

Clement the Hymnographer. Kanon for a nun.

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1 Genre of the kanon

First I will very briefly summarize what is known about the genre of the kanon, mainly to fix the (sometimes confusing) terminology.

a Kanon is a complex and highly structured poetic form that started to replace kontakion in service in the late seventh century.

Kanon consists of nine *odes*, corresponding to the nine biblical Canticles. Each ode is divided into several monostrophic stanzas, called *troparia*, not to be confused with the poetic genre of the same name. The initial troparion of the ode is called *irmos*. Further stanzas of the ode are sang on the melody of the irmos. Last troparion of each ode is devoted, starting from around the late eighth century, to the theotokos, and is called *theotokion*. Music of the whole kanon is also defined by one of the eight *echoi*, indicated in the beginning, which, in modern terminology, determines the musical mode.

In contrast to the kontakion, which has the form of a poetic homily, stanzas of each ode of the kanon are repetitive supplications and praises, each providing a variation of the same theme. They may or may not, as in the example of the kanon in this essay, be linked to the corresponding biblical Canticles in contents.

Although strict, the formal structure of the kanon allows for great variation in terms of textual unity. On the one extreme, there may be a whole series of kanons on one occasion and by one author (e.g. the so-called “garlands of kanons” by Joseph the Hymnographer), one for each of the eight echoi, all adhering to metrical rules and developing the same theme, with odes meaningfully corresponding to biblical Canticles and acrostics in tune with each other. On the other, we may have a repetitive composition with no apparent unity, in which different parts can be interchanged without the loss of meaning.

It is worth noting that theotokia may also have no contextual relation to the rest of the kanon. As we will see below, this creates additional problems in determining the authorship.

2 Clement the Hymnographer

Clement was a writer of hymns active in late eight - ninth century. From the iconodulic themes abundant in his works, it can be inferred that he lived during one of the Iconoclasm periods,

most probably the second. Almost nothing else is known. Clement's kanons can be identified from the acrostic ΚΑΗΜΕΝΤΟΣ in theotokia and, more importantly since there were many hymnographers with this name, from the formula with various forms of the words ὠδή and πλῆρόω in the last line of the theotokion of the ninth ode.

In the article [2] 29 kanons that, with various degree of confidence, partly or in full, can be attributed to Clement are listed. Among these are 7 "ceremonial" kanons, devoted to the following topics:

1. On monastic garment.
2. On the death of an abbot.
- 3-4. Two kanons on the death of a monk.
5. On the death of a man who took the monastic life right before death.
6. On the death of a nun.
7. Hortatory.

These were edited together by Arco Magri in [1], and I have chosen the kanon on the death of a nun for this essay.

As was noted in the previous section, many kanons may appear to be completely formal variations on the same theme, lacking personal touch of the poet. This is why Kazhdan called his article on Clement "An Oxymoron" – personal features of the Byzantine hymnographer are not expected to be apparent from his hymns, at least not from a certain point of view focusing on the literary genre. All the more interesting, how much actually *can* be inferred from the analysis of these features. The most important events of the outside world – schisms, barbarian attacks, cataclysms of hymnographer's personal life – make their way into the liturgy.

In the case of Clement, however, the problem of authorship may be especially difficult. Both attributions – acrostic and signature phrase – appear in the theotokia. For example, two of the kanons with both of these signature features listed in [2] have acrostics in the main body attributing them to other authors – one to Gregory, another to Thekla, see [3] for the discussion of the latter. Since the contents of theotokia may not be tied to the content of the kanon at all, or tied loosely after the main body was already composed, there is no guarantee that any of the known kanons were written by Clement in full! In the kanon on the death of a nun, translated below, only the theotokion of the third ode has a mention of the departed.

3 The nun

The kanon of this essay is the so-called ceremonial kanon on the death of a nun. It consists of nine odes, on the first Echos. All odes consist of four troparia (including theotokia), except for the second one, which has six. Each troparion, except theotokia, is a supplication on behalf of

the departed nun, with one notable exception of the third troparion of the seventh ode – the only one in the main body without any mention of the departed and without any supplication. Most of the troparia of the main body consist of some combination of the following three elements: mentions of the holy monastic life on Earth, prayer to forgive the sins of this life, and prayer to receive the departed in Heaven. Life on Earth is sometimes compared to the desired position in Heaven, as we will see.

