



# JANI CHRISTOU

THE WORKS AND TEMPERAMENT  
OF A GREEK COMPOSER

ANNA M LUCCIANO

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# Jani Christou

The Works and Temperament  
of a Greek Composer

Anna Lucciano

*Conservatoire d'Aix-en-Provence, France*

Translated by Catherine Dale



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

The rapid expansion and diversification of contemporary music is explored in this international series of books for contemporary musicians. Leading experts and practitioners present composition today in all aspects – its techniques, aesthetics and technology, and its relationships with other disciplines and currents of thought – as well as using the series to communicate actual musical materials.

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Nigel Osborne

*To Stelios*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my warmest thanks to Sandra Christou, daughter of Jani Christou, who kindly allowed me access to the private archives of the composer, and to George Leotsakos, musicologist, music critic and close friend of Christou, for his invaluable help throughout my research.

The function of music is to create  
soul, by creating conditions for  
myth, the root of all soul.

Where there is no soul, music creates  
it. Where there is soul, music  
sustains it.

class, 23 Aug  
1968.

## INTRODUCTION

This study of the composer Jani Christou is intended primarily as an introduction to a musical personality whose contribution to contemporary thought is essential, even if its originality and potential effects on artistic expression in general fail to be recognized or are ignored, and even if today this all too subversive music is scrupulously forgotten, much to the eternal regret of a small circle of friends who lack the means to ensure its survival. For these reasons I selected Christou (rather than any other composer) as my subject and, in rescuing him from obscurity, have devoted a large portion of this book to the reproduction of hitherto unpublished texts by the composer himself. Thus I found myself in an unenviable situation: though, on one hand, I experienced no difficulty in suppressing my own views in the face of such a strong personality, I was confronted, on the other, with the dilemma of selecting from the profusion of documents those that ought to be made public and those that ought to remain private when all of them seemed so important – an acute crisis of conscience.

The structure of this book is somewhat similar to that of a concert, with a first and second part and an 'interlude' in between. This layout was dictated not by an all too fanciful imagination but by the composer's own concept of his entire output. Thus, my choice of 'Phoenix Principle' as the title of Part One and 'Lunar Pattern' as that of Part Two was an intuitive one, the result of an instinctive sympathy with the spiritual world of the composer which subsequently proved to be entirely justified, since this same division was adopted by Christou himself in one of his last letters.<sup>1</sup>

The subdivision of the parts into chapters follows normal chronological order. For biographical detail I have tried to rely as much as possible on written documents, but in the case of oral accounts I have noted each time the name of the commentator and their relationship to the composer. Those vital biographical questions to which I was unable to obtain a definitive answer remain unanswered.

With regard to the analyses and commentaries on the works, particularly in chapters I and II, my decision to treat certain pieces or extracts in more detail than others was determined by two factors: each

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Rufena Ampenoff dated 7 June 1969. See also p. 100.

piece belongs to a characteristic period in terms of its style, and therefore to a clearly defined corpus of works within Christou's compositional development. In this respect, each piece may be differentiated from the others. In chapter I, my decision to study one piece rather than another from the same corpus of works is entirely subjective and based on personal preference. However, from chapter II onwards my field of investigation widens and deals directly with the question of composition. Thus in chapter II I have given priority to *Patterns and Permutations* in order to render a more detailed account which will serve as a firm theoretical basis.

I have attempted, moreover, to carry out this study without losing sight of its musicological interest, and for this reason each question is considered as much from an historical as from a technical point of view. Historically, I have sought to trace in the clearest possible way the progression of a musical journey through time, from Christou's early works to his late ones, whilst through the analytical commentaries I have aimed to emphasize the more specific features of this journey.

Finally, the summary at the end of the book provided me with the opportunity to present with complete freedom my own personal impressions and arguments concerning Christou's music; in this section his work is considered in a much wider context and in a more relative way, in a spirit of openness, touching (albeit only briefly) on a number of general issues and on the crisis of aesthetics in particular.

## BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

- 1926 Jani Christou born 8 January in Heliopolis (north-eastern quarter of Cairo) in Egypt.<sup>1</sup> Second son of Eleutherios Christou (an industrialist and chocolate manufacturer) and Lilika Tavernari, of Cypriot origin.<sup>2</sup>
- 1930-38 English primary school in Alexandria.<sup>3</sup>
- 1938-44 Victoria College in Alexandria. Piano lessons with the pianist Gina Bachauer.<sup>4</sup> He continued his education

<sup>1</sup> A birth certificate stating that the composer was born in Nicosia, Cyprus, has recently been found. However, the information concerning this certificate is based on oral evidence rather than hospital records, which suggests that it may be a forgery.

<sup>2</sup> Christou's mother was a well-known poetess and spiritualist. She constantly helped her son to realize his artistic projects, whereas his father would have preferred him to follow his own profession. She may also have been at the root of his unfaltering attraction to mysticism: indeed, according to his son Evis, during the 1960s Christou practised transcendental dialogue.

<sup>3</sup> Christou grew up in the patrician Greek community of cosmopolitan Alexandria, which was composed essentially of industrialists, delegates of various diplomatic corps, and artists. The Alexandrian way of life was aristocratic and luxurious, and the town maintained continual contact with European countries, especially England and France, from which she drew inspiration and whose values she adopted. In short, Alexandria was one of the principal poles towards which the intelligentsia of the country gravitated. It is probable, moreover, that the fact that Christou grew up in a country that was the cradle of an ancient civilization, essentially preoccupied on a religious level with the phenomenon of life after death, may have influenced the spiritual world of the young composer up to a certain point and contributed to his future orientation towards the metaphysical and his attraction to the question of the afterlife. It was not by chance that Christou chose the infernal world of *Mysterion*, based on ancient Egyptian texts, for the work that was to have the most direct relationship with death.

<sup>4</sup> As far as Christou's earliest musical studies are concerned, he received his first piano lessons at the age of five with an émigré Russian teacher and then with an Italian. He recalled the following facts in an interview which has proven to be a key document concerning his youth, musical education and early works, since it is the only surviving written account of this period: 'When I was barely five years old, I felt the extraordinary attraction that music held for me; and it was at this age that I began to learn the piano. I was already determined to devote myself to music and become a composer. Between the ages of thirteen and fourteen, I began my initiation to general music theory with the famous pianist Gina Bachauer. The musical atmosphere that prevailed in her home contributed to the development of my musical education. I should add, however, that until the age of seventeen I was self-taught in the sense that the real work I did was not with my teacher. Let me explain: I used to perform pieces and try to understand the secrets of their style. It was vital

principally in England at King's College, Cambridge, where he studied philosophy with Ludwig Wittgenstein (linguistic logic) and Bertrand Russell (symbolic logic), receiving the B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) Cantabrigiensis in Moral Sciences. At his father's request, he also followed an elementary course in economics.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, he studied harmony, counterpoint and composition in Letchworth with Hans Ferdinand Redlich, a disciple of and writer on Alban Berg.

1949-50

Attended the 1949 summer course at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena where he met F. Lavagnino with whom he was later to take private lessons in analysis and orchestration in Gavi and Rome. In summer 1950 he resumed his studies at the Accademia Musicale. At the same time, he became interested in psychology in depth and in the work of Carl Jung, under the influence of his brother who studied at the Jung Institute in Zurich from 1951 to 1954.<sup>6</sup>

1951 (or 53?)

Returned to Egypt where he established a studio, enabling him to devote himself full-time to composition.<sup>7</sup> He nevertheless maintained contact with Italy.

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for me to become thoroughly impregnated with them in order to perform them better. In this respect my musical instinct served as my guide.' (Interview with Christou by Jean Marcelin, 'Un Alexandrin de moins de trente ans, Jani Christou, est un musicien dont la notoriété ne cesse de grandir' (French text), *Le Journal d'Égypte*, 3 February 1956, Alexandria.)

<sup>5</sup> This information is based on the account of one of his former economics classmates who reported the significant fact that, after having received his diploma and deciding not to concern himself with economics any longer but to single-mindedly follow the course he had marked out for himself, Christou parcelled up all his books and notes and presented them to his friend, claiming that he would make better use of them than Christou.

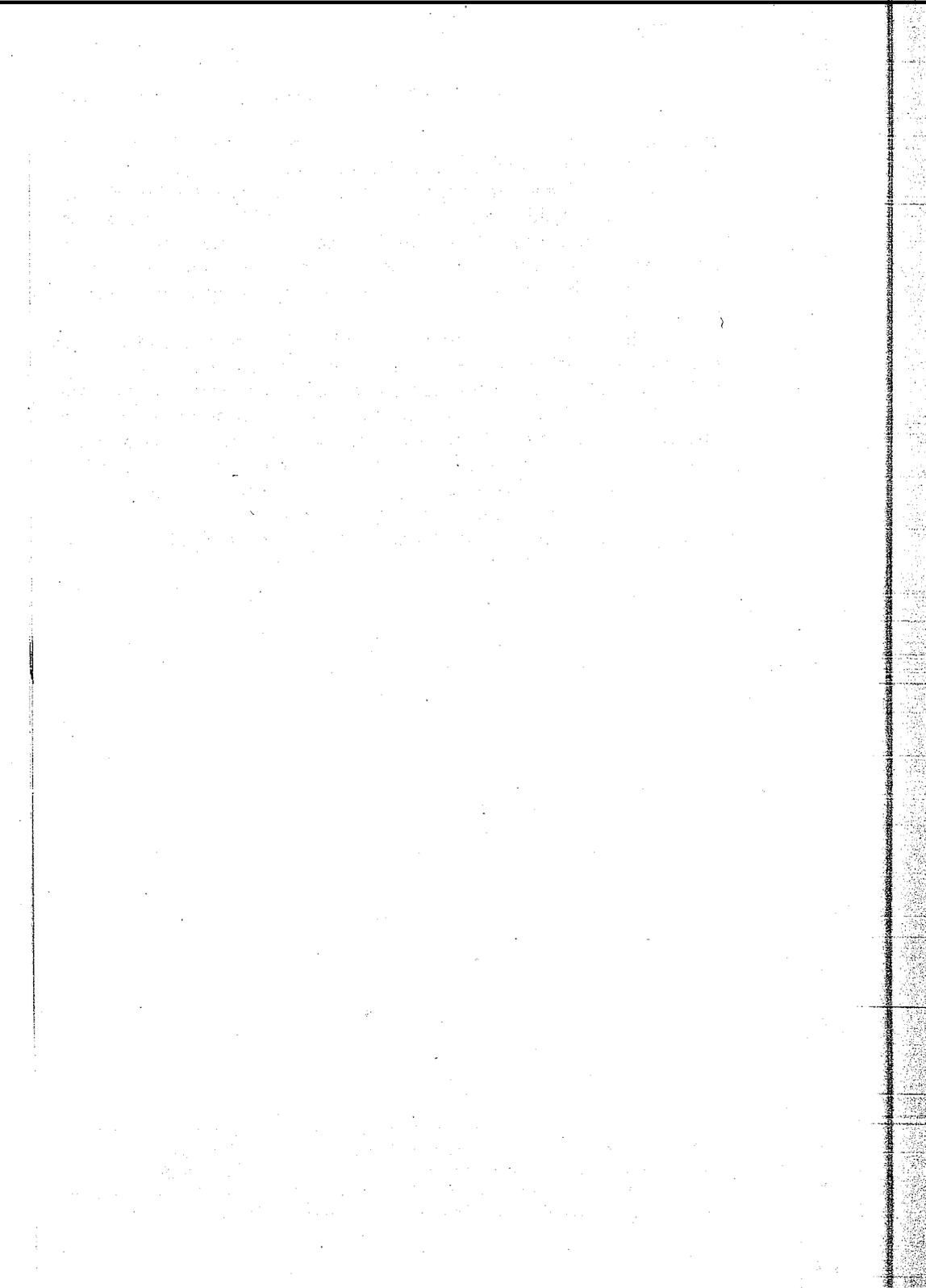
<sup>6</sup> Christou's brother, Evangelos, was the author of a book entitled *The Logos of the Soul* which was published posthumously in English in 1963 due to the efforts of Jani himself (Dunquin Press, Vienna, Zurich; introduction by James Hillman). Evangelos played an important role in the life of his younger brother Jani, exerting a particularly strong, guru-like influence on the composer (see Appendix I, p. 122). Christou himself may have followed courses with Jung in Zurich, but probably as an observer since he is not registered in the archives of the institute. His attendance at the institute is highly likely but not absolutely certain. (The musicologist George Leotsakos has conducted a fruitless investigation into this subject.)

