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**The Use of the Ancient Egyptian Hymns (Coptic)
to Write and Conduct
Contemporary Egyptian Music Compositions**

A Research presented by the researcher

George Kyrillos Awad Youssef

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Supervision

Prof. Emeritus Dr. Linda Fathalla Gabrawy

Ex - Dean of the High Institute of Arabic Music

A. Prof. Dr. EZZ El Din Slim

Head of Composition & Conducting Dept.

High Institute of Arabic Music

Dr. Mohamed Alaa M.Fathy

Lecturer in the Composition & Conducting Dept.

High Institute of Arabic Music

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SUMMARY

The Use of the Ancient Egyptian Hymns (Coptic) to Write and Conduct Contemporary Egyptian Music Compositions

Coptic Music is the ancient Egyptian Music with its Pharaonic authentic roots. A deep analysis of the methods of composition, music scales (Maqamat), and cadences as well as the conducting methods and the different approaches used by the conductor to deal with a group of choirs in the different formations, will help us enhance the fundamentals by which we can write and conduct Contemporary Egyptian Music Compositions, which bear within an originality uncovering an Egyptian musical identity – an identity which is about to lose its features amid this western torrential wave.

Through his analysis of the heritage of Coptic Hymns and his music studies, the researcher has noticed that there is a significant diversity in the methods of formulation, performance, and a diversity and modulation in Maqamat with its different types and geneses, and in the speed and rhythms of the musical sentences, as well as in the duration of each hymn, and cadences of these hymns during its succession.

From here, rose the idea of research to benefit from this diversity and musical richness existing in the Coptic heritage (Accapella and Monophonic), to enrich the public musical life by writing and conducting innovative Egyptian musical compositions, combining the originality, using the ancient (Coptic) Egyptian music and the contemporary musical methods such as Polyphonies and Homophonies and Orchestration coloring in various instrumental configurations, with the addition of some Egyptian instruments like Nay and Lute, after recording them in the Partitura, as well as the study of different conducting styles and patterns for those configurations.

The researcher has also noticed that the issue of conducting in Coptic music in the various liturgical rites during the year-round is a spontaneous art that has not been researched. The conducting styles in the Ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic) and how to develop them and put the technicalities relevant to its spontaneous conducting in a scientific and academic form in order to conclude the conducting styles in the various rituals of the Coptic Hymns have also not been studied. This has been done through the selection of a sample of some of the ancient Egyptian Hymns (Coptic) which have been

preserved in the Egyptian Coptic Church, represented in different recordings via “The Institute of Coptic Studies” and the Recordings of "David Ensembles".

In this study, the researcher pursued the descriptive method, surveyed studies (content analysis) and he used the recordings of the ancient Egyptian music (Coptic), and music notation of the research music sample (music transcription by the researcher) from the first century AD until the seventh century AD in Egypt, which was recorded at the Institute of Coptic Studies and through David Ensemble recordings. Also, the researcher surveyed expert opinion with respect to the innovative music composition by the researcher.

Introduction includes: -

Research problem, the goal of the research, the importance of research, the research question, research limitations, research methodology, research sample, research tools, and research terminology.

Chapter One The Theoretical Framework of the Research

Includes six Topics;

The First Topic: A historical study of the ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic) and methods of Conducting, and includes:

- Music of the Egyptian Coptic Orthodox Church and,
- The historical relationship between the ancient Egyptian music and each of the Byzantine and Syrian music.

It has addressed the history and origin of the Byzantine Empire (Patriarchy of Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Georgia). Also it mentioned the Syrian music and the names of Syrian melodies and the origin of the rituals and hymns and its musical characteristics and Maqamat. The Syrian music scale and its eight tunes in the Syrian Church have also been addressed.

Also it comprises the different music drafting techniques in terms of music stanzas of the Coptic hymns, one of which is the most famous Coptic “Melisma” style, and the reasons behind using it in the Egyptian church, and the other is the “Syllabic” style.

The research also includes musical forms used in ancient Egyptian music, and the importance of understanding of the music form of the Coptic hymn by the deacon, cantors and the Psalmist.

