

*Katy Romanou*

## WESTERNIZATION OF GREEK MUSIC

**ABSTRACT:** The two longer lasting conquerors of Christian Greeks were the Venetians and the Ottoman Turks. Under the Venetians, Greeks (specifically, the inhabitants of the Ionian Islands) assimilated Italian music and harmony in a popular tradition. Greeks subjugated to the Ottoman Turks, resisted cultural assimilation, and, united under the guidance of the Ecumenical Patriarchs in Constantinople, saw Orthodoxy in combination with the Ancient Greek heritage, as the essence of Greek nationality. Monophonic church music, termed "national music", and its neumatic notation were widely spread. Westernization in those areas, that included Athens, was initiated by Greek musicians from the Ionian Islands. They founded institutions for the performance of western music, aiming at the edification of the general public. One of those institutions, the Conservatory of Athens, was reformed in 1891, introducing methods, study programs and evaluation criteria, much like those of the best music schools of Paris and Germany. As a consequence, the musicians from the Ionian Islands were marginalized, while the repertory, the aesthetic principles, the performance modes and conventions, underwent abruptly radical changes.

Those changes in musical manners coincide with Eleftherios Venizelos' election as a prime minister, in 1910, and his progressive pro-western policy. It was in that year that the composer Manolis Kalomiris, who had studied in Vienna, and was an admirer of both Wagner and Venizelos, settled in Athens, emerging as the initiator, leader and promoter of a Greek National School, that was to dominate musical life of Athens during the first half of the twentieth century (and, of course, to change the meaning of the term "national music", westernising that too!).

The ensuing conflict between pro-Italians and pro-German musicians, was violent and, at times, amusing. It reflected political leanings, but primarily it was a debate over the devolution of privileges from one group of musicians to another; a struggle for professional survival.

Westernization, which transformed the world's music during the twentieth century,<sup>1</sup> is a vague term, describing many diverse modes of cultural transformation. It may be stated with certainty though that the westernization of music includes always the adoption of harmony, and the urbanization of musical life.<sup>2</sup> It is understood, therefore, that western music itself, before developing its model-characteristics, underwent during the Middle-Ages transformations much similar to the ones observed during the westernization of non-Western people.<sup>3</sup> The similarity of the West's Middle Ages with recent developments

<sup>1</sup> See Bruno Nettles, "World Music in the Twentieth Century: A Survey of Research on Western Influence", *Acta Musicologica*, 58, 1986, 360—373.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, 362.

<sup>3</sup> "The process [of Westernization] with all its varied ramifications, is essentially the same process as the medieval process", observed Warren Dwight Allen in *Philosophies of Music His-*

among many non Western peoples, is usually shaping the perception of what is progressive or underdeveloped in those peoples' music.

The observation of westernization in Greek musical life is rewardingly interesting, because historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors have been varied, even opposed in different areas of the country, and frequently altered; because religious proselytism, that is as a rule the main carrier of harmony to non-western people,<sup>4</sup> had little effect in Greece, where Orthodoxy endured rulers of every provenance; also because Greek traditional music and the music that would partly supersede and transform it (Western music), were both conceived as inheritors of Ancient Greek and Byzantine music.

The two most enduring conquerors of Christian Greeks were the Venetians (since the 13<sup>th</sup> century) and the Ottoman Turks (since the 14<sup>th</sup> century), who, but in a few cases, succeeded the Venetians (in the 17<sup>th</sup> century). Only certain of the Ionian Islands,<sup>5</sup> including Corfù, the largest and most densely populated, were never under the Ottoman rule.

Among Greeks subjugated to Ottoman rule, westernization was slow, hindered by isolation and a prolonged dominance of the church in politics and everyday life. To those Greeks, westernization was in many ways associated (most profoundly during the 18<sup>th</sup> century) with their aspiration for freedom.

Under the Venetians, westernization was a matter of fact. The inhabitants of the cities spoke and wrote Italian, went to Italian schools established for the Venetian settlers,<sup>6</sup> studied at Italian Universities in Italy, and participated in the government of their homelands. This ostensible equality existed only for the aristocrats (a class arbitrarily established by its members, the *Corpo di Nobili*,<sup>7</sup> and supported by Venice, in a mutual tolerance). The western education of this aristocratic class<sup>8</sup> meant that it played a leading role in the awakening of national conscience — of the entire Greek population — the dissemination of the ideas of the Enlightenment, the preparation of the 1821 Revolution, the political organization of the new state and the ensuing cultural and social evolution. It was members of this class that laid the foundations of the most effective and ataxic education of western (harmonic) music ever to exist in Greece. They took advantage of the islands' traditional music — both secular and church — characterized by improvised polyphony,<sup>9</sup> and of the proximity to Naples with its *conservatories*.

