρ ὑπομείνας δι’ ἡμᾶς, \* θανάτῳ θάνατον ὤλεσεν.<sup>42</sup>

Ἰεννατ ἔτἀναστασις ὑπῆχς ογοθ τε-  
νοτωτ ὑφθεοταβ Ιησ Πῆχς Πενδοεις  
φθετοι ἡαθνοβι ὑματατϣ.

Ἰενοτωτ ὑπεκστατρος ὦ Πῆχς : τενωω  
τεντῶοτ ἡτεκἀναστασις :

Χεἰθοκ γαρπε Πεννοτϣ : ογοθ ἡτενσωοτη  
ἡκεοται αν εβηλ εροκ : ογοθ δεν πεκραν  
εμοτ τῆρον.

Διωινη τηροτ ηπιστος ἡτενοτωτ ἡτἀ-  
ναστασις ὑπῆχς : χε ρηηπε εβολ ριτεν  
πετρε αϣι ἡχε φραωι εδοτη ἐπικοςμος  
τηρηϣ.

Ἰαρενμοτ ἐπποσ ἡχοτ ηιβεν ογοθ ἡτεν-  
τῶοτ ἡτεκἀναστασις : χε αϣερετπομονη  
ογοθ αϣδομδεμ ὑφμοτ ριτεν πεμμοτ<sup>43</sup>

“Having beheld [C: We behold] the Resurrection of Christ / let us worship [C: and we worship] the [C: our] holy Lord /Jesus [C add. Christ], the only Sinless One. // We worship Thy Cross, O Christ, /and [C om.] Thy holy [C om.] Resurrection we hymn and glorify: for Thou art our God, / [C add. and] “we know none

<sup>39</sup> Πρ. Λεοντοπόλεως Σωφρονίου, “Ο ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Δαμασκηνὸς καὶ τὰ ποιητικὰ αὐτοῦ ἔργα,” *Νέα Σιών* 28 (1933), pp. 11-25, esp. pp. 15, 16.

<sup>40</sup> C. Hannick, “Hymnographie et hymnographes Sabbaites,” in *The Sabbaites Heritage in The Orthodox Church from The Fifth Century to The Present*, ed. Joseph Patrich, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 98, Leuven 2001, p. 219.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Σωφρονίου, “Ο ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Δαμασκηνὸς,” *Νέα Σιών* 28 (1933) 20, n° 100.

<sup>42</sup> *Πεντηκοστάριον*, Rome 1883, p. 17.

<sup>43</sup> See *الإصلمودية المقدسة، مكتبة المحبة*, Cairo 2007, pp. 19-20.

other beside Thee, / we call upon Thy name [C: in Thy name we are called<sup>44</sup>]” (Is 26:13). // O come all ye faithful, let us worship Christ’s holy [C om.] Resurrection, / for behold through the [C: his] Cross joy hath come to all the world. // Ever blessing [C: may we bless] the Lord, / we [C: and] hymn His Resurrection; / for having endured crucifixion for us [C. om.] / He hath destroyed death by [C add. his] death.”<sup>45</sup>

We add here two verses of the current Coptic text which are absent in the Greek version. The reason for this absence is not obvious. It occurred perhaps in the ancient Greek tradition or it is due to the Coptic additions or because they are dedicated to the Virgin Mary.<sup>46</sup> It is nevertheless clear that the version of the “Resurrection Canon” of the Coptic Church may be taken from a preceding Greek text or recension.

