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*Sala di musica orientale: Literary
Representations of Oriental Salon-
Music During the Reign of Selim III
(1789-1808)*

Keywords: love songs, Ioannis Karadjas, Petros Peloponnesios, Alexander Mavrocordato

This paper deals with some early instances of salon music in late 18th-century Istanbul, as attested in the Greek literature of the time. The indication “early” has been preferred here because, in the European context, this music genre is said to have been “officially” launched in the early 19th century, its heyday being reached in mid-century.¹ However, musical performances are known (and well-documented) to have taken place since the 18th century in Parisian and other western-European salons (Hanning 1989). In fact, Parisian salons had appeared a century earlier, to counteract the court culture, although the nobility also participated along the rising middle-class (Gordon-Seifert 2011: 230-259). Nevertheless, in this early stage, such events were mainly literary gatherings, in the sense that music was part of a broader cultural activity that encompassed other performative events, such as book reading, recitation of poetry, theatre acting, etc. Music was often performed by way of airs, those originally being vocal compositions taken from larger works (operas, cantatas, oratorios) but gradually turned to pieces for instrumental ensembles.

¹ Hence the main title of this paper (*Sala di musica orientale*), thus alluding to music of oriental salon as opposed to salon music per se, a western phenomenon and term. Besides, *sala orientale* would refer to any “oriental room” still to be found in Italy (such as in Caffè Florian, Venice).

Parisian literary salons were occasionally imitated in the Ottoman context by members of the Greek elite, mainly the Phanariots, thus named after the Phanar district of Istanbul, which they inhabited. Following the French precedent, the best-known literary salon of the 18th century was presided by a woman, madame Tyaniti, alias Mariora Rizos, sister of the Greek author Ioannis Rizos (Xourias 2014). Apart from some readings of European dramatic translations, no music is known to have been performed in madame Tyanitis' salon, possibly due to the Ottoman intolerant of female participation in public life. In any case, literary salons organized by Muslim women was a much later development towards the end of the 19th century (Khaldi 2008). Another noteworthy account includes a theatrical performance of Aeschylus' play (*Persians*) in 1820 Istanbul in the context of a Greek male-gathering with revolutionary pretensions (Van Steen 2010: 67-108).² Therefore, as was the case in other European cities (such as Vienna), salon music was not systematically recorded due to its private nature but was partially described in travelers' accounts or in works of fiction.

ORIENTAL SALON MUSIC?

One of our main sources of information is the Greek romance collection *Ερωτος αποτελέσματα* [Effects of Love], written by an anonymous author,³ and published in 1792 by a Greek printing-press in Vienna (with a second edition in 1809).⁴ The fact that the collection appeared in the Austrian capital is no wonder, for a sizeable Greek community had been formed there from the first half of the 18th century, following the peace treaties of Karlowitz (1699) and Passarowitz (1718) and their related trade agreements between Austria and the Ottoman Empire (Katsiardi-Hering and Stassinopoulou 2011). The Greek author and martyr Rigas of Velestino had published his translation/adaptation of Restif de la Bretonne's voluminous romance-collection *Les Contemporaines*

² This account is given by the French author and diplomat, Lodoïs de Martin du Tyrac, Comte de Marcellus, who was present in the performance of the tragedy. See Marcellus 1859.

³ The anonymous author, hidden behind the initials I. K., has been identified with the Cypriot writer and patriot Ioannis Karadjas (1767-1798). See Eideneier 1994.

⁴ The work has been known to contemporary European audience through the travelogue of John Hobhouse (1813: 1079), Lord Byron's companion to the Levant, who has included some excerpts and rendered the original title as follows: *The Effects of Love, or Ethicoerotic History, with Political Songs: Put Together in the Vulgar Dialect for the Gratification and Delight of Young Gentlemen.*

(1780-1785)⁵ as well as his revolutionary pamphlets in Vienna (Kreutz 2019: 55-58), followed a little later by the Greek cleric Anthimos Gazis, with his scientific and literary journal *Ερμής ο λόγιος* [Hermes the Intellectual].⁶ In fact, during the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, most of the Greek schoolbooks and Greek researchers were being printed in Viennese printing houses.

Coming to the *Effects of Love*, it should be stated from the outset that it is a rare work for documenting early salon music in the Ottoman Empire and its related repertoire (though with no musical notation). Though a fiction, the collection contains many realistic elements, such as geographic settings, certain historical events, and numerous verses (taken from musical anthologies of the time). The realistic status of the work has been noticed by this author as well as by other specialists, who have found in the author's detailed and careful description of places and people a sense of great familiarity and intimacy (Plemmenos 2003). The first two stories of the collection are set in Istanbul, in the districts of Pera and Stavrodromi (modern-day Beyoğlu), whilst the third one takes place in the Russian city of Poltava. The respective places are described with great accuracy: Pera had been a district with wonderful gardens, and Stavrodromi was (and partly is today) the basis of foreign embassies. Poltava, later immortalized by the great Russian poet, Aleksander Pushkin,⁷ is also admired for its castle as well as its muddy roads that makes the people's life miserable.

The third story, in particular, is based on a historical event according to which, Alexander Mavrocordato, prince of Moldavia since 1785, fled a year later when he found himself in danger of being executed by the Turks – hence his nickname *Firrari*, or *Fugitive* (in Turkish). Subsequently, having found refuge in Russia, he participated in the Greek liberation movement and became a member of the *Philiki Etaireia*, or *Society of Friends*, which prepared the Greek revolution of 1821 (Soutzo 1974: 244-245). Next to Mavrocordato, mention is made of two other notable Greek figures, the high-rank clergymen

⁵ In 1790, Rigas published his translations of six stories from the collection under the title *Σχολεῖον τῶν ντελικάτων ἐραστῶν* [School of Delicate Lovers]), which he enriched with Greek verses, some of which reappear in the *Effects of Love*. These verses have been identified by this author with Phanariot songs from contemporary music anthologies.

⁶ The journal (published between 1811 and 1821) can be found in the following link of the Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: <http://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=lgh>.