<sup>7</sup> According to his brother-in-law Yanris Horemi, Christou possessed an extensive record library, containing centuries of masterpieces of western musical culture. Horemi often used to spend whole nights with Christou, listening to records. These records were mainly 78s that were transported to Chios when he left Alexandria, and the majority were subsequently sold by his children. In Athens, however (according to his daughter Sandra), he kept only a few records out of his huge collection in his studio; these were principally by Shostakovich and Berg as well as *Pierrot Lunaire*; he was also particularly fond of Bach and Schütz.

- 1956 Married Theresia Horemi, his childhood friend. Later in the same year his brother was killed in a car accident, an event from which Christou found it difficult to recover and which brought about a change in his artistic work. Until 1960 he divided his time between Alexandria and the island of Chios.
- 1960 Finally settled in Greece, sometimes residing in Athens and sometimes on the island of Chios.<sup>8</sup> During the last years of his life, he spent less and less time on Chios in order to live in Athens, due to the increasing number of official artistic events in which he was involved. Shortly before his death he was planning the construction of a substantial tourist complex on Chios, comprising a village in local style and an open-air theatre, which would have enabled him to organize an international festival of modern music on the island.
- 1970 During the night of 8 January he died in a car accident whilst returning from the celebration he had organized for his birthday, leaving three children. (His wife died ten days later as a result of the same accident.)

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<sup>8</sup> This move was imposed as a consequence of Nasser's accession to power and his subsequent reform of the private industrial sector.



## JANI CHRISTOU: TEMPERAMENT<sup>1</sup>

In the opinion of all those who knew him, Christou was an extraordinary character. The following testimony provides valuable evidence of this:

'He had the secret of being exceptionally cordial towards the people with whom he mixed, a whole society of artists and intellectuals who were attracted by his personality, and yet he never revealed to them the depth of his being. He was both very close to all the issues of contemporary life and at the same time very removed from them: rather as if he occupied a position from which he could see everything, in a universal perspective, and raise everything to the level of a single and unique force, a driving principle'.<sup>2</sup>

Christou worked tremendously hard, devoting ten to fourteen hours to composition each day. He possessed a vast library containing works about a great variety of subjects: Eastern religions, philosophy, psychology, magic and occultism, social anthropology and the study of prehistoric and primitive societies, history, music and history of art, as well as works concerning the problems and techniques of our age. A large part of his activity was reserved for meditation and philosophical thought concerning the work in hand; once the particular problems of the work had been solved, composition itself flowed freely and quickly. For many years, moreover, he kept a meticulous record of his thoughts and methods of working and especially of his dreams, thus accumulating a large number of documents. He was without doubt one of the most passionately devoted of all to the search for artistic expression through psychomusical channels.

'During the later years of his life, his works received more performances than ever, both in Greece and abroad. A legend thus began to spring up around his name that became more and more vivid as different aspects of his work and character became known. Young people in particular were deeply impressed and wanted to hear more and learn more about this musical phenomenon. The accident that led to his death contributed to the spreading of this legend, making it all the more remarkable; and, as many aspects of his work became more accessible,

<sup>1</sup> See the text by Manolis Kalomiris, Appendix II, pp. 123-124.

<sup>2</sup> Leotsakos, George S., extract from a lecture entitled 'Yannis Christou' given towards the end of 1970 at the Goethe Institute in Athens, and again on 20 January 1971 at the Macedonian Art Society in Salonika, unpublished.

the interest in the unexpected force and richness of each piece grew continually.<sup>3</sup>

Posthumous performances of his works increased both in Greece and abroad (England, Germany, Cyprus, the United States, etc.). In Greece two festivals were organized in his memory (September 1970 and January 1973) and numerous artistic commemorations and other festivals (September 1971, for example) contained world premières of his works. Concerts, broadcasts, lectures and exhibitions were dedicated to him; and in England the 1970 English Bach Festival was dedicated to him in part, whilst the 1971 festival contained the world première of his *Toccatà*.

Meanwhile many Greek composers wrote works in memory of him:

Michael Adamis (b. 1929): *Mirolòi* for two singers, an ison<sup>4</sup> tenor, mixed choir, percussion and piano (1970-73);

Theodor Antoniou (b. 1935): *Mirolòia for Jani Christou* for baritone and piano (1970);

Stefanos Basiliadis (b. 1933): *En Pyri*, electronic music. First version (1972-73); second version with double bass (1975-76);

Yannis Ioannidis (b. 1930): *Metaplasis B* for orchestra (1970);

Yorgos Kouroupos (b. 1942): *Impromptu In Memoriam Jani Christou* for violin, guitar, cello and piano (1982); and

Nikos Mamangakis (b. 1929): *Penthima in memory of Jani Christou* for guitar solo (1970-71).

Foreign composers also wrote works dedicated to his memory, including:

Rich. Felciano (b. 1930): *Lamentations for Jani Christou* for eleven performers and tape (1970); and

Giacinto Scelsi, a friend of the composer and his family: *Pranam I* for voice, twelve instruments and tape (1971-72).

A further aspect of Jani Christou's character is revealed by his long and rich correspondence with a large number of friends and relatives (revealing his worldly nature) on the one hand, and musicians, composers, musicologists and editors on the other. In the light of the latter correspondence, it would be incorrect to assume that Christou was opposed to having his works performed in public. But he insisted that the performance should be carried out in perfect technical conditions, and if such conditions could not be achieved he preferred to cancel the performance.<sup>5</sup>

Despite his extensive creative activity and numerous contacts in musical circles both in Greece and abroad, Christou preferred to remain

<sup>3</sup> Papaïoannou, Yannis G., introductory text to the record *Teleutaia Erga (Late Works)*. See discography on page 162.

<sup>4</sup> In Byzantine music, a held note or drone.

<sup>5</sup> This occurred in the case of *Enantiodromia* since the orchestral parts could not be copied out in time for the scheduled performance in March 1968 by the Oakland Symphony Orchestra in California.

professionally independent all his life. He himself maintained: 'I have never held an official position in my life and I never attended a conservatory. I have no degrees in music, have never had any orthodox musical training, and consider myself to be mainly self-taught'. And so he remained without any official position, job appointment or academic qualification whatsoever.<sup>6</sup> In fact, as a result of his complete financial independence, he was able to devote himself entirely to his creative work.

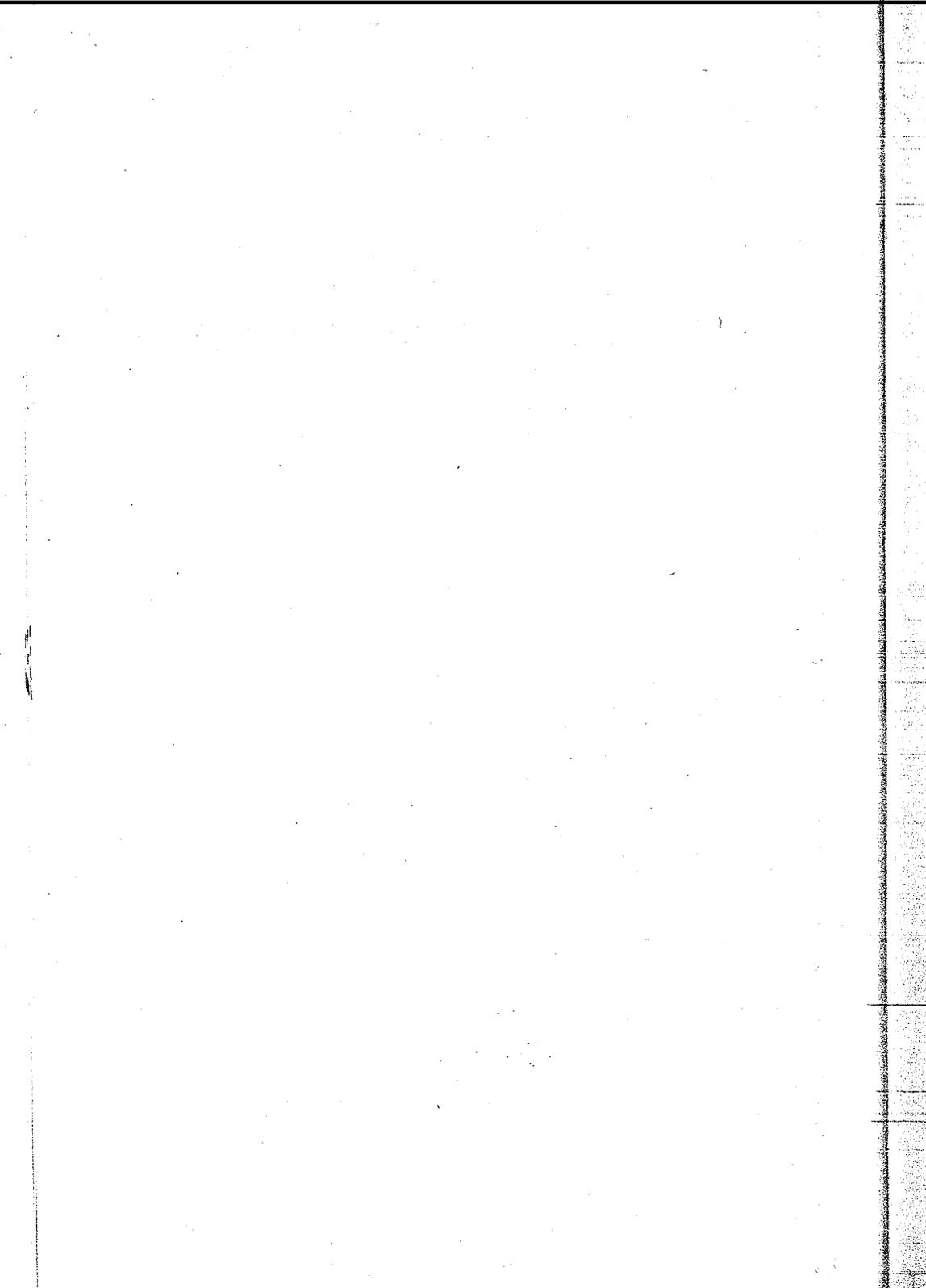
Finally, it should be noted that Jani Christou played a very active role in the expansion and dissemination of avant-garde musical activity in Greece, and in the creation and success of contemporary music festivals. Moreover, in addition to his active role as an organizer and his unbiased 'militantism' (for he was concerned with the works of other composers as much as with his own) in the promotion of new musical works in his country, his remarkable spirit of enterprise involved him in many projects from the most serious to the most idealistic, and he strove to communicate this personal characteristic to those around him whenever there was work to be done.

