

From Popular to Esoteric: Nikolaos Mantzaros and the Development of his Career as a Composer

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Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros (1795–1872) was a noble from Corfu and is better known today as the composer of the Greek national anthem. However, recent research has proved his importance as a teacher and as one of the most learned composers of his generation, renowned, in Italy and France as well as Greece.

The aim of this article is to present Mantzaros' developing relationship as dilettante composer to the emerging European nineteenth-century music and aesthetics, as featured through his existing works and writings. In his early works (1815–27) Mantzaros demonstrates a remarkable creative assimilation of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century operatic idioms, whereas his aristocratic social status allowed him an eclectic relationship with music in general. From the late 1820s, Mantzaros also began setting Greek poetry to music, in this way offering a viable solution to the demand for 'national music'.

From the mid-1830s onwards, Mantzaros' already existing interest in Romantic idealism was broadened, affecting his work and thoughts. He stopped composing opera-related works and demonstrated a dual attitude towards music. On the one hand he continued composing popular music for the needs of his social circle, but on the other he developed an esoteric creative relationship with music. The latter led him as early as the 1840s to denounce the 'extremities of Romanticism' and to seek the musical expression of the sublime through the creative use of 'the noble art of counterpoint'. This way he attempted to propose a re-evaluation of nineteenth-century trends through an eclectic neoclassicism, without neglecting the importance of subjective inspiration and genius.

Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros (1795–1872), better known with the Italianate version of his name as Niccolò Calichiopulo Manzaro, was until recently completely unknown in Europe,¹ and even in Greece his name was only connected to the setting of the Greek national anthem.² This nationalistically

¹ The changing attitudes towards Mantzaros during the last decades are illustrated in a lively way by the entries regarding the composer in the 1980 and 2001 editions of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (NGD)*. See John G. Papaioannou, 'Mantzaros [Halikiopoulos] Nikolaos' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 1st ed. (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1980): vol. 11, 635–6 and George Leotsakos, 'Mantzaros, Nikolaos Halikiopoulos', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001): vol. 15, 787–8.

² Between 1829 and 1830 Mantzaros set to music Dionysios Solomos' *Hymn to the Liberty*, a poem of 158 stanzas, the first two of which, with the music of this early setting (since at least three were to follow) became, in July 1865, the official anthem of the Greek Kingdom.

motivated image of Mantzaros prevented scholars from seeing behind this simplified sense of a composer, educator and thinker. He considered music in its broader sense and developed attitudes on music which reveal major aspects regarding music in nineteenth-century Greece and Europe.

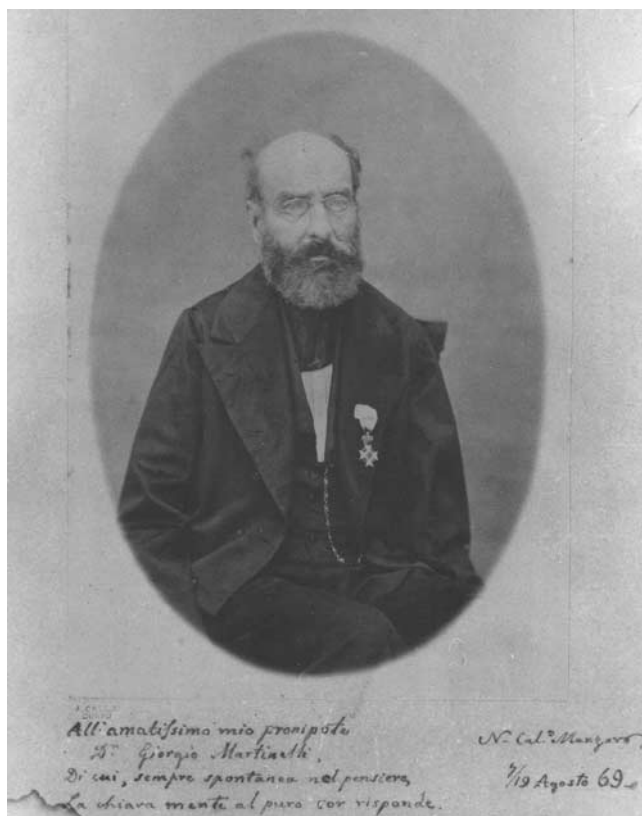


Fig. 1 The only known photograph of Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros. Photographic collection of the Corfu Reading Society

Mantzaros was a noble of Corfu, which was the administrative centre of the Ionian Islands. Between 1386 and 1864 they were under continuous 'western administrations'.³ Corfu and the Ionian Islands in general remained in close contact with the European social, cultural and historical developments, especially those of the Italian peninsula. Opera (already performed in Corfu since the eighteenth century) and vocal music played central roles in the formulation of the

³ From 1386 to 1797 Corfu was under Venetian administration, followed by the Napoleonic Republic of France. From 1800 to 1807 the Ionian Islands, under the protection of Russia, became the first neohellenic state, but from 1807 until 1814 the Napoleonic French transformed them into a satellite of France. Napoleon's final fall in 1814 heralded the arrival of the British administration, which was to rule for 50 years. In 1864 the Ionian Islands were annexed to the Greek Kingdom.

musical life of the Ionian urban centres, which soon managed to compromise the cosmopolitan hegemony of Italian melodrama with their local (and later national) endeavours.⁴ Mantzaros was the earliest offspring of this creative amalgamation of Greek and broadly European musical culture.

During the mid-nineteenth century, Mantzaros had already established his fame as an important figure in Greek and Italian musical circles, especially as a contrapuntist and a 'philosopher of music'.⁵ However, this was the mature stage of a diverse compositional career that began in 1815. Mantzaros was born at the very end of the eighteenth century, was almost the same age as Schubert, Rossini and Donizetti, and thus belonged to that group of composers that represent the musical transition from the late eighteenth century to the multifarious nineteenth century.

In contrast to the above-mentioned composers, however, the aristocrat Mantzaros always considered himself as a *dilettante*, an attitude that allowed him a privileged relationship with the art and the science of sounds. This also gave him the opportunity to develop a personal approach to music of its time, combining the experiences of the past with the demands and the diverse attitudes of the nineteenth century. At the same time, Mantzaros lived almost entirely on the periphery of the European world, making his case most compelling. The main aim of this article is to outline Mantzaros' development as *dilettante* composer from his early creative period – characterized by the interaction of cosmopolitan and national attitudes – to the esoteric musical approaches of his maturity.

The early period

Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros was the third child and the only son of the jurist and orator Iakovos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros (1768–1843). His family belonged to the local nobility and was one of the oldest and richest of Corfu. Mantzaros' noble descent was to play a decisive role regarding his life-long stance *vis-à-vis* music. His belief in aristocratic gallantry and a sense of a mission of the nobility towards the 'lower classes' always prevented him from accepting any kind of payment for his musical activities or to consider himself a professional composer. It is indicative that in the official documents he described himself as a landowner and that, despite his progressively tantalizing financial

⁴ Kostas Kardamis, 'The Music of the Ionian Islands' in *Ionian Islands: History and Culture* (Athens: Region of Ionian Islands, 2007): 186–203 and 356–65.

⁵ Several archival sources refer to Mantzaros' 'European fame'. See Alexandros R. Rangaves, *Memoirs* (Athens: Vivliorama, 1999): vol. iii, 133, who emphasizes that Mantzaros' fame in Italy was so influential that 'his opinion regarding harmony was sought by Verdi and other illustrious composers, who often sent him their works'. Moreover, in 1856 Niccolò Tommaseo made explicit reference to Mantzaros, 'student of the great and good Zingarelli', and his authoritative opinion on music, see Niccolò Tommaseo, *Belleza e Civiltà o Delle arti del Bello Sensibile*, (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1856): 110. See also Niccolò Tommaseo, 'Italia, Grecia, Illirio, le Isole Jonie, la Corsica e la Dalmazia: Industria e Arti Gentili', *La rivista contemporanea* IV, vol. 8 (Torino, 1856): 1–6 (p. 6). See Benaki Museum Historical Archives (Athens), Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros Archive (BM/NMA), Scores 407, 3, for a record of a discussion on versification between Tommaseo and Mantzaros; Gerolamo Alessandro Biaggi, *Della Musica Religiosa e Delle Questioni Inerenti* (Milano: Lucca, 1856): 168.

problems that became obvious in the 1850s, his only known professional occupations are two appointments in local administration.⁶

However, this does not mean that Mantzaros' musical knowledge was confined to that of the average nineteenth-century *dilettante*. His active occupation with musical composition already differentiated him from his fellow Ionians, and the same applies in regard to his extensive knowledge of music theory. In 1807 Mantzaros' mother persuaded her husband to allow their son to learn music on a systematic basis. Mantzaros' early teachers were Stefano (1768–1826) and Gerolamo (1779–1842) Pojago, two brothers born in Corfu, but with family roots in Milan. The former taught him keyboard music and practical music theory, and the latter the violin from as early as 1809.