⁷ The poem narrates various episodes of the Battle of Poltava (1709) between the Russia and Sweden, ending with Tsar Peter's victory. The poem inspired Tchaikovsky's opera *Mazeppa* (1884). For more on Pushkin's work, see Burns 2005.

cum intellectuals, Evgenios Voulgaris and Nikephoros Theotokis, who had resided in Poltava (before the publication of the collection).⁸ Voulgaris, apart for his religious activities (as bishop of the Russian Patriarchate and author of sacred works), translated some of Voltaire's dramatic works (including *Memnon*), and is said to have participated in madame Tyanitis' literary salons (Mackridge 2010: 36-37, 51-52, 83-87). It may be not a coincidence, then, that a vast number of songs in this story is performed in the salon of Prince Mavrocordato, by his lazy officers, in his absentia.

In these stories the salon (mentioned by the Italian word of Lombard origin, *sala*) is the standard place for the heroes' social gathering, romantic mating, and music making. The type "sala" (σάλα) has since remained in Greek lexicography to denote the salon, the parlour, the guest room, the ballroom, and any spacious room for formal gatherings (Dictionary 1998).⁹ The same word has also been used at the time in an oriental context, for instance in a Greek translation (from the Italian)¹⁰ of the *Arabian Nights*: there, the heroine, Balko, is received by Abdul in his *sala* (σάλα), where he is reclined on a golden couch.¹¹ Similarly, in the first story of *The Effects of Love*, the young hero, Georgakis, is shown by a female servant to the *sala* of Giakoumis (his beloved's father), to whom he has been dispatched by his own father for business.¹² Giakoumis is not yet back, so during his waiting time he meets

⁸ In 1775, Voulgaris became the first bishop of the newly created Diocese of Slaviansk and Cherson (modern-day Ukraine), followed, some years later, by Theotokis. For more, see Batalden 1982.

⁹ "[S]ála: 1. the largest and most common. the most beautiful room in the house for the reception of guests; 2. large room, usual. in a hotel, for dances, receptions" (σάλα: 1. το μεγαλύτερο και συνήθ. το ωραιότερο δωμάτιο του σπιτιού, που προορίζεται για την υποδοχή των επισκεπτών· σαλόσι. 2. μεγάλη αίθουσα, συνήθ. σε ξενοδοχείο, για χορούς, δεξιώσεις).

¹⁰ The Greek translation of the *Arabian Nights* was based on the Italian adaptation of the French *Mille et une nuits* by Antoine Gallard (1704), the latter being the first European version of the original work. For the Greek translations, see Papachristophorou 2007.

¹¹ "She then knocked on the door, and asked to speak with Abdul. Right away, a male slave took her to a *sala*, where his master was lying on a golden cushion; and as soon as he saw Balco, he was wounded by her beauty" (Τότες αυτή εκτύπησε την πόρτα, και εγύρευε διά να ομιλήση με τον Αμπτούλ. Ευθύς ένας σκλάβος την ανέβασεν εις μίαν σάλα, όπου ο αυθεντής του ήτον ζαπλωμένος επάνω εις μίαν μαξιλάραν χρυσοϋφαντον· και ευθύς όπου είδε την Μπάλκο έμεινε τραμένος από την ευμορφίαν της) (Abu-Bekir 1837: 53).

¹² "[D]o come in, and soon comes [the master]; because thus he ordered, unless you have a hasty work; he then obeyed the words of the servant, which led him up to the *sala* and said, here wait a little until he comes" (ορίσθε μέσα και ευθύς έρχεται· επειδή έτζι παρήγγειλεν, αν δεν έχετε καμμίαν βιαστικήν δουλειάν· αυτός δε υπήκουσεν εις τα λόγια της δούλης, η οποία τον ωδήγησεν έως εις την σάλαν και τον είπεν, ορίσθε καθήσατε ολίγον όσον να έλθη) (I. K. 1792: 22).

Elenitsa, with whom he has a little (but effective) talk. No music is heard or performed there, but the hero has just delivered a love song in his *oda* or bedroom, before his departure, following a revealing dream, whereupon he saw himself united with his beloved.

Musical performance, practiced in the salon, has three basic elements, which characterize the oriental culture at large: it is an all-male event (women being reduced to listeners), the music is vocal and monodic (in one or two rounds), and the guests are the performers themselves. By oriental culture, one should include therein both the Muslim and the eastern-Christian attitudes towards gender and the arts, at least as they are attested during the Ottoman period.¹³ In all three stories, heroines do not sing in public (that is, in front of others) but only do so in (and on) their own; they are only allowed to receive (and to a much lesser extent compose and send) love letters to their lovers. They mostly try to attract the male's attention through various (and invisible) means. In the first story, Elenitsa, "to make him happy", manages to send Georgakis "a secret and erotic glance" (*ένα βλέμμα κρύφιον και ερωτικόν*), while leaving the garden with her parents. In the second story, the minter's niece, while at dinner in the *sala*, "was looking in secret" (*εκρυφοκόταζε*) at Andreas, ultimately falling in love with him.

Another important feature of oriental salon-music is the complete lack of musical instruments, a phenomenon one can ascribe, in the first place, to literary technique or the author's choice but, after the following consideration, one can explain it otherwise. The explanation lies in the broader context of Christian Orthodox Church, where musical instruments were completely prohibited (Gardner 1980: 21-25). The music heard in the Phanariot or Armenian salons may belong to the secular genre but its composers (and poets) have been identified with the cantors of the Greek Patriarchate of Istanbul. Among them, one can mention Petros the Peloponnesian (c. 1730-1778), Iakovos the Peloponnesian (1740-1800), Petros Byzantios (d. 1808), Gregorios Levitis Byzantios (1778-1821), et al.¹⁴ All of them left a vast corpus of original or arranged ecclesiastical music, exhibiting the same basic features as their

¹³ Although the role of women in the Ottoman society has recently been subjected to revisionism (regarding the contribution of high-rank women to local economy), their overall image in the Ottoman Empire was one of inferior status against the male population. See, for example, Gerber 1980.

¹⁴ This is not to say that these composers were not familiar with musical instruments, for most of them have been reported to have mastered various Ottoman instruments, such as the *tambur* (long-necked lute), *nay* (transverse flute), etc. For the biographies of these composers, see Patrinelis 1973.

secular output: it is written for male voices, it is modal, monodic, and has no instrumental accompaniment. The only deviation from the reality is the amateur status of the literary performers; yet the latter were usually patrons and consumers of the music composed by the Patriarchal cantors.