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tory. *A Study of General Histories of Music 1600—1960*, Dover Publications Inc., New York 1962, 335.

<sup>4</sup> B. Nettle, *ibid.*, 367, where the word "proselytism" is not however used.

<sup>5</sup> These islands (known also as Heptanesos, i.e. Seven islands) lie at the West of Greece, in the Ionian sea, south of the Adriatic. They are: Corfù, Cephalonia, Zakynthos, Leukas, Ithake, Paxoi, Antipaxos and few more very small islands.

<sup>6</sup> Italian schools were founded in the cities where Venetian families settled. No schools were established in villages, where the Greek language was spoken.

<sup>7</sup> Humbler classes were called *Civili*, *Popolari* and *Plebaglia*.

<sup>8</sup> Unique in the history of the Greek nation, since the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>9</sup> Evidence of this tradition in Greek church music — presumably related to Sicily's and Southern Italy's oral tradition of the "falsobordone" — is given, among others, by Gioseffo Zarlino [in: *The Art of Counterpoint; part three of Le Institutioni harmoniche*, 1558, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1968, 14] and Charles Burney [in: *A General History of Music, from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, vol. 2, Printed by the author, London 1782, 76].

Cultural life in the Heptanesos was that of a South Italian province.<sup>10</sup> Accademias were founded and theatres built since the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At San Giacomo, a Corfù theatre built in 1720, an Italian group gave the first opera performance in 1733.<sup>11</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the opera seasons were unceasing. Gradually, Greek names (of both performers and composers) began to appear in the theatre's programs.

In Corfù, music education, initiated by Italians who settled on the island giving private lessons to well-off Greeks, showed spectacular results after the foundation of the Corfù Philharmonic Society in 1840. The Society's founders and board of directors were members of the *corpo di nobili*, its first instructors were mostly Italians, but the majority of the pupils and members of its first ensemble, a wind band, were boys from the lowest classes, some completely illiterate and of the utmost poverty.<sup>12</sup>

The Philharmonic Society's educational program was conceived by Cavaliere Nicolaos Chalciopoulos Manzaros (1795—1872), on the model of Neapolitan *conservatories*, where he had perfected his musical training.

Music education in 19<sup>th</sup> century Naples is seen as decadent by Westerners. François Fétyis arrogantly describes the reduction of the "science of harmony" into a few rules of Fenaroli's simple and easy method, based on tradition and intuition rather than the intellect. "Teaching methods in the conservatories of Naples", he says, "have not advanced one step further since one century ago. [...] Everything down there is practice and little theory."<sup>13</sup>

Fedele Fenaroli (1730—1818) taught the "partimenti", a semi-practical method of harmony, at the Conservatorio dei Turchini, which, united in 1806 with three other conservatories, formed the Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella,<sup>14</sup> where an impressive number of Greeks from the Ionian Islands studied. One of the first to do so, was Manzaros, tied by a lasting friendship with his

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Specifically on the subject of this tradition, called in Heptanesos "Cretan music", see Marcos Dragoumis, "He Dytikizousa Ekklesiastike Musike mas sten Crete kai sta Heptanesa" [Westernised Church music in Crete and the Heptanesos], *Laographia* 31, 1976—1978, 272—293; Katy Romanou, "Ena Archeio 'Cretikes Musikes' sten Philharmonike Etaireia tes Kerkyras" [An Archive of 'Cretan Music' in Corfù's Philharmonic Society], *Musicologia* 12—13, 2000, 175—188.

<sup>10</sup> The best study of music culture in the Ionian islands thus far is Spyros Moutsenigos, *Neohellenike Musike. Symvole eis ten Historian tes [Neohellenic Music. Contribution to its History]*, Athens 1958.

<sup>11</sup> See Platon Mauromoustakos, "To Italiko Melodrama sto Theatro San Giacomo (1733—1798)" [Italian opera at the theatre San Giacomo (1733—1798)], *Parabasis*, vol. I, 1995, 147—191.

<sup>12</sup> A press announcement inviting boys to join the society, stating that they will be instructed reading and writing if needed by the Philharmonic Society, is quoted in Moutsenigos, 151. The band's first public performance on 11 August 1841 was given from behind the philharmonic's windows, because some of the boys were in rags and barefoot, and the ensemble's uniforms were not ready in time. See Laurentios Vrokines, "Ai Litaneiai tou Hagiou Spyridonos", [The Litanies of Saint Spyridon], in: *L. Vrokine Erga [L. Vrokines' Works]*, vol. II, Corfù's Chronicles XVII, Corfù 1973, 301.

<sup>13</sup> "Fenaroli (Fedele)", in: *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens et Bibliographie Générale de la Musique*, 2nd edition, Paris 1874.