The Pojago brothers were members of the orchestra of the Nobile Teatro di San Giacomo of Corfu.⁷ The first opera was performed there in 1733 and, at least from 1771 until 1900, melodramatic performances were staged without interruption. In 1791 Stefano Pojago contributed the music for the opera *Gli amanti confusi ossia Il brutto fortunato*, which was premiered in Corfu.⁸ In 1819 Pojago presented in the same place his *ballo eroico* entitled *L'arrivo d'Ulisse alla isola dei Feaci*. In this way Mantzaros' teacher became the first known indigenous composer of the Ionian Islands.

Mantzaros' early studies were connected, directly or not, with the activities of his tutors. The style of early nineteenth-century opera performances, as well as contemporary vocal music, provided the most important melodic experiences of the composer. Regarding music theory, thorough bass harmony in the form of keyboard accompaniment or of the realization of *partimenti* offered a common approach to the systematic learning of harmony. Stefano Pojago's occupation as organist of Corfu's Catholic cathedral from as early as 1803 until his death,⁹ might suggest Mantzaros' early connection with contemporary sacred music practices. From the very beginning of his studies poetry and music were two inseparable issues in Mantzaros' aesthetic thought, the combination of which could lead to the 'real essence of art'. Mantzaros' beliefs coincided with orientations in Italian music and its long-established culture in the vicinity of the Ionian Islands.

Early studies confirmed the musical talent of the young aristocrat, but no more so than other noble *dilettanti*, for whom reasonable facility with music was a common preoccupation. However, it was Mantzaros' interest in music theory that created a turning-point in his relationship with music. Despite Pojago's knowledge of music theory (proved by his compositional dexterities), Mantzaros soon sought further training in that field from Stefano Moretti, a music teacher

⁶ Namely, Secretary of the General Attorney of the Ionian Islands (1818–32) and Secretary of the President of the Ionian Senate (1833–56). See Kostas Kardamis, *Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros: 'Enotita mesa stin pollaplotita'* [*Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros: 'Unity within Variety'*] (Corfu: Society of Corfu Studies, 2008): 41, 58.

⁷ Kostas Kardamis, 'O "prosolomikos" Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros kai to ergo tou' [*The "pre-Solomian" Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros and his Work*] (PhD diss., Ionian University, Corfu, 2006): 63–74.

⁸ Claudio Sartori, *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800*, 7 vols (Cuneo: Bertola & Locatelli, 1990): iii, 107.

⁹ General State Archives – Archives of Corfu [GSA-AC], Ionian Senate/Imperial French 16, 190 (25 Aug. 1810, no. 185) and GSA-AC, Ionian State 50, 46 (23 Oct. 1826).

from Ancona already active in Corfu since the mid-1780s and a *maestro al cembalo* in San Giacomo theatre during the late eighteenth century.¹⁰

Nonetheless, Moretti's teaching was disappointing to his young disciple, especially regarding fugue, a form that would be emblematic for Mantzaros' mature period. Moretti's inadequacy seems to have been the main cause that led Mantzaros in 1810 to the side of 'Cavalliere Barbati', possibly a Neapolitan refugee, who taught him harmony, orchestration and composition until 1813. Barbati seems to have been an influential figure regarding Mantzaros' relationship to music theory and possibly the person who decisively affected his orientation towards the Neapolitan school and its aesthetic ideals. However, apart from Barbati, one more person who seems to have strengthened Mantzaros' belief in the musical ideals of the Italian south, was Giuseppe Castignace, a Neapolitan musician, graduate of the San Sebastiano Conservatory, pupil of the celebrated music theorist Fedele Fenaroli and rather mediocre composer of comic operas, who worked from 1817 until the late 1840s as *maestro concertatore* in the theatre of San Giacomo.¹¹ Castignace and the young Mantzaros became friends and the latter had the opportunity to appreciate the quality of the former as a strict follower of Fenaroli's contrapuntal tradition and as a competent player of *partimenti*. The use of *partimenti*, a practice that characterized the Neapolitan teaching of counterpoint, was not only related to the educational and creative procedures of the Italian south, but it was still useful for the operatic practices of the time. The 'violoncellisti' and 'contrabassisti al cembalo' were required well into the nineteenth century to be extremely competent in harmony, figured bass and *partimento*, since they had to 'realize' and enhance in real time the accompaniment of the *recitativo semplice*.¹² The employment of such performers in the theatre of San Giacomo, as evidenced by the existing libretti,¹³ seems to reveal one additional factor in Mantzaros' appreciation of the creative potentialities of the *partimenti* practice.

In 1813 the young composer married his life-long partner, Countess Marianna Giustiniani. Family tradition insists that this marriage was partly motivated by Mantzaros' father, both for financial reasons and as a counterbalance to his son's preoccupation with music. However, Mantzaros' marriage flourished and his active occupation with music never stopped. For instance, between 1819 and 1826 Mantzaros was periodically visiting Italy in order to come into direct contact with the dominant musical culture of the region, its musicians and composers, as well as its musical thought. It was during that period that Mantzaros visited Naples, Venice, Milan and possibly Bologna; that he composed a considerable number of vocal, keyboard and sacred musical works; and that he became a close friend of, among others, Niccoló Antonio Zingarelli, Saverio Mercadante and Giovanni Paccini. It should be noted that almost from the beginning Mantzaros was considered in Italy as an accomplished composer, educator and theorist. Naples' musical style and Zingarelli's ideas attracted Mantzaros' aesthetic attention, a fact that decisively affected his mature musical

¹⁰ Sartori, *I libretti italiani*, iii: 226 and GSA-AC, Executive Police 1547, no. 2365 (25 Dec. 1810).

¹¹ Kardamis, 'O "prosolomikos" Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros', 122–5.

¹² Claudio Bacciagaluppi, "'Primo violoncello al cembalo': L'accompagnamento del recitativo semplice nell' Ottocento', *Rivista Italiana di Musicologia* XLI-2006/I, 101–34: esp. pp. 105–6.

¹³ The most complete collection of such libretti is held by the Corfu Reading Society.

orientations. Mantzaros' preoccupation with music, however, seems to have been the most important reason for his not obtaining a formal academic education, despite his alleged knowledge of the humanities, philosophy and sciences, which is evident in his writings. After all, music had only a marginal relation with the academic curricula of the time.

Mantzaros' formal music training took place entirely within Napoleonic period (1807–14), but it was in 1815 – as the British administration was establishing itself – that the young composer presented in public his earliest known works. Following the pattern of his time Mantzaros composed a series of works for the stage of San Giacomo between 1815 and 1827. These early works were not full-scale operas, but concert or substitute arias or duets¹⁴ dedicated to or written for certain performers of the theatre, often on the occasion of their benefit nights. Such works were a common route by which to introduce young composers to a professional career (an alternative would have been the composition of sacred music). Nonetheless, on the frontispieces of his compositions Mantzaros claimed that they were creations of 'a *dilettante* Corfiot' motivated either by the quality of certain singers or by a special occasion of local interest. This fact justifies to a certain extent Mantzaros' selective and non-continuous public appearances as composer and reveals the use of music not as a way of establishing a professional career, but rather as a medium of expressing his appreciation of singers. Mantzaros' admittance of his dilettantism legitimized his creative occupation with music, an art that caused scepticism among the aristocracy of the time.

Nonetheless, Mantzaros' public appearance as composer already differentiated him from his co-citizens, especially aristocrats, who were usually only performers or merely passive receivers of music. These early works by Mantzaros creatively and selectively assimilated operatic styles of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In his 'theatrical compositions' Mantzaros reveals a characterful sense of melody, both in vocal and instrumental parts, which can be attributed to his training alongside opera musicians and his attendance of operatic performances.¹⁵ The same applies to the orchestration and especially regarding the use of wind instruments, where the timbre of the pairs of flutes, clarinets or oboes is enriched by the English horn (Ex. 1) or the basset horn (Ex. 2).¹⁶ The use of such orchestration is not only indicative of an era, during which timbral variety would eventually become a self-contained aesthetic parameter of music, but also important for the orchestral and vocal potentialities of a peripheral theatre such as that of Corfu.

¹⁴ The earliest are: *Sono inquieto ed agitato* (1815, aria for baritone), *Bella speme lusinghiera* (1815, aria for tenor), *Come augellin che canta* (1815, aria for soprano), *L'aurora* (1818, 'cantata' for soprano, lyrics by Metastasio), *Si ti credo amato bene* (1818, duet for soprano and tenor). Even *Don Crepuscolo* (1815), which is described as 'azione comica d'un atto solo', is an operatic work (in its broader sense) partially based on Marcelo Bernardini's 'farsetta' *Le donne bisbetiche*, that demands only a baritone as singing voice, while the other participants hold the scenic action with pantomime.

¹⁵ Some of these compositions by Mantzaros have been recorded in Nikolaos Halikiopoulos *Mantzaros: Early Works* (Ionian University/Music Department, 2005, IU005). The earliest of them have been published in Nikolaos Halikiopoulos *Mantzaros 1795–1872: Early Works for Voice and Orchestra I: Three Arias of 1815*, ed. Irmgard Lerch Kalavrytinos, *Monuments of Neo-Hellenic Music* (Corfu: Ionian University/Department of Music/Hellenic Music Research Lab, 2006).

¹⁶ Albert R. Rice *From the Clarinet d'Amour to the Contra Bass: A History of Large Size Clarinets (1740–1860)*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 190–91.