IN THE ARMENIAN SALON

In the second story, Andreas, a Greek dragoman of the Venetian Embassy to Istanbul, is invited for dinner (*δείπνον*) by the Armenian *tarabhaneci* (*ταραβχανατζή*) or minter, Stepan agha,¹⁵ and is first directed to the *sala*, where he meets the minter's wife and daughter awaiting their "master" (*ο αυθέντης*); they then invite him to have a seat in the *misafir odasi* (*Μισαφίρ οδασί*) or guest room.¹⁶ *Misafir oda* was one of the two rooms of the Ottoman salon, placed on the ground floor of the house, the other being *kahve oda* or coffee room (Deniz 1998). *Mousafir oda* is today the name of a historic guesthouse in Zagori, Greek Epirus, where Ali Pasha was allegedly entertained by the Greek owner of the mansion (1785).¹⁷ Andreas is again invited by Stepan agha the next day, where he meets the daughter's cousin, by whom he is courted though to no effect (he is attracted by the minter's daughter). A few days later, the hero receives a new invitation by Stepan agha for a *ziyafet* (*ζιαφέτι*) or banquet-feast,¹⁸ whereupon he meets some Armenian relatives (the minter's son, brother, and stepson), with whom he exchanges several songs, "out of great merriment" (*από την πολλήν ευθυμίαν*).

It must not be accidental that the only female able to write and send love letters to the other (male) part is not a Greek but the Armenian minter's niece, who happens to be an orphan and enjoys some degree of freedom by his guardians. Having read Andreas' love letter to her cousin (the minter's

¹⁵ For the role of the Armenians as minters in the Ottoman Empire, see Bölükbaşı 2013.

¹⁶ "[H]e went up, led by the maid to *sala*, where he found standing Stepan agha's wife and her daughter waiting for their master to come; while entering he saluted them politely . . . the lord's wife and his daughter counter-saluted him by telling him to come to Misafir Oda to sit down" (*ανέβη δε επάνω, οδηγούμενος από την δούλην έως εις την Σάλαν, ένθα εύρε την γυναίκα του Στεπάναγα με την θυγατέρα της οπού εστέκοντο αναμένουσαι να έλθη ο αυθέντης· εμφαίνοντας δε εις την Σάλαν τας εχαιρέτησε με ένα πολιτικόν . . . η γυναίκα δε του τζελεπή και η θυγάτηρ του τον αντιχαιρέτησαν λέγουσαι, να ορίση εις τον Μουσαφίρ ονδάν να καθήσουν*) (I. K. 1792: 34).

¹⁷ See the guest house's site: <http://www.mousafirontas.gr/en/index.php>.

¹⁸ In the Ottoman Empire, *ziyafet* designated a privileged banquet, in an urban, upper class context, for which we possess complete lists of food stuffs. For more, see Artan 2000: 115-116.

daughter), she decides to compose one of her own to respond to his exaggerated praises of her cousin's "unique graces" (the letter is handed to him later and in secret by a servant). At the first dinner, the Armenian minter's daughter, described as having "a liberal mouth" (*ελευθεροστομία*), albeit in "a humble and polite manner" (*το ήθος της οπού εφαινονταν ταπεινόν, όμως ήτον πολιτικόν*), engages in "a sweet discourse" (*η ομιλία της η γλυκεία*) with Andreas, thus making him fall in love with her. However, it seems that the daughter acted out of politeness, for, at the second *ziyafet*, she was completely indifferent for Andreas, thus making him miserable and her cousin extremely jealous. At the second *ziyafet*, Andreas, having been so advised by the daughter's nanny, changes his strategy, pretending to be attracted by the cousin, in order to provoke the daughter's attention and jealousy.

It is at this juncture that the anonymous author introduces a cycle of seven songs put on the mouth of the fellow diners in the salon of the Armenian minter. Although a fiction, this account can give us a glimpse of the entertainment music of the time, since the majority of songs are found in contemporary music anthologies, and their musical indications (*makam* or mode) in the collection agree with their notated form.¹⁹ The opening song, performed by Andreas "very softly and sensually" (*πολλά σιγανά και ερωτικά*), refers to his recovered optimism of gaining his sweetheart: "In my sorrows, I found a break for just an hour; while looking at you, I sent away my pain" (*Σταις λύπαις μου ανακαχήν, μιαν ώρα εύρον μοναχήν, κντάζωντάς σε μόνον, τότε δεν είχα πόνον*) (I. K. 1792: 59). His next "most erotic" (*Ερωτικώτατον*) song expresses his contradictory emotions: "In the eyes I long for, I feel a double energy, causing two sentiments, now distressing now pleasing me" (*Στα μάτια οπού λαχταρώ διπλήν ενέργειαν θωρώ, δυω αίτια συμβαίνουν, πικραίνουν και ευφραίνουν*) (I. K. 1792: 60).

There follow three songs by the Armenian guests, which are supposed to be rendered "in Armenian" (*Αρμένικα*) but are given in Greek language; in fact, they must be considered Greek creations, since they have been identified in contemporary Greek music anthologies (Plemmenos 2010: 37-41).²⁰ The first

¹⁹ Yet, the anthologies do not give any information as to the venue or the occasion of the performance. The classification of these songs as belonging to entertainment music is inferred by their content as well as other indirect information. For more, see Chatzipanagioti-Sangmeister 2001: 160-165.

²⁰ In the musical anthologies, the "Armenian" songs are attributed to Petros the Peloponnesian, second cantor of the Greek Patriarchate of Istanbul and one of the most prolific composers of Byzantine chant (with no distinction between composer and poet).

song, by the Armenian daughter's brother, seems to respond to Andreas' anxiety, speaking of the lack of "complete happiness and total joy" one can get in this life (*Τελεία και σωστή χαρά και ευτυχία καθαρά, πούποτες δεν εδόθη, κανείς δεν ηξιώθη*). Next, comes the brother's uncle, who, "despite being an old man, was revived by the wine (since the wine can affect, not only the mind, but even the sense of one's age)".²¹ The lyrics, (set to *makam* Nikriz), refer to one's changing fortunes: "I look at the messy flow and the frequent change of my fortune, so I find no piece" (*Την ακατάστατον ροπήν και την συχνήν μετατροπήν της τύχης μου κυτάζω κ' έτζι δεν ησυχάζω*). The third Armenian performer is Stepan agha's stepson (married to his elder daughter), "after recalling the love of his youth" (*ενθυμήθηκε της νεότητός του τον Έρωτα*): "Oh terrible fate, why are you so envious, why are you that heartless and immensely evil?" (*Ω τύχη, τύχη φοβερά, γιατί είσαι τόσο φθονερά, τι τόση απονία και άμετρος κακία?*) (I. K. 1792: 62-63).