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<sup>6</sup> With one exception in 1962 when he took part, as a member of the jury, in a composition competition organized by Manos Chatzidjakis, with the aim of promoting contemporary music (Yannis Xenakis entered two works in this competition: *Amorsima-Morsima* for ten performers and *Morsima-Amorsima* for piano, violin, cello and double bass. The latter shared first prize with *Mesouranisi* for twelve performers (1960) by Anestis Logothetis).

**Part One**

**THE PHOENIX PRINCIPLE**



# Chapter I

## EARLY WORKS

### Phoenix Music

#### I. Generalities

*Phoenix Music* represents the composer's first work properly so called. The works dating from his adolescence, when Christou was still self-taught and had not received any serious musical education, cannot really be included amongst his output and Christou himself did not acknowledge these minor works,<sup>1</sup> citing *Phoenix Music* as his opus 1.

Hans F. Redlich states that the score of *Phoenix Music* was completed in Gavi in April 1949, and that it underwent a kind of 'trial performance' in the summer of the same year before an invited audience.<sup>2</sup> This performance, given by Alec Sherman and the New London Orchestra, was a resounding success, as was the 'official' première on 5 January 1950, by the same orchestra and conductor.

*Phoenix Music* is based on the general transmutability of a structural motive consisting of a minor second and diminished third, which constitutes the thematic cell of the entire work. There are two important observations concerning this motive: firstly, it is composed of small intervals, the minor second and diminished third being Christou's preferred intervals **throughout his compositional career**; for, more than mere intervals, they constitute a whole style of writing, as the analyses of the later works will show. Secondly, the musical elaboration governing the development of this motive is conceived in an entirely modern spirit rather than in the traditional manner of post-romantic thematic development.

Thus, for his first orchestral work Christou did not choose a sonata form but adopted a type of Lisztian symphonic poem cast in a single stream of five continuous movements. The choice of this free form gave Christou the opportunity to expand and develop his own style of writing within a framework that nevertheless remained conservative. It should be noted furthermore that the symphonic poem represents the only musical genre in the field of pure instrumental music in the nineteenth century in which the musical development was no longer

<sup>1</sup> See catalogue of works, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Redlich, Hans F., analytical note intended to serve as an introduction to the première of the work.

dictated by a technical system or an intrinsically musical form, but by an extra-musical argument. It is precisely this 'para-musical' programme that the opponents of the symphonic poem attacked, reproaching it with being anecdotal to the music and considering the music to be subordinate to an external subject, thus losing any value it might otherwise have had.

In Christou's case, however, as Hans Redlich quite correctly observes, 'the word 'Phoenix' does not imply any hidden programmatic associations, but seeks to express by means of a pictorial symbol the general character of the musical processes at work in the composition' [my emphasis]. In this respect, if this attitude of distancing anything that might inflate the importance of the anecdotal or the descriptive is laudable and reveals an advanced stage of musical thinking, it is all the more interesting for the fact that it relies upon the function of symbolization to which we shall have occasion to return later in this study. It should simply be noted for the time being that it conditions the general dynamic shape of the work: slow movement, increasing gradually from *piano* through a *crescendo* to its climax, followed by a rapid *decrescendo* back to the initial movement. This thus corresponds to the schema: birth – growth – drama – end and new beginning.

*Phoenix Music* was described by the critics as 'cast in the form of free variations on the basic motive and its derivatives'. There follow several observations on this subject. The process of variation in music is not, of course, an innovation in itself; it has been practised for centuries, just as the symphonic poem is a genre dating from the previous century and free atonality was, at the time of the composition of *Phoenix Music*, already over forty years old. There are two ways of treating the process of variation, however, which occur on two different levels.

Let us consider the theme as a sound object. On the first level, the theme itself is varied by modifying it in an increasingly sophisticated way whilst retaining its essence so that it remains recognizable to the listener, even at a distance. This method of variation is effected in two ways: the first relates to the outer shape or configuration of the theme, whilst the second modifies its inner substance. In both cases, however, the theme and variations are connected in a more or less close relationship. On the second level, variation may no longer be regarded as a technique, but as a phenomenon. Thus, it no longer relates to the sound object itself but to the way in which this object is perceived. It is rather like looking at the object through a distorting prism, a kind of refraction. The object, although unchanged, is perceived as having been transformed. This result may be obtained by considering the object in relation to the sound environment in which it is placed: it is this environment that has changed, whilst the object remains the same. Variation arises, therefore,

from the 'non-variation' of the object. Christou was himself to express this idea much later but from a slightly different perspective.<sup>3</sup> But what did he understand by the term variation at the time of *Phoenix Music*? In *Phoenix Music* the nature of the motive implies a closer correspondence with the second of these techniques. For three notes in almost conjunct movement can scatter to any orchestral instrument throughout the entire piece. This 'theme' relationship with a new musical phrase in each section, imbricated in its entirety, in such a way that it is true, as Redlich notes, that 'this motive proliferates continuously new transformations, without ever losing its identity, ... [it recurs] at the close of the work in spite of its previous transformations, immutable, indestructible, enigmatic in its ubiquitous presence, Phoenix-like in its unscathed identity'.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, this music is constantly evolving through time, for Christou is not concerned with symmetry of form for its own sake. In this respect, the movements of the work are not fixed musical entities relating more or less loosely to one another, but sections of a compact whole, the beginning and end of which represent the beginning and end of a drama, enabling changes in dynamic level and musical style to be understood in terms of a symbolic journey with which the listener is already familiar at the outset. The difference lies in the spirit, rather like Verdi's new concept of drama in relation to that of earlier opera. This demonstrates Christou's lack of concern with pre-established formal schemes. Indeed, his entire symphonic poem is a rejection of these, for he is concerned to pursue other means, to go beyond formal limitations. Throughout his music a hidden force lies waiting to be released, and as his work proceeds this force becomes increasingly apt to burst its bonds and spring forth from ever deeper and more mysterious sources, with all the dangers that this entails for the composer. He thus turns to his advantage the plasticity of sound and developmental potential of each sound element that are already apparent in *Phoenix Music*.

Finally, there already exists as early as *Phoenix Music* one further essential characteristic that occurs throughout Christou's works: the **exclusion of all development**. Christou's music proceeds by means of the juxtaposition of different moods and styles of writing, or of reminiscences (variation), but there is no large-scale development. This characteristic may at times seem disconcerting to the uninitiated listener, for it creates the impression of a piece that 'stops dead'; nevertheless, it is

<sup>3</sup> See the credo, pp. 92-93.

<sup>4</sup> This appropriate observation by Redlich becomes clearer if one looks forward for a moment to 1960 and Christou's concept of the pattern, particularly the 'implacable character' of the *proliferation of its components which does not prevent the pattern from preserving its identity*. In this respect, it is apparent that in *Phoenix Music* the composer has already marked out the direction his work will take by orienting himself towards the elaboration of the basic musical material.

precisely this characteristic that allows Christou to conserve his explosive energies, rather than diluting them by spreading them freely abroad.

## II. Analysis

Rather than attempting to describe the succession of the parts and structural organization by way of an explanation of the work, I have sought to clarify its specific musical characteristics in this brief analytical account. During the course of this study I became aware that what gave *Phoenix Music* its particular character were those elements that anticipated the composer's later style, whilst, conversely, the majority of the components of the musical discourse that he did not re-use subsequently lay at the root of that vague impression of '*déjà entendu*' that so delights those who try to find influences in and put labels on everything. This observation has determined the direction of my analysis.

### Example 1

1<sup>a</sup> viola *Solo* *espressivo assai* *esaggerato*  
 le altre viole *arco vibrato* *gliss.* *pizz.*  
 Celli *arco vibrato* *gliss.* *mp*  
 Bassi *gliss.* *pizz.* *mp*

Cl. I<sup>b</sup> *(sord.)* *vibratissimo* *ppp*  
 A-B *(sord.)* *vibratissimo* *ppp*  
 Vlni I *(sord.)* *vibratissimo* *ppp*  
 C-D *(sord.)* *vibratissimo* *ppp*  
 Vlni II *(sord.)* *vibratissimo* *ppp*  
 1<sup>a</sup> viola

The work begins almost from nothing with three low, muffled beats on the timpani, then straight away the theme appears in the flute, creating contrast through the use of two widely separated registers. The orchestral sobriety of the exposition of the minor second – diminished third motive (B-A sharp-C) a typical feature of Christou's music of the beginning of his works. The basic motive occurs in the viola in a *legato* melodic line, strongly delineated by leaps of a seventh like a musical gesture stretched to its utmost degree of expression. Indeed, the score is marked *espressivo assai esagerato* (see example 1). This phrase evolves against a dissonant background, supported by string chords. The melodic line reappears slightly varied at the end of the third movement where it functions as an emotional link between the third and fourth movements:

## Example 2

The image shows a musical score for Viola, labeled 'Example 2'. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts with a 'Solo' marking and a 'mf' dynamic. The melody is characterized by large leaps and is marked 'esagerato' and 'pizz.'. The second staff continues the melodic line with 'gliss.' and 'pizz.' markings, and ends with a 'pizz.' marking.

It also spawns the prominent violin melody in the fourth movement (see example 7), and is not entirely unrelated to the double bass solo at the end of the piece (see example 3).

