



### Musicologists

Source: Atiya, Aziz S. (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, vol. 6, (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1991), p.1741,2.

#### Borsai, Ilona (1925-1982):

After graduating from the University of Kolozsvár, in her native city of Cluj, Rumania, qualified to teach Greek and French languages, Ilona Borsai attended the Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary, where she received the Diploma of Music Education. Completing further studies in the field of musicology under Bence Szalócsi, she began to work in research in folk music under the direction of Zoltán Kodály at the Academy of Science. Having retired in 1978, she died in Budapest on July 8, 1982.

Her research led into musicological studies of Egyptian music, pharaonic, folk, and Coptic. During three visits to Egypt, she made many recordings of folk and Coptic music in 1967-1968 to collect recordings for transcriptions and analyses, in 1969 to attend the Second Conference of Arab Music where she presented a paper, and in 1970 to follow up on the studies and recordings of Coptic music. As a result of these visits she produced a number of transcriptions in collaboration with Margit Tóth and publications describing the results of her research.

She was a member of the Coptic Archeological Society, the Hungarian Ethnographical Society, the Association of Hungarian Musicians, the Hungarian Society of Studies of Antiquities, the International Association of Hungarian Studies, the Hungarian Kodály Society, and the International Association of Coptic Studies.

Her pioneering research into the details of the historical, analytical, and liturgical significance of Coptic music opened the field of Coptic musicology and defined its direction. Her contribution has had an impact not only on Coptic studies but also on all research concerning music whose historical roots have been transmitted through the centuries by oral tradition.

#### MARTHA ROY

#### Hickmann, Hans (1908-1968):

Hickmann, a German musicologist, was known primarily as an authority on the musical instruments of ancient Egypt. He devoted much study to the music of the Coptic church, which he felt was a living link between the past and the present.

Born 19 May, 1908, in Rosslau bei Dessau, Germany, he received his early education in Halle and continued his studies in musicology at the University of Berlin under the direction of some of the most distinguished scholars of the time, including Erich M. von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs. After his graduation in 1934, he studied at the Staatliche Akademie für Kirchen- und Schulmusik (Berlin-Charlottenberg) and the Berliner Hochschule für Musik. His interest in Eastern music was first aroused by a field trip to the Siwa Oasis (1932-1933), sponsored by the Berliner Phonogrammarchiv. In

1933, he settled in Cairo, and from here he conducted extensive investigations into the music of Egypt for more than two decades.

From 1949 to 1952, he lectured in many countries of Western Europe. In 1957 he left Egypt because of political conditions and returned to Germany to head the department of Ethnomusicology at the University of Hamburg. In 1958, as the new director of the Musikhistorisches Studio (Archiv-Produktion) of the Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft in Hamburg, he produced many recordings of ancient music, all of great scholarship and authenticity. He died 4 September 1968, in Blandford Forum, Dorset, England.

His published works cover more than three decades (1934-1968, plus articles published posthumously). A comprehensive bibliography, comprising some 198 entries, is listed in the *Journal of the Society of Ethnomusicology*, vol. IX, no. 1 (January 1965), pp. 45-53, and vol. XII, no. 2 (May 1969), pp. 317-19.

MARIAN ROBERTSON

Newlandsmith, Ernest (1875-? [after 1936]):

British violinist, composer, and writer, best known for his extensive transcriptions of Coptic liturgical music.

The son of a clergyman, he was born 10 April, 1875. Having shown a talent for music, he entered the Royal Academy of Music in 1893, from which he graduated with distinction in 1899, earning the A.R.A.M. (Associate of Royal Academy of Music). Disillusioned as music teacher and concert violinist, he turned his back on music as a profession (1908) and became a “pilgrim” or “minstrel friar.” Henceforth, he traveled through the countryside presenting musical religious services and lining by the generosity of others.

In 1926 he undertook a musical pilgrimage to the Holy Land. En route, he stopped at Cairo where he met Ragheb Moftah, who arranged for him to compile a book of liturgical music of the ancient Coptic church. Newlandsmith continued his journey to the Holy Land (Mount Carmel), but soon returned to Cairo. Here, as the guest of Mr. Moftah, he lived in a houseboat on the Nile, notating the music as chanter – among them the great master chanter Mu'allim Mikha'il Jirjis – sang their time-honored melodies hour after hour, day after day (1926-1931). He also spent some time at Abu al-Shuquq working with Mr. Moftah on the transcriptions (1929).

The complete project lasted about ten years (1926-1936), and during this time, Newlandsmith transcribed some sixteen folio volumes of music, including the Liturgy of Saint Basil (vol. 1), numerous other special songs for the various feasts and fasts, and special songs reserved for high church officials.

Impressed by the dignity and beauty of this music, Newlandsmith used certain melodies in his own violin compositions, and upon return trips to England (1928, 1931), he played these works as part of his music services. He also gave enthusiastic lectures about the antiquity of the Coptic musical tradition.

During his life Newlandsmith founded various musical-religious societies, the most significant being “The New Life Movement.” A prolific writer, he penned several pamphlets and books wherein he expounded his idea about music.

A bibliography of his early musical compositions is listed in the *Universal Handbuch der Musikliteratur aller Zeiten und Völker* (Vienna, n.d.), vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 124. He based his later works on Coptic melodies, of which two, dating from 1929, remain significant: his *Oriental Suite* for violin and piano, and the *Carmelite Rhapsody* for solo violin.

MARIAN ROBERTSON