The song cycle draws to the end with a couple of pieces by Andreas, also expressing his desperate love for the minter's daughter (here we are given modal indications, *makam* Neva and Saba, respectively). Both songs use strong images, such as the death that overcomes the desperate lover and the erotic fire that consumes the passionate lover. In the first song, the lover blandly states that if his life "is to hung in [her beloved's] lips, then it better disappears, is cut through and becomes a *tebtıl*" or torn to pieces (*Αν η ζωή μου κρέμαται μέσα στα δυο σου χείλη, άνοιξ' ας λείψη ας κοπή, ας γένη πια πεπίλι*) (I. K. 1792: 63). In the other song, the narrator confesses that "the erotic fire has always overwhelmed" his heart with all his "inner self" (*Η φλόγα η Ερωτική εστάθη υπερβολική, πάντοτε στην καρδιά μου με όλα τα σωθικά μου*) (I. K. 1792: 63-64). Although exaggerated, these images should be read within their context, i.e. the consumption of wine, the tension of singing, and the accompanying memories. Besides, the image of fire was a common topos in Ottoman love poetry, particularly among the Sufis, who used it as a symbol of the heart's union with God (Vaughan-Lee 2000).²²

The anonymous author then notes the "pleasure and gladness" (*ηδονήν και αγαλλίασιν*) felt by the interested parts, as opposed to "sadness and depression" (*λύπην και αθυμίαν*) of the previous banquet (where no music was played out). We are also told that the company suspected that Andreas "was

²¹ "[Α]γκαλά και ήτον γέρων, όμως το κρασί τον έκαμε νέον (ο οίνος γαρ ου μόνον φρένας, αλλά και ηλικίαν μεταβάλλει εν όσω ενεργεί)" (I. K. 1792: 61-62).

²² It should also be added that some Greek composers of the time were hired by the whirling dervishes for their sacred dances in tekkes. For more on this issue, see Plemmenos 2012.

heartbroken” (*τραωμένος*) but they could not guess the cause of his pain and the object of his love. What one can note here is the intimate gathering and improvisatory rendering of the songs, for the performers are not professional musicians but among the guests themselves.²³ Yet, nobody seems to have any difficulty in joining Andreas over singing, even though they have recently met each other a week or so before. On the other hand, this is not a musical event per se, although music seems to be indispensable in the broader entertainment (that includes food consumption, chatting, etc.). One can finally sense a kind of “light” competition between the Armenians and the Greek hero, who has the “lion’s share” in the songs, in face of the abovementioned religious rivalry between their faiths.

Another common feature of the songs heard in the Armenian *sala* is their versification, for all save one employ the same strophic type, i.e. the alternate eight and seven-line stanza (8877) in the iambic metre (˘ ˘) rhyming in pairs (AABB).²⁴ The music setting for every eight- and seven-syllable line has a separate metric correspondence: the eight-syllable lines start with a quaver rest (possibly to avoid emphasizing the first syllable which is the weak in the iambic metre), and go on by placing the last beat of every cycle before the accented syllables. On the other hand, in the seven-syllable lines, the first and second syllables occupy a cycle each, the three following syllables (a crotchet and two quavers) share the third cycle, and the two last syllables (two crotchets) fill in the last cycle. This strophic type is considered a variation of the 8787 one (the supreme pattern of Greek folk song) in two stages: first, by the addition of improvised phrases (exclamations, etc.) after every eight- or seven-syllable line, and, second, by the adjustment of these phrases to fit the metre and rhyme of the preceding line (Kyriakides 1990: 111-127).²⁵ In this context, Phanariot songs of the 8877 type represent an “advanced” form of stage 2, where the “additional” lines have become an integral part of the main stanza.

The *ziyafet* and its episodes seem to have greatly affected the main characters of the story: Andreas, “after he woke up in the morning, began to

²³ A similar phenomenon would be observed in Central Europe during the so-called Biedermeier era (1815-1848), during which music was not only commissioned but also composed by the growing middle class (women included). For more, see Gramit 1993.

²⁴ The abovementioned Petros the Peloponnesian composed thirty-four pieces on this pattern using the Ottoman *usul* or rhythmic cycle *Sofyan* (four beats).

²⁵ The same strophic pattern is found in Greek folk song, the earliest example coming from the collection of the German philologist, Werner von Haxthausen (1935: 6), and described as “scoffing” (*Spottlied*), usually performed during the Carnival period (the week before Shrove-Sunday).

recall”, among other things, “the songs” (*τα τραγούδια*) heard at the table.²⁶ To dispel his fears lest Stepan agha had suspected his feelings, he started singing “very silently yet passionately” (*πολλά σιγανώς, εμπαθώς δε*). The song lyrics suggest to every prospective lover to “have a good heart and much patience, and not become distressed towards whatever befalls him” (*Καλή καρδιά κ’ υπομονή, κανείς τυχαίνει νάχη, και να μην απελπίζεται, εις ότι κι αν του λάχη*). On her part, the cousin, having recalled Andreas’ erotic glances towards her (she was ignorant of his plan to seduce her cousin), regained her hopes to win him, and “to sweeten herself”, she began to sing the following “very hedonically and harmonically” (*πολλά ηδονικά και αρμονικά*): “When someone’s patience reaches his limits, it becomes desperation, with much affliction” (*Μια υπομονή σαν φθάση εις τον άκρον της βαθμόν, σε απελπισίαν κλίνει, όμως με πολύν κλαυθμόν*) (I. K. 1792: 70).