The research also addressed in its first topic those significantly involved in preserving and archiving the Ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic) such as cantors, sponsors and ensembles / orchestras who had a role in maintaining the Coptic melody, such as “David Ensemble” , “Ragheb Mofteh”, Mikhael Al Batanony”, ...,etc.

The Second Topic: The performance styles and conducting techniques in ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic) which includes:

Performance styles in the ancient Egyptian Music (Antiphonal Singing, Responsorial singing, solo and collective) and the reasons behind the use of each style and the characteristics and specifications of each style, and the role of the conductor" Cantor" therein.

Also the study has addressed a new topic: The conducting techniques in the ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic) at which the researcher has gone through what he called: “Front and Rear Conducting” and “Indirect Conducting in the Coptic Church”, which enables the conductor/cantor to control the audience /congregation who stands behind him indirectly, and to start removing the obscurity that surrounds the musical concert/Coptic Hymns and explain it to the public in a simplified manner, different from his explanation to the musicians of the orchestra. In this process, the conductor has to quickly notice (glance) the audience while conducting the musicians and singers, to watch out for the audience reactions to the concert and their interaction with the maestro.

This glancing process is similar to that which the players of the orchestra and singers use to glimpse the conductor's signals, which is called “Peripheral Vision”

Also it includes searching for the importance of conducting in the ritual processions in the Egyptian church, which involves circulation around the altar or the church, and which requires the cantor to conduct in a careful and more focused manner.

The researcher has also addressed the types of liturgical processions and its three divisions, and the accurate design of the processions in terms of the start time of each procession in each liturgical occasion, the participants, their orders in the procession, the Sacerdotal Dresses customized for each of them, and the movement path of the procession, as well as the hymns that should be chanted in each procession.

The Third Topic: The Music Scales of the Ancient Egyptian music (Coptic), which includes: The nature of the music scales (Maqamat) of Coptic Hymns, their different types and forms, and the distinctive nature of the “microtone” of the Coptic music scales. Throughout, the relationship between the Coptic and Pharaonic melody and the extent to which the Coptic Hymn has been affected by the Pharaonic melody has been identified.

The research concluded that the Pharaohs specialized in the deities music with its Pharaonic secrets, those when entered the Christian faith, could not get rid of neither the Pharaonic music nor its Maqamat, types and forms, formulations and its musical

cadences. Therefore, the nature of their Coptic music in its initial form, in its infancy, came with the same nature of the Pharaonic music, because inevitably, it has included within its sentences some of the musical "Pharaonic Themes".

It also includes the mutual affection that occurred between both of the Coptic and Hebrew hymns, where the people of Israel with their 12 tribes lived in Egypt and listened to our Pharaonic melodies in Egypt for 430 years (the duration of the stay of the Israeli people in Egypt). Where they recognized its Maqamat, intervals, measurements, musical tempos, rhythms, time signatures, forms and different formulations, and where they left out Egypt, carrying these inwardly in their feelings, their memories and in their worship rituals.

In the other direction was the role of Saint "Mark," the apostle, who lived a period between the tones of prophet David of Bethlehem, those melodies have been carried by St. Mark to Egypt, where he founded the "Divinity School" in Alexandria, teaching music in there beside the theological sciences. He taught these melodies in that school, where he included some of them in the Divine Liturgy which he wrote and which is considered the oldest mass known in the Coptic Church.

This topic, as well has included the common argument: that the Coptic Hymns are pure Pharaonic Music which have been compounded upon by Coptic words that are being repeated by some, relying on the lengthening in tones. This argument was refuted in ten points, and the results were extracted.

The research also comprised the distinctive nature of the "Microtone" of Coptic music Scales "Maqamat", which resulted in the emergence of a multitude of diverse musical scales exceeding one hundred in number.

In addition, it comprised the degrees of tones stability in the Coptic music scales (Maqamat), which shows liberation from the commitment to the traditional degrees of tones stability, thus providing more coloring and richness to the music formulation. Moreover the study has addressed the topic of "Music scales modulations, a distinction of the Coptic hymns, putting it into a high, profound rank in comparison to the music of other nations and countries.

