

The composition *Dynamis* of the Trisagios hymn, by the protopsaltes Xenos Korones. From the 14th to the 21st century

Η σύνθεση *Δύναμις* του Τρισαγίου ύμνου, του πρωτοψάλτη Ξένου Κορώνη. Από τον 14^ο στον 21^ο αιώνα

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The protopsaltes Xenos Korones was an outstanding musical figure in the Psaltic Art of the 14th century. Together with Ioannes Koukouzeles they were students of another famous musician of the beginning of the 14th century, Ioannes Glykys. Korones created an enormous body of musical work which was fully accepted by both his contemporaries and subsequent performers of so-called “Byzantine” music. One of his compositions is the *Dynamis* of the Trisagios hymn, an extensive melos (*Δύνα - δύναμις, δύναμις, Άγιος ό Θεός, Άγιος Ίσχυρός, Άγιος Αθάνατος, έλέησον ήμάς, ερετερερρε... δύναμις, άγιος.*) which was intended to be sung during the Divine Liturgy. It is a characteristic case of a kalophonic musical piece that gained appreciation because of its artistic value.

This composition of Korones is very common especially in the manuscripts of the 15th century and thereafter, whereas in the manuscripts of the 14th century we don't often find it under the name of Korones, but with the designation «συνοπτικότερον» (ms National Library of Greece 2456, f. 186r). In some manuscripts of the 15th century we have inscriptions which attribute this melos to Koukouzeles and only the kratema (*ερετερερρε...*) to Korones. But, most of the scribes give us the name of Korones as its composer.

When we examine the specific melos we can see some resemblances between this and other similar compositions from the same era, like the *Dynamis* of Ioannes Glykys or of Koukouzeles. In these three compositions we have indeed almost the same initial melodic phrase in the word *Δύναμις*. What is important to say is that Glykys set to music the word *Δύναμις*, then added a long kratema and in the end composed briefly the text of the Trisagios Hymn. On the other hand, Koukouzeles set to music only the word *Δύναμις* and then he continued with a long kratema *ερετερερε...* and concluded with the words *Δύναμις, Άγιος*. On the contrary, Korones set to music the word *Δύναμις*, then all the Trisagios Hymn, then added a kratema and finished his work just like his fellow student Koukouzeles did.

Throughout the centuries the *Dynamis* of Korones has been copied several times in musical manuscripts. From the 15th century it is important to mention the mss of the Society

of Antiquaries of London 48 (one of the earliest mss which clearly attributes this composition to Korones, written by David from Raidestos in about AD 1430), and Mount Athos-Iviron 1120 (a manuscript of the famous musician Manuel Doukas Chrysaphes, AD 1458).

During the following centuries many musicians elaborated, recorded in manuscripts and chanted the same composition according to their personal musical approach. In the 17th century the famous protopsaltes of Crete island Demetrios Tamias (ms Patmos-Monastery of Ioannes Theologos 819) put the kratema just after the word *Δύναμις*, and altered at some points the melody of the main verse *Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός...* In Tamias' work we can see a more analytical melody and repetitions of some words, like *...ὁ Θε- ὁ Θεός-ὁ Θεός.... Ἰσχυ- ἰσχυρός- ἰσχυρός...* etc. Tamias' version is not as close to the original as the others are.

Later in the same century the gifted protopsaltes of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Panagiotes Chrysaphes "the new" also copied in his manuscripts an elaborated version of the same composition of Korones.

In the second half of the 18th century the founder of the modern Psaltic tradition Petros the Lampadarios from Peloponnesos, and some years later his student Petros the Protopsaltes, wrote this composition to a more analytical musical notation, while at the same time on Mount Athos the monk Synesios from Iviron monastery transcribed the Korones' *Dynamis* according to the Athonite style of chanting (ms Mount Athos-Koutloumousiou 421). Finally, in the second decade of the 19th century the analytical work of Petros the Lampadarios helped the well known Gregorios the Lampadarios and Chourmouziotis the Chartophylax to transcribe this composition to the current musical notation, known as "the New Method".

In the following years, when we also have printed books, this composition (the Chourmouziotis' transcription) has been edited only once. It is an extensive melos (the extent of only the introductory word *Δύναμις* is about a printed page) and it was difficult to be chanted in the churches. Further more, in these years some other new and shorter compositions of the same hymn appeared.

In the second half of the same century a skilful musician, Neleys Kamarados, tried to elaborate and shorten the *Δύναμις* of Korones in order to be suitable for ecclesiastical use. He abbreviated the melody of the word *Δύναμις*, he used musical formulas from the original long kratema and created two smaller pieces which he put after the phrases of the main hymn: *Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός τορορο*, *Ἅγιος Ἰσχυρός τορορο* (the same), *Ἅγιος Ἀθάνατος τενενα εριρεμ... Ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς*. In some manuscripts before this musical work of Neleys we can read the

inscriptions “Dynamis of Korones, elaborated by Neleys Kamarados” or “Dynamis by Neleys Kamarados who imitated the composition of Korones”. It is not clear yet whether in the beginning there were two or three versions of this elaborated composition. But it is certain that after a while many outstanding musicians in Constantinople and elsewhere started performing this “new” version of Korones’ *Δύναμις*. During the last 6-7 decades it has been printed in many editions, and recorded by excellent protopsaltes in live records inside the churches or on other occasions.

The specific composition and its age-old evolution is a characteristic example of the maintenance of a kalophonic musical work in the psaltic repertoire during the last seven centuries. It is an interesting case of the survival of the late-Byzantine or Palaeologian musical art until today, indicative of the vigour, the flexibility and finally the classical character of Psaltic art.