Ex. 1 English horn; *Bella speme lusinghera* (1815), bars 73–79 (the original notation has been preserved)



Ex. 2 Basset horn; *Si ti credo amato bene* (1818), bars 4–7



The learning experience acquired through the performances and the critical reception in Corfu of operas by composers like Cimarosa, Mayr, Paisiello, Guglielmi, Sarti or Zingarelli is evident in these early works. On the one hand he was trying to adjust the taste of his audience and the abilities of the performers to his original endeavours. On the other, there is a sense of living in a transitory period in musical culture. The common matrix, based on which Rossini and Donizetti were also taking their initial steps at roughly the same time, is evident. Rossinian operas reached Corfu around 1818,¹⁷ a fact that further underlines the originality of Mantzaros' activities.

These compositions also reveal that during this transitional period Mantzaros remained receptive towards new harmonic and timbral developments that started to make their presence felt in the early nineteenth century. Repercussions of these developments seem to have reached Corfu's operatic theatre relatively early. During his 'Italian period' (1819–26) Mantzaros continued composing 'theatrical' music for Corfu, but with an important difference; all compositions of this period have an autonomous character, usually following the contemporary theatrical cantata's prototypes.¹⁸

Already from the early 1820s, if not earlier, Mantzaros had begun to contribute original vocal music with keyboard accompaniment for the private use of his friends and fellow citizens.¹⁹ All the currently known settings from that period are in Italian, a choice that was perfectly justifiable at that time, since Italian poetry was then popular in the Ionian Islands and Greek-speaking singers were very hard to be found. Nonetheless, Mantzaros' experience gained by the settings of both 'theatrical' and vocal works would prove very important in

¹⁷ A concert performance only with keyboard accompaniment of *L'ignanno felice* in 1816 featuring the young Giovanni Battista Verger is the earliest case of a possible (but still not fully documented) presentation of a Rossinian opera in Corfu (see, GSA-AC, Executive Police 59). Nonetheless, the 1818 contract for Corfu's theatre stated explicitly that two of the six operas to be presented must be by Rossini (GSA-AC, Ionian State 6, f. 5 (2 Jun. 1818): 2r).

¹⁸ These works were: *Ulisse agli Elisi* (1820, for soprano and tenor), *La gratitudine* (1821, for soprano), *Cantata con cori* (1824, for soprano), *Minerva nell'isola di Corfù* (1827, for mezzo).

¹⁹ Tertius T.C. Kendrick, *The Ionian Islands: Manners and Customs* (London, 1822): 262.

practical and aesthetical means in the immediate future regarding the setting of Greek poetry.

The texts of these early vocal compositions, regarding either their subject or their form, can be related to the eighteenth-century Classical prototypes. The connection with Antiquity, was of particular importance for the nineteenth-century Ionian Islands, whose national identity had already been fully awakened. The systematic projection of Corfu's identification with the Homeric country of the Phaeacians and its relation with Odysseus illustrate this attitude.²⁰ In this context, Mantzaros' 1820 cantata *Ullisse agli Elisi* contained strong references to this conviction. There are several 'neoclassical' elements throughout Mantzaros' early works, but these preferences are projected in a period during which European culture was increasingly abandoning Classical prototypes in favour of emerging romanticism. The use of poetry by Metastasio or Jacobo Andrea Vittorelli (who was considered the major representative of Metastasian ideals in nineteenth-century Italy) in Mantzaros' (as well as in Rossini's, Verdi's or Schubert's) vocal music in general can also be attributed to the endeavours of this transitory period.

Mantzaros' preference for vocal music with pianoforte accompaniment had a decisive effect on his mature compositions, since 'Lied' (in its broader sense) was gradually establishing itself as a medium for nineteenth-century musical expression.²¹ Mantzaros' vocal music can generally be considered part of these developments. These settings were also an ideal field for the composer to train his abilities in the musical use of poetical texts during a period in which nineteenth-century neohellenic poetry had not fully manifested itself and Greek-speaking singers were scarce. The phonetic similarities between Greek and Italian and the use of similar metres to those of Italian verse by the nineteenth-century Greek poets facilitated Mantzaros' settings of Greek poetry during the late 1820s in an era, during which the use of the national language was considered a strong emblem of national identity.

Mantzaros' transition from the earlier practices towards his later developments is also evident from the structure of his songs, in which strophic or 'folklike' forms co-exist with through-composed ones; conventional harmony competes with elaborate, 'dramatic' harmony, and simple piano accompaniment vies with more virtuosic piano writing. Instrumental accompaniment is at times designated for pianoforte, harp or harpsichord. The importance of the vocal *musica di camera* would become central in Mantzaros' mature period, since almost all of his known compositions of that time belong to the aforementioned genre. At the same time *musica di camera* was to become the main creative area, in which Mantzaros balanced his compositional dualism between works that would satisfy the needs of a society with non-homogeneous musical training and those that would express mainly the aesthetic needs of the composer.

²⁰ If nothing else, the accounts by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travellers strengthened this 'neoclassical' approach. See H.W. Williams, *Travels in Italy, Greece and the Ionian Islands*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Constable and Co., 1820): ii, 168; Christian Müller, *Voyage en Grèce et dans les Iles Ioniennes* (Paris: Persan et Ce, 1822): 297–8; *Descrizione dell' Isola e Città di Corfù* (Corfù: Stamperia del Governo, 1823): 9–12; N.P. Willis, *Pencilings by the Way* (London: Bohn, 1846): ii, 178, 182–4; Alexandre Buchon, *Voyage dans l' Eubee les Iles Ioniennes et les Cyclades en 1841* (Paris: Émile-Paul Éditeur, 1911): 135–6.

²¹ See Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989): 96–111.

The prevalence of vocal music is, naturally, evident in Mantzaros' sacred compositions, which were destined for the Catholic Church. The music of these works is only partly known today. The earliest of these works were certain biblical *Laments* by Jeremiah, composed in Corfu between 1813 and 1818; they have never been performed publicly and were lost during Mantzaros' lifetime.²² In Naples Mantzaros composed two Latin masses (*Messa a quarto voci* [before 1821], *Messa a quattro voci con cori a piena orchestra* [c. 1825]),²³ but only a piano reduction of the latter is known to exist. Finally, the settings of certain *Psalms of David* 'according to the translation of [Saverio] Mattei',²⁴ are only identified with church music because of their ecclesiastical titles.²⁵

The years of transition

Mantzaros' direct connection with the musical environment of Italy between 1819 and 1826 contributed further to the development of his early style. At the same time he had the opportunity to experience all the changes that occurred in the music of post-Napoleonic Italy. Nonetheless, the decisive re-orientation which took place during this period, was his final decision to limit his compositional activities to musical forms that were, according to him, more appropriate to a noble *dilettante* and could express at the same time a creative amalgamation between the experiences of Classicism and the dynamic of his contemporary music. The basic constituents of this change, which became increasingly evident from the 1830s onwards, were the use of Greek language in his settings; the gradual abandonment of theatrical music; the particular importance of educational activities; the preference for the vocal *musica di camera*; a philosophical approach to music; the faith in the creative power of counterpoint and the emergence of a romantic dualism in his creative activities. Thus the composer actively projected the idea of 'noble dilettantism', that is to say non-profit preoccupation with music, not only for his personal satisfaction, but first and foremost for the enlightenment and education of his society.

The years between 1826 (his return from Italy) and 1834 (a clear aesthetic turn towards idealism), however, represent a transitional period, during which earlier practices and contemporary attitudes co-existed in Mantzaros' work. The composer's relations with Naples and Niccolò Zingarelli in particular had an instrumental effect on these changes. Zingarelli seems to have considered Mantzaros, almost from the very beginning of their acquaintance, as an accomplished musician,²⁶ who was able to express, adapt and project into a

²² Domenico Padovan, 'Poche parole sopra i scritti del Cav. Nicolò C. [alichiopulo] Manzaro' ['Some Words Regarding the Writings of the Knight Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros'], *I Foni* (Corfu's newspaper) 361 (12 Apr. 1872): 2–3. Mantzaros was decorated with the silver cross of the Order of the Saviour by King Otto of Greece in 1845 and promoted to the golden cross in 1865 by King George I (Kardamis, *Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros*, 74–5).

²³ Kardamis, 'O "prosolomikos" Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros', 172–3, 380–91.

²⁴ Padovan, 'Poche parole', 2–3.

²⁵ Kardamis, 'O "prosolomikos" Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros', 111–14, 263, 378, 395.

²⁶ Some anecdotal information on this issue is given by Spyridon Motsenigos, *Neoelleniki Moussiki: Symvoli eis tin istorian tis* [*Neohellenic Music: A Contribution to its History*] (Athens, 1958): 100–103.

changing nineteenth century the values of the Neapolitan school. During the 1830s Mantzaros' name was acknowledged by Italian musical circles as one of the representatives of the Neapolitan style,²⁷ something that must have been further supported by Zingarelli's intention to see the Corfiot composer as his successor in the conservatory of Naples.²⁸

Mantzaros was brought up at a time when the term classical was just making its presence felt within the musical world.²⁹ Moreover, the new ideas were not in direct opposition to the experience of the Enlightenment. It should also be noted that, despite the projection of instrumental music in German countries as a practical medium of expression of romantic ideals, in the Italian countries this genre was considered as a decadent invention of the *ultramontani* and the prevalence of vocal music was indisputable. Mantzaros, like Rossini, Donizetti, Mercadante or Bellini, was to become familiar with these emerging musical trends and to reflect his ideas within the conditions dictated by the aesthetic prototypes and the social demands of southern Europe.