<sup>14</sup> Initially named "Collegio di Musica di San Sebastiano" or "Real Collegio di Musica".

teacher, Niccolò Antonio Zingarelli, a student of Fenaroli.<sup>15</sup> Zingarelli appreciated Manzaros' respect of tradition.<sup>16</sup>

Music heard in Naples was much different from the music heard in Western cities (or in the north of Italy). Dionysios Laurangas (1860—1941) from Cefalonia, after studying music in Corfù — with Manzaros — and at the Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella in Naples, went to Paris in 1890 and was impressed by the amount of completely “new” music he heard in that city: “Coming from Italy, I had no idea of symphonic music or symphony orchestras, since neither was known down there [...] Beethoven, Berlioz, Mendelssohn, were names heard of by a few maestros only...”<sup>17</sup>

The Neapolitan conservatorios' practical methods, as well as the repertory performed in Italy's South ideally suited Manzaros' aims to establish a popular, free music education in his homeland. He adopted them, conscious of what they represented in relation to Western music. It is well documented that Manzaros was a broadly informed musician.<sup>18</sup> Imbued with national feeling, he was wholly committed to his homeland's music education. He taught talented youngsters free of charge, and, aside from a number of erudite contrapuntal and dramatic works, he composed music for the people, in the traditional forms of both church and secular music. A considerable number of his songs, he wrote in collaboration with the poet Dionysios Solomos from Zakynthos, one of the greatest Greek poets and among the first to use popular language in poetry.<sup>19</sup>

There was no music hall in Corfù besides the San Giacomo theatre — where only theatrical plays and operas were performed. Thus the vast piano and chamber music literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was absent from this popular music culture, a culture connected with national and religious feasts, and open-air family gatherings. Opera tunes, polkas and mazurkas, marches and hymns, performed by the Philharmonic Society's wind band, were assimilated as a purely indigenous tradition.

The foundation of music institutions for the performance of Western music in Athens, relied heavily on Heptanesians who settled in Athens after their islands' unification with Greece in 1864.

Quite a different music culture existed in that city; it was a culture developed in Constantinople, which was the base of the Patriarch (the political leader of the enslaved Greeks, responsible for their submission to the ruler, tax pay-

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<sup>15</sup> One among Manzaros' theoretical treatises is his unpublished “Disposizioni armoniche del V e VI libro dei Partimenti di Fenaroli”.

<sup>16</sup> A letter sent to Manzaros by Zingarelli (1825), asking to succeed him in order to safeguard the tradition of the “beautiful Neapolitan school, preserved up to those days incorruptible” is quoted by Laurentios Vrokines in his “Prooemiakon Martyriai kai Semeioseis” [Documents and Notes for the Preamble], in: *L. Vrokine Erga [L. Vrokines' Works]*, vol. I, Corfù's Chronicles XVI, Corfù 1972, 30.

<sup>17</sup> Dionysios Laurangas, *Aponnemoneumata [Memoirs]*, Govostes, Athens s.a., 28, 41.

<sup>18</sup> In the Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella, Manzaros taught in 1825—1826 the History of Music; certain of his writings provide evidence of his broad culture, such as the *Rapporto relativo al dono di alcune Opere di Monsigny e Grétry*, Tipografia Scheria, Corfù 1851.

<sup>19</sup> Also educated in Italy. Manzaros' and Solomos' better known collaboration is the *Hymn to Liberty* (1830), a long work relating critical fights and other events of the Greek liberation struggle; its first stanzas became the Greek national anthem in 1865.

ing etc.), the centre of the Orthodox Faith, the symbol that kept the nation united for four centuries.<sup>20</sup>

Education in those eras was in most cases connected to the church.<sup>21</sup> At certain periods it reached high standards (especially in Constantinople) and aimed to enforce both the Orthodox belief and national conscience. Up to the 18<sup>th</sup> century it consisted of the study of the Church Fathers and ancient Greek writers, mainly the philosophers. Under the influence of the Enlightenment, a great number of books on applied sciences, geography, western history, philosophy and literature, etc. were translated into Greek.<sup>22</sup>

Music education consisted of the study of church music and the neumatic (Byzantine) notation, which under the influence of the Enlightenment, was, in 1814, simplified and transformed into an easily apprehended system, known as the “New Method”.<sup>23</sup> The term “church music” did not imply up to the end of the nineteenth century an opposite to “secular music”; it was synonymous with “national music”,<sup>24</sup> and neumatic notation was used for all music sung by the people. A large part of that music consisted of church melodies that were — whether adapted to secular texts or not — sung at dinners, at work, as well as in the church. Church music also functioned as secular music, the church permeating every-day life, education and politics.<sup>25</sup>

In Athens (as in all areas that formed the Greek state after the 1821 Revolution) aristocracy was non-existent. Economic classes developed much later in the century, when Greek refugees who had become rich in Russia and the West, settled in the capital.<sup>26</sup> Music education was consequently uniform, acquired mainly in the church.<sup>27</sup> The dispersion of Western music (i.e. harmony)

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<sup>20</sup> Steven Runciman’s *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1968) is an excellent study of the role played by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in keeping Greek national consciousness alive from the fall of Constantinople (1453) until the outbreak of the War of Independence (1821).