However, when the mother discovers Andreas’ love letters to her daughter, she reacts fiercely by tearing the letters to pieces, expelling her niece for conspiracy, and punishing her daughter for accepting such a gesture. Among her arguments for reprimanding the girls, the mother includes the fact that they have accepted love letters by someone of different religion (*από αλλοπίστους*). Ironically, a short time before, the daughter had herself confessed to her cousin that she was firmly resolved not to fall in love with Andreas, due to his being of a different denomination, and the obvious outcome of the matter. Since the 6th century, Armenians had formed their own Christian creed, so-called monophysite, for they believed in Jesus’ one nature (the divine), contrary to the widespread Christian Orthodox faith (prevalent in the Byzantine Empire) preaching Jesus’ double nature.²⁷ The anonymous author attributes the daughter’s (and mother’s) reaction to the way parents “rear their children in Turkey, infusing them with acute hatred (*μίσος άσπονδον*) against people of another religion”.

The main participant of the salon entertainment, Andreas, is portrayed as “truly gifted young man” (*νέος τω όντι χαριέστατος*), both for his physical and his spiritual talents. He was able to speak several western and oriental languages, and he comes from “a noble family” (*εκ λαμπρού γένους*) of Corfu,

²⁶ “Ο δε τσελεπή Ανδρέας σηκωθείς πρωί άρχισε να στοχάζεται εκείνα οπού ηκολούθησαν, την ομιλίαν μετά της Μείρέμ, την ζηλοτυπίαν της Χοροψιμάς, τα τραγούδια και τα λοιπά” (I. K. 1792: 65).

²⁷ For a comprehensive account of the Armenian Church against the Churches of Constantinople and Rome, see Stopka 2016. Apart from the episode between the two heroes, the anonymous author reserves very severe words for the non-Christian Orthodox believers.

one of the Ionian islands in western Greece, which was under Venetian rule since the 14th century.²⁸ Venice was one of the four nations that had long established embassies in the Ottoman capital, the rest being England, France and Austria; yet, in contemporary sources, the dwellings of the Venetian diplomats were described as the most “sumptuous and delightfully situated” (Dallaway 1797: 127).²⁹ The majority of dragomans in the service of the European ambassadors was recruited from among the Greeks, since the latter possessed multilingual skills due to their exposure to western education and ideas (Quataert 2005: 81-83).³⁰ In the evenings and on feast days, Andreas used to meet some friends in order to entertain himself (*να εγγλεντίζη*) and thus gain some “comfort” (*άνεσιν*) from his daily professional dealings. It is in this cultural environment that salon music was practiced in the story.

One cannot also avoid referring to Armenian musicians of the time and their relations with their Greek counterparts. Among the former, mention should be made of Hamparsum Limondjian (1768-1839), a charismatic musician and composer, born in Pera, the district where the second story is situated. He was placed from his youth under the patronage of Hovhannes Düzyan, the Armenian director of the Ottoman Imperial Mint, who helped him continue his music education, while staying in the Düzyan family mansion in the Kuruçeşme district of Istanbul. He served as cantor in the Armenian Church, but he also studied Ottoman music with Ismail Dede Effendi. Hamparsum is said to have taken musical classes by the abovementioned cantor and composer of the Greek Patriarchate, Petros the Peloponnesian (Papadopoulos 1890: 319).³¹ Conversely, Gregorios Levitis, first cantor of the same Patriarchate in Istanbul, is related to have fervently frequented in his adolescence the Armenian church, from which he was only detached after the mediation of a high-rank Greek cleric, especially appointed by his desperate father (Papadopoulos 1890: 329).³²

²⁸ For the Venetian occupation of Corfu in the late medieval and early-modern period, see Gertwagen 2007.

²⁹ At that time, James Dallaway was chaplain and physician to the British embassy to Istanbul. He travelled to the Balkans and the Greek islands and later published his travelogues which were well received by the English-speaking audience.

³⁰ For a broader perspective of the dragomans, see Bowen et al. 1995.

³¹ This looks unlikely for Hamparsum was only ten years old when Petros died from plague. Yet, this tradition may have been made after Hamparsum’s invention of a new musical notation (based on the Armenian alphabet) comparable to Petros’ own reformed notation of Byzantine chant. On Petros and his involvement in the Ottoman music, see Gerlach 2017.

³² The young Gregorios is said to have mastered Armenian music as well as language, and the mediator was an archimandrite of the nearby Greek Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Istanbul.

IN THE RUSSIAN SALON

Another instance of salon music occurs in the third story, set in the Russian city of Poltava, where prince Mavrocordato and his entourage have stationed, after their departure from Istanbul. Alexander Mavrocordato had already spent part of his youth in Russia, thereafter serving as Great Dragoman of the Ottoman Empire and Prince of Moldavia. He was then dethroned by the sultan, due to his rivalry with Patriarch Procopius, and fled to Russia, where he remained up to his death (although the sultan requested his extradition).³³ His life events were immortalized and parodied in a caustic comedy entitled *Alexandrovodas the Unscrupulous* (1785), written by the Phanariot author, Nicolaos Soutzo.³⁴ After his departure, Mavrocordato is said to have left his wife in Istanbul, and took with him his mistress along with their illegitimate son (who had been born in Moldavia). In the story, the prince's young secretary, Antonakis, is described to have been engaged in Istanbul, and is tempted to fall in love with a Russian beauty, Barbara, but is finally come to his senses. It should be stressed that some of the main Russian characters of the story (Barbara included) have been identified with real persons of the time (Kehayoglou 1996: 426).

In the context of the story, the salon is first used to host the officers' musical expositions, headed by the young hero, Antonakis, a secretary of prince Mavrocordato's *Camaras* or first chamberlain and private treasurer.³⁵ Antonakis is accompanied by other officers who are named by their (Turkish or Romanian) title: *Cubukcus-basi* or head of pipe men, first and second *Kahveci-basi* or head of coffeemakers, *Stolnik*, *Dvornik*, second *Portar* or door-keeper (*kapici*, in Turkish), and *Postelnik*. No Christian or Muslim names are provided, and Antonakis is also called *chelebi* (Çelebi) or gentleman, an Ottoman generic title often reserved for notable people. Among them, the

³³ In 1711, Dimitrie Cantemir, prince of Moldavia, had also fled to Russia, after his secret agreement with Peter the Great was revealed. For the multiple role of the Phanariots in the Ottoman bureaucracy, see Philliou 2009.