In 1823 innovative practices were becoming dominant in central Europe predicating subjectivity and the turn towards the fantastic or metaphysic. Almost at the same time Mantzaros was returning to Corfu from his third journey to the Italian peninsula. Both the music and the poetry of his *Aria cantata dall' ombra di patroclo nel sogno di Achille* (created at roughly the same time) demonstrate, despite the neoclassical connotations, the composer's ability to respond to the innovative developments, as exemplified in Italian operatic stages.³⁰

Also that year Alessandro Manzoni was giving to the same innovative dynamic a more pragmatic definition, more relevant to Italian conditions. According to him, contemporary literature should have the pragmatic as its aim, reality as its subject and the interesting as a medium.³¹ This was an attitude that had not rejected the 'enlightened' experiences of the eighteenth century.³² Manzoni was referring to an innovative movement with a practical agenda,

²⁷ 'Neue musikalische Untersuchungsreise in Italien', *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 21 (25 May 1836): 333. The article on an 1834 trip in Italy, where Mantzaros is included among the leading representatives of classical Italian music, and especially that of Naples. See also 'New Travels of Musical Research through Italy', *Musical World* 23 (19 Aug. 1836): 151–4, for an English translation of the same article.

²⁸ Severiano Fogacci, 'Corcira: Stato dell' Incivilimento de' Corciresi dopo i bei secoli della Grecia sino al finire del secolo passato' [Corcira [i.e. Corfu's name during antiquity]: State of Civilization of the Corcyreans After the Beautiful Centuries [i.e. Antiquity] of Greece until the End of the Previous Century], *Album Jonio* XVI (1 Sep. 1842): 133–5 (p. 135). See also, the Greek translation of an 1835 letter by Zingarelli, published in Freiderikos Alvanas, 'Nikolaos o Mantzaros', *Attikon Emerologion* (Athens: 1873): 239–52 (p. 242). Zingarelli's statement to Mantzaros that 'I cannot find anyone else to succeed me ... because any other will corrupt ... the Neapolitan style', might also suggest Zingarelli's views about Gaetano Donizetti. The latter taught composition in the Conservatory of Naples from 1834 and would become its temporary director in 1837, after Zingarelli's passing (William Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984): 84, 118).

²⁹ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 15–26.

³⁰ This aria is also included in the CD *Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros: Early Works*.

³¹ David Kimbell, *Italian Opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): 391.

³² Enrico Fubini, *Il pensiero musicale del Romanticismo* [*The Musical Thought of Romanticism*] (Torino: EDT, 2005): 21–38, John Stewart Allit, *J.S. Mayr: Father of the 19th Century Italian Music* (Longmead: Element Books Ltd, 1989): 36.

based on the rationalism of the eighteenth century, as well as on the eternal values of art, without denying sentimentality, but at the same time rejecting 'romantic extremities'. Italy and its intelligentsia were not alone in these quests. At exactly the same time as the social and national consciousness of the Ionian Islands was awakening, the Greek Revolution was developing and people were asking for similar approaches in art. Mantzaros' eclecticism, seeking to express in a rather personal way the 'Zeitgeist' of his era, was balanced throughout his life on a golden ratio that attempted to make a compromise between 'Classicism' and 'Romantic extremities', without ignoring the tendencies of a most vivid musical century and its social and national endeavours. In this last respect and especially during this transitional period, the Corfiot composer seems to have been closer to the beliefs regarding music that were expressed by the Italian patriot Giuseppe Mazzini in his *Filosofia della Musica*, published in 1836, asking for music to have 'sublime', but at the same time 'pragmatic', aims.

The compositional output of Mantzaros' transitional period is indicative of this. Despite not being as prolific as that from 1815 to 1826, it is characterized by variety and a more stringent choice regarding presentation. Some of these compositions share similar characteristics to those of the earlier period. The 27 January 1827 benefit performance of the Italian contralto Elisabetta Pinotti gave Mantzaros the opportunity to compose two works which illustrate the transitional status of his creative ideals. These were an Italian cantata with neoclassical connotations entitled *Minerva nell' isola di Corfù* and an *Aria Greca*,³³ which became the earliest concert aria in the Greek language. The references to the mythical past of Corfu are obvious in the former, but the latter's verses had a rather contemporary and practical character, since they expressed in Greek the gratitude of the singer towards the audience of San Giacomo. It has already been pointed out that the lack of Greek-speaking singers was an obstacle for the composition of works in Greek for the theatrical stages of the Ionian Islands and that the only occasions on which such works could be presented was within the limits of private musical performances by local amateurs. Nonetheless, in 1827 Mantzaros, just three months after his return from Naples, used his experience in order to set to music Greek verses written by Vincenzo Nannucci, an Italian political refugee, to be performed by an Italian singer.³⁴

It is still not entirely clear whether Mantzaros' connection with Italian aesthetic thought, as expressed by Manzoni, combined with the developments of the Greek Revolution that year, persuaded him that it was time to start composing vocal music in vernacular Greek. Nonetheless, the use of the 'people's language' was central in the ideology of both the Enlightenment and of Romanticism, and it should be noted that Mantzaros's 1827 *Aria Greca* constitutes one of the earlier settings of a 'national language' in nineteenth-century Europe.

It is undeniable that *Aria Greca*,³⁵ compared to other similar vocal works by Mantzaros, is rather light in character, as well as simple in its structure and

³³ *Gazzetta degli Stati Uniti delle Isole Jonie* 475 (22 Jan.–3 Feb. 1827): 3.

³⁴ The verses are written in the Latin alphabet, in order to facilitate the singer. Similar practices for similar instances were frequent in the Ionian Islands throughout the nineteenth century. The score belongs today to BM/NMA 505. Regarding Nannucci's contribution, see Haris Xanthoudakis, 'O poiētis tis *Aria Greca*' ['The Poet of *Aria Greca*'], *Moussikos Loghos* 7 (Summer 2006): 30–57.

³⁵ *Aria Greca* is also included in the CD *Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros: Early Works*.

conventional in its orchestration and its melody.³⁶ However, it is of particular importance that, not only Mantzaros, but also the audience of the theatre were ready to accept a composition in vernacular Greek by a learned composer in the conventional style of a strophic operatic song. Given the situation and the composer's social position, any such representation was at that time a sufficient token of national identity.

This was further confirmed two years later, when Mantzaros began composing his initial setting of Dionysios Solomos' *Hymn to the Liberty* for male choir, this time with piano accompaniment. The patriotic character of the poetry, represented both by the Greek language and subject, contributed decisively to Mantzaros' music, where elements of revolutionary anthems, martial rhythms and operatic effects create a composition with both immediate and sublime connotations. However, the composition of this work came at a relatively safe time for Mantzaros, since an independent Greek state was beginning to be formulated, despite being under the authority of the Russophile Corfiot aristocrat, Ioannis Capodistria.

Certain parts or all 158 stanzas of the aforementioned poem were to have numerous re-settings in the following decades, but the 1829 setting signalled the only time that Mantzaros would place his music directly at the service of the revolutionary causes of the Greeks. This does not mean, however, that he stopped expressing their national endeavours. On the contrary, Mantzaros appreciated and fervently supported vernacular Greek³⁷ throughout his life; for the composer, vernacular Greek has always been both a most valuable source of poetic texts by some of the most distinguished poets of nineteenth-century Greece and a means of expression of Hellenic national identity. The metre of this poetry, based on the 'people's language', provided the basis for his rhythmic and melodic conception of 'national music'. The use of male choirs or amateur male and female soloists with piano accompaniment, combined with the melody's 'folklike' character, were also elements that facilitated the dissemination of this music through Ionian and Greek society. After all, Greek-speaking singers could be found among the people or the *dilettanti* of the Ionian Islands and the piano was evolving there as the unchallenged instrument for domestic use as early as 1815. In these ways, Mantzaros was giving to his music a practical and, at the same time sublime, direction – that of the expression of nation through its language, its poetry and its aspirations. Nonetheless, he followed a different way when compared to Mazzini, who considered melodrama as the appropriate medium for a nation's expression. The absence of a Greek opera troupe did not give Mantzaros, or other Ionian composers, any alternative way to address the Greek-speaking public.³⁸

After 1827, Mantzaros made his presence felt in the theatre of his homeland only once, this time by composing incidental music. This was a *sinfonia*, a march and two

³⁶ Nonetheless, one cannot avoid observing certain similarities to the 'Finale Ultimo' in Act I of Rossini's *Semiramide*, which had been performed in Corfu earlier that year and in which Pinotti sung the role of Arsace (*Gazzetta degli Stati Uniti delle Isole Jonie* 458 (25 Sep.–7 Oct. 1826): 3). Mantzaros probably used these reminiscences from *Semiramide* to facilitate Pinotti singing in Greek.

³⁷ This also justifies Mantzaros' negative reaction towards Andreas Kalvos' poetry, which was characterized by the use of ancient Greek. See Spyridon Deviazis, 'Andreas Kalvos', *Akritas* 27 (November 1905): 291–2.