Theotokia, bearing the acrostic ΚΑΗΜΕΝΤΟΣ, deserve special mention, as is always the case with the author. They are more varied than the main body, and are of a much more lyrical character. The theotokion of the last ode, bearing the signature *καὶ μελωδῶν τὴν ᾠδὴν ἐκπληρῶ*, names the praise for Theotokos as a source of divine inspiration: “The mouth that is praising you, All-Holy Mother of God, is filled with divine wisdom”.

But what can we tell about the nun herself? The first most natural question: is it *a* nun or *the* nun? Namely, is this kanon a generic piece, composed to be performed on multiple occasions, or is it for some particular person?

Of course, no name is mentioned. Most of the details are of generic character: the departed was a faithful nun, who bore her cross and led ascetic life; she hated the world and loved Christ; she also praised God in hymns, psalms and vigilant prayer. In Heaven, poet is asking her to be received to the choirs of singing maidens. All these seem applicable to any nun, except for the one phrase *καὶ τὸν σταυρόν σου ἄρασαν ἐκ βρέφους*, implying that the nun in question wore her garment from some early age, which is not enough to draw any conclusion.

In the edition of Arco Magri [1] there are also two kanons on the death of a monk, and it is interesting to compare them to the kanon we examine. Characteristic of monks are very similar: they also led ascetic solitary life, and bore their cross. However, there is a major difference in the description of the relationship of the monks with hymns and songs. In both kanons for monks there are prayers to God to receive them into the heavenly choirs. However, with regard to the choirs of this life, all three kanons differ. One of the kanons for monks, no. 4 in [1], does not seem to mention singing in the earthly life at all, so I will compare no. 3 with the kanon for a nun. In the latter, singing is mentioned in the following terms:

1. δουλεύσασαν [...] ἀγρύπνω προσευχῇ ἐν ὕμνοις καὶ ψαλμοῖς
2. Ὁ τάξας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς προνοία τῆ σῆ, ἀγαθέ, εἰς χορὸν ψαλλόντων ἡμέρας τε καὶ νυκτός
3. ἀξίωσον ἄδειν, ὡς ψάλασαν ἐν βίῳ σοι
4. ἐκάλεσας εἰς δουλείαν [...] τοῦ ἀνεῖν καὶ ψάλλειν σου τὸ ὄνομα

Compare this to two mentions of singing in this life in the kanon for a monk:

1. ᾄσμα σοι ψάλλοντα
2. διγείρετο ψάλλων

There are also several mentions with the forms of the verb βράω, about which the context is not so clear.

One may see from this comparison at least that, assuming that the kanons were composed for the same monastic community or for several similar, that in this community (or communities) much more emphasis was placed on the singing of female choirs than of male. Note also, that the singing in heavenly choirs is mentioned equally in both cases, so the hypothesis that it may have been not worth mentioning the singing of the monks can be excluded. It is also interesting to note the usage ἐν ὕμνοις καὶ ψαλμοῖς, especially in comparison to the use of verbs and active participles of various verbs of singing and uttering in other places. Can this mean that the nun in question *composed* some of these hymns? Given how few female hymnographers we know, and the established fact that Clement was acquainted with the work of Thekla, can Thekla be *the* nun?

4 Text and translation

Κανὼν εἰς μονάζουσιν
Κλήμεντος

Ἔχος α'.

ὠδὴ α'. Ἴππον καὶ ἀναβάτην.

Δέσποτα πανοικτῖρμον,
τὴν σὴν οἰκέτιδα
ὡς μονάσασαν πίστει
5 καὶ τὸν σταυρόν σου ἄρασαν
ἐκ βρέφους, τῷ πόθῳ σου μεταστᾶσαν,
δεῖξον σὺν ταῖς παρθένοις εὐφραينوμένην ἐν σοί.

Ἰλεως ἔσο, Λόγε,
τῇ σῇ οἰκέτιδι
10 καὶ πταισμάτων παράσχου
τὴν ἄφραστον αὐτῇ ὡς Θεὸς
καὶ δόξης ἀξίωσον βασιλείας
σὲ γὰρ ὁμολογοῦσα, ἐν σοὶ κεκοίμηται.