The Fourth Topic: Speeds, Rhythms and Cadences of the Ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic), which includes:

Study of the issue of subordination of the Coptic Hymns to rhythms and measures with its limited rhythms variants, because the violent rhythm has a stronger effect on the body and not the spirit.

The research also comprised the role of Adlibitum tempo method that gives more freedom to the performance, and that which permeates a large number of the ancient Egyptian music (Coptic).

Also, the research discussed the importance of rhythmic changes within the same framework of the melody, as well as the rhythmic changes during the succession of hymns. The study also- exclusively, provides few pages on the use of the cymbals and the triangle and their role in controlling the tempo and bringing about joy in the melodies "farayhi", as well as their role in bringing about a diversity between the hymn in which they are being used and the following hymn where they are not used.

The research also includes all kinds of musical Cadences in ancient Coptic music heritage and introduces different styles of cadences.

It also discusses the issue of "subordination of Coptic Hymns for instrumental tuning", where some foreigners alleged that Coptic hymns are not capable of being tuned on musical instruments, consequently a conducted research finalized its subordination to instrumental tuning via six points.

The research also addressed the severe variance in the durations of hymns of the repertoire of the Coptic Church praising program, which creates a kind of diversity that eliminates the feeling of boredom which might creep to worshipers when times of praise in liturgical rituals extend to longer hours. This is beside the diversity in the formulation and performance styles, speeds and rhythms, music scales (Maquamat) and accompanying instruments (cymbals & triangle), all of these create a diverse and renewed praising repertoire even if its time is extended to ten hours such as Good Friday Rite.

The Fifth Topic: The Fundamental Basics in the writing of Contemporary Egyptian music compositions, using Ancient Egyptian Hymns (Coptic), which comprises:

The importance of inspiration and perspiration in musical composition: not by inspiration only will there be music, not by inspiration only can a composer formulate a beautiful musical masterpiece; he must rely on perspiration, effort, perseverance, studying, science and knowledge seeking.

It also includes the characteristics and traits of "inspiration" and the characteristics and attributes of "perspiration"

The research also includes classification of the composers into four groups:

"Spontaneous composers:" who rely mainly on inspiration, the **"Constructive composers:"** who rely on inspiration by finding the main Motif (theme) and then completing their composition by perspiration and composing sciences, and

"Traditionalist composers": who start with "Music Style" and not by Motif, these composers possess methods and techniques of composition that are new, mature and fully developed, and which continue to evolve throughout history, and **"Revolutionary composers:"** who come with all what is new, even if it is done in a radical manner that is attributed to their roots and origins, and regardless of being considered a taboo or difficult to be understood, and which will have a profound impact on the coming generations.

The research also includes how to evaluate the musical compositions and specifying the target of the musical composition (expression – creative beauty- ability to entertain) It also consists of the four properties and characteristics of a good musical composition: (stability, variety, balance, and symmetry).

The research includes the basic components of a musical composition: (Motif, rhythm, dynamics, Timber, and Chords) and also the constructive sequence of a musical composition: (Motif, melodic phrase, Period), and how to create, generate, and develop motifs using the traditional methods, Random Motif Generation, and Escape time fractal Motif Generation which means the typical generation of the motif and then leaving it as time goes by.

The research also comprises all musical tools and composition methods which are used by the composer to construct his musical work, and by which he can write a contemporary musical composition using ancient Egyptian musical motifs (Coptic) and some of these methods are:

Repeating the main motif method, using retrograde method, using inversion method, using retrograde inversion method, also by dividing motif into segments, by inserting small rhythm motifs, by using motif augmentation, and motif diminution, using sequential restatement of motif, using the vertical variation of an interval in motif by expansion or contraction, by deletion of some of the motif tones, by the interpolation of tones in motif, and finally by collecting all derived motifs from the main motif to form an integrated music phrase which can carry the main characteristics and same features of the main motif but in a unity, harmony and variety. Thus, the research includes 13 methods for developing the Coptic musical idea.