³⁸ The earliest full-scale opera in Greek was Spyridon Xyndas' *O ypopsifios* [*The Parliamentary Candidate*], premiered in Corfu in September 1867.

chorales for the 1832 performance of Metastasio's *La clemenza di Tito*, a production dedicated to the British High Commissioner, Sir Frederick Adam. Mantzaros' other public compositional activities include a *Te Deum* for the consecration of the Catholic Archbishop of Corfu, Antonio Nostrano (1832), as well as his *Orthodox Mass* for the consecration of the Orthodox Archbishop, Chrysanthos Masselos (1834). In the former he included an (apparently one-movement) 'sinfonia alla tedesca', which 'was equal to the famous symphonies by Beethoven'.³⁹ The latter was based on the principles of Ionian traditional Orthodox polyphonic chanting, but also included elements of contrapuntal learned techniques.⁴⁰ Another public occasion that enabled Mantzaros to compose original music was the inauguration of Corfu's aqueduct in the summer of 1831. The festivities that were organized for the occasion also included a poetry contest that was won by the celebrated Italian writer, patriot and philosopher Paolo Costa, who was then self-exiled in Corfu. Mantzaros, possibly motivated by the occasion and Costa's personality, set the prize-winning poem to music.

At the same time, Mantzaros continued composing vocal music with piano accompaniment in Greek, as well as in Italian. These works were almost entirely created for friends or other amateurs, but quickly became popular. They also demonstrate the huge diversity of styles, technical abilities and aesthetic orientations of both the recipients and the composer. Their melodic character varies from easy to professional level and the same applies to the piano accompaniment, which extends from simple rhythmic-harmonic figures to lieder-like pianistic writing, appealing to skilled performers.⁴¹

An 1830 collection of brief songs in vernacular Greek provides some indications regarding the dissemination of Mantzaros' music in the urban Greek-speaking circles of that period. The collection's general title is *16 Arie Greche* [16 Greek Airs], but contains 18 such compositions set to music by Mantzaros. The simplicity of the accompaniment is balanced by the melodic qualities of the vocal part, which could be described as 'hybridic', since there are no voices specified, but it is written in such a way as to facilitate its performance from one to four singers (or a vocal ensemble).⁴² From the 18 poems set to music only two have been confirmed to be by known poets (only one by Solomos), whereas the rest seem to have been creations of local amateurs or Mantzaros himself. Moreover, only one of these airs has a patriotic character and the rest depict love, passion and romantic desperation. Mantzaros expressed 'Greekness' through the use of the 'national language', something that was to be expected

³⁹ Padovan, 'Poche parole', 2–3.

⁴⁰ The manuscript of the Orthodox Mass belongs to the Music Archive of the Corfu Philharmonic Society.

⁴¹ In this respect the numerous settings of Petrarch's sonnet *Levommi il mio pensier*, constitute a good example and they can also be connected to the increasing, and often distorting, Romantic re-evaluation of Medieval and Renaissance times. For these settings, see BM/NMA 505, 3, 15 and 3, 16: pp. 198–227, in which the diversity of styles varies from 'lieder-like' to fugal. Of those settings, only the one dedicated to his pupil Domenikos Padovás around 1840 has been published posthumously under the title *Pensieri Musicali sulle parole di Sonetto di Messer Petrarca Levommi il mio pensier in parte ov'era* (Firenze, Roma: Venturini, [c. 1884]).

⁴² The manuscript belongs to the Corfu Philharmonic Society. An autograph manuscript by Mantzaros, which contains six of these airs (as well as other 'folklike' vocal compositions) explicitly for male choir, belongs to the Bulgari family in Corfu.

given the composer's position and the often inflexible British administration. It is also obvious that Mantzaros attempted to promote the setting of the Greek language in the circles of Greek-speaking *dilettanti* by making compromises to allow for their abilities and taste.

Similar observations could be made about Mantzaros' piano music. Comprised mostly of operatic transcriptions, dances, marches and sinfonias, these works attempt to meet both the needs of a society eager for music and the contemplations of their composer, who had already published two sinfonias in Milan during late 1822 (or early 1823).⁴³ This variety is clearly demonstrated in the 18 existing one-movement sinfonias (currently in the National Library of Greece). Despite all of them following the condensed sonata-form of an operatic *sinfonia*, their technical demands vary, this way providing an adequate insight into the abilities of the pianists who could be found in the Ionian Islands at that time. In any case, Mantzaros, who seems to have been a competent keyboard player and piano teacher, had demonstrated his facility in the composition of this kind of piano music, thus creating (together with his other piano compositions) the earliest complete corpus of piano works by a Greek composer.

All these activities of Mantzaros justify Ieronimos Padovàs (Domenikos' father), who in 1835 described him as 'virtuoso *par excellence*'.⁴⁴ For his compatriots Mantzaros was, by then, not only a noble involved in the Ionian administration, but also a composer, who found a balance between his personal endeavours and the satisfaction of music (in creative and educational means) and the musical needs of a society whose national identity had been fully awakened and at the same time was eagerly consuming music. Nonetheless, only a few people within Mantzaros' narrow circle were able to comprehend the composer's dualism to its full extent. It was such that, on the one hand, was represented by the light character of the works destined for the local amateurs, but on the other, did not meet its boundaries in his virtuosic vocal or piano music. Already from the early 1830s Mantzaros considered music also as a medium of philosophical expression, away from the often dull limitations of opera and the 'extremities' of Romanticism. The composer was already then on a quest to express Romantic philosophic ideals through music based on the combination of Classical and Romantic elements. This was an aspect of Mantzaros that was totally misunderstood during his time and was neglected until recently, despite the fact that it characterized his maturity.

The most important aesthetic change in Mantzaros' style was already evident in 1826. That was the promotion of the fugue as the most highly praised musical expression and creative medium of the Romantic sublime, besides being a valuable educational tool. However, counterpoint, and especially fugue, had a marginal relation with the creative agenda of Romanticism and was usually related to sacred music. From this point onwards several commentators on Mantzaros saw a gradual divergence between his works and the conventional idea of musical Romanticism. These opinions were perfectly justifiable, if one takes into consideration that, at a time during which several composers were shifting towards the 'extremities of Romanticism', Mantzaros insisted on the creative and

⁴³ See *Biblioteca Italiana o sia Giornale di Letteratura, Scienze ed Arti*, vol. 8, Jul.–Sep. 1823 (Milano: 1823): 110. It should be noted that one of these sinfonias is a piano reduction of the orchestral overture of Mantzaros' 1820 cantata *Ulisse e Nausicaa agli Elisi*.

⁴⁴ [Ieronimos Markos Padovàs], *Critical Observations on the Sketches of Corfu* (Corfu, 1835): 72.

educational importance of the 'noble' and 'sublime' art of counterpoint in the agenda of Romantic music, despite the fact that his early works feature, up to a certain point, a positive and often original response to the period's innovative elements. Mantzaros' change is evident in the works dedicated to his friend Niccolò Zingarelli,⁴⁵ who was for him both 'the Italian Mozart'⁴⁶ and 'the prince of the art of harmony and counterpoint'.⁴⁷ The most distinctive is the *Dodici fughe* [*Twelve Fugues*], which, according to Mantzaros, are based on certain *partimenti* by Zingarelli and wish to 'excite the emulation of the students for the fine Art and Science' of counterpoint.⁴⁸ Their form, the creative application of fugue and the educational use of Mantzaros' work in the Naples Royal Conservatory can be connected with the support and projection of the ideals of Classicism (clarity, simplicity, melodism) within the institution. Nonetheless, these fugues have only a distinct relation with those prototypes that were developed during the Baroque period. On the contrary, they express the spirit of simplicity and melodism, but at the same time they do not betray the basic principles of a fugal model. A common characteristic of these twelve compositions is their initial development according to a truncated succession of the conventional fugal parts leading to the work's climax in choral polyphony.

This fugal aphorism was repeatedly used by Mantzaros in his mature period (most notably in the later settings of *The Hymn to the Liberty*), during which his removal from the preferences of his early period was evident. The composer's belief was that fugue, with its noble and eclectic form, its ability to combine seemingly unrelated musical material, as well as its free and unconstrained use, could be a legitimate expression of Romanticism, without betraying the diachronic artistic values of simplicity, clarity and melody. This belief would constitute one of the central proposals of Mantzaros' 'esoteric' style, which is related to his philosophical approach to music, as well as his idea of a 'mixed, but legitimate style' of musical expression.

The mature period

The mature works of Mantzaros – patriotic operas, symphonic poems, piano music or musical compositions – do not express metaphysical and supernatural elements, and from this it could justifiably be concluded that Mantzaros was a conservative and academic figure who only marginally expressed the conventional Romantic ideal. However, this does not take into consideration the diverse aesthetic nature of nineteenth-century music, with its characteristic belief in the value of the composer's subjective expression. This means that the now

⁴⁵ *Dodici fughe scritte per quattro e cinque voci* [*Twelve Fugues Written for Four or Five Voices*] (Naples: Negri, 1826) and *Canone all'undecima sopra basso e soprano* (BM/NMA 505, 3, 16, pp. 314–19).