Πάντα τὰ ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ
15 καὶ τὰ ἐκούσια,
ὅσα ἤμαρτεν, Λόγε,
ἢ σὴ πιστὴ θεράπαινα
συγχώρησον, Δέσποτα, ὡς οἰκτῖρμον
σοὶ γὰρ ἀπεκληρώθη πιστῶς μονάσασα.

θεοτ. 20 Κλιμαξ ἀφικνουμένη
πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀπὸ γῆς,
Θεοτόκε, ἐδείχθης,
δι' ἧς κατέβη Κύριος
ἀφράστως σαρκούμενος καὶ παρέχων
25 πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπ' ἐλπίδι θανοῦσι θεῖαν ζωὴν.

ὠδὴ β'. Ἴδετε, ἴδετε
ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι Θεός.

Δέησιν πρόσδεξαι
νῦν ἐπιτάφιον, Σωτήρ,
30 καὶ ῥῦσαι τῆς κολάσεως,

Kanon for a nun
by Clement

Echos 1.

Ode 1. "Horse and rider..."

All-compassionate Lord,
receive your slave,
who became a nun with faith
and took up your cross
since childhood, and with longing for you passed away;
show her among maidens, delighted with you.

Be gracious, Logos,
to your slave
and, as God, grant her forgiveness
of her faults,
and deem her worthy of the glory of the Kingdom:
for she confessed you, and with you she died.

All in which unknowingly
and willingly
your faithful servant
sinned, Logos,
forgive, Lord, as you are gracious:
for as a pious nun she was allotted to you.

A ladder reaching
to Heaven from Earth,
Mother of God, you were revealed,
through whom the Lord came down
inexpressibly incarnated and giving
to all those dying in hope divine life.

Ode 2. "Behold, behold,
that I am God."

Receive now this
funerary supplication, Savior,
and deliver, my Savior,

Σωτήρ μου, τῆς φρικτῆς σου
τὴν οἰκέτιν σου, Χριστέ,
παρορῶν ἁμαρτίας
καὶ τῶν πταισμάτων παρέχων ἄφεσιν.

35 Κόσμον μισήσασα
καὶ σέ ποθήσασα, Χριστέ,
σπουδαίως καὶ μονάσασα
ἐν πίστει σοι προσῆλθεν
ἡ οἰκέτις σου θερμῶς,
40 ἣν καὶ προμεταστᾶσαν
τῆς σῆς παστάδος νύμφην ἀνάδειξον.

Πίστιν ὀρθόδοξον,
βίον ἀσκήσεως, Χριστέ,
ὡς δῶρα πενιχρά τὴν σὴν
45 οἰκέτιν κεκτημένην
προσδεξάμενος, Σωτήρ,
τῶν πταισμάτων παράσχου
ἐλευθερίαν ὡς μόνος εὐσπλαγχνος.

Σοὶ ὡς δουλεύσασαν,
50 Λόγε, ἀγρύπνῳ προσευχῇ
ἐν ὕμνοις καὶ ψαλμοῖς τὴν σὴν
οἰκέτιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ
καταξίωσον, Χριστέ,
σὺν χοροῖς νεανίδων
55 μετ' ἤχους θεῖους ἑορταζόντων παιδρῶς.

θεοτ. Λέλυται, πέπαυται
πᾶσα ἡ λύπη διὰ σοῦ,
Παρθένε· τὴν χαρὰν γὰρ
ἀπεκύησας τῷ κόσμῳ,
60 τὸν Θεὸν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ,
τὴν ζωὴν ἀφθαρσίας
νεκροῖς καὶ ζῶσιν πᾶσιν διδόντα πιστοῖς.

ὦδὲ γ'. Ὁ πῆξας ἐπ' οὐδενὸς (τὴν γῆν)

Χορείας μοναζουσῶν παρθένων ἀγίων, Σωτήρ,
65 τὴν πιστὴν σου δούλην, Χριστέ, συμμετόχον
δεῖξον ὡς μονάσασαν πιστῶς,
τοῦ βίου τὰς εὐθύναις

from your terrible punishment,
your slave, oh Christ,
overlooking sins
and granting forgiveness for wrongdoings.

Hating the world,
and loving you, Christ,
and zealously being a nun,
with faith she went to you
hastily, your slave,
whom, after her death,
proclaim the bride of your chamber.