³⁴ The work has been translated and commented (with a long introduction) by Anna Stavrakopoulou (see Soutsos 2012). In this work, set in Istanbul, before and after the departure of Mavrocordato, the prince's officers employ various plots to secure their position of power and other benefits. The prince himself, is given both an "abused" wife (Domna Zapheira) and a "debauched" mistress.

³⁵ "[A]s the master was invited by another lord for lunch, they resolved to have all lunch together, in the master's *sala*. . . . After lunch, and after they have become cheerful enough, they began to sing" (*με το να ήταν ο Αυθέντης καλεσμένος εις ένα άρχοντα εις το γεύμα, ηθέλησαν και αυτοί να συμφάγουν όλοι ομού, εις την σάλαν του Αυθέντου. . . . Μετά το γεύμα δε, αφ' ου ευθύμησαν αρκετά, άρχισαν να τραγωδούν*) (I. K. 1792: 144).

most prominent were pipe men who followed their masters carrying long-stemmed pipes and tobacco, and coffeemakers who prepared coffee and tea (Vaughn Findley 2014: 58-59). The rest of the offices bear a Romanian name: *Stolnik* or chief steward, *Dvornik* or judge, and *Postelnik* or master of the ceremonies at court.³⁶ Antonakis opens and closes a cycle of seventeen songs, rendered in two rounds. Later, Antonakis was again summoned in the prince's *sala* by *Postelnik*, who convinced him to abandon his love for the Russian beauty, Barbara (since he was engaged in Istanbul).³⁷

In the same story, the prince's entourage are not sketched as plotters or rivals but instead show a kind of tolerance and cooperation, which is particularly expressed twice in their song contests. One such occasion occurs in the nearby *bahche* or garden, the other in the prince's *sala*, where they engage in a long cycle of songs, at the instigation of Antonakis (despite his being a lower officer), to whom "everyone obeyed" (*υπήκουσαν όλοι*). Furthermore, in both instances, Antonakis opens and closes the song cycle in a way that is readily accepted by the others, whatever their post (although the music in the salon seems to take place more spontaneously). The spontaneous nature of both gatherings is underlined by the fact that, while at the garden, the officers began to sing "whatever one had known" (*εκείνο όπου ήξευρε*). It should also be noted that, after Antonakis' opening, the other officers sing in the order of their offices (in two rounds) – it seems then that the Greek secretary must have gained priority due to his artistic gifts, since he is described as "versifier" (*στιχοποιός*), and "not so handsome but sagacious and important" (*όχι τόσον ωραίος, όσον αγήνους και σπουδαίος*).³⁸

While at the garden, Antonakis is joined by *Kahveci-basi*, the second *Kahveci*, *Stolnik*, *Cubucus-basi*, second *Dvornik*, and second *Portar*, who sing in two rounds, in exactly the same order. The same company is later enlarged with the presence and participation of *Postelnik*, right after Antonakis, since this post was the most important of the Phanariot court and the person

³⁶ For a contemporary English account of the Phanariot offices in Wallachia and Moldavia, and other relevant information, see Wilkinson 1820: 46-59.

³⁷ "[O]nly chelebi Antonakis and Magioros remained in the *sala*, before the window, and stared towards the castle wall; in the meantime, the master departed, and so they remained the two of them" (*μόνον ο τζελεπή Αντωνάκης και ο Μαγιόρος, όπου έμειναν οι δύο εις την Σάλαν εις το παραθύρι και εθεωρούσαν εις το τειχόκαστρον εν τω αναμεταξύ δε ανεχώρησε και ο Αυθέντης, και έτζι έμειναν οι δύο*) (I. K. 1792: 186).

³⁸ The character of Antonakis has been identified with the Greek intellectual, Athanasios Psalidas, another possible author of the *Effects of Love*, who lived in Russia between 1785 and 1787, then moved to Vienna, where he remained until 1795 and edited other Greek books in the Baumeister Press. For more, see Athini 1998-1999.

elected was usually a Greek.³⁹ In the story, Great Postelnik (called *Μαγιώρος* or Major) is responsible for accompanying the prince “as a guide, and expert in many languages” (*ως οδηγός, και ως ειδήμων πολλών γλωσσών*). The account of the officers is an indication of the story’s plausibility (if not realism), since the work (though printed in Vienna) witnessed a large circulation and popularity among the Greek communities of the Ottoman Empire and abroad, obtaining a second edition and a reprint.⁴⁰ It would then have been almost impossible for the anonymous author to attract the Greek audience if the work lacked altogether correct information or a sense of verisimilitude (the so-called *εικός* by Aristotle).⁴¹

The company commences the entertainment at the prince’s *sala*, right after lunch, and “after they have become cheerful enough” (*αφ’ ου ευθύμησαν αρκετά*), “since songs are the outcome and a sign of joy” (*τα τραγούδια είναι αποτέλεσμα και σημείον χαράς*). To get an idea of the offices’ duties, Dvornik (spelled as *Δβόρνικος*) was responsible for the princely court, holding a silver stick (*αργυράν ράβδον*) as a sign of his authority (Photeinos 1819: 455-519). Great Stolnik (*Μέγας Στόλνικος*) was responsible for the prince’s kitchen and comestibles, placing the prince’s first dish at the table, while wearing a long gown (*καββάδι*). Great Portar (or *Portar-basi*) was responsible for welcoming the Ottoman visitors, showing them before the prince, taking care of their accommodation and nutrition. Of the above officers, Dvornik recited a song “with utmost gaiety, to please his friend’s company” (*με άκραν ευθυμίαν, δι’ ευχαρίστησιν της των φίλων συντροφίας του*). Cubukcus-basi, described as “funny” (*αστειός*) opted for a “very funny” song (*πολλά αστειόν*),⁴² inviting his mature friends to get married after the abolition of the custom of obligatory dowry in cash (*τράχωμα*).⁴³

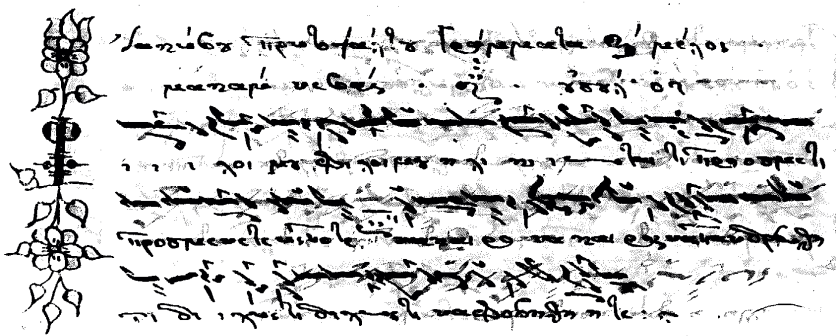
³⁹ The most authoritative Greek account of the Phanariot officialdom in the Danubian Principalities is Photeinos 1819: 455-519.