They are added in this place in accordance with the Coptic text:<sup>47</sup>

<p>         ΗΙΡΑΥΙ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΣΕΤΩΜΙ ΕΡΟ Ω ΨΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΣ :          ΧΕ ΕΒΟΛΖΗΤΟΨ ΑΥΤΑΨΘΟ ΝΑΔΔΑΜ ΕΠΠΑ-          ΡΑΔΙΟΣ : ΕΑΨΒΙ ΝΟΥΤΟΛΨΕΛ ΝΧΕ ΕΥΑ ΕΨΜΑ          ΜΠΕΨΜΚΑΨΝΨΗΤ : ΕΑΨΒΙ ΝΨΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΙΑ          ΝΚΕΨΟΠ ΕΨΒΗΨ ΝΕΜ ΠΙΟΥΨΑΙ ΝΕΨΝΙΟΝ.          ΔΝΟΝ ΔΕ ΨΩΝ ΜΑΡΕΝΨΨΟΥ ΝΕ ΨΩΨ ΟΥΔΨΟ          ΝΤΕ ΨΑΝΑΨΤΑΨΙΨ : ΧΕ ΧΕΡΕ ΠΙΟΥΨΑΨΡΟΨ          ΕΨΤΟΒ ΕΨΑΝΕΡΑΨΠΟΛΕΨΙΝ ΜΠΙΩΝΨ ΕΒΟ-          ΛΖΗΤΟΨΨ : ΧΕΡΕ ΘΗΕΨΑΨΜΙΨ ΝΑΝ ΜΠΨΧΨ          ΠΕΝΝΟΥΨΨ : ΟΥΟΨ ΑΨΨ ΝΑΝ ΜΠΙΩΝΨ ΕΒΟΛ-          ΖΗΤΕΝ ΤΕΨΑΨΑΨΤΑΨΙΨ.       </p>	<p>         كل الأفرح تليق بك يا والدة الإله. لأنه من قبلك أرجع آدم          إلى الفردوس. ونالت حواء الزينة عوض حزنها. وأخذت الحرية          دفعةً أخرى من أجلك والخلاص الدهري.          ونحن أيضاً فلنمجّدك ككنز القيامة. السلام للكنز المختوم الذي          امتلأنا بالحياة من قبله. السلام للتي ولدت لنا المسيح إلهنا          وأعطانا الحياة من قبل قيامته.       </p>
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“All joy befits you, O Mother of God, / for through you, Adam has been turned back to Paradise, / Eve having received consolation to replace her sadness, / having gained through you freedom once more as well as eternal salvation. // And we too, let us glorify you as a treasure of the Resurrection: / Hail to the sealed treasure through which we were given life. / Hail to her who gave birth for us to Christ our God and he gave us life through His Resurrection.”

<sup>44</sup> This part of the verse in the Coptic text does not correspond to the translation of Is 26:13 in Bohairic.

<sup>45</sup> Translation: <http://www.hogwartsprofessor.com/is-the-hymn-of-the-resurrection-a-ring-composition>.

<sup>46</sup> Youhanna N. Youssef, “Liturgical Connections,” *EL* 114/4 (2000), pp. 394-400.

<sup>47</sup> See مكتبة المحبة، الإصلمودية المقدسة، Cairo 2007, pp. 20-21.

### Conclusion

From the presentation above we make the following remarks in conclusion:

1. As for the first two *heirmoi* of Saint John of Damascus we note that despite the doctrinal differences between the Greek and Coptic Churches, the Coptic alphabet remained a last link, because of the ostensible similarities between the two languages. Hence it was easier for the Copts to borrow texts from the Greek Orthodox Church, in the Greek without translation, except on a limited number of occasions.

2. Unlike many other Greek hymns which entered into the Coptic Church in Greek,<sup>48</sup> either by Saint John of Damascus or by other hymnographers, the hymn of “Palm Sunday” and that of the “Canon of the Resurrection” were translated into Coptic. Why? That is the question! I do not think that this was done so that these two hymns might appear pure Coptic compositions, or with a view to hiding the identity of the Greek hymnographer, Saint John of Damascus, who belongs to the Chalcedonian Greek Church, for the ancient Copts were more tolerant than we are nowadays. I think that the Copts simply did not worry about the identity of the author and translated them with the sole purpose of being understood by those who did not know Greek.