The Sixth Topic: Choir and orchestral Conducting and its relationship with Conducting the ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic).

It includes a preface on the history of Music Conducting such as: Conducting using feet and hand beat, using a roll of paper or large stick, using hand napkin or clicking by Ring, using the eye, while singing, with violin arc, lute neck, player of Harpsichord, and using a small conducting stick. The research includes the psychology of musical expression using the conduction stick. It also includes spontaneous conducting in

ancient Egyptian music "Coptic", the topic of orchestra without a conductor, and conducting without Partitura.

It addresses, as well the important role of the conductor in pulse unifying, breath unifying, thought unifying and senses unifying, and the impact of the Maestro's mood on the conducting process.

It also includes research on working with an Orchestra and Choir face to face and the basic requirements the conductor should possess as in understanding the nature of the Orchestra, understanding the difference between the Orchestra and the Choir, awareness of the Baton Technique of the conductor, the leadership ability of the conductor, recognition of the difference between conducting and coaching, preparation of the Beat, understanding the Peripheral Vision, ability to deliver the beat without using the "Ultra Sostenuto motions", the ability to conduct Retards and understanding the methods of cueing the players.

The study includes how to lead an orchestra rehearsal, which has been divided into three rehearsals: the first to play all the tracks, the middle rehearsal for drilling down and solving the difficult passages, and the last rehearsal to achieve a continuous, uninterrupted performance. It also includes studying the techniques and procedures of the rehearsal, and how to adjust and tune the instruments of the orchestra, allowing for the first reading /sight reading, solving the problems of acoustic balance, and knowing how to achieve Aural focal points. In addition, two methods have been presented to remind the conductor of the difficult passages which represent performance problems.

It also addresses how to prepare the choir for orchestra rehearsals, and what the conductor should say and what he should avoid, and how can the conductor boost self confidence in the orchestra players.

Chapter two

The Applied Study

It covers the reason behind selecting the research sample, and the foundations upon which the sample has been selected resulting in it being varied with respect to the nature of the hymns, conducting perspective, and in terms of composition. And it defined three analysis elements for the research sample which are:

General data for the Hymn, Detailed analysis of the Hymn, and Analysis from a Conducting perspective.

The Applied study included 4 ancient Egyptian hymns:

1. The first Hymn is: **Κατα Πιχορος**
2. The second Hymn is: **ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΠΑΝΑΧΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΗΡ**
3. The third Hymn is: **ὄντος ἄληθως**
4. The fourth Hymn is: The use of the Coptic Hymn **Ὁκῶριος Μετασον** to write a contemporary Egyptian Music.

The general data of the hymn includes:

Name of the hymn, language of the hymn, duration of the hymn, scales of the hymn, degrees of stability, time signature, speed of the hymn, the number of measures, rhythm type, music fabric style, Form, cadences, musical composition, the accompanying instruments, tone range, melodic shape, music intervals, motifs configuration, , and melodic ornaments.

The detailed analysis of the hymn also includes:

Ritual occasion for the hymn to be chanted, language of the hymn, Maqamat and genus of the hymn, changes in time signature and tempo, tone ranges, description of melodic curve, rhythmic motifs.

The analysis from a conducting perspective (conducting patterns and signals) includes: Signals and conducting patterns in a scientific way for the of ancient Egyptian music (Coptic) for the research sample in all its forms: Anacruses signal, downbeat signal, preparatory beat signal, fermata signal, cut-off signal, final cutoff signal, ritardando & ritenuto signals, it also included how to conduct dynamics like Forte & Piano, the cue signals for cymbals& triangle and its cutoff signals, As well as the cut-off pattern between verses and also includes the signals of the quartet, triplex and bilateral time signature.

Conclusion: -

Research results and interpretation:

Includes results of the researcher which have answered the research questions with respect to the:

- Possibility to take advantage of the basic characteristics of the ancient Egyptian music (Coptic) to intensify the Egyptian musical identity.
- Possibility to use the melodies of the ancient Egyptian music (Coptic) in writing and conducting Contemporary Egyptian musical compositions.