⁴⁰ The second edition contains only minor alterations, not affecting the main story and the songs.

⁴¹ On the issue of verisimilitude in the “Arcadian” context of the time, see Smith 2009.

⁴² “My elderly friends, what are you waiting for, until when? This is the time to get married, without fearing anything” (*Φίλοι μου ηλικιώται, τι προσμένετε ως πότε, να καιρός να πανδρευθήτε, δίχως τι να φοβηθήτε*). In Ms. 1428 (1818-1820), Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos, the song (lyrics and music) is ascribed to Iakovos Protopsaltis, first cantor of the Greek Patriarchate (1789-1800). See the original notation and its transcription as Ex. 1.

⁴³ *Trachoma* was “the custom of giving an added amount of dowry in cash as opposed to land to the prospective groom” that led “to an increase of intermarriage of Christian women with Muslim men” (Tsoukala 2010: 888-890). This custom had been twice



NEVA

ΙΑΚΩΒΟΥ ΠΡΩΤΟΨΑΛΤΟΥ

ΠΑΡΑΛΛΑΓΗ

1 Φίλοι μου ηλικιώται ώται τι προσημέτι προ

7 σήμετε ως ποτε να και ρός να και ρός να παν δρεν θείτε δίχως

14 τι δίχως τι να φοβή θείτε

Ex. 1. Iakovos Protopsaltis, Φίλοι μου ηλικιώται [*My Elderly Friends*], Ms. 1428, Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos (1818-1820). Sung in the Russian salon by Cubucus-basi.

There follows a second round of songs, commencing with Antonakis, and followed by Postelnik, who did not want to “look inferior” (*δια να μη φανή . . . υποδέεστερος*). In this round, the “funny” (*αστείος*) Cubukcus-basi is given two consecutive songs, one characterized “still funny” (*αστείον πάλιν*) and the other “funnier” (*αστειότερον*). His first song is an appeal to young women to “rejoice” (*να χαρήτε*) at the prospect of their marrying men “possessing head and no feet”, thus alluding to mature bachelors. His other song is a revealing piece of verse about the adventures of the narrator (speaking in the first person) in a “beautiful garden” (*εις περιβόλι εύμορφον*), where he entered “to taste its flowers and harvest its fruits” (*τα άνθη του να ευφρανθώ, καρπούς του να τρυγήσω*). The metaphor becomes apparent further down, when the narrator reaches two “sweet lemons”, which he passionately “kisses and sucks” (*τα λεμονάκια τα γλυκά, φιλώ και πιπιλίζω*). This is an exceptional case among the songs of the collection and the Phanariot verses at large, in terms of tone as well as content (Chatzipanagioti-Sangmeister 2005: 269-271).⁴⁴ Finally, the penultimate song by the second Portar is described as “remarkable” (*αξιόλογον*) for someone of that post.⁴⁵

The singing company consists entirely of men and there is not even a female listener – in fact, throughout the story, no woman appears to take part in any musical event. The central heroine, Barbara, is not even allowed to compose a love letter or recite a song (as was the case in the second story). In the contemporary context of the Ottoman Empire and its dependent Balkan nations, women were still restricted in terms of their exposure to social events, let alone public entertainment. Until the reign of Selim III, Muslim women are not reported to have taken part in artistic activities, with the exception of those attached to the imperial harem, where an elementary artistic education was provided (Gelişli 2004). In fact, very few Muslim poetesses have been recorded in Ottoman literary history, their few works lacking even references to female identity.⁴⁶ Besides, the custom of *kabul gunu* or reception

abolished through the Patriarchate’s protestations to the Ottoman authorities in 1772 and 1785.

⁴⁴ Thus, the song has been attributed to the author of the collection. It should also be noted that this song is not included in the manuscript anthologies of the time (musical or not). On the issue of Eros in the Phanariot literature, see Papacostea-Danielopolu 1988.

⁴⁵ “To silence, I can’t, to speak, I don’t dare, something that no mind can hold, if the mouth bears witness” (*Να σιγώ δεν ημπορώ, να λαλώ και δεν τολμώ, πράγμα που νους δεν χωρεί, αν το στόμα μαρτυρή*).

⁴⁶ Except from the early-Ottoman poetess, Mihrî Hatun (1460-1515), mention should be made of Fitnat Hanım (d. 1780). For more on this issue, see Silay 1997.

day, which was held once a week by upper-class Ottoman women, is a later development dating from the late 19th century (Davis 1986: 157). Christian women followed suit, since no female poet or composer is reported up to the early 19th century – even then the earliest examples were mainly involved in translation (Denissi 2011).⁴⁷

On the other hand, Russian women poets are attested since the 1760s, though mainly dealing with “light” genres, such as pastoral verse, sonnets and elegies (Ewington 2014). However, in the story, the Russian heroine, Barbara, is only the recipient of various love letters composed by a desperate Antonakis, who manages to translate them with the aid of his Russian teacher. Barbara is described as “beautiful yet utterly modest” (*ωραιά μεν, σεμνή δε εις το άκρον*), possibly due to her Christian Orthodox denomination (as opposed to the Armenian monophysites of the second story). She does not only refrain from singing but even from excessive talking, since “her talk was very little” (*η ομιλία της ολιγίστη*), a fact making her look like “a Grecian daughter” (*μίαν κόρην της Ελλάδος*). The love letters are given to Barbara either in the church (during the Sunday service) or at her house, through her own servants (tipped generously by Antonakis). Up to the gathering in the garden, the Greek hero sends a couple of letters to Barbara, followed by another couple before the second gathering in the prince’s *sala*.