<sup>21</sup> In areas under the influence of Constantinople, the church was up to the end of the nineteenth century, as paramount as it was in the Middle Ages in Western Europe.

<sup>22</sup> Many among these translations were done by church officials, who were the first representatives of the Enlightenment, simply because they were at the time the better educated.

<sup>23</sup> On the influence of the Enlightenment on the 1814 Reform of music notation, see Katy Romanou, “He Metarrythmise tou 1814” [The 1814 Reform], *Musicologia*, vol. 1, January 1985, 7–22.

<sup>24</sup> The political, social and cultural developments that brought about the changing meaning of those terms are related in detail in Katy Romanou, *Ethnikes Musikes Periegesis, 1901–1912* [*Wandering National Music, 1901–1912*], vol. 1, Cultura, Athens 1996.

<sup>25</sup> On the subject of the secular functioning of church music up to the twentieth century, see Katy Romanou, *Historia tes Entechnes Neohellenikes Musikes* [*History of Neohellenic Art Music*], (Cultura: Athens 2000) 23–38, especially.

<sup>26</sup> “When the kingdom of Greece was established in 1828, the Greeks inhabiting the Ottoman Empire or dispersed in the West and Russia, much more in numbers and much more wealthy than the Greeks of the kingdom, formed the most important part of Hellenism” says the historian Nikos Svoronos in *Episkopesis tes Neohellenikes Historias* [*Compendium of the Neohellenic History*], Themelio, Athens 1976, 91.

<sup>27</sup> As a matter of fact, it was also in church that certain Western societies’ lower classes were musically educated. In his description of musical life in Bologna, Charles Burney says: “The music of the churches here, which the common people hear every day, is a good school for them and enables them all to sing with taste and expression of the right sort.” See *Music Men and Manners in France and Italy 1770*, Ernst Eulenburg Ltd., London 1974, 92.

and staff notation in Athens, was uninterrupted since the enthronement of the Bavarian Otto as King of Greece in 1833 and, to a broader public, since the 1860's, when a great number of musicians from the Ionian islands — both Greeks and Italians — settled in the capital, founding and directing amateur music societies, in collaboration with a few German musicians from military bands, as well as Athenians of a western education.

What was called “European music” in 19<sup>th</sup> century Athens had even less in common with the music played in the West, than with music heard in Corfu and the rest of the Heptanesos. It consisted of urban popular songs, operas, transcriptions of favourite tunes for wind bands and mandolin ensembles, music for ancient Greek dramas,<sup>28</sup> music for the *comic idylls*,<sup>29</sup> harmonised church music, etc. The repertory and the entire net of foundations for music education, transmission and commerce of the western musical centres, was ignored. Towards the turn of the century, most of the Athenian musicians involved in the dissemination of “European music”, such as Themistocles Polykrates, Ioannis Sakellarides<sup>30</sup> and others, were amateur, bilingual musicians (who had mastered neumatic and staff notation, harmony and the Octoechos). They were both composers and performers of operas, music for Greek dramas, school songs, liturgies, church hymns and more.

The most important organizations working for the introduction and dissemination of this “Western” repertory in Athens, were the *Euterpe Philharmonic Society*, founded in 1871 by Rafaele Parisini, from Bologna; the *Music and Drama Association*, founded in 1871 (its branch was the *Conservatory of Athens*, that inaugurated its lessons in January 1873, under the leadership of Alexandros Catakuzinos<sup>31</sup>); the *Athens Philharmonic Society*, founded in 1888 by Spyridon Spathis from Cephalonia; the *Friends of Music Association*, founded in 1893 (with the Italian Ricardo Boniccioli directing its small symphony orchestra). In 1888 the *First Hellenic Opera* was founded. Then, Dionysios Laurangas, returning from Paris, formed in 1898 the more enduring *Second Hellenic Opera*, with singers chosen from church choirs. He also created a mandolin ensemble. By the century's end, ensembles for the performance of western music were numerous in Athens.

The stated aim of these amateur groups was the performance of digestible western music for the edification of the general public. The instruction of the performers in notation, theory and technique was a matter of consequence.<sup>32</sup> Proof of the effectiveness of this practical method of learning is provided by

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<sup>28</sup> The earliest documented music for a modern Greek performance of an ancient Greek tragedy (Sophocles' *Antigone*, performed in Constantinople in 1863) was composed by the Italian G. Foschini. See, Romanou, *Historia*, 91.