Through the search in ancient Egyptian music (Coptic) and the analysis of different samples of the hymns which is chanted in the Egyptian Orthodox Church, the

researcher was able to identify the fundamental basics of the ancient Egyptian music, which is considered the image that could describe the musical life of ancient Egypt during the days of our Pharaoh ancestors and which led to intensifying the Egyptian musical identity.

It was also possible to use the melodies of ancient Egyptian music (Coptic) in writing and conducting Egyptian contemporary musical compositions. The answer to these two questions was given from several perspectives.

Composition and Orchestral writing perspectives:

First: advantage has been taken from the Melisma style which was known by the priests of the Pharaonic temples, and was used by the Egyptian Church in the hymns by composing many tones on one syllabic, a style seen in contemporary works.

Second: advantage has been taken from the ancient Egyptian music motifs, where it was possible to reformulate them using nearly thirteen styles that were considered a development for these motifs.

Third: advantage has been taken from the formulations, and the outstanding, diversified cadences of the ancient Egyptian music, where it was employed to compose new musical masterpieces.

Fourth: advantage has been taken from the musical brilliance found in the ancient Egyptian music which manifested itself in the exotic scale modulation liberated from the control of the perfect pivot, as well as the temporary degrees of tones stability.

Fifth: advantage has been taken from the diversity of the Repertoire in the different rituals such that it has been possible to make use of that in the preparation of a diversified and good quality concert through a diversity in the performance style, diversity in the song duration, diversity of formulation style, diversity in scales, diversity in speeds and rhythms of the succeeding melodies, and diversity in the use of musical instruments.

The researcher has also deduced the following:

- The Coptic Hymns subordinate to Rhythms, and thus the common argument stating that Coptic Hymns are not subjected to Rhythms, is completely wrong.
- The Coptic Hymns subordinate to instrumental tuning, and thus the common argument stating that Coptic Hymns are not capable of being tuned on musical instruments, is completely wrong.

- The Melisma in the Coptic Hymns is not resulting from placing Christian texts on former ancient Egyptian melodies, but from the extremely musical capacity of these hymns to express the lyrics by tones, rhythms & scales and to reflect the spiritual environment & the ritual ambience.
- The specialized Pharaohs in Music Deities with its secrets, who accepted the Christian faith, were not able to get rid of the Pharaonic music- that lived in their sentiments, mingled with their lives, and was stored in their subconscious- so they composed new hymns, that incorporated Pharaonic musical themes having same characteristics of Pharaonic Music.

Conducting perspectives:

First: Advantage has been taken from the conducting belief in the Egyptian Orthodox Church, by choosing a place to lead the musical ensemble of the researcher, such that he does not turn his back to the audience (when taking the center of the theater as a place for him), but, he should be standing in the far right of the stage, this enables him to notice the public from the left side of his cheek using the method of "Peripheral Vision".

Second: Conducting signals and patterns were put to maintain the character of the ancient Egyptian melody, without the exaggerations named "Ultra Sostenuato motions" that are done by some of the conductors, where, the use of such exaggerations with venerable melodies such as traditional Egyptian Church Music is considered un-preferable

Third: The uses of the cymbals and triangle have been regulated in the ancient Egyptian music (Coptic), where it was used spontaneously before. As such, the study has determined the appropriate timings for the cue/ cutoff to start / end of play and play termination. Also, models for its conducting patterns have been drafted to be used as examples for other Coptic hymns melodies.

Fourth: The researcher has concluded in his study, that the conductors (Cantors or psalmists) in the Coptic Church deal with the deacons from a training perspective as if that Cantor or Psalmist was a "Coach", rather than the concept of a "Conductor" in itself. It was noticed that this method has risen in their consciousness due to the nature of the delivery method of these hymns "Oral Tradition Method", which relies on repetition and a lot of recurrence until the hymn is learnt by heart. The researcher has also concluded that the delivery of Coptic Hymns using music notation, will contribute in solving a big part of that problem.