⁴⁶ *Rapporto del Cav. N. Calichiopulo Manzano, Presidente della Musica della Società Filarmonica in Corfù, relativo al dono di alcune opera di Monsigny e Grétry* [*Report of the Knight Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros, President of Music of the Philharmonic Society in Corfu, Regarding a Donation of Some Operas of Monsigny and Grétry*] (Corfu: 1851): 11. This was Mantzaros' report regarding the artistic qualities of certain operas by Monsigny and Grétry, donated to the Philharmonic Society by the French patron Jules Lardin in 1849.

⁴⁷ Giuseppe Regaldi, *Canti e prose* (Torino, 1862): 418.

⁴⁸ *Dodici fughe*, [ii].

conventional idea of musical Romanticism was not universally acceptable among the composers of the nineteenth century, whose stance towards the Romantic movement could vary from that of neoclassical approaches to those of 'Romantic extremism'.

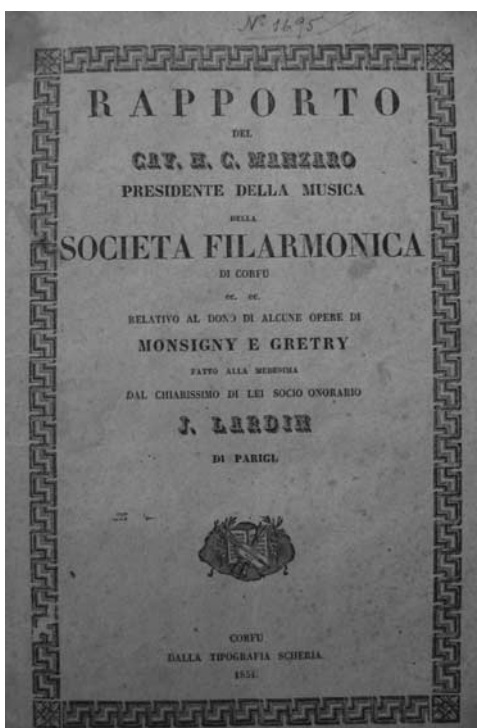


Fig. 2 The frontispiece of Mantzaros' *Rapporto* (Corfu, 1851). Corfu Reading Society

During his mature period it seems that Mantzaros consciously kept a critical stance towards what he himself, as well as other European composers, considered 'Romantic extremities' and projected a mixed and very personal aesthetic style that unified the ideals of the past with the demands of the present, without ignoring the importance of creative genius. Mantzaros based his approaches on the non-German world, where the idea of instrumental music's predominance as a medium of expressing emotions had a rather peripheral acceptance, whereas melodrama played a central role. The views expressed by Mantzaros in the 1851 *Rapporto* are indicative of the ideas of his maturity, as well as of an era during which Romanticism in its conventional sense was stabilizing and a new period in nineteenth-century music was about to begin. The composer believed that the 'modern systems' might harm artistic progress, since they distorted 'the natural development of the genius' through the continuous 'exercise of the sense', and not of music itself.⁴⁹ Classicism should always be the core for the endeavour of 'artistic beauty', because the fall 'into oblivion of that part, which is related to the past'

⁴⁹ *Rapporto*, 8.

would also 'damage the modern, which must succeed it', a condition that was more demanding in music, 'the most abstract of all arts'.⁵⁰ And he concluded:

Today's abuse of this stylistic complexity has its roots in this deviation [i.e. the absence of a relation with the past], which tends towards the fantastic and the spectacular and crowds over the different forms of its variety and robustness. Moreover, some modern composers tend to benefit from the philosophy of Schelling and Hegel, aiming in this way to open a new road to the art, based on speculations related to metaphysical realms. This affects the creations of certain popular modern composers, the so-called mystics, whose works, despite containing in them exceptional powers and creating vivid sensations in their audiences, deviate up to a certain extent, because of some naturalness and liberty of thought regarding the realization of the ideal beautiful, which as a creative act does not derive from a spiritual, theoretical effort, but, on the contrary, from the spontaneity of the inspirations of art itself.⁵¹

The importance of the creative genius is further underlined by the fact that 'words like profoundness, simplicity, mysticism, Romanticism and others of this kind'⁵² express only art's potentialities, which are activated viscerally by the inspirations of genius. The great composers express their inspirations through a 'rhythmic and sonorous spirit', which constitutes the power of their creative actions and corresponds to the artistic thought. Monsigny (also a noble *dilettante*, like Mantzaros) and Grétry, who constitute *Rapporto's* main concern, belong to this group of musicians and Mantzaros goes on, mentioning several other composers of the past (Mozart, Cimarosa, Leo, Vinci, Pergolesi, Jommelli, Traeta, Piccini, Guglielmi, Paisiello, Zingarelli, Durante, Porpora, Fenaroli, Mayr, Paër, Gluck, Lully, Rameau) and of his own time (Rossini, Generali, Mercadante, Donizetti, Paccini, Ricci, Bellini, Verdi, as well as C.M. von Weber).⁵³ All these composers share in their compositions the common qualities of 'simplicity, naturalness, frankness of expression, originality, richness and profoundness',⁵⁴ as well as 'simplicity in melody that leaves a lasting impression'.⁵⁵ It is the absence of these qualities in music of the mid-nineteenth century that led to the

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 8. See also the favourable review of the critic Girolamo Alessandro Biaggi for Mantzaros' *Rapporto* (see, *L'Italia Musicale* VI, 32 (22 Apr. 1854): 125–6), as well as the warm letter that Mantzaros sent to Biaggi on the occasion of the publication of the latter's book entitled *Della Musica Religiosa e Delle Questioni Inerenti* (Milan: Lucca, 1856) (see Archive of Corfu Philharmonic Society (CPS/A), Correspondence II, 1341, Mantzaros to Biaggi, 20 Jul. 1857).

⁵² *Rapporto*, 8. Mantzaros used the same words in 1848 to describe the 'type of the fantastic creatures' of the poet Dionysios Solomos, see Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros, *Cenni sul Conte Solomos [Thoughts on Count Solomos]*, manuscript currently in Solomos Museum of Zakynthos.

⁵³ *Rapporto*, 9–12. Mantzaros' extensive knowledge of Monsigny and Grétry, however, is of particular importance, since this suggests the broadening of those factors that could influence the ideas and the experiences of a Greek nineteenth-century musician, especially in the Ionian Islands, whose reliance upon Italian melodrama was taken for granted until recently. The same applies regarding the reference to Mozart (whose *Don Giovanni* was among the scores that Mantzaros had in his library, see CPS/A, Proceedings 1842–8, 323, 6 May 1845) and Weber.

⁵⁴ *Rapporto*, 9.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 7.

'extremities' of certain compositions, which, according to Mantzaros, are further supported by the indifference of the state regarding proper music education and by the 'modern' productions of operas of the past that betray the spirit and the style of their composers.⁵⁶

The views of Mantzaros could classify him among the negators of Romanticism (at least of its conventional approach). Nonetheless, archival sources, as well as Mantzaros' existing writings, reveal a fervent supporter of Romantic philosophical idealism and a person who contributed to the importation of such ideas into the Ionian Islands of the nineteenth century. After all, Mantzaros is openly denounced as the person whose 'speeches on aesthetics' turned Solomos' poetic inspiration towards 'foggy mysticism'⁵⁷ as early as the 1830s. The early 1830s mark the period during which the intelligentsia of the Ionian Islands acquired a closer relationship to the ideas of German idealism as expressed by Hegel and his followers and as they were disseminated in Italy and France.

At the same time people of a younger generation, like the brothers Ermannos (1806–1868) and Nikolaos (1798–1885) Lountzis, Petros Vrailas Armenis (1812–1884; a follower of Victor Cousin) and Konstantinos Stratoulis (1814–1892) contributed with their writings and critical views to the dynamic and original connection of the Ionians with Romantic philosophy. Nonetheless, Mantzaros seems to have played an important role regarding music's connection with Romantic aesthetics in the Ionian Islands. It is indicative that Vrailas explicitly mentions Mantzaros' contribution in his 1856 essay on music,⁵⁸ in which Hegelian ideas are prevalent. These developments facilitated, as early as the 1830s, Mantzaros' gradual transition to his idiosyncratic musical anachoreticism. Parallel to this, his romantic dualism was evident; he continued composing salon music for his social circle, while developing and supporting a musico-philosophical approach, which was known only to his close friends, associates and pupils and was characterized by compositions of fugal or canonical forms and the use of the Greek language.

Mantzaros' 'esoteric' approach to music attempted, during a period of contradictions, to unify and reconcile the late Enlightenment's experiences with those of early Romanticism. Not surprisingly, among Mantzaros' notes and texts the names of such philosophers as Hegel, Rosmini, Cousin, Kant or Pasquale Galluppi, and such terms as 'eclecticism', 'idealism', 'unity' or 'unifying system' can frequently be found. Already from the 1830s Mantzaros demonstrated his wish to express the sublime in music through the philosophical qualities of beauty, morality and truth, with a simultaneous balance between the experience of Classicism and Romanticism. According to this, Mantzaros believed that the beauty of counterpoint, harmony and poetical rhythm not only expressed the truth and the morality of sublime ideas, such as 'the nation', but that all three of

⁵⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁵⁷ Spyridon Zampelios, *Pothen i koini leksis 'Tradoudo'* [What Are the Origins of the Common Word 'to Sing?'] (Athens, 1859): 74.

