



Second part Archaic poems of Christian content

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In addition to the poem, presented in the previous article, we know the version of Gloria in excelsis or Gloria maior, transmitted by the apostolic Constitutions (17, 47). This version is a little different, perhaps older, than the byzantine recension, the one known to us. It seems clear that the text evolved from the influx of the Christological issues of the third and fourth centuries. From the praises to the one true God he knew the adoration of the Lamb, as in the pictures of the triumph of God that the Apocalypse presents to us:

Gloria in Excelsis Deo et in terra pax,
in hominibus bona voluntas (cfr Lc. 2, 14).
Laudamus te,
hymnis celebramus te,
benedicimus te,
glorificamus te,
adoramus te per magnum Pontificem,
te Deum verum,
ingenitum unum,
solum inaccessibilem,
propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Rex caelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens,
Domine Deus,
Pater Christi,
Agni immaculati qui tollit peccata mundi:
Suscipe deprecationem nostram,

qui sedes super Cherubim (Ps. 79, 2)

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,

tu solus Dominus Dei universae naturae creatae,

Iesus Christus, Rex noster, [per quem gloria, honor et reverentia].

A third archaic poem follows a similar procedure: a biblical expression of praise is enriched employing amplifications.

Laudae pueri Dominum,

Laudae nomen Domini (Ps. 112, 1).

Laudamus te,

hymnis celebramus te,

benedicimus te,

propter magnam gloriam Tuam,

Domine Rex,

Pater Christi Immaculati Agni,

qui tollit peccata mundi.

Te decet Laus,

te decet hymnus (Ps. 64, 2),

te decet gloria,

Deum et Patrem per Filium in

sancto Spiritu,

In saecula saeculorum. Amen

It is necessary to underline the expressive method that consists of the accumulation of synonyms, either to intensify the contemplative effect of the divine attributes – Deus, Dominus, Pater, Rex, Domine Deus, solus sanctus, Deus Pater omnipotens, Rex caelestis –, either to encourage internal adhesion to the action of the Church – laudamus, hymnis Celebramus, benedicimus, glorificamus, adoramus. These two poems or hymns should be added the Te Deum laudamus.