Fifth: In his study, the researcher has arrived to the extent to which the Ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic) is capable to be performed outside the liturgical rites in the opera theaters, an issue that necessitates the presence of conducting, as well as learning its rules and skills.

Sixth: The researcher has arrived to a very important result during his research on the psychology of expression in the conductor's patterns and signals, through which he is able to convey his feelings and his melodic sense to the instrumentalists, choir, or deacons.

Seventh: The researcher, as well has arrived to a very important result regarding the conduction of the hymns speed and the freedom of movement in the time "Rubato", it was concluded that this freedom could widen and narrow according to the nature of the melody.

Eighth: The researcher concluded the possibility of conducting the Egyptian Church Music (Coptic), using the primitive method named "Kironomia". This simple method can be easily taught to the Cantors and the teachers responsible for conducting the Coptic hymns, until they are taught and educated the conducting sciences.

Ninth: The researcher concluded that the use of Metronome or pendulum has a great importance in training to maintain the Hymn speed during the initial sessions of training on conducting for cantors. However, to continue and engage in training, in a permanent and strict way using Metronome has its risks since the ancient Egyptian music (Coptic) is characterized by the richness of its rhythms and changes in the speed of its music which allows for a certain degree of freedom.

Tenth: The researcher concluded that the use of the stick in conducting might be rejected by some priesthood, as such; focusing on the eye and facial expressions in conducting is a very important matter.

Eleventh: The researcher concluded that the actions that the conductor (cantor) of the Egyptian Church music takes while he is conducting such as singing are very important techniques that the Coptic orthodox Church has realized two thousand years ago, and then it was realized afterwards by "Richard Wagner", as the conductor is able to identify the speed of music in a more accurate way when he sings these melodies deep inside before transmitting it to the choir and orchestra.

Twelfth: The researcher concluded during his study that using the cymbals and the triangle is an absolute necessity in the ancient Egyptian hymns (Coptic), especially in

the liturgical processions and he was able to identify the basics and rules of playing them which must be taught to the Cantors and deacons.

Recommendations:

Include the following:

- Forming an association or a committee for the preservation, compilation and archiving of that heritage, and the documentation of all its melodies (Coptic Music Hymns).
- Forming of an Orchestra or a Choir that specializes in recording all the Coptic hymns heritage which are recorded and presented in specialized concerts inside and outside Egypt.
- That the musical institutes, institutes of conservatories and colleges of music education and qualitative music education have to look forward to the ancient Egyptian music (Coptic) through the preparation and development of curricula for teaching such music, such that it is being taught as "Ancient Egyptian Music" subject, and "Analysis of Ancient Egyptian Music (Coptic)" as another subject, and " History of Ancient Egyptian Music and its Pharoanic Roots" as a third subject. Also the characteristics of this Coptic music, its performance styles in Coptic chanting, the musical instruments used in it, the prohibited musical instruments (in liturgical rites) and the reasons behind being prohibited should also be taught.
- Rituals in which this ancient music been chanted should be taught, as well as the diversity of the musical programs within these rituals in which the role of its hymn extends to nearly ten consecutive hours, and the diversity of the Psalms in melodies played in the rituals of the Coptic Church throughout the year.
- The relationship between the melody and the text must be taught and the relationship of both of them with the ritual in the Coptic Church hymns and the text sources of these hymns. Also special attention should be given to the sacraments surrounding these hymns such as sacerdotal dressings, incenses, iconostases, colonnades, candles,....etc.
- Conducting techniques of the Coptic music shall be taught and compared to the conducting techniques of the Pharaohs era, and the conducting techniques of the contemporary music.

- The expansion in teaching the sciences and arts of conducting in the Egyptian music and the translation of a sufficient number of books and references relevant thereto is of high importance.
- Conducting departments shall be opened in all conservatories and colleges of music.
- Orchestra and Choir shall be made available for the students so that they are offered real life training on how to conduct. This point is of highest importance, as some conducting institutes, provide conducting students with training via a cassette where the students conduct the music coming from and played by the cassette (not by the orchestra), a technique with which the student neither underestimates himself if he was mistaken, nor overvalues himself if he was correct.