⁵⁸ Petros Vrailas-Armenis, 'Peri moussikis' ['On Music'], in *Corpus Philosophorum Græcorum Recentiorum*, ed. E. Moutsopoulos, I/4 (Athens: 1973): 319–45. Mantzaros was among the audience of Vrailas' lectures and the latter attended the composer's lectures on harmony. Mantzaros also appears in the chapter on music in Konstantinos Stratoulis, *Dokimion Kallilogias itoi Stoixeia Esthithikis* [Essay on Beauty, Namely Elements of Aesthetics] (Zakynthos, 1856): 264.

them are equal manifestations of the same sublime idea. At the same time, and in pure musical terms, he was following the principles that were codified in 1851 as 'simple, naïf jusqu'au sublime';⁵⁹ simple melody, clarity in the fugal or contrapuntal forms, use of harmony within acceptable limits. For Mantzaros 'the science of music' was equal to 'the art of music' and thus an effective way to reach the essence of the latter.

This is another reason that further underlines the importance of his educational activities, where clarity and simplicity constituted a valuable tool of learning. Mantzaros' realizations of Fenaroli's fifth and sixth book of *partimenti* are characteristic. In the introduction to this work, dedicated by Mantzaros to Queen Victoria in 1856,⁶⁰ it is clearly stated that they facilitate the creative amalgamation of 'the forms that reveal the inspiration's thought, the result of which is the fulfillment of beauty's real expression, that is to say art's sole aim'. After all, 'the masterpieces of art manifest through their unity' beauty, truth and the sublime 'revealing thus a spirit that expresses itself'.⁶¹

This way, the tripartite romantic ideal of beautiful, true and moral could be expressed. Mantzaros' aesthetic programme found its expression in the motto 'Unity within Variety', a central attitude in Romantic philosophy, related to the idea of organicism. The previously described morphology of Mantzarian fugues seems to depict this development from diversity through 'Classical simplicity' to unity. Mantzaros seems to have considered that his fugues, despite being vocal, constituted a kind of 'absolute music',⁶² since they could also express a self-contained 'musical message' on their own, based entirely on certain rules and musical relations, which combined the authority of Classical without betraying the Romantic sublime. Furthermore, the combination of the fugue with high poetry, either in Greek or in Italian, was a legitimate and palpable way of connecting the 'twin arts', creating an additional organic relationship. Moreover, in the case of the use of (vernacular) Greek the 'sublime art of counterpoint' was connected with the 'sublime idea of nation', thus generating a new level of beauty, truth and morality, which could develop the spiritual, moral and intellectual qualities of a society.

In this sense one cannot fail to observe that Mantzaros approached poetry and its form through musical means, again without ignoring the importance of Classical simplicity, as well as that of genius, which should express 'sublime ideas' through art. His *Thoughts* (1848, 1850) regarding Solomos are indicative:

Thanks to a prodigious rhythmic and harmonic attitude of his [i.e. Solomos'] spirit, the truth manifests itself in him at once. ... For this reason the object, the idea and the word form in him a perfect harmonic triad, simultaneous and inseparable. ... He creates the major part [of his verses] by instinct with the use of song, by improvising melodies which reflect integrally the true expression of the poetic conception of a sonorous spirit. ... Having listened to him many times creating this

⁵⁹ Letter from Mantzaros to Jules Lardin dated 6 Dec. 1851 (private archive).

⁶⁰ The manuscript is in the British Library, Royal Music Library, RM18a3.

⁶¹ *Rapporto*, 23.

⁶² One cannot fail to observe that philosophers, such as Tieck and E.T.A. Hoffmann, also considered the vocal music of Palestrina as a kind of 'absolute music', which expresses the sublime [see James Garratt, *Palestrina and the German Romantic Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): esp. 52–7]. The style *alla Palestrina* retained a central role in the mature compositions of Mantzaros.

way, I understood that he formulated the poetic harmony with a succession of notes articulated by himself, using a prodigious and highly harmonious variety of cadences; from these articulation resulted the simplest words, the only apt ones to express the rhythm, the idea and the harmony of the verse. ... He told me many times that he had created poetry from musical intuition. I am absolutely sure that, in most of his original and abstract poems, he certifies that they were created without any synthetic preparation, and resulted from such intuitions. ... His rhythmic and harmonic attitudes are vivid and potent. One day, having asked me to give him a general idea of the so-called musical fugue, alias of the free and spontaneous law that secures the unity of an artistic harmonious creation, after giving him only the definition of the words subject, countersubject, response, counter-response, attack, accompaniment, divertimento, structure etc, with an eye illuminated by a thought ready to express the act, rather than the abstract notion of the idea that he received, to my great astonishment he immediately specified with clear words a fugue with voices and instruments, which did not leave me unaffected.⁶³

Within these limits, the 'sublime composition'⁶⁴ of fugue played a crucial role as a unifying form that could combine into perfection several musical elements, such as harmony, melody, harmonic rhythm, and poetic metre. The unity of the elements towards the expression of the sublime was a central idea in Romantic philosophical thought and Mantzaros considered counterpoint, and especially the 'sublime' fugue and its combination with poetry, the perfect medium for this unity's expression in music. This is further supported by the concluding part of the *Rapporto*, which is an extended and detailed analysis (with the use of terminology borrowed from poetry) of two 'theatrical fugues' by Monsigny, namely the 'O Ciel! Quoi tu vas mourir' from *Déserteur* and the 'Mais ils sont en courroux' from *Rose et Colas*.⁶⁵ Mantzaros especially emphasized that certain passages and harmonic elements of both compositions do not follow the contrapuntal and harmonic rules, since they followed the dramatic plot and he pointed out that this could outrage 'the scholastics'.

The composer had several objections to the strict and 'academic' use of the contrapuntal and harmonic rules. Mantzaros expressed strong objections to the ideas of the 'strict teachers of counterpoint', who would have condemned the free use of fugue in an operatic composition and he kept on stating that this way they prove 'their knowledge of the rules' in relation to didactical and religious purposes, but not their 'sense regarding their right use' in creative means.⁶⁶

Monsigny, according to Mantzaros, succeeded in proving that the fugue is able, not only to express the sublime and the divine, but first and foremost to demonstrate that this compositional genre in the hands of a genius could achieve a strong and effective musico-dramatic flexibility. This is exactly Mantzaros' point in regard to his ideas on the art of music; his contemporaries should re-approach the real essence of counterpoint and harmony, not through the artificial borders that

⁶³ *Cenni sul Conte Solomos*.

⁶⁴ This is how Placido Mandanici, a contemporary of Mantzaros, described the fugue in Fedele Fenaroli, *Partimenti e regole musicali*, ed. P. Mandanici (Naples: Clausetti, ~ 1850): 89.

⁶⁵ For a detailed account and comment, see Dimitris Brovas, 'I fuga kai i simasia tis gia ton Nikolao Halikiopoulo Mantzaro mesa apo to *Rapporto* tou' ['The Fugue and its Importance for Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros through his *Rapporto*'], *Moussikos Loghos* 7 (Summer 2006): 59–92.

⁶⁶ *Rapporto*, 28–31.

were set by the nineteenth-century scholastics, but by rediscovering their graces and potentialities, in other words by re-evaluating their syntax.⁶⁷

Mantzaros gave particular importance to the flexibility of the use of harmony and counterpoint in his educational activities, which actively demonstrated his 'noble dilettantism'. Several pages of his pedagogical works (almost all of them the product of his maturity) are dedicated to these 'licenze'.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, he also made clear the boundaries of this flexibility:

There are three diverse kinds of compositional style: 1) the rigorous ecclesiastical style (for solo voices), the so-called '*alla Palestrina*', which is directly related to a fugal genre, alias to the most strict doctrine; 2) the mixed ecclesiastical style (for voices and orchestra), which *today* is related to a more or less ideal rhythmic according to a doctrine of pure rhythmic and harmonic forms with a certain variety in subjects and musical plots; and 3) the literal style, or theatrical, (for voices and orchestra), which is entirely ideal and is related to an entire spontaneous doctrine of veridical forms that aim at the expression of human passions. This is the style of melodrama ... The pure instrumental style, as well as that of chamber [music] may be related to any of the aforementioned species according to the nature of the composition.⁶⁹

The immediate connection of music and poetry aiming at the creation of a complete musical work is undeniable for the Corfiot composer, since even instrumental music should be related to the characteristics of vocal style. Mantzaros, as other composers before and after him, recognized harmonic and morphological flexibility in opera, but not in sacred music, in which the *stile antico* does not allow such deviations and only his contemporary 'mixed style' has a certain degree of freedom.⁷⁰ Mantzaros' reference to the style *alla Palestrina* (naturally, as this was perceived in the nineteenth century) connects

⁶⁷ Mantzaros' relation to operatic developments, as well as his knowledge of music theory, might have facilitated his views regarding evolutionism in harmony as demonstrated in a practical way in his *Opera sulle Cadenze ossia Dizionario delle Modulazioni, cominciando dalle più semplice e naturale e progredendo gradatamente fino alla più astuta e complicata contenendo quello che fù fatto, quello che si fa al presente, e quello che si potrà fare in avvenire* [On the Cadences or Dictionary of Modulations, Beginning with the most Simple and Natural, and Progressing Gradually until the most Astute and Complicated containing those that have been Created, those that are Created in the Present and those that will be Created in the Future], BM/NMA 505, 9, 37–40.