I emphasize this melodic passage because it recalls, in its phrasing, the characteristic melodic curves of the mezzo-soprano line in the *Six Songs* (does it not also correspond to the timbre of the viola?). Its interpretation is curiously similar to that of the *Six Songs* too, for it aims to create maximum expressivity through complete tension, and, as in the *Six Songs*, it is closely allied to psychological states: *espressione esagerato*, *isterico*, *doloroso*. With regard to the *doloroso* indication in the final double bass solo (see example 3), it may be seen that timbre plays a fundamental role, for the high register of the instrument gives it a shrill, grating sound; moreover, different kinds of attack, accents or rhythms are employed to create the desired effect: rapid even sounds create *espressione esagerato*, whilst *tremolo* sounds, trills and a particular timbre (*sulla tastiera*) are appropriate to the hysterical rendering (see example 7). The rhythmic treatment of the double bass solo, for its part, gives the melody a jerky, hesitant character, as if it were out of breath (see example 3).

The first movement comes to a close with a general *crescendo* to a *fortissimo*, interrupted abruptly by the entry of the drum, introducing the

## Example 3

3<sup>a</sup>

1<sup>o</sup> C. basso

gli altri Bassi

*Solo*

*doloroso mp*

*sff*

*f*

*vibrato*

*arco*

*pizz*

*mp*

*esaggerato*

*vibrato*

*mp*

3<sup>a</sup>

1<sup>o</sup> C. basso

gli altri Bassi

*vibrato*

*arco*

*vibrato*

*mp*

*sff*

*vibrato*

*mp*

*arco*

*vibrato*

*mp*

*allegro ben ritmato* in which the percussion section plays an important part. On a more general level, it may be observed that, although the constitution of this instrumental group still remains quite conventional and bears no relation to the batteries doubled in number of some of his later works, in terms of musical style it already plays much more than a mere accompanimental role either as a harmonic foundation or a punctuating element: it serves a structural function as a transition between dynamic changes (for example, it introduces the bassoon solo in the transition from the first to the second movement and the trombone solo in that from the second to the third; within the third movement itself it links two dynamic climaxes).

The new variation of the initial motive is introduced in the bassoon. This melodic-rhythmic motive is, in a way, a forerunner of the 'patterns' that the composer was subsequently to employ, not in terms of its function, but of its configuration, for it possesses an autonomous inner energy. It consists of the projection in sound of a musical gesture comprising a dynamic impetus/acceleration and fall of a seventh:

## Example 4

1<sup>o</sup> fagotto

*mp*

*sff*

*vibrato*

*arco*

*vibrato*

*mp*

dynamic gesture

Fall of a seventh

Internal dynamic due to the marked rhythm and acceleration

This variation may be compared with that of the third movement which also possesses an autonomous energy; moreover, the rhythm of this variation is similar to that of certain short phrases in the music of Stravinsky, whilst the melodic succession gives the motive a tonal rather than a dodecaphonic character:

### Example 5



These two musical examples lead to a number of further observations concerning the orchestral accompaniment. Indeed, surrounding each of these strongly characterized motives, easily recognizable even at the first hearing, are several important sound groups ranging from complex figures to cells and even single sustained notes which revolve around the motives, prolonging and punctuating them. These groups are in themselves simply stereotyped orchestral formulae that do not attract the listeners' attention but which nevertheless participate with great subtlety in the evolution of the ensemble in both the second and third movements. Let us now consider the differences between these movements.

The second movement exploits the formula of a *crescendo* rising through short groups of notes dispersed throughout the instruments or anacrusic groups that resolve onto long notes. This creates the effect of a mosaic of short bursts of sound supported by an incessant continuum of semiquavers in the viola that lead into the first *crescendo*; there follows a contrapuntal passage with an ostinato in the cello which soon gives way to a rising bridge passage (♩) in the bassoon, followed one bar later by a sustained *p-mf* note in the oboe and clarinet. This transition figure increases in length to three then four bars and imposes a general rising motion on the orchestra which brings the second movement to a *fortissimo* conclusion, as in the first. The second movement is without doubt the most traditional in style of the five movements.

The third movement demonstrates Christou's post-Stravinskian influences, first of all in the maintenance of a constant crotchet beat in the strings, punctuated by the drum. This metronomic staccato beat appears here for the first and last time in Christou's music. It is, therefore, a fleeting reference without further consequence. Secondly, although an ascending anacrusic pattern typical of Stravinsky may be recognized easily in the strident interventions of the brass, this nevertheless possesses an entirely different dynamic meaning in Christou. Example 6 illustrates these two stylistic features clearly (see example 6).

Example 6

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Timp., Tamburo, Vlni I, Vlni II, Celli, and Bassi. The second system includes parts for Tamburo, Vlni I, Vlni II, Violo, Celli, and Bassi. The score is marked with various dynamics and performance instructions.

**System 1:**

- Timp.:** *Tutti al tallone* (with hairpins), *Solo*, *ff*, *fff*.
- Tamburo:** *Tutti al tallone V*, *fff*, *p*, *sf*, *p*.
- Vlni I & II:** *f*, *fff*, *fff*, *fff*, *pizz*, *fff*, *p*, *fff*.
- Celli & Bassi:** *f*, *fff*, *fff*, *fff*, *pizz*, *fff*, *p*, *fff*. Includes *tutti f* and *V 3* markings.

**System 2:**

- Tamburo:** *sf* → *p*, *sf* → *p*, *sf* → *pp*.
- Vlni I & II:** *pp*.
- Violo:** *pp*, *p* (with *(Pizz)* marking).
- Celli & Bassi:** *pp*, *p* (with *(Pizz)* marking).

The fourth movement is the most important one from a historical point of view, for it is in this movement that the premises of Christou's mature musical personality are revealed. Indeed, the violin I phrase quoted in Example 7 is accompanied by an indication of a psychological nature (*trille strettissimo, come un brivido, con accentuazioni isteriche*) that is already characteristic of the future mood of the composer's work and anticipates the vocal treatment in the *Six Songs*. The same may be claimed of the instrumental part. Here the composer exploits a strongly accented ostinato in order to provide a basic pulse above which the woodwind intervene forcefully with formulae similar to those discussed above, creating a fragmentation into shorter time spans. This ostinato lies halfway between the Stravinskyan type – a beat that regulates the metre as a unit of time – and the kind used in the first three of the *Six Songs* which is much more like a self-contained repetition of an autonomous sound group possessing a strongly marked individuality and intrinsic energy. For this ostinato clearly serves a metrical function, but it has a definite expressive role too (*ostinato ed angoscioso*).

Various rhythmic motives are gradually superimposed, enriching the initial ostinato, whilst the intensity steadily increases (*ancora più forte, crescendo ed accelerando con furore*) and the string section replicates the solo violin phrase in dissonant trills, creating a highly suggestive impact on the listener. From this point on, the vertically conceived music is constructed from rhythmic blocks of sound which enable the composer to play on the effects of contrasting textures, alternating the orchestral *tutti* with the thematic cell or its inversion in the horns and trombones alone. Within this general homorhythmic texture, the strings effect the dramatic acceleration whilst the woodwind have short punctuations and the brass play solos; this distribution of roles is similar to that in many passages in *Symphony no. 1*.

The climax is reached in a final explosive quotation of the initial motive, after which the music seems to disintegrate in a whirlpool of kaleidoscopic sound colours created by means of *glissandi*, arpeggios, *tremolos*, superimposed beats and descending chromatic scales in a vast play of orchestral colours, ending triple *piano* in the final section. This section returns to the initial version of the theme and concludes the cycle: birth – growth – drama – end and new beginning.

*Phoenix Music* displays a remarkable spirit of orchestral maturity for an early work. The polyphonic passages reveal much ingenuity, for in these Christou exploits to full effect his technical knowledge of counterpoint, employing imitation, diminution, augmentation, etc., and he demonstrates also the richness of his vast imagination in the way in which he combines timbres and registers, taking care over even the smallest detail. Furthermore this technical maturity is accompanied by an equal and completely astonishing aesthetic maturity, for the composer totally

Example 7

solo violin phrase

The musical score is arranged in a system with five staves. The top staff is for Violin I (Vini I), marked with *ppp* (pianississimo) and *(assisirol)*. A wavy line indicates a repeat or continuation. The second staff is for Violin II (Vini II), marked with *ponticello* and *pp*. The third staff is for Viola, marked with *ponticello* and *pp*. The fourth staff is for Celli (Celli), marked with *ponticello* and *pp*. The fifth staff is for Bassi (Bassi), marked with *pp*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

rejects any artifice and does not allow himself any gratuitous 'effect' or 'easy' option, creating a work that is both sober and beautiful. Finally, movements III and IV, in which the texture is clearly more vertical, provide a glimpse into Christou's future – the future of *Patterns and Permutations* and the *Toccata* in terms of orchestral technique and that of the *Six Songs* in terms of psychological mood and melodic line. What appeared to contemporary critics merely as an enigmatic work veiled in mystery is in fact much more than that, but it was difficult to see this at the time. The prediction of the future musical direction of a young composer at the start of his career is always a delicate matter, and it is all the more reason, therefore, to pay homage to the foresight of Piero Guarino, an avid observer of the 'Christou phenomenon' from the composer's earliest works, and whose article published in *Rythmes* in 1955 has an almost prophetic ring to it.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, by way of an epilogue, I would like to cite a few lines concerning *Phoenix-Music*:

'It rose to rapid success. A little later, it was performed by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra and, in 1950, by the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino under the baton of Willy Ferrero. Another huge success and unanimous praise from the Italian critics. Finally, Willy Ferrero gave a performance in Moscow'.<sup>6</sup>

And so, with this 'first attempt', this 'master-stroke', Christou was crowned with laurels whilst still a student in Italy, and thus began his career as a composer in the most auspicious circumstances. What was to happen next?