<sup>29</sup> Stage works, similar to Western *pasticcios*.

<sup>30</sup> He was the musician who taught H. J. W. Tillyard the reformed Byzantine notation in 1904–1907, in Athens.

<sup>31</sup> He was invited from Odesa — where he was directing the church choir of this Russian harbour's prosperous Greek community — to lead the choir of the royal chapel in Athens.

<sup>32</sup> Describing the rehearsals of the first amateur opera productions, Antones Hadzeapostolou says: “There was no need to copy the parts: Practically none of these youngsters knew music or how to read. Whatever they sang they learnt by ear.” *Historia tou Hellenikou Melodramatos* [*History of the Hellenic Opera*] (Athens 1949) 10.

the successes, both at home and abroad, of certain ensembles and individuals of this period.<sup>33</sup>

Training at the Athens Conservatory was along similar lines until the institution was reorganized by Georgios Nazos in 1891. Supported generously by the state, he established methods, study programs and evaluation criteria of both pupils and teachers, much like those of the best music schools of Paris and Germany. Thus, while up to 1891, singing and ensemble instruments were taught to a considerable number of students, mostly male, in following years piano classes were the more popular, attended mainly by girls from well-off families, whose budgets and moral principles were in harmony with the instrument's cost and solo repertoire. As for the professors, most were Germans. Not one of the musicians (Greeks or Italians) who had worked up to then for the dissemination of western music in Athens, was invited to teach at the reorganized Conservatory. Nazos was selected president of the Conservatory by the politically influential personalities of Athens; it was certainly not his music skills that led to the choice (his studies in Munich lasted too long and were never completed<sup>34</sup>) but the fact that he belonged to a wealthy and influential family himself.

Despite the elitist nuance that tinted music education in the Conservatory of Athens thereafter, its reform was part of the progressive political change that ripened in the first decade of the twentieth century. In short, this change consisted of the abandonment of the policy to project the Greek Orthodox Church as the apostle of the nation (a policy even the educated Greeks approved of, because the Greek Orthodox church was seen as a sign of primacy over the states with the same creed, the Slavs) and an orientation towards an assimilation with Western Europe.<sup>35</sup>

Debates over the specific western nation that should serve as the model for the westernization of Greece occurred on many frontiers, motivated by varied interests. The criteria were political, social, and moral. A press debate was initiated in July 1902 after a French troupe's scandalously hideous performances in Athens. Minute descriptions of the performances were followed by analy-

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<sup>33</sup> Such as the *Second Hellenic Opera* (that toured from Turkey to France and from Russia to Egypt) and the *Athenian Mandolin Ensemble* (that gave performances even in the USA), the tenor Giannis Apostolou, the violin teacher Demetres K. Dounes and others. See Romanou, *Ethnikes Musikes Periegesis 1901–1912*, 223–224, 271–277.

<sup>34</sup> On Nazos' music studies, see Georgios Drosines, *Georgios Nazos kai to Odeion Athenon* [*Georgios Nazos and the Conservatory of Athens*], (Hestia: Athens 1938) 20–52.

<sup>35</sup> The events that led to the definite change in political orientation were: 1) The 1908 revolution of the New Turks in Turkey, which brought into force a progressive constitution. Initially the revolution had a positive effect for the Greeks, still living in thousands in Turkey. Soon, however, the New Turks assumed nationalistic characteristics, with tragic consequences for the Greeks. In Greece, the revolution of the New Turks, on the one hand added strength to demands for justice and morality, while on the other, it turned the people against the government, for its inability to protect the Greeks in Turkey. 2) The 15 August 1909 „Revolution of Goudi”, initiated by young officers demanding reform of the armed forces, administration, judicial system, educational system and economy, as well as the eradication of favouritism and the squandering of public money in all sectors. The Athenian people, in a demonstration on 14 September, acclaimed the insurgents as their representatives. 3) The election of Venizelos' progressive party in 1910, and the constitutional reforms, which started in January 1911.

ses of the effects of westernisation and the people's imminent moral corruption. "Germany: there is a great and healthy Nation, an example for imitation" was the title of one among several long articles proposing the correct western model and exposing German virtues.<sup>36</sup>

Among musicians, the debate on the correct western model reflected that of the Greek politicians, but also, Western reactions to Wagner's influence. Primarily, the debate was over the devolution of privileges from one group of musicians to another; it was a struggle for professional survival.

Georgios Lambelet (1875—1945) from Corfù, entered that struggle by founding a periodical, in collaboration with Georgios Axiotis, aptly entitled *Kritike* [*Criticism*] (1903—1904).<sup>37</sup> The two men satirized Nazos' rise to musical dictator, his pretense of authority on all subjects. They mocked Nazos' repeated interviews with ignorant journalists, dumbfounded by his "broad knowledge": "Oh Byzantine music, we will teach it differently... on a new basis... on a higher level... you will see, you will see..." And, the following day: "Oh! A Greek opera... I work upon it night and day, but we will form singers differently... on a new basis... my own school... a higher level... you will see, you will see...".<sup>38</sup>

They deplore the interruption of the music education initiated by Heptanesians — which they characterize as "sincere and natural" — through Nazos' reform that brought about deceit and hypocrisy in the music world:

Those people representing the period before the appearance of Nazos, [...] followed step by step the development of the people's musical sentiment and nurtured it. They founded philharmonic societies and choirs, established the first Greek opera group, organized recurring music concerts, composed works that the people came to love and regard as their own music. [...] With them, the development and cultivation of musical sentiment proceeded naturally, evenly and unobstructed; were it left to grow unrestrained, today we would had achieved admirable progress.<sup>39</sup>

Axiotis states blatantly the replacement of Italian music by German as the most destructive among Nazos' initiatives:

Does the director of the Conservatory of Athens realize the crime he commits, when he soaks in the poison of the German spirit the soul of this innocent people, who expect from this institution to sound one day the polyphonic Song of

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<sup>36</sup> *Oi Kairoi* [*The Times*], 10 July, 1902.

<sup>37</sup> Georgios was the younger of three brothers, all of whom were musicians who settled in Athens towards the end of the nineteenth century. Before founding *Kritike*, he wrote for the first musical periodical of Athens, *Mousike Ephemeris* [*Musical Journal*] (1893—1895), directed by his brother Napoleon Lambelet (1864—1932), the more generously gifted of the three brothers, a leading figure in the Athens Philharmonic Society and the Conservatory of Athens before Nazos' reorganization. Napoleon left Athens in 1894, coming into conflict with a number of musicians, and worked in Alexandria and in London from 1895, where he died.

<sup>38</sup> "Anoiktai epistolai dia to Odeion Athenon" [Open letters on the Conservatory of Athens], 128. (In the volumes of *Kritike* found both in the Gennadeios Library and the Library of the Parliament, in Athens, the separate issues are not identifiable. Therefore, only the page number may be given, the pagination being continuous in the volumes).

<sup>39</sup> *Kritike*, 130.

their soul? [...] The various menuetti, polkas and the like, performed [...] by the old Conservatory's small orchestra, the chorals from *Lucia* or *Norma* or *Sappho* sung by the conservatory's choir, the performance by the students of comprehensible, clear and simple compositions [were] analogous to the spirit and the requirements of the society.<sup>40</sup>

Georgios Lambelet stigmatizes the bourgeoisie, whose pretentious manners contribute to the uncreasing number of piano students. He gives a fictitious speech addressed by Nazos to the female piano students of the Conservatory, "the young ladies frequenting the salons of the so called aristocratic class":

The Conservatory is dedicated to you alone. Everything else is less important. This is how I conceive true progress. You should become piano maniacs. [...] Athens must produce more lady pianists than Munich and Vienna. [...] And when in society, you will be playing the last notes of some piece by Bach or by Schumann, and after a while you will stand up to receive the congratulations of your audience, your forehead wet with cool perspiration, after the agonizing emotion produced by the piece, if some innocent stranger, ignoring our manners and customs, expresses his desire to hear something refreshing after his wearisome effort, something by Chaminade, a melody by Tosti, something by Verdi or Bellini etc., you answer with a smile of astonishment and disdain, as if saying: You want me to play that sort of things! That is for provincial simpletons!<sup>41</sup>

One perceives in Lambelet's remarks the bitter disappointment of a person ousted as a "provincial simpleton", incapable of comprehending good music, by persons whose musical abilities are questionable.

The significance of the Ionian tradition and its Italian beginning in the westernisation of Greek music was further undermined and its representatives completely marginalized, when in 1910, Manolis Kalomiris settled in Athens. It was in that year that Eleutherios Venizelos' election as prime minister definitively marked the European orientation of Greece.

Manolis Kalomiris (1883—1962)<sup>42</sup> emerged as the initiator, leader and promoter of a Greek National School that was to dominate the musical life of Athens during the first half of the twentieth century. A new meaning was assigned to the term "national music". Its significance became dependent on Greek music's relation to Western music, containing a hint of the former's marginality. National music was now viewed as if by Western spectators, and was thereafter the concern of musicians well educated in Western music. Training in Greek music, practical or not, was no longer adequate for the creation of national music.

Kalomiris succeeded in presenting this belated movement as progressive, by arousing the interest of the circle surrounding the periodical *Noumas* (poets and writers advocating a cerebrally constructed popular language, and support-

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<sup>40</sup> *Kritike*, 164.

<sup>41</sup> *Kritike*, 193—194.

<sup>42</sup> Kalomiris was born in Smyrna. He studied the piano and theory at the Vienna Konservatorium für Musik und darstellende Kunst (1901—1906).

ing Venizelos and his goal of westernisation). He launched an extensive series of articles, propounding his views on national music, music education, etc., disclosing his German musical culture. He projected the *Noumas* literary movement as a cultural renaissance that forecasted the growth of national music. “If we look at the history of Music, we will see that music often comes about as the reflection of some great literary, religious or social movement”, he says, adding that the reformed conservatory is “admirably organized from the bottom to the top. [...] In my humble opinion the Conservatory is one of the few institutions which is an honour to the country.” He concludes this not very “humble” text, with a violent attack on Spyros Samaras,<sup>43</sup> questioning his fame in the West and trying to obliterate his image as the most important Greek composer, and possible successor to Nazos. Samaras, he says, does not write Greek, but Italian music, which has nothing in common with the character of Greek art:<sup>44</sup>

Imagine the brazen ignorance of those who say that our music is related to Italian music, just because we are neighbours! Any Norwegian song reminds me more of our national music than ten Italian operas. [...] To Greek music, Mr. Samaras is of less significance than either the Russian Glazounow or the Dane Carl Nielsen; the former wrote two overtures based on Greek folk songs, while the latter, inspired by the sun of Attica, wrote his *Helios Overture*. [...] Whom can we put forward as a worthy successor for Mr. Nazos? No one. Perhaps Mr. Samaras himself, you might say. But I think that if Mr. Samaras is as highly regarded in the international music world as the Greeks imagine him to be, then he would never accept to return to Athens for ever, abandoning the brilliant career that he could have made for himself abroad.

You will say that he might do it out of patriotism. Yes, but for us to believe in his patriotism, he should have demonstrated it in the form of some important and serious composition in Greek and with Greek character. Since his patriotism is confined to his desire to assume the directorship of the Conservatory, he will forgive us if we believe that his only reason for coming to Greece is that his international position is not quite as eminent as we imagine.<sup>45</sup>

Another person writing in *Noumas* in support of Nazos and Kalomiris is Theodoros Synadinou.<sup>46</sup> He launches an attack on several composers from the

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<sup>43</sup> Spyros Samaras (1861—1917) was from Corfu. Many among his operas (on Italian libretti) were successful on Italian scenes, including Milan’s La Scala, as well as in Vienna, Paris, Monte Carlo, Berlin etc. Today, his better known composition is the *Olympic Hymn* (on a poem by Costes Palamas) written for the 1896 revival of the Olympic Games in Athens, and established as the official Olympic hymn in 1958.

<sup>44</sup> It is certain that Kalomiris had never heard any music by Samaras or any other Heptanesian composer, when writing those articles. He would change his view in later years, and as a matter of fact, work for the performance of their works.

<sup>45</sup> “He Techne mou ki’oi Pothoi mou. Gia Odeia kai gia to Odeio” [My Art and my desires. On Conservatories and on the Conservatory], *Noumas*, January 1910, 1—6.

<sup>46</sup> He was a journalist and director of *Akropolis*, a daily whose offices were in 1901 the target of violent public demonstrations instigated by the circulation of several translations of the Bible in everyday language. The *Akropolis*’ translation was written by Alexandros Palis, a member of the *Noumas* group. The translations of the Bible were seen as an effort to remove from the Greek Orthodox Church the privilege of using the Bible in its original language, and rank it as equal to the churches of the Slavs.

Ionian islands, for their Italian culture, with crude characterisations such as “Persons, who have the gall to show their disgusting faces, having grasped the ideals of *dolce far niente* with both hands” and compares them to Kalomiris. Napoleon Lambelet’s<sup>47</sup> entire work, he says, “consists of a dozen songs which, if you bundle them all together, aren’t worth a single bar of one of Kalomiris’ compositions”.<sup>48</sup>

Unsurprisingly, Kalomiris was taken on at the Athens Conservatory as professor of piano, harmony, counterpoint, composition and history of music. He embarked on the creation — and leadership — of a Greek national school, having secured the support of Venizelos and the government, a majority of the press, progressive intellectuals and musical authorities!

Then, in 1919 Synadinos published his *Historia tes Neohellenikes Mousikes 1824—1919* [*History of Modern Greek Music 1824—1919*], the first history of Greek music to disregard the entire tradition of Byzantine music (considered since as a specialised field),<sup>49</sup> to diminish the importance of the music of the Ionian islands as “Italianate” and to propound that the first examples of music in Greece were the marches played by King Otto’s military bands and the salon pieces performed at social gatherings in foreign ambassadors’ homes.