Savior, receiving your slave,
who procured the Orthodox faith
and the ascetic life
as humble gifts, oh Christ,
grant her freedom
from wrongdoings,
as you are the one compassionate.

Because she served you,
Logos, with vigilant prayer
in hymns and songs,
your slave during life,
deem worthy, Christ,
of choirs of maidens
brightly celebrating with divine voices.

All pain dissolved,
ended through you,
Virgin: for you gave birth
to the joy for the world,
to God of Israel,
giving life of immortality
to all faithful, dead and alive.

Ode 3. "The one who fixed the Earth on nothing..."

Show your faithful slave, Christ, partaking
in the holy choirs of maiden nuns, Savior,
because she was a faithful nun,
overlooking, with your love for mankind,

φιλανθρωπία παρορῶν αὐτῆς,
μόνε ἀναμάρτητε Κύριε.

70 Ὁ τάξας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς προνοία τῆ σῆ, ἀγαθέ,
εἰς χορὸν ψαλλόντων ἡμέρας τε καὶ νυκτός,
Σῶτερ, τὴν οἰκέτιν σου πιστῶς
ταύτην καὶ μεταστᾶσαν
ἐν οὐρανῶν χοροῖς ἀρίθμησον
75 τῶν δοξολογούντων σε, Κύριε.

Ἐν ἔργοις, διανοίᾳ καὶ λόγοις σφαλεῖσαν πολλοῖς
ἐν τῷ βίῳ τούτῳ τὴν σὴν οἰκέτιν, Χριστέ,
δώρησαι τὴν ἄφεςιν αὐτὸς
τῶν ἐγκλημάτων πάντων,
80 ὁ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιστάμενος
τὸ πολυαμάρτητον, Κύριε.

θεοτ. Ἡ μόνη ἀμαρτωλῶν προστάτις ὑπάρχουσα
καὶ τῶν ἐκπιπτόντων θεία ἀνόρθωσις
καὶ τῶν τεθνεώτων πρεσβευτής,
85 Παρθένε, σωτηρίας
διὸ πιστῶς σε ἱκετεύομεν
ὑπὲρ τῆς θανούσης πρεσβεύειν Θεῶ.

ὦδὴ δ'. Τὴν θεῖαν ἐννοήσας (σου κένωσιν)

Στενὴν καὶ τεθλιμμένην ὁδὸν ἐπὶ γῆς
90 ἡ σὴ οἰκέτις, ἀγαθέ,
διῆλθεν πίστει ἀσκήσασα
ἀλλ' εἴ τι ἤμαρτεν, Λόγε,
ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐν βίῳ συγχώρησον.

Κριτήριον πικρὸν καὶ ἀδέκαστον
95 πᾶσιν ἐκδέχεται ἡμῖν,
ἐν ᾧ, Σωτὴρ ὑπεράγαθε,
τῆς μεταστάσης τὰς πράξεις
ἀφάτῳ εὐσπλαχνία συγχώρησον.

Τῆ πίστει ἠκολούθει ὀπίσω σου
100 ἡ σὴ οἰκέτις, ἀγαθέ,
ὡς ἐλομένη τὴν ἄσκησιν
ἀλλὰ ὡς ἄνθρωπον ταύτην
σφαλεῖσαν ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἐλέησον.

accusations of her life,
oh the only infallible Lord.

You, blessed, who appointed, with your providence,
on this Earth, this your faithful slave
to the choir of those singing night and day,
oh Savior, and after death
count her in heavenly choirs
that are praising you, Lord.

To your slave, who erred in many deeds,
in thought and words in this life,
give pardon, oh Christ,
from all wrongdoings,
oh Lord, knowing the mankind's
many faults.

Being the only guardian of the sinners
and the divine restoration of those fallen,
and champion of the dead,
Maiden, savior:
wherefore with faith we ask you
to mediate to God for the departed.

Ode 4. "You devised your divine emptying..."

Strait and narrow path on Earth
your slave, oh blessed,
took, depriving herself, with faith;
and if she sinned, being human in this life,
forgive, Logos.

Bitter and impartial judgment
awaits all of us,
in which, Savior, blessed,
forgive the deeds of the departed
in your unutterable benevolence.