'I continued to work resolutely. In response to the kind invitation of the London Symphony Orchestra offered to me in 1950, I wrote my Symphony no. 1 which was completed the following year and performed before the London public in the Royal Albert Hall by Alec Sherman. It was warmly received, I must admit... This symphony was chosen by the famous Dutch conductor Paul van Kempen to feature in the contemporary music category of the programme of the conducting courses he taught at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena.'<sup>7</sup>

## Symphony No. 1

### I. Introduction

As a general description of this work, I would like to cite the following apposite remarks by Piero Guarino:

'This first symphony, commissioned by the New London Orchestra following the success of *Phoenix Music*, dates from 1951 and has already

<sup>5</sup> Guarino, Piero, 'Compositeurs d'Egypte: Jani Christou', *Rythme*, vol. v, 1955, Alexandria, pp. 3-6.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Christou by Jean Marcelin, 1956, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

been performed in all the main musical centres of Europe. If the language and sound world resemble those of the preceding work, the same cannot be said of the form and essence of the symphony. The dramatic thrust, so powerful in *Phoenix Music*, has here become a haunting tragedy. With the intervention of the human voice, an inconsolable and disincarnate melancholy being "contemplates" the drama and brings it to its close. The work is constructed from a succession of three principal phases: the ascendant phase which is composed of a multiplication of the cells and creates a degree of tension, the increasing violence of which is resolved only in the discipline of a fugato; the static phase in which a female voice recites T.S. Eliot's poem "Eyes that last I saw in tears" with great sobriety of expression on a few notes; and the disaggregation phase in which the constituent elements of the symphony fragment and begin to crumble until the return of the opening figure and the simple conclusion of the voice on the final vibration: "this is my affliction". This work is distinguished by an extreme economy of means and the complete effectiveness with which these are distributed from a dramatic point of view. "Effect" – which is without doubt the principal means by which the piece may win the vote of the average member of the public – is the indisputable prerogative of the composer, but it is never gratuitous and forms part of the actual context of the discourse, the culminating points of which represent inevitable moments in an implicit dramatic action, contained within purely musical limits. It is this impossibility-of-doing-another-thing-else that leads to the intervention of the human voice, and it is the mood of this musical moment that determines the choice of text'.<sup>8</sup>

## II. Analysis

Since a detailed analysis of a work of some thirty minutes' duration lies beyond the scope of this study, it is more appropriate in the present context to identify its principal characteristics through an analysis of a given extract. Indeed, *Symphony no. 1* may be described essentially as an exploration of an inner musical space that extends throughout the entire range of pitches and registers, that is, as a large area of space within which the lines of sound move. It is therefore an exploration of the sound space within the music rather than of that which lies outside it (a sound that passes from one loud-speaker to another, or the reflection of sounds between one group of instruments and another, etc.). Thus, the symphony unfolds as a linear structure, due not to the suppression of the large-scale textural effects or its atonal harmonic context, but to the fact that it is conceived in an exclusively horizontal way, either through different lines or sound patterns played in unison by instrumental blocks, or in a spirit of true

<sup>8</sup> Guarino, Piero, 1955, op. cit., pp. 3–6.

counterpoint. This fact serves to explain its structure which may be analysed, especially in the first movement, as a 'sequence of dominos' in which the relationships become increasingly complex as the sequence proceeds from one domino to the next.

*Introduction and first movement:*

In contrast to the majority of introductions, the function of which is to announce in the clearest and most succinct way the material of the piece, its subject matter or the particular sound world it will inhabit, the introduction to *Symphony no. 1* casts the listener into a feeling of uncertainty, of expectation. This feeling is created by the fact that the slow phrase A (see example 8) that occurs throughout the introduction does not have a clear and easily recognizable melodic line; it proceeds rather by means of short bursts phrased in groups of two, three or four notes. Its melodic unity thus remains ambiguous and may be perceived only latently. The rhythm contributes greatly to this impression also, for it deliberately avoids establishing the sense of the bar-line or any beat whatsoever (long note values and notes on the weak beats of the bar are given prominence). The tempo is fast enough for the listener to gain a sense of the musical impetus, but not sufficiently so to indicate a basic beat. Distilled note for note, phrase A nevertheless reveals a breadth that is characteristic of the force of the entire symphony. For the phrase spreads in a great gush of sound conveyed by a succession of different timbres and without any orchestral accompaniment, before concluding in a typical coda built from an arpeggio of rising fourths that subsequently serves a structural function in the form of the entire piece.

During the varied reprise that follows the first statement of this arpeggio, phrase A evolves within a space widened to its maximum, for the phrase divides into two registers situated at opposite extremes of the range: introduced by a high-pitched pedal (on b4) in the violins and a low fourths motive in the double basses, the two melodic lines occur in contrary motion, converging on the pitch D and resolving onto the second arpeggio in fourths (see example 9).

The introduction proceeds at an irregular and extremely slow pace, concluding with a third and final phrase that sweeps down through every register from high to medium, and ends with a **statement of the pitch B** blazing out in the trumpet and trombone which marks the beginning of the second part of the first movement (see example 10).

Thus, having wandered through this sound space in a mood of uncertainty, hanging by Ariadne's thread onto the occasional melodic pattern, the listener now witnesses a sudden contrast, the crystallizing of phrase A - at definite pitch - into absolute certainty that marks the setting in motion of the drama.

## Example 8

Violini I

Violini II

Viole

Celli

C. Bassi

M. M.  $\text{♩} = 126$

*p* *meditativo*

VI. I

VI. II

Vle

Vc.

Bs.

①

VI. I

VI. II

Vle

Vc.

Bs.

②

*p*

*div.*

*p*

etc

In terms of purely compositional technique and formal structure, *Symphony no. 1* is important because it goes definitively beyond the notion of theme, which was already somewhat nebulous in *Phoenix Music* where it was reduced to a simple cell. It would indeed be difficult to locate the theme at the start of the piece with any degree of certainty. It is not until the end of the introduction that an explanation of this situation may perhaps be found, for, as stated above, it is at this point that after an initial descending minor second – the fundamental cell of the piece – the pitch B blazes out in the brass, vigorously accented three times and extending throughout a very energetic phrase ( $\Omega$ ) that ends with a concluding figure in the horns. In fact, it is precisely this phrase that contains

## Example 9

1ª corda 3

Vl. I  
pp

Vl. II

Vla

Vc.  
pp

Bs.  
pp

Vl. I  
Vl. II  
Vla  
Vc.  
Bs.  
cresc.  
cresc.

Arpa  
Pasciar viturare

Vl. I  
Vl. II  
Vla  
Vc.  
Bs.  
div.  
p  
div.  
p  
div.  
p

Second arpeggio in fourths

the raw material of the musical ideas and compositional material that will be extracted from it (see example 11).

The first way in which Christou uses this phrase concerns the cell X. This cell is related in contour to the ostinato in the fourth movement of *Phoenix Music* and is subjected to a series of variations. It may be observed that after the drama has been set in motion, the temporal succession undergoes a complete transformation and the musical discourse continues within very strict formal structures that may be analysed as follows: the piece evolves by means of sections of precisely defined duration that conform to a regular division of the beat. Thus, for example, cell X is not developed but is transposed onto different pitch



levels in two segments, each of which is followed by a concluding figure of identical duration (section I: 6 bars + 1 bar), whilst sections II and III which correspond to two variations of the cell (♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ and ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩) are divided into eight and nine bars respectively, thus unfolding within the same length of time. This varied treatment of cell X is effected in the most traditional way possible; the variations do not occur on melodic and rhythmic levels separately, however, but rather through the combination of these. This is due to the fact that they are too short to possess either a characteristic shape or phrase structure. They proceed too rapidly for the listener to grasp their transpositions to different pitch levels or their internal modifications, and they appear at the beginning as nothing more than hastily sketched sound features. Over and above their trivial configuration, however, these sound groups are perceived as unstable, **material in motion** that seems unable to settle, leaving the listener perplexed as to its eventual outcome. This impression of witnessing the continual transformation of a sound outline within a rhetorical language is accentuated on the one hand by the fact that these sections are performed in unison, which gives this sound world an austere, somewhat crude and violent character, but also permits to observe in their bareness the successive acoustic transformations of the initial elements. On the other hand, the variations throughout the piece are played by a fixed group of instruments (clarinet, bassoon, strings) which ensures their constant identity through their unity of timbre.

It should be added finally that phrase A is itself integrated into this musical texture with an exclusively developmental function but, forced to adapt to a new sense of space-time, it appears in fragmentary form only, serving to consolidate the broad structural outlines: for example, the three sections I, II and III each conclude with three musical fragments extracted from phrase A (A', A'' and A'''), which contribute to the general rise in tension for they occur on successively higher pitch levels (see example 12).

Sections IV and V correspond to the second phase of the *crescendo* in which the orchestral texture is organized in the same way as in *Phoenix Music*; the brief percussive punctuations that were to become a characteristic trait of Christou's orchestral style are reserved for the woodwind whilst the brass take the solos (see example 13). At the same time, the operation of the components of the musical discourse is modified and the latter achieves a new impetus. Finally, the 'accompanimental' role of the motive derived from X becomes explicit: the varied forms of this motive in the first three sections are no longer used structurally (alternation with A', A'' and A''') but are combined with the other orchestral elements. This stability is itself precarious, however, and is called into question following the occurrence of the arpeggio in fourths by the appearance of an ascending chromatic phrase  $\Omega'$  derived from  $\Omega$  which is extended in an equivocal passage (sections VI and VII) in which every connecting thread seems to have disappeared: there are no longer any

Example 12

stentato a tempo A' > sf A First rhythmic variation

Fl. *f* *sfz*

Ob. *f* *sfz*

Cl. *f* *sfz* *sfp < sfz*

Fag. *f* *sfz* *sfp < sfz*

Trbe. *f*

Trbni *f*

Tr.bs. *f*

V.I. *f* *sfz* *sfp < sfz* *al tallone*

V.II. *f* *sfz* *sfp < sfz*

Vie. *f* *sfz* *sfp < sfz*

Vc. *f* *sfz* *sfp < sfz*

Bs. *f* *sfz* *sfp < sfz* *al tallone*

## Example 13

The musical score for Example 13 is divided into two systems. The first system includes the woodwind section (Oboe, Flute, Bassoon, Clarinet, Bassoon) and the vocal line (Cantata). The second system includes the string section (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass). Annotations include 'percussive punctuation in the woodwind' with an arrow pointing to the woodwind staves, and 'accompanimental role of the motives derived from X' with an arrow pointing to the string staves. A bracket labeled 'call X' spans across the vocal line and the beginning of the string section in the first system.

solos – only the orchestral framework with its rhythmic blocks and brief points of punctuation. The usual conclusion to this passage, leading into section IX, is delayed by a reminiscence of the opening Phrase A; section VIII is, in fact, constructed from a regular symmetrical chromatic line, ascending then descending. From this point on, however, this chromatic phrase also becomes established within a regular metrical scheme, for its long note values are accompanied discreetly by a phrase constructed entirely of crotchets in the bassoon and piano. Thus, after the rapid trajectories of the preceding passages, the effect of renewal and dramatic power is created here by this dense vertical texture.

Section IX does not represent the dramatic climax but rather the conclusion of a stylistic process set in motion in the first section; indeed,

the progressive dramatization of the musical discourse is due to the increasingly virtuosic style in the strings – to which the full woodwind are subsequently added – which reaches maximum virtuosity here (quintuplets in demi-semiquavers). From this point on, these 'clusters of notes' are no longer perceived as such. The increased speed has an irrevocable effect on the sound material, mixing harmonics and secreting a complex white sound, a dynamic and effective block of sound. Although the solo/accompaniment relationship appears to be respected theoretically in the score, this is not so on a perceptual level, for the role of the string motives is called into question by the irreversible course of the ongoing musical process. The two elements are then opposed, like antagonistic forces – a conflict between the dense mass of the large orchestral resources and the sobriety of the two-note interval in augmentation blazing forth in the brass, opposing the brevity of the initial cell in a kind of transcendence of itself:

Example 14

The musical score for Example 14 is a full orchestral arrangement. It features the following parts:

- Flute (Fl.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Oboe (Ob.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Clarinet (Cl.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Bassoon (Fag.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Trumpet (Trpt.):** Part 1, marked *ff p*, with a dynamic marking of *ff p*.
- Trumpet (Trbn.):** Part 1, marked *ff p*, with a dynamic marking of *ff p*.
- Violin I (V.I.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Violin II (V.II):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Viola (Vla.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Violoncello (Vcl.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.
- Double Bass (Bs.):** Part 1, marked *f*, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*.