3. On the other hand, it is quite clear that the “Palm Sunday” version and that of the “Canon of the Resurrection” of the Coptic Church are, in many points, fuller and more complete than the Greek ones. The short forms, if they are actually short forms, may be due to the compilers of the Greek texts in their definite forms. As for the Coptic additions, they may be due to the nature of the Copts which would tend to add to the translated Coptic texts from their own, so that the texts may appear to carry their own footprint. From the attribution of the first part of the “Canon of the Resurrection” to Saint John of Damascus and from the information given by Ibn Kabar we conclude that the date of the adoption of — at least — this hymn by the Coptic Church lies in the period between Saint John of Damascus’ death, i.e. 750 and Ibn Kabar’s death, i.e. 1324 (the period between the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the first quarter of the 14<sup>th</sup> century). I would like to suggest that this hymn and probably the others entered into the Coptic Rite either through Jerusalem where the two com-

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<sup>48</sup> Such as: Ἡ παρθένος σήμερον, Ἡ γέννησίς σου Χριστὲ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, Βουλὴν προαιώνιον, Ἐν τῇ γεννήσει τὴν παρθενίαν ἐφύλαξας, Ἀνοίξω τὸ στόμα μου, Ἄξιόν ἐστιν ὡς ἀληθῶς, Τοὺς σοῦς ὕμνολόγους Θεοτόκε, Ἐν Ἰορδάνῃ βατιζομένου, Τὸν συνανάρχον λόγον, Τοῦ λίθου σφραγισθέντος, Εὐφραινέσθω τὰ οὐράνια, and Τὴν ἀνάστασίν σου Χριστὲ Σωτήρ, see Burmester, “The Greek *Kirugmata*,” see above.

munities exchanged their liturgical Rites (cf. the *Consecration of Icons*) or through the monastery of Saint Anthony (cf. the *Doxology of Adam*).

After examining these examples we are now in a position to determine that from the so-called “Dark Ages of Byzantium (650-850)”<sup>49</sup> there still came a bright light through the hymnographic compositions of John of Damascus which eventually illuminated the Coptic liturgy and so some important and useful information lies hidden in the fact that some hymnographic works, written by Chalcedonian authors, like Saint John of Damascus, after the Council of Chalcedon, were adopted and introduced into its rite by the Coptic Church.

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#### SUMMARY

The present paper reveals wide circulation of the Byzantine hymnography even in non-Byzantine traditions. Some hymnographic works, composed by Saint John of Damascus (680–750) after the Council of Chalcedon (451) and more precisely during the so-called “Dark Ages of Byzantium” (650-850), were adopted by the Coptic Church into its liturgy. Despite the dogmatic differences between the Chalcedonians (the Byzantines) and the anti-Chalcedonians (the Copts), liturgical connections never stopped and four Byzantine hymns, attributed to Saint John of Damascus, were introduced into the Coptic Liturgy. These four hymns are: Ἀνοίξω τὸ στόμα μου, Τοὺς σοὺς ὕμνολόγους, Θεοτόκε, Χαίρε καὶ εὐφραίνου πόλις Σιών i.e. “The Canon of the Palm Sunday” and Ἀνάστασιν Χριστοῦ θεασάμενοι i.e. “The Canon of the Resurrection.” Two of these four hymns entered in the original Greek version while the others were translated into Coptic; some underwent additions and omissions while others are still as they were in the original Greek texts. This matter testifies that from the so-called “Dark Ages of Byzantium” there still came a bright light through the hymnographic compositions of Saint John of Damascus. Also some important information lies hidden in the fact that some hymnographic works, written by Chalcedonian authors, like Saint John of Damascus, after the Council of Chalcedon, were integrated into the Coptic liturgy.

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<sup>49</sup> For this period see our study “Re-assessing views regarding the ‘Dark Ages’ of Byzantium (650-850),” *Byz* 76 (2006), pp. 115-152.