With faith she followed after you,
your slave, oh blessed,
taking up an ascetic life,
but for her human fault
in this life — have pity.

θεοτ. Μεμύηται, Παρθένε, ὁ τόκος σου*

105 τὸν γὰρ ἀόρατον Θεὸν
βροτὸν ἐκύησας, ἄχραντε,
ἐν ὁρατῇ ὑποστάσει,
δι' ἧς περιγραπτὸς ἐγνωρίσθη ἡμῖν.

ὥδ' ἔ'. Ὁ ἀναβαλλόμενος.

110 Λόγων τε καὶ πράξεων
καὶ ἐνθυμήσεων
τὰς ἀμαρτίας, Χριστέ οἰκτιρμον,
ὡς Θεός συγχώρησον
τῆς προμεταστάσης,
115 ὡς πίσται δουλευσάσης σοι.

Τὸ ἀπροσωπόληπτον
τοῦ κριτοῦ πρόσωπον
τίς οὐ τρομάσσει καὶ τίς οὐ φρίττει;
Διὸ φεῖσαι, Κύριε,
120 πυρὸς αἰωνίου
τὴν μεταστᾶσαν δούλην σου.

Τῆς ἀγαλλιάσεως
τῶν σωζομένων, Χριστέ,
τὴν σὴν οἰκέτιν, ὡς ἐλεήμων,
125 μετὰ τῶν ὑμνούντων σε
ἄξιωσον ἄδειν,
ὡς ψάλασαν ἐν βίῳ σοι.

θεοτ. Ἐχουσα τὸ καύχημα
τῆς παρθενίας φαιδρὸν
130 ὡς Μήτηρ ὠφθης Θεοῦ γεραίρειν
ὑπερτέρως, ἄχραντε*
διό σοι τὸ Χαῖρε
τοῦ Γαβριὴλ φθεγγόμεθα.

ὥδ' ἔ' ζ'. Μαινομένην κλύδωνι

135 Ἐπι γῆς φορέσασαν
μετανοίας ἔνδυμα, Σωτήρ,
τὴν πιστὴν οἰκέτιν σου, ἄξιωσον
ἀφθαρσίας
στολὴν αὐτόθι ἐνδύσασθαι.

Your son, Maiden, has been revealed:
for you gave birth, oh undefiled,
to the invisible God
in his visible substance,
limited in which he became known to us.

Ode 5. "Wearing [light as a garment]..."

Sins in words,
deeds and thoughts
of the passed away,
oh Christ compassionate,
forgive, as God,
as she served you faithfully.

Who does not tremble and who does not shudder
before the impartial
face of the judge?
So spare, Lord,
your departed slave
from the eternal fire.

Of the great joy
of the saved, Christ,
deem her worthy to sing,
as merciful,
along with those chanting for you,
as she sang to you in life.

Having the bright boast
of virginity,
as Mother of God you appeared to honor
exceedingly, oh undefiled:
and so we celebrate
the Gabriel's "Rejoice!" to you.

Ode 6. "Raging wave..."

Your faithful slave,
who wore the robe of repentance
on this Earth, Savior,
deem worthy now
to wear the garment of immortality.

140 Ἦν πιστῶς ἐκάλεσας
εἰς δουλείαν, Δέσποτα Χριστέ,
τοῦ αἰνεῖν καὶ ψάλλειν σου τὸ ὄνομα,
μεταστᾶσαν
χοροῖς αἰνούντων σε σύναψον.

145 Φοβερὸν τὸ βῆμά σου
καὶ ἡ κρίσις ὄντως χαλεπή·
διὸ φεῖσαι, Κύριε, τῆς δούλης σου
ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ
τῆς ἀδεκάστου στάσεως.

θεοτ. 150 Νέον σοι ἐγκώμιον
καὶ ἀρχαῖον ἄδωμεν, ἀγνή·
οὐ γὰρ κρεῖττον ἔχομεν πρὸς ἔπαινον
πλὴν τὸ Χαῖρε
τοῦ Γαβριήλ σοι προσφθέξασθαι.

155 ὦδὴ ζ'. Ὁ ὑπερψούμενος

Ἐν τῇ μετὰ δόξης σου
παρουσίᾳ, Κύριε,
ἀξιώσον, Δέσποτα,
φαιδρῶς ὑπαντῆσαί σοι
160 κατέχουσιν λαμπάδα,
ὁ Θεός, τὴν σὴν οἰκέτιν.