The score is written in a single system with ten staves. The woodwind parts (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon) and the string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass) are marked with a dynamic of *f* and a tempo marking of *♩ = 2*. The brass parts (Trumpet, Trumpet) are marked with a dynamic of *ff p*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A handwritten annotation "cell x" with an arrow points to the first measure of the Trumpet parts.

The following two sections (X and XI) form a kind of twofold coda in the dramatic process. The structure of section X is based on a slowly progressive chromatic ascent in which the note values gradually increase in length, concluding *fortissimo* on the pitch B, whilst the *tremolos* in the strings sustain the dramatic action. The clarinet solo should also be noted, for it anticipates the statement of motive  $X_3$  in phrase  $\Omega$ . This immense *crescendo* is interrupted by fragments of the initial phrase A (section XI), cut short by a new treatment of rhythm, attacks, accentuation and texture and recognizable only by their melodic outline; these fragments, sounded *fortissimo* in the full orchestra, alternate in stark contrast with the initial cell X in the horns:

## Example 15

The musical score for Example 15 is arranged in ten staves, labeled on the left as Fl., Ob., Cl., Fag., Corni, V.I., V.II, Vie, Vc, and Bs. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The Flute, Oboe, and Clarinet parts feature a chromatic ascent with notes marked with accents and slurs. The Bassoon part has a similar chromatic line. The Horns part (Corni) shows a specific melodic fragment circled in a dashed line, with the label 'a 2' written above and below it. The Violin and Viola parts are marked with 'ff' and feature a chromatic line with accents. The Violoncello and Bass parts are marked with 'div. v' and 'ff', and feature a chromatic line with accents. The score concludes with a final chord in the strings.

After a *decrecendo* which serves as a transition, motive X<sub>3</sub> appears as the head motive of a fugato subject:

Example 16

The musical score for Example 16 consists of three staves. The top staff is for the Flute (Fag.) and the middle staff is for the Clarinet (Cl.). The bottom staff is also for the Flute (Fag.). The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 104$ . The top staff begins with the marking "Ben ritmato" and "I Solo". A dashed line indicates a *decrecendo* leading to the start of the fugato subject, which is marked with "mp" and labeled "X<sub>3</sub>". The middle staff has a measure number "18" and also includes "I Solo" and "mp". The bottom staff continues the fugato subject, ending with "etc".

This fugato appears as a kind of challenge from several points of view. Firstly because it is strictly dodecaphonic, which seems paradoxical within a form (fugato) that champions tonal writing, and secondly because it represents a construction of a **rational order** occurring unexpectedly after the unfurling of contradictory, conflicting and uncontrollable sound energies. It is, therefore, from beginning to end, the construction of what may be called a theme in the conventional sense of the term. Finally, it is the pretext for the **use of measured time with a regular beat**, which occurs here for the first time. The **automatic** progression of the contrapuntal process at such a level of mounting tension snatches an unprecedented moment of relief and serves as a 'breathing space' in the dramatic process.

But how insignificant this clear and rousing subject seems after the hold this powerful and austere violent music has exerted over the listener. The intrinsic fragility of the fugato, representative of a certain perfect balance, is subsequently confirmed. Indeed, in the third and final part of this first movement, the elements of the fugato subject are interrupted by groups of sounds from the preceding sections (particularly the fragmented segments of A). The alternations between these groups of sound and the fugato subject constitute a **conflict between contradictory styles of writing**. Gradually the original sound forces reappear, punctually at first and then with more and more insistence until, after a relentless struggle in which the sinuous lines of the fugato and wide dissonant intervals in long, *fortissimo* notes build with great virulence, they completely engulf the fugato subject. As the texture gradually becomes more

and more saturated, bringing the orchestra to a climax, the attraction of the pitch B – the axial pitch of the work – becomes increasingly insistent. Once again, it is the brass section that creates the tension through sustained notes, gradually clearing a way through the chaotic orchestral texture to arrive on this pitch, triple *fortissimo*, and progressively drawing the rest of the orchestra into a gigantic unison. This climax, at maximum dynamic level, may at first sight seem to bring the first movement of this symphony to a close, but in fact it is immediately followed by a contained, intense atmosphere, vibrating around the pitch B and tailing off in a soft *pizzicato* in the strings on the threshold of the central movement.

The central movement of the symphony appears as a static phase in which the music settles momentarily in the present. Melodic writing thus assumes a role of fundamental importance, for, virtually absent from the rest of the composer's output, it appears here as an inevitable consequence of and irreplaceable element in the discourse, contrasting completely with the musical treatment of the first and third parts from which it is absent. This recourse to melody represents Christou's greatest concession to romantic writing and lyrical feeling. Otherwise, the movement is one of great **simplicity**: simplicity of the melodic vocal line which is based on the 'Phoenix' motive of minor second – diminished third (B-A sharp-C) at original pitch, and of the instrumental accompaniment which takes the form of a sober and discreet ostinato followed by a solemn and serious succession of chromatic octaves. It thus constitutes a **point of repose** after the immense elaboration of the preceding music. It also represents the **eruption of speech** after the world of sound energies, however, thus giving the work a human dimension through the naturalness and spontaneity of the voice. This central movement, marked by a great lyrical beauty, is an ephemeral moment balanced between construction and destruction; nevertheless, it cannot escape the ever-present, underlying threat of a drama that is about to erupt at any moment, and the fact that the listener is aware of this emphasizes all the more strongly the fragility of the voice and the pathos of its message.

In conclusion, I would like to make several further remarks about this symphony: its exclusively horizontal orientation implies that **any vertical construction will occur in unison**. The melodico-rhythmic blocks thus employed present **an opportunity to perceive the texture in a new way**. For in *Symphony no. 1*, in contrast to other ensembles that are overwhelmed with the post-romantic perspective, the texture is one of absolute intensity and purity. This treatment of texture, in which all the timbres coincide on a single pitch, is resumed and systematized in the *Latin Liturgy*. In this respect, the work is very modern since it aims to create an austerity of means and combat exaggeration through a compositional style that is condensed to the utmost degree. It might perhaps

be claimed of Christou that, in his orchestral works, he took this style further than any other composer, retaining the essential but without falling into scantiness. This style of writing also enabled him to emphasize the play of timbres, which is clearly apparent in the third movement in which reminiscences of fragments of the fugato theme are combined in subtle permutations of sound colours.

Finally, it may be observed that this work marks a step forward in relation to *Phoenix Music* in as much as it breaks away from the old compositional systems (except for in the central part), and proceeds rather by means of sound ensembles that occur repetitively throughout the piece, the structural functions of which, whether in relation to the form, orchestration or dynamics, are highly individual. The functions of these ensembles sometimes conflict with one another: for example, the insistent recurrence of the pitch B opposes the incessant motivic transformations in unison, and its unified character conflicts with the diffraction of the sound of the chord arpeggiated in fourths and the dodecaphonic orchestral texture. Certain elements are employed as constructive forces whilst, conversely, others appear as agents of disintegration of the musical discourse (particularly in the third movement). In these respects Christou's compositional procedure anticipates the future course of his work, which was to result in the consecration of a system in *Patterns and Permutations*.

In short, if one were to list the characteristics of this work, one might say unusual and provocative. Unusual because of the extravagance of the music which gradually produces its musical momentum out of virtually nothing as its initial material. It is a type of music that sets the listener all at sea, that refuses to give him any sense of security. And it is provocative too, because, having destroyed all traditional understanding of musical parameters, it aims to focus its concern throughout all three movements on a single pitch: B.

## Latin Liturgy

### I. Introduction and Commentary

Thanks to the interview conducted by Jean Marcelin mentioned above,<sup>9</sup> I have been able to obtain at first hand, additional information on the *Latin Liturgy* that contradicts the previously accepted information and which served as a point of reference for my investigation. In this interview Christou stated clearly that the work was composed in 1951, the same year as *Symphony no. 1*, and not 1953 as indicated in the catalogues. He also added that it was performed in Siena and was included

<sup>9</sup> See note 4, pp. xv-xvi.

in the teaching programme of the Accademia Musicale Chigiana and the Alexandria Conservatoire. The 1971 performance under Yannis Mandakas in Salonika did not constitute the world première, therefore. Unfortunately the composer gave neither the name of the performers nor the date of the performance.<sup>10</sup>

Few works offer such a clear example of sobriety carried to its extreme as the *Latin Liturgy* for mixed chorus, brass and percussion. It is characterized by the **complete absence of development** and is written in a semi-serial style in which passages of free atonality alternate with strictly dodecaphonic ones. In spite of the lyrical melodic nature of certain figures, the work is organized, in relation to the text, by means of rhythmicized syllabification; the vocal line is exclusively syllabic and the writing is, on the whole, vertical in style. In fact, except for the twelve-note series, presented in full in the Kyrie Eleison with which the work begins, that recurs in a contrapuntal passage, and the two twelve-note palindromic phrases in the middle of the Credo, the vocal style is based essentially on the textual scansion, either on the interval of a semitone (D-C sharp) or on a single note (mainly C or D). Like a rhythmicized recitative, the Liturgy gradually proceeds towards the utmost reduction and austerity of means: the Sanctus and Agnus Dei conclude on the chord G, A, C, F in a vertical statement that emphasizes the effect of texture, and in which the texts are scanned on the same note. The work dies away *pianissimo* on the word '*pacem*' and the note B.

The pitch B is emphasized elsewhere too, for it constitutes the first and last note of the piece, as in *Phoenix Music* and *Symphony no. 1*. It is on this note too that the timpani and bass drum rolls occur.

In the *Latin Liturgy* the instrumental parts perform an organizational function which governs the dramatic process either by creating it by means of loud, accented leaps through wide intervals as in the introduction, or maintaining or heightening it through a sound continuum (drum roll), or supporting it with rhythmic punctuations. They proceed at times by means of clusters of sound around a pre-determined pitch (usually B or E) like clouds of sound defining a certain harmonic ambience, and finally erupt into the Sanctus in full splendour, emphasizing the solemnity of the chorus. The role of the accompaniment is, in general, punctual and limited, however, like an 'interference', since many passages of the text are sung *a cappella*.

