

HIS BEATITUDE ADDRESS AT THE INTER-DISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON THE MUSICAL MANUSCRIPTS OF THE LIBRARY OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM.

3-7-2015

Distinguished Members of the Scholarly Team,

Respected Participants in this Conference,

Your Eminences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We greet you at the beginning of this important conference
with the words of the Psalmist:

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live,

I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

May my meditation be pleasing to him,

For I rejoice in the Lord.

Psalm 103 (104): 34–35

We are delighted to welcome you to the Holy City of Jerusalem
and to give our blessing to this significant inter-
disciplinary conference that is dedicated to the manuscripts
in the collection of the Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem. The

Patriarchal Library houses one of the most important collections of manuscripts and printed books in the world.

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In this collection is a significant group of musical manuscripts. These musical manuscripts are a double treasure. First of all, these manuscripts constitute an inestimable heritage from our forebears in the Church of Jerusalem. We have received this heritage from generations of faithful clergy and people down the ages ,who have kept the Christian faith alive in our region, and these manuscripts are a part of the evidence of a flourishing Christian presence in the Holy Land.

In addition to this, these manuscripts are treasure-trove of primary witnesses to the tradition of church music, that was developed by and cultivated in the great ascetical center of the Holy Monastery of Saint Saba the Sanctified, one of the oldest monasteries in continuous use in the world. Here so many distinguished teachers of music and composers of church music lived and worked, among them Saint John of Damascus, Saint Cosmas the Hymnographer and Saint Andrew of Crete. The Holy Monastery of Saint Saba was the centre of the formation of the *Typikon* , a deep and abiding influence on the worship of the Orthodox Church that continues to this day.

The great tradition of Orthodox hymnody in its priestly and liturgical aspects lives still in the Holy Monastery of Saint Saba, as it does in Orthodox Monasteries and Churches around the world. But so much of this tradition began here in the Holy Land. It is worth mentioning that the signing of church music in the lavra remains strictly *a capella*, with no instrumental support, as is the special character of Orthodox church music and worship.

It is said that "he who sings prays twice". We know the special value and power of music in Christian worship, and Orthodox worship places a special premium on singing. Music can convey a sense of the divine in a way that the spoken word alone cannot convey. All Orthodox worship is sung or chanted. While it is true that some prayers are read in a speaking voice, Orthodox worship is famous for the haunting beauty of its musical traditions, traditions that in most cases go back to the very emergence of the Byzantine tradition represented by the *Typicon of Saint Saba*.

The Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, together with the hegoumenoi of our monasteries never abandoned their concern for protecting and preserving the great manuscript collection of the Patriarchate, that includes manuscripts of dogmatic, hermeneutical, historical and musical traditions and teaching. The Brotherhood exercised this stewardship and *diakonia* in the face of untold sacrifices of blood and money over the centuries. And so this invaluable patrimony remains.

As we open this conference, we celebrate the new co-operation that now exists between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Faculty of Music of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens to facilitate the scholarly study of the musical manuscripts of the Patriarchal Library. We believe firmly that this work will contribute on the one hand to making this great heritage better known to the wider world and on the other will advance our understanding of the choral tradition of Orthodox music and hymnody. At its heart, Orthodox music is communal activity: the entire congregation is meant to join in the signing of the liturgical music. In the Orthodox tradition, in spite of much contemporary practice, the music of the liturgy is to be sung by all, and not by a small choir of trained cantors or singer. In the Orthodox tradition, music coheres the worshipping community and helps to create a sense of the unity of the congregation. Your work will help us understand

more completely all the dynamics of the traditions of Orthodox music.

As we open this conference , we pray for divine enlightenment on the work of all the scholars and the organisers of the conference. We wish to express our gratitude particularly to Mr. Demetrios Balageorgos and Miss Flora Kritikou, Assistant Professor. May God bless you all, and may the grace of the Holy and Life -giving Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you in your work and research.

Thank you.

His Beatitude

Theophilos III

Patriarch of Jerusalem