Σοὶ πιστῶς κεκλήρωται
ἐπὶ γῆς ἡ δούλη σου
διὰ τῆς ἀσκήσεως,
165 Σῶτερ ὑπεράγαθε·
τῆς σῆς καὶ μεταστᾶσα
ἀπολαύσει κληροῦχίας.

Οἷα ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν
καὶ ἡ δόξα ἅπασα
170 ἀτμίδος σαθρώτερα,
σκιᾶς ἀδρανέστερα.
Τί μάτην ἐν τῷ βίῳ
φρυαττόμεθα ἀφρόνως;

θεοτ. 175 Τίμιον τὸ κάλλος σου
καὶ Θεῶ ἐράσμιον·

The one whom you truly called
into service, Lord Christ,
of praising and singing your name,
join the departed
to the choirs of those praising you.

Frightful is your step,
And the judgment is harsh:
So spare, Lord, your slave
in the hour
of impartial weighing.

New and old praise
we sing to you, oh pure:
for we have nothing better
to sing in praise for
than Gabriel's "Rejoice!" .

Ode 7. "Exceedingly exalted..."

In the presence
of your glory, Lord,
deem your slave
worthy, Master,
to meet you, God, rejoicing,
carrying a lamp.

Your slave on this Earth
was truly allotted to you
because of the ascetic life,
oh blessed Savior:
and after her death
she will enjoy your inheritance.

How much is our life
and all our glory
more fragile than steam
and paler than shadow!
Why are we so proud
in this life, vainly and foolishly?

Worthy is your beauty
and pleasant for God:

τοῦτο γὰρ θελγόμενος
Υἱός σου ἐγένετο,
παρθένον σε φυλάξας
ὡς πρὸ τόκου μετὰ τόκον.

180 ὦδὴ ἡ'. Σοὶ τῷ παντουργῶ

Δέσποτα Χριστέ,
τὴν μεταστᾶσαν πίστει
χοροῖς καταξίωσον
παρθένων ψάλλειν σοι'
185 «Πάντα τὰ ἔργα τὸν Κύριον ὑμνεῖτε
καὶ ὑπερυψοῦτε εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας».

Σοῦ ὡς τὸν σταυρὸν
ἀναλαβοῦσαν ὠμοῖς
καὶ πίστει μονάσασαν
190 τὴν σὴν οἰκέτιν, Χριστέ,
δέξαι εἰς κληῖρον τῶν σέ δοξολογούντων,
ἵνα σοὶ τὸν ὕμνον σὺν τούτοις ἀναμέλπη.

Πίστει ἀκλινεῖ
ἡ σὴ οἰκέτις, Λόγε,
195 ὀπίσω σου ἔδραμε,
διὰ τοῦ σχήματος,
ἥνπερ παράσχου συγχώρησιν πταισμάτων
καὶ σὺν τοῖς ὁσίοις ἀξίωσον ὑμνεῖν σε.

θεοτ. Ὁλη καθαρὰ
200 καὶ πλήρης θείας δόξης,
ἀγνή, ἡ πλησίον μου, —
φησὶν τὸ Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ, —
σὲ προαγγέλλον τοῖς ἄσμασιν ἐβόα'
σοὶ γὰρ πρέπει χαίρειν, Θεὸν βροτοῖς τεκοῦσα.

205 ὦδὴ θ'. Ἡσαΐα χόρευε

Ἐκ πιστῆς προθέσεως
βιοτικῆς μέριμναν ζωῆς
φοροῦσα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, Δέσποτα Χριστέ,
ἡ δούλη σου ἤρατο
210 ἀσκητικὸν βίον καὶ σεμνόν'
ἥνπερ ἀνάπαυσον

for here, charmed,
your Son was born,
preserving your chastity,
after birth, as before.

Ode 8. "To you, creator of all..."

Lord Christ,
deem departed with faith
worthy of the choirs
of maidens, to sing to you:
"Bless the Lord, all you works [of the Lord],
praise and exalt him above all forever."