Completely removed from the style of *Phoenix Music*, and *a fortiori* from the horizontal style of *Symphony no. 1*, the broad and forceful

<sup>10</sup> In response to his request for clarification concerning this matter, George Leotsakos received the following information from the Accademia Musicale Chigiana on 17 November 1983: Jani Christou took lessons in composition with Vito Frazzi in 1947 and 1948 and in the composition of film music with Lavagnino in 1949, 1951 and 1953. However, the archives of the Accademia contain no trace of any performance of the *Latin Liturgy* whatsoever.

texture of the *Latin Liturgy* sanctions the victory of rhythm over melody in the vocal writing, for the pitch often remains fixed for an entire section. The brass and percussion act as catalysts on the vocal part, inciting it to play on the stark contrasts of tempi and extreme changes of nuances without either a *crescendo* or *decrescendo*. Indeed, it proceeds by means of alternating 'blocks of sound' which influence not only the sound colour through the differentiation of timbres created by the use of widely separated registers combined in rapid changes of intensity, but also the density of the sound through interruptions in the texture. The unit of time is itself relative and is constantly cast into doubt by the strongly accented changes in tempo.

Within the context of such extreme musical austerity, the resources used to ensure new growth and the evolution of the musical process may be reduced to the minimum. In order to create an event within a passage constructed around a single note, it is sufficient to outline even an embryonic melody or a sudden change in intensity or register, for example; sometimes a mere vigorous acceleration of the agogic movement may suffice, for in this transparent texture the slightest change will not pass unnoticed; it attracts the listener's attention, and even the smallest change arouses his interest. The dramatic impulse is fully revealed in this work, therefore, a work that is more concerned with bare bones than decoration, with raw feeling than sophistication, and spiritual rather than material substance. Simplicity and strength characterize the *Latin Liturgy*.

'In a single flow, condensed, vital, without division into "pieces", the Liturgy is the simple reading in music of texts in their ritual succession. This reading, transferred to the level of musical composition, reaffirms the sense of form and powers of concentration of the composer, whilst emphasizing once more the thoroughly dramatic character of his nature and artistic vision.'<sup>11</sup>

## Six Songs

### I. Introduction

The *Six Songs* for piano and mezzo-soprano belong to the same creative period as the three works previously discussed. It would be incorrect to note only the date on which the composer 'made a neat copy' of material he had already composed, however, for the year 1955 was only the final year of a period of gestation dating back to 1950, a period that witnessed a long interruption, as the composer himself recalled:

The idea to write songs on poems by T. S. Eliot came to me in Rome in 1950. It was then that "Eyes that last I saw in tears" was written (and incorporated in the Symphony no. 1), and that a draft for "Mélange

<sup>11</sup> Guarino, Piero, 1955, op. cit., pp. 3-6.

Adultère de Tout" and "The wind sprang up at four o'clock" were written. Also the central idea for "Phlebus the Phoenician" was born around then (the mournful soft deep pedal and acute sorrowful bell – or phantom bell effect...). I took the idea up again in 1955, in the summer, and wrote the set as Five Songs. It was while making the "neat" copy that I realised I had to add a sixth song – and that the sixth had to be "Virginia". This was written in a day. The Six Songs for Mezzo-Soprano and Pianoforte were finished in October 1955. The following year, in Chios, the idea came to me that these ought to be sung with orchestra, and later, in the summer of 1957, Piero Guarino suggested I should do that. Starting on August 22, 1957 and finishing a month later, I wrote the orchestral edition (finished in October 1957).<sup>12</sup>

## II. Generalities

The *Six Songs* present an opportunity for a poetic approach, a rare emotional adventure. The music is indeed wedded to the perfection of the poet's texts and seeks to extract from these the humorous along with the strange, the sad with the nightmarish. There is, moreover, a psychological progression from the first to the last song, with a clearly corresponding musical evolution. The *Six Songs* may be divided into two groups comprising the first three and the final three songs respectively. Before examining the musical differences between these two groups, however, I will identify their common traits in terms of their instrumental and vocal treatment.

These points of similarity relate to the operation of the musical rhetoric. Although the musical discourse takes account of the poems' verse structure with regard to every aspect of the melodic development of the songs as well as to the instrumental punctuations, the dynamic treatment on the opposite is defined at the level of the strophe and the overall progression of the poetic text. In the majority of cases, this treatment amounts to a general *crescendo* carried to extremes in an exacerbation of every parameter. These dynamic 'swellings' lead to an explosive conclusion and alternate with tense passages in which the voice sings in a low register.

Moreover, the vocal discourse does not always follow the structural logic of the instrumental discourse for they occur in more or less complex relationships, supporting and answering one another and entering at staggered intervals in time, the one anticipating the other and vice versa.

The analysis also reveals the composer's obvious concern with form in all six pieces, but the solutions he adopts differ in each case:

- Song no. 1 unfolds within a structure that is essentially developmental
- Song no. 2 is in a familiar ABA' form
- Song no. 3 is in ABC form

<sup>12</sup> Extract from a note dated 29 November 1957, Alexandria.

- Song no. 4 is in AB form
- Song no. 5 is in ABA' form similar to no. 2 but with an inverted dynamic scheme
- Song no. 6 is in ABB 'A' form (A' restates the elements of A inverted).

### III. Instrumental Accompaniment

The instrumental accompaniment, whether for piano or orchestra (in the 1957 version) is not organized according to the same criteria in the two groups of songs.

Indeed, it may be said that in the first three songs it is based on the **immutable repetition of an autonomous sound entity**, possessing its own inner dynamic and melodic design and fixed rhythmic accentuation, and is composed of a highly compact group of several cells or micro-figures. It is the repeated statement of this motivic group that creates the acoustic impression of an ostinato:

#### Example 17

##### Song n° 1

Allegro con spirito

*p*

*lasciar vibrare*

##### Song n° 2

Allegro (M.D.)

*pp* *staccato*

(M.S.)

##### Song n° 3

*cresc. sempre poco a poco*

*cresc. sempre poco a poco*

These motives may encounter antagonistic elements within the musical discourse, as in no. 1 where another, more percussive motive (a chord cluster), gradually encroaches upon the ostinato until the latter gives way to it, whilst the dramatic mood increases correlatively. The drama thus occurs on two levels: it depends on the purely psycho-emotional domain, but is incorporated in the musical rhetoric also through the conflict of elements that are strongly contrasting, even incompatible. Moreover, whilst the intensity and tempo may intervene in order to accelerate the dramatic process, the motives are in no way altered in rhythm or melody (except in a brief passage at the end of no. 2 where the dramatic exacerbation requires increasingly wide intervals). This is the essential difference between the first and second groups of songs.

In the second group the musical discourse is not organized around an ostinato but conforms to much more traditional criteria. The fact that the fourth song was composed earlier as the central part of a symphony indeed explains this difference in style, and it is striking to note that although there is a melodico-rhythmic ostinato at the beginning of the song, it simply functions as a sonorous background; completely static, it acts only as a support for the melodic vocal line in a much more traditional way than in the preceding songs (legato: a more conventional vocal production). Whereas in the first three songs there is an irresistible sense of forward motion (especially in nos 1 and 3), in which each element is directed towards its becoming, evolving constantly, a mere second later being perceived differently. On the contrary, no. 4 brings the listener into the present, into a static sense of space and time in which the melody finally seems to exist in its own right so that its beauty might be admired. Pitch thus assumes a prominent role, which is unusual in Christou's music.

The style of the accompaniment in the fifth song is very pianistic (octave repetitions and octave leaps in a marked rhythm) and full of verve in the romantic manner, which confirms the more conservative orientation of this song.

Christou's reasons for writing 'Virginia' may be explained as follows. First of all, Christou never ended a piece *fortissimo* or *allegro*, as he was obliged to do in no. 5 in order to follow the mood of Eliot's text. Ending on such a sonorous high point without further consequence would have been contrary to the higher dynamic principle to which he was committed and which he identified above all with the mythical symbol of the Phoenix and, subsequently, the sequence of lunar phases. A second, more strictly musical reason may be found in the content of no. 4, and specifically in its harmonic context. In comparison with nos 1-3 and no. 5 which oscillate constantly between atonality and tonal colour, even though this may be perceived in an ambiguous way by the listener, the fourth song, extracted from *Symphony no. 1*, is clearly more atonal, not in its melody, which contains tonal reminiscences; but in the

instrumental treatment that supports it. The accompaniment in no. 6 is precisely the only one that approaches the chromaticism of no. 4 and both songs share a further characteristic of a crotchet beat, creating a serious, sombre mood in each case. In fact, song no. 6 effects a synthesis between the dark chromatic colouring of no. 4 and the dynamic conception of the others. This synthesis is accompanied by an attempt to concentrate every previous experience. It reflects condensed to the extreme all the components in such a way that, in terms of the dynamics, for example, transitions, chromatic bridges and sustained notes no longer exist, only the process of tension/explosion in its raw state, effected simply by a *crescendo* and rhythmic acceleration of the instrumental motive A sharp, B, D, A sharp. Christou would have had a second reason for composing his sixth song: ending his musical setting of Eliot's poems in a certain unity of style and spirit of synthesis with a final summarizing 'recapitulation'.

#### IV. Vocal Treatment

The vocal treatment differs from one song to the next, but the technical procedures remain almost identical. I propose to examine song no. 1 in more detail and from this, consider the remaining songs in a more general, comparative way.

In the first song the developmental procedure that occurs in the instrumental part may also be found in the vocal part. Indeed, the child-like little melody which sounds like a children's counting rhyme (Eliot's text refers to children playing on a swing in an orchard) is gradually distended and fragmented by intervals of a seventh.

- Phrase A: An initial leap of a fourth gives the melody a spontaneous character at first, but it rapidly proves to be a driving force, determining the increase in dramatic tension.
- Phrase B: This is a continuation and variation of phrase A with a reinforcement of the initial accentuation, revealing its correlation with element B (percussive) of the instrumental part.
- Phrase C: Much more chromatic, it functions as a 'bridge' to phrases D and E. Its unexpected chromaticism and *crescendo*, together with the fact that the voice lingers on long notes, produces a strong dramatic thrust which reaches its fulfilment in the following phrase.
- Phrase D: Loud and shrill, it maintains the style of the children's counting rhyme, but its execution at an exaggeratedly high pitch and the different musical context make it unsuited to its new circumstances, creating an unusual displacing effect.
- Phrase E: This phrase is a response to phrase D, but it now contains a stark contrast in the form of a descent that brings about the

displacement of the melody to a lower register and an unexpectedly low intensity. These two factors act equally on the vocal timbre.

Phrases F and G: These phrases effect the multiplication of the wide intervals (augmented fifths and sixths) and rhythmic punctuations that distend the counting rhyme and its conclusion. The playful melodic element of the beginning explodes completely and becomes subordinated to the rhythm and intensity that govern the general dynamic evolution of the piece. The shrill 'escape' notes break up the melodic line and the intensity changes abruptly from *piano* to *forte* and then *fortissimo*. The voice reaches a climax with an *accelerando* – faithfully reproduced at the same time by element B in the instruments – which resolves in a final thrust on a long held note in the upper register of the voice. A rest – not total emptiness, but rather suspense – then, *pianissimo*, the coded key of motive A momentarily half-opens the doorway to an unforeseen microcosm, and closes it discreetly, delimiting the boundaries of the specific temporal location of the song in relation to that of real time.