The music performed in the prince’s *sala* by Antonakis and the other officers exhibits further (more salient) characteristics which may help us define more precisely this type of event at the time. This we can manage, first, by comparing the song lyrics performed in the garden to those in the prince’s salon. As it will become apparent, salon music, being an indoors entertainment, contains more “indecent” songs than garden music, an outdoor event that could attract uninvited listeners. The opening song by Antonakis, while in the garden, portrays an innocent hero, a novice lover who “has never tried Love’s passion”, which “the latter has apparently decided to teach” (*Ποτέ δεν εδοκίμασα του Έρωτος τα πάθη, αυτός δε καθώς φαίνεται, θέλει να με τα μάθη*). However, his opening song in the salon is an attempt to reassure his beloved that “she has brought him to her side”, and that “he is all hers” (*Φως μου χαροποιήσου, μ’ έφερες στην βουλήν σου, φως μου πλια βεβαιώσου, πως είμαι εδικός σου*). In the same vein, his initial song of the second round is

⁴⁷ Denissi (2001: 42) locates two main groups of female authors in the early 19th century: the first was active from 1816 to 1821, and the second, from 1818 to 1830. The former consisted of Phanariot ladies, while the latter, of relatives of middle-class intellectuals.

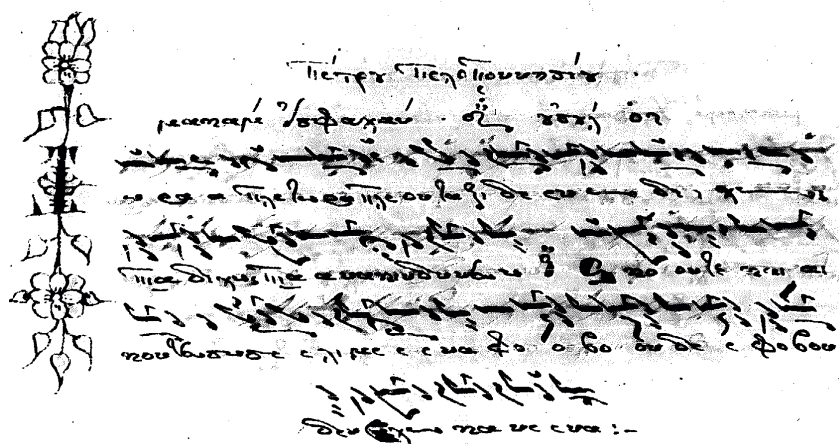
a further confession to his beloved that “her charms, being so admirable, can have no comparison, but are unique” (*Τα κάλλη σου ψυχή μου, τα τόσα θαυμαστά, σύγκρισιν δεν λαμβάνουν, αλλ’ είναι χωριστά*). Finally, his closing song of the second round, called “an epilogue” (*επίλογον*), is a setback on behalf of the hero, expressing his fears that a faithful lover is sometimes payed back with “infidelity” (*Στην αγάπην η κακία, εις τους όρκους απιστία, εις τους λόγους εναντία, εύμορφη αντιμισθία*).

Other officers seem to play specific roles in the event, complementing each other, and enriching the performance through the corresponding musical expression of their character. For example, during the gathering in the garden, the second Portar, sketched as “melancholic” (*μελαγχολικός*), is assigned a song referring to the precarious nature of human relationships (between friends or lovers): “I reflect on and wonder at the present friendship, that remains on the mouth and not in the heart” (*Στοχάζομαι και απορώ την τωρινήν φιλίαν, οπού στο στόμα στέκεται και όχι στην καρδίαν*). Yet, in the entertainment at the prince’s salon, he seems to have recovered from his fears and looks more optimistic: “Now I am traveling in no danger anymore, and I approach a port, feeling no fear” (*Τώρα πλέον ταξιδεύω δίχως πλια να κινδυνεύω και κοντεύω σε λιμένα, φόβον δεν έχω κανένα*).⁴⁸ His second (optimistic) song may be said to counterbalance the previous one, rendered by Dvornik, using the sea as a metaphor of dangers: “Oh wild, much-haunted sea, you make those who wander in thee, sigh deeply” (*Θάλασσα αγριωμένη, μεγαλοστοιχιωμένη, όσοι σε περιδιαβάζουν, βέβαια αναστενάζουν*).

To sum up, this paper attempted to present an example of oriental salon music during the reign of Selim III through a work of Greek literature of the time, depicting salon gatherings accompanied by music. This type of musical event has three main aspects: it is an all-male, vocal, and amateur happening, and have been placed in the broader Ottoman cultural environment of the time. Women are usually passive listeners and can only sing (or write songs) in private, while at the same time, may be allowed to receive love letters containing long verses. Salon music is not accompanied by musical instruments, in accordance with the songs’ notated form in music collections, where there is no instrumental indication. This lack of instruments may be due to the prohibition of instrumental music in Byzantine chant, since the composers

⁴⁸ See the original notation of the song, along with its transcription in staff notation, in Ex. 2 (Ms. 1428, Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos). The song is attributed to Petros Peloponnesios, second cantor of the Greek Patriarchate.

were among the cantors of the Greek Patriarchate. The performers are finally amateur musicians and are identified with the fellow diners themselves. This type of oriental salon-music differs from its western counterpart of the time, which employs musical instruments, includes women (both as artists and hostesses), and the performers are not identified with the guests (professional artists as opposed to noble or bourgeois audience).



7 

Τώ - ρα πλέ τώρα πλέ-ον τα-ξι-δευ - ω δι - κως ἴτα δι-κως

7 

ἴτα να κιν-δυ - νεύ - ω και κον - τε και κον - τεύ - ω σε λι - μέ - να

13 

φό - βον δε φό - βον δεν ἔ - χω κα - νέ - ναν.

Ex. 2. Petros Peloponnesios, Τώρα πλέον ταξιδεύω [Now I Am Traveling], Ms. 1428, Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos (1818-1820). Sung in the Russian salon by the second Portar.

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