As the one who has taken up
your cross on her shoulders
and was a nun with faith,
your slave, Christ,
receive into the lot of those glorifying you,
so that she would praise you with them in hymn.

With steadfast faith
your slave, Logos,
ran after you;
and for this way of life
grant her forgiveness of her faults
and deem her worthy to sing to you with saints.

Absolutely pure
and full of divine glory,
holy, my close one, —
said the Holy Spirit,—
announcing you cried to you in songs: for you are worthy
of praise, giving birth to God for the mortals.

Ode 9. "Isaiah sings..."

With faithful purpose
enduring care of worldly life
on this Earth, Lord Christ,
your slave loved
ascetic and holy life:
so give rest

μεταστᾶσαν, ὡς φιλόανθρωπος.

Τὸ πολυαμάρτητον
τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἶδας, ἀγαθέ,
215 ὡς πλάστης τε καὶ Θεὸς καὶ δημιουργός·
διὸ τὴν οἰκέτιν σου
μοναχικῶς ζήσασαν ἐν γῆ,
πᾶν εἴ τι ἥμαρτεν,
ἐλεῆμον, ἄνεσ, ἄφες αὐτήν.

220 Ὡς τὸ ζῆσαι πνεύματι
ἐρασθεῖσα, Δέσποτα Χριστέ,
ἐμόνασεν ἡ σὴ δούλη ἐπὶ γῆς·
ἀλλ' εἴ τι καὶ ἥμαρτεν
ἐν τῇ σαρκί, δώρησαι αὐτῇ
225 σὺ τὴν συγχώρησιν,
ὡς ἐν πίστει σοὶ δουλεύσασαν.

θεοτ. Στόμα τὸ δοξάζον σε,
παναγία Μήτηρ τοῦ Θεοῦ,
σοφίας θεϊκῆς πλήρωσον αὐτό·
230 ἐν πίστει πρεσβεύω σοι,
ἵνα πλουτῶν χαίρω καὶ ὑμνῶ
τὰ μεγαλεῖά σου
καὶ μελωδῶν τὴν ᾠδὴν ἐκπληρῶ.

to the departed, as you are benevolent.

You know the many sins
of men, oh blessed,
as the creator, and God, and the Maker of the World:
so, if your slave,
who lived a monastic life on Earth,
sinned in anything,
oh merciful, set her free and forgive.

Loving to live in Spirit,
oh Lord Christ,
your slave became a nun on this Earth:
and if she committed some sin
of flesh, you give her
forgiveness,
as she faithfully served you.

Mouth that is praising you,
All-Holy Mother of God,
fill it with divine wisdom:
I worship you with faith,
so that I, being rich, rejoice and sing
your greatness,
and complete the song with melodies.

5 Notes

Kanon is present in two manuscripts:

C = Cryptensis Γ.β. XLIII, saec. XI, membran., ff. 219^v-224^v.

O = Ottobonianus gr. 160, a. 1363, chart., ff. 167-169^v.

Arco Magri uses **C** edition as the main one. In the few comments below I have not included the scriptural references already indicated by Arco Magri, except for the one place (l. 160), where the text is not clear without them. I have also indicated where I have chosen another textual variant.

6. μεταστᾶσαν – μεθίστημι lit. *to change one's state*, very frequently in Christian literature as *to die*.

8. ἔσο – later form of the 2nd. imp.

41. τῆς σῆς παστάδος νόμφην ἀνάδειξον – cf. Math. 25, Parable of Ten Virgins.

112. τὰς ἀμαρτίας – **C** has τῆς ἀμαρτίας, but I have chosen the variant of **O**: lit. “forgive *the sins* of words, . . .”, direct object of συγχώρησον.

145. βῆμα – either a *step* or a *seat* of a judge.

160. Again cf. Math. 25.

167. κληρουχίας – κληρουχία lit. *appointment of land*. Later is used in the general sense of inheritance.

196. σχήματος – σχῆμα lit. *image*, is used for the monastic rule in general, as well as (today) for the particular type of the monastic garment.

197. ἦπερ – Arco Magri notes that this may be a scribal error for ἦπερ, and I translate it as such.

220. Ὡς τὸ ζῆσαι πνεύματι ἐρασθεῖσα – cf. Romans 8:9 Ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ἀλλὰ ἐν πνεύματι, εἴπερ Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν.

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