The vocal procedures employed in this first song reappear in the succeeding ones. The following brief inventory lists these procedures in relation to their dynamic function:

- Low repeated notes: *piano/forte* shading, deep and sombre vocal timbre, **tense atmosphere** of suspense (nos 2 and 6); they may also represent fading into silence – nothingness, progressive dynamic decrease (*piano*, no. 2, end).
- Shrill repeated notes: *forte*, **outburst** (no. 1, end; no. 2, middle section; nos 5 and 6).
- Sustained notes (in the upper and lower registers): **tension, suspense** (no. 2, third section); when they occur in the upper register only, they represent a sort of 'tail' concluding the melody (no. 1, end; no. 2, middle section).
- Chromaticism: after a diatonic passage, it functions as a transition, **increasing the tension** towards a higher dramatic level (nos 1 and 5); in conjunct movement, it expresses the smallest acoustic unit of the tempered scale and may be employed to **emphasize pitch** (no. 3, middle section; no. 4; no. 5, middle section).

Wide intervallic leaps: (i) serve to create the sense of **dislocation** that occurs unexpectedly during an outburst following a passage of tension. Dramatic climax (no. 1);  
 (ii) rhythmico-dramatic function of **accentuation** (nos 1 and 2).

Discussing the vocal part from the point of view of dynamics alone gives a distorted picture of the work as a whole, however. In fact, the use of certain sonorous ideas as parameters of the musical discourse is so interesting and so revealing of the composer's personal style that it is appropriate to comment on it at greater length.

Rhythm, for example, is considered here in the wider sense, determined more by pitches and musical accents than by a succession of notes of different durations: one simply has to read the score aloud without respecting the tonic accents to become aware of this. For the strongly accented intervallic leaps that occur from time to time within a slightly uneven melodic line evolving within a narrow range, play a rhythmic rather than a melodic role. Pitch does not appear here for its own sake but, combined with vigorous accentuation (*sforzando*), it helps to exacerbate the expression by creating dynamic impact. Indeed, the pitched 'escape' notes function in the following ways:

- (i) dynamic increase when the leap is from the medium low to the upper register;
- (ii) dynamic decrease, a kind of 'black hole' of decibels, when the leap is from the upper to the lower register.

In each case, the melodic phrase is thrown into **rhythmic prominence**. This rhythmic treatment of the musical phrase is conceived similarly in songs nos 1, 2 and 5.

As to the accentuation, it is perfectly linked to the English text. Christou's genial intuition and his ability to perceive the potential energy of each phoneme of any language may be seen in his later works also, particularly *Tongues of Fire*, *Prometheus Bound* and *The Persians*. Is the rapid, repetitive scansion on single notes, hammered out on small intervals such as the minor thirds in the middle section of 'Phlebus the Phoenician', not reminiscent of the treatment of the chorus part in the incantatory prayer in *The Persians*?<sup>13</sup>

This emphasis on the importance of rhythm may suggest that pitch plays a negligible role, especially in the first three songs. This is not the case, however, since the extreme expressiveness of this musical style

<sup>13</sup> See example 38.



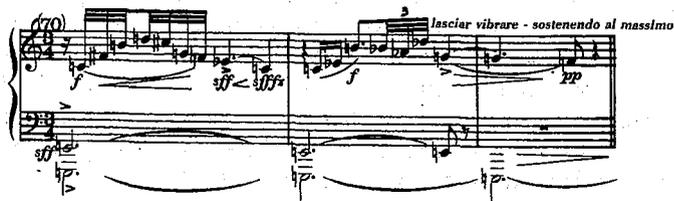
The melodic-dynamic trajectory on the word 'spears' should also be mentioned:

Example 22



Corresponding to this purely vocal figurative treatment in the foreground is a rather more subtle instrumental figuralism that resolutely adapts itself to the psychological mood, symbols and spirit of the text, and gives rise to the great variety, even disparity of the instrumental accompaniments, ranging from the most abstract atonality to the most obvious figuralism (as in the musical depiction of the 'phantom bells' in 'Phlebus the Phoenician' or the galloping of the Tartars in the fifth song). In a wider sense, however, figuralism is, in fact, a **particular aspect of expressiveness**, inextricably bound up with the dramatic conception of the musical composition: in this respect, a group of notes or a musical phrase suggestive not only of an image or an idea but also of a feeling or a **movement** may be described as 'figuralism'. The individual **sound gesture** produced in this way, such as that which serves as an introduction to the second song, thus belongs under the label of figuralism also (Example 23). It recalls in every respect certain vigorous and autonomous phrases in *Symphony no. 1*:

Example 23



Pitch intervenes, moreover, as an important structural parameter in the middle section of the third song. This song is related to the first group by its style of orchestration, but is entirely separate in terms of its vocal expression. It is, in fact, the only song that is based, exclusively on the speech act. The text is declaimed throughout a very slowly progressing *crescendo* until the voice breaks into a cry. Through its one-directional dynamic evolution, it constitutes a rapid survey of all the nuances of the

scansion. The fact that this is effected on an extremely high note ( $c^3$ ) gives it its particular tone quality, indicated in the score as *gesticolando e buffardo assai* (see also the first song p. 32 phrase D). It is therefore in the middle section, which is based on maximum contrast with the preceding one, that pitch determines the individual character of the passage and predominates as a feature of the sound. Other factors nevertheless play a part too: the mode of attack – *legato* as opposed to the distinct *staccato* style of part A; intensity (*decrescendo*), and the instrumental accompaniment which sets a succession of static dissonant chords against the initial ostinato motive:

## Example 24

The image shows a musical score for a vocal piece with piano accompaniment. The top staff is the vocal line, starting at measure 160 and ending at measure 165. It is marked with 'Meno', 'singhiozzando, dim. molto', 'rallentando', and '(165) più mosso'. The lyrics are 'On mont-re - ra mon cé - no - taphe — Aux côtes bru-lantes de Mo-zam-bique.' The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment, also starting at measure 160 and ending at measure 165. It is marked with 'Meno', 'più mosso', and 'pp attacca sub.'. The piano part features a series of chords and arpeggios, with a 'rallentando' marking in the middle.

But, above all, it must be recalled that pitch assumes most importance in the fourth song where it fulfils its traditional aesthetic status once more in a distant, yet still palpable, line of descent from post-romanticism.

We must turn now to the question of why the composer chose to orchestrate these songs, originally written for piano. Firstly, because the orchestra was his preferred medium, and secondly, because timbre plays a fundamental role in this sound universe; regulated by other parameters such as attack, intensity and the interplay between registers, it creates subtle vocal and instrumental colours and forms the basis of the ingenuity of writing in this work.

As far as register is concerned, the timbre of the mezzo-soprano in a low register is clearly completely different to that of the same voice in a high register. It is these variations in colour that the composer exploits when the voice shifts abruptly from one register to another. The second song makes extensive use of this enlarged sound palette, a resource which is exploited more systematically in no. 6. This musical parameter is prioritized in the instrumental part also, regardless of whether it is connected to the dramatic process of the musical discourse or not.

In the first case, the most characteristic example concerns the musical treatment of the third part of 'Mélange Adultère de Tout'. In this

section register is at the base of the **process of individualization** between one element that is similar in quality to another (dissonant chords in this case), but which is brought into conflict with it, for it is this sense of confrontation carried to extreme violence that creates the drama. As this drama gradually unfolds, the conflict between the two elements becomes more marked and the difference between them is achieved by means of the contrast in register. Register thus plays a structural role and the most extreme separation of register coincides with the explosion, the saturation point of dramatic tension:

### Example 25

The musical score for Example 25 is presented in two staves. The upper staff, in treble clef, features a sequence of notes marked with 'fff' and '8', indicating a high register. The lower staff, in bass clef, also features notes marked with 'fff' and '8', indicating a low register. The piece concludes with a 'Ped.' (pedal) instruction.

The intervention of register as a parameter in its own right plays a structural role in relation to the dynamic process in the central section of the fifth song also, but this time its function is reversed: it occurs within a phase in which the musical discourse is de-dramatized and in which the separation between the registers, simultaneously high and low, is presented as a subtle continuum of sound on a low pedal and a high sustained sound, corresponding to a change in the psychological mood, an oasis of stillness between two fiercely dramatic worlds. The synchronous arrival on extreme registers occurs in song no. 6 also, but it does not serve the same function: rather it acts as a punctuation related not to the form or the verse structure but to the dynamic of the sound; the *tremolo* in the extreme upper register (heard as an anticipation of the vocal entry) represents the 'comet's tail', as it were, of a simultaneous vocal and instrumental explosion (See example 26).

Finally, register may participate in the dramatic action in a more modest and simple way, supporting it, as in the first song (phrases F and G) where the displacement of the instrumental part in the upper register relates to that of the vocal line.

It may, however, play a fundamental role without relying on any dynamic evolution whatsoever, thus serving to 'characterize' an autonomous musical motive (See example 17, songs nos. 2 and 3). Attack may occasionally contribute to this function of characterization too (See example 17, song no. 1, and Example 24, song no. 3, middle section).

## Example 26

The musical score for Example 26 consists of two staves. The top staff is for the voice, and the bottom staff is for the piano. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins with the lyrics "came with me and go with me" and "Red ri-ver, ri-ver". The tempo is marked "A tempo" and the dynamics range from *pp* to *fff*. Performance instructions include "cedendo", "cedendo molto", "cresc. sempre", "colpi staccatissimi e de massima velocità", and "dim sub". The score is marked with a rehearsal sign (355) and includes a section enclosed in a dashed box.

Timbre, which, in an exclusively pianistic score, relies upon the many resources offered by the use of varied attacks and registers, thus appears here as an important factor in the renewal of musical ideas and the inner life of the work. This is due to the fact that it forms the basis of the **particular sound colouring governing each song**. Indeed, although each of these six songs forms part of a larger musical whole, it may at the same time be considered as a separate potential drama. The composer thus appears to conceive his music rather like Verdi who tried to achieve the most appropriate colouring for each one of his operas. In this way, each of the Six Songs is treated in an individual space-time that is determined entirely by its particular dynamic process to which the musical material is subordinated, and it is this process that determines the treatment of both this material and the structure within which it evolves.

Alongside this generally very rapid unfolding through time, the quest for maximum expressivity is equally responsible for determining the style of the music, which may be termed expressionist and thoroughly dramatic. It is perhaps the voice, in its complete submission to the demands of expression and the sequential play of sound energies, that creates the greatest impact on the listener. Its long sustained sounds, sometimes held for several bars, even at a fast tempo, create a sense of psychological tension, for duration, fixed and suspended on a single note, is interpreted here in its literal meaning