Kalomiris and Synadinos contributed to the dissemination of aesthetic principles and criteria for the evaluation of music, that had evolved in the West by the time it was overwhelmed by German Romanticism. The western distinction between folk and the people’s music, between music that should evolve and music that should not, the precepts of what is pure in traditional music, what is serious in art music and many other novelties (no matter how incompatible with the situation in Greece, especially concerning the transmission and evolution of music inherited) were introduced and rapidly spread to a people compliant with and credulous of western ideas.

Synadinos opens the prologue of his history with the sentence: “One of the fundamental principles of Wagnerian theory is that art comes from the people and should return to the people”. Which he elucidates, defining the creators of folk music as “people”, who, he says, are not “capable of receiving music, though initiated by them, when it returns as a work of art”, because the folk is uneducated, and music appreciation is a privilege of the educated.<sup>50</sup>

He says that those who created marvelous folk music while fighting for their liberation were thereafter sluggishly turning to music of a “sick romanticism”. “Sick romanticism”, or plain “romanticism”, a term used here not in connection to the romantic period, but to a dreaming, unrealistic and effeminate disposition is, according to Synadinos, Italian opera. “Bavarians arriving with the king Otto”, he says, “did incite a sparkle in the young Greeks’ souls with their marches, their dances, their concerts and songs. But Italian opera [...] which has not stopped one moment to dominate the Greeks’ brain and he-

<sup>47</sup> See fn. 37 above.

<sup>48</sup> “To Odeion mas” [Our Conservatory], 22 November 1909, 4—5.

<sup>49</sup> On the histories of Greek music written prior to Synadinos’, see Romanou, *Historia*, 30—32.

<sup>50</sup> *Historia Neohellenikes Musikes 1824—1919* [*History of Neohellenic Music 1824—1919*] Typos, Athens 1919, ε—ετ.

art, extinguishes every attempt for original musical expression. For many decades Greeks have cried with Verdi's *Traviata* and laughed with Rossini's *Barbiere* [...] Greece is sailing in the ocean of romanticism."<sup>51</sup>

The music promoted by the Heptanesians and the Italians in Athens up to Nazos' reorganization of the Conservatory, was neither folk nor serious: much too popular, it was accused as "commercial", even though, the better financed institution was the Conservatory of Athens ("something like the Coffers of the State" says Lambelet, commenting on the fashion of donations to the Conservatory<sup>52</sup>), while "commercial" music, including Italian operas, was performed by amateurs under extremely difficult conditions and with great economic loss. "We must fight against commercial music in all its forms, from the opera through the canzonetta", wrote Kalomiris<sup>53</sup>, without leaving room for misinterpretation, since he did not name "operas", neither Wagner's nor his own "musical dramas".

*Кати Роману*

## ПОЗАПАДЊАЧАВАЊЕ ГРЧКЕ МУЗИКЕ

### Резиме

Постојала су два освајача која су дуже време владала хришћанским Грцима — Венецијанци и отомански Турци. Под Венецијанцима, Грци (посебно становници Јонских острва) народну традицију употпуњавали су италијанском музиком и хармонијом. Грци које су покорили отомански Турци опирали су се културној асимилацији и, уједињени под вођством васељенског патријарха у Цариграду, сматрали су да православље заједно са древним грчким наслеђем спада у суштину грчке нације. Монофона црквена музика, звана „национална музика“, и њена неуматичка нотација биле су широко распрострањене. Позападњачење тих области, које су обухватале и Атину, иницирали су грчки музичари са Јонских острва. Они су основали институције за извођење западне музике, тежећи да је приближе општој публици. Једна од тих институција, Атински конзерваториј, реформисан је 1891. године и увео је методе, програме студија и критерије за оцењивање налик онима на најбољим музичким школама у Паризу и Немачкој. Због тога су музичари са Јонских острва били маргинализовани, а репертоар, естетски принципи, начини извођења и конвенције нагло су доживели корените промене.

Те промене у музичким обичајима десиле су се у време када је Елефтериос Вензелос изабран за премијера 1910. године, у време његове напредне про-западне политике. Те године се композитор Манолис Каломирис, који је студирао у Бечу и био поштовалац Вагнера и Вензелоса, настанио у Атини и истакао се као иницијатор, вођа и заступник Грчке националне школе која ће доминирати музичким животом Атине током прве половине двадесетог века (и, наравно, променити значење термина „национална музика“, позападњавајући и њега!).

<sup>51</sup> *Historia Neohellenikes Musikes 1824—1919*, η—θ.

<sup>52</sup> *Kritike*, 193.

<sup>53</sup> "Musikokritika gymnasmata" [Exercises in musical criticism], *Noumas*, 2 May 1910, 2—3.

Уследио је сукоб између про-италијанских и про-немачких музичара који је био жесток и, повремено, забаван. Он је осликавао и политичке ставове, али првенствено је представљао сукоб око позиција једне или друге групе музичара, борбу за професионални опстанак.