⁶⁸ For example, Mantzaros', *Decifrazione del V e VI Libro de' Partimenti di [Fedele] Fenaroli* (Library of the Ionian University), or the *Studio Pratico dell'Armonia* (BM/NMA 505, 5, 22 and 23, as well as 6/24 and 25).

⁶⁹ Preamble to an unpublished analytical report (Mantzaros' manuscript, currently in the Ghele Archive, Athens). Similar views are expressed in 1810 by Alessandro Barca in 'Rapporto sullo stato della musica nel Regno d' Italia', in *Biografie di scrittori e artisti musicali bergamasci nativi od oriundi di Giovanni Simone Mayr* [Biographies of Native or Foreign Writers and Musical Artists of Bergamo by Giovanni Simone Mayr], facsimile edition (Bologna: Forni, 1969): 33–46 (pp. 35–6).

⁷⁰ This justifies the fact that Mantzaros in 1826 found 'several mistakes' in Francesco Durante's eight-part *Messa de' morti* (*Rapporto*, 20). The combination of the rigorous style with innovative elements in compositions that nominally belonged to *stile antico*, characterized Durante and could confuse Mantzaros. Mantzaros also echoes, in his observations on the 'mixed style', the long-established polemics against the amalgamation of sacred music with elements deriving from secular or theatrical genres.

Ex. 3 'Kyrie' from *Messa a quattro voci con cori a piena orchestra* (c. 1825)

The image shows a musical score for a four-part vocal setting of the Kyrie. The vocal parts are Soprano, Contralto, Tenore, and Basso. The organ part is also included. The lyrics are: Ky - ri - e e - - le - i - son e - le - - - - - i - . The score is in G major and common time. The organ part provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

him with one more aspect of the period's music, that is the revival of the Renaissance as expressed through the movement of Cecilianism. Nurtured in German countries, this movement for sacred music also found supporters in the rest of Europe. In Italy Zingarelli and Bainsi were among those composers who fervently supported this return to the qualities of 'purity' and 'noble simplicity',⁷¹ a fact that further relates Mantzaros with the Neapolitan School. Mantzaros was aware of this approach and its rigorous character, but this did not mean that he was following it blindly, since he made a clear distinction between the three 'different styles' of musical composition. Nonetheless, the use of certain characteristics of the *alla Palestrina* style in his works for the Catholic Church

⁷¹ Siegfried Gmeiwieser, 'Cecilian Movement', *New Grove Dictionary* (2001), vol. 5, 333–4, Eugenio Costa, 'Movimento Ceciliano', *Dizionario enciclopedico universale della musica e dei musicisti* (Turin: UTET, 1984), iii, 259–60. See also, James Garratt, 'Prophets looking Backwards: German Romantic Historicism and the Representation of Renaissance Music', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 125 (2000), 164–204; esp. 171–87 and Bernard Janz, 'Legende und Wirklichkeit: Die Kompositionen Giuseppe Bainsi und die Tradition des Palestrina-Stils in der päpstlichen Kapelle', in *Palestrina und die Kirchenmusik im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Winfried Kirsch, 3 vols (Kassel: Gustav Bosse Verlag, 1989–99): iii, 13–32.

Ex. 4(a) 'No. 24: Fuga reale', from Nikolaos Mantzaros/Dionysios Solomos, *Hymn to the Liberty* (London: Clayton & Co, 1873)

131

No. 24. *Fuga Reale.*

ΤΕΝΟΡ. Ὡ ἀκο υσ - μέ - νοι εἰς τὴν . . ἄν - δρεί - α κα - τα -

ΒΑΣΣ. - - - - -

ΠΙΑΝΟ-ΦΟΡΤΕ. - - - - -

στή - στε ε - να σταυ - ρό. Καὶ φω - νά - ξε - τε μέ

Καὶ φω - νά - ξε - τε μέ -

(some of them created with Zingarelli's encouragement)⁷² proves his belief in the principles of this movement (Ex. 3). The use of blank notation for the final (and only fugal) part of the earliest setting of *The Hymn to the Liberty* (1829–30) suggests that the appearance of such characteristics, as well as their connection to simplicity, the divine and the sublime, played a central role in the culmination of this emblematic 'national composition' (Exx. 4a and 4b). Moreover, it anticipates the use of fugal forms in the future settings of the same poem. The notational characteristics of the *alla Palestrina* style also made their appearance in the

⁷² Padovan, 'Poche parole', 2. The known parts of the *Messa a Quattro voci con cori a piena orchestra* (currently in private archive) particularly demonstrate the differences between *stile antico* and 'mixed style'.

Ex. 4(b) Posthumous publication of the earliest setting of the *Hymn* (1829–30)

132

μί - α βα - σι - λείς κυτ - τα - ξετε εδω τό ση -
 τό ση -

μί - α βα - σι - λείς κυτ - τά - ξετε εδω τό ση -

μεί - ον πού προσ - κυ - νά - τε εί - ναι του - το
 μεί - ον πού προσ - κυ - νά - τε εί - ναι του - το
 μεί - ον πού προσ - κυ - νά - τε εί - ναι του - το

και γι αυ - τό μα - τω - μέ - νους μᾶς κυ - τῶ - τε
 και γι αυ - τό μα - τω - μέ - νους μᾶς κυ - τῶ - τε
 και γι αυ - τό μα - τω - μέ - νους μᾶς κυ - τῶ - τε
 μα - τω - μέ - νους μᾶς κυ - τῶ - τε

compositions by Mantzaros for the Orthodox church, a fact that further underlines his belief in the connection of sacred music with the purity, simplicity and melodism of the past, in this case without betraying the principles of the traditional polyphonic ecclesiastical style of the Eastern Church (Ex. 5).

It is still not clear when Mantzaros started to adopt this esoteric approach. Nonetheless, the dedication to King Otto of Greece of a contrapuntal setting of Solomos' *Hymn* in 1844, even if that was a gesture motivated principally by the inducement of Petros Vrailas, might suggest that as late as that time the composer was still following his perception of Mazzinian proposals, namely the combination of music's patriotic use with counterpoint. The years 1848 and 1849 could well represent the turning point in Mantzaros' relationship to musical composition and his final turn to an esoteric approach to the sublime. One of the

to the Cefalonia issue, but his place in the Ionian administration and his political sympathy with the Moderate Party should have contributed to his disillusionment in regard to the development of national (unification with the Hellenic Kingdom) and social (agrarian issues) demands in the Islands.

This might well have been a reason for the radical change in Mantzaros' stance regarding the manifestation of the sublime in music. Mantzaros was not the only European composer who was disappointed by the failure of liberal ideas in mid-nineteenth-century Europe and who reconsidered the relationship of his music with the period's political challenges. All over Europe this reconsideration led to a movement that was epitomized by the motto of 'art for art's sake'. Naturally, this does not mean that Mantzaros abandoned his faith in the sublime ideas of nation, language, religion (in its broader sense) or people (naturally, in the Mazzinian sense). This radical esoteric approach concerning the sublime is clearly a development of Mantzaros' already-established belief in the ability of counterpoint to convey idealism in the face of national upheaval. Nonetheless, there is no indication that the composer felt uncomfortable either with this willing marginalization of his 'philosophic music' or the particular popularity of some of his lighter compositions.

The endeavours of Mantzaros' maturity led to the 'philosophization' of his work. The compositions that expressed his esoteric and rather idiosyncratic approach were comprehensible and accessible only to a narrow circle. The composer also willingly distanced himself in his late years from the social role of his musical programme (his educational activities excluded). This led him to a sort of creative alienation,⁷⁴ which was further emphasized by his willing exile within his homeland. This seemingly inexplicable failure of the composer to respond to conventional expectations (despite formalism's particular place in nineteenth-century music), led to the rejection of his work. In light of this, it is astonishing that the compositional individuality of Mantzaros was not accepted by the followers of Romanticism, despite the particular place of creative subjectivity within the limits of this artistic movement. However, one cannot fail to observe that the re-evaluation of the past, the emergence of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century forms, the style of 'musical aphorism', harmony's dynamic development or the creative importance of counterpoint would prove basic constituents of the post-Romantic idiom of the early twentieth century, when composers such as Busoni, Casella, Reger, Schoenberg or Webern would revive historical practice and herald modernism.

⁷⁴ In 1861 Petros Vrailas described Mantzaros as living 'in the heights of the theory of the Good', something that did not prevent him from 'supervising and directing even the elementary lessons' and 'revealing and teaching the most mysterious laws of artistic creation'; see *O Paratiritis* (Corfu's newspaper) IV-182 (16-28 Sep. 1861): 2-3. It is also indicative that after 1826 Mantzaros did not permit any of his music to be published, despite the pressure by publishers like Francesco Lucca (see BM/NMA 505, 10, 73 (Francesco Lucca to Mantzaros: letter dated 21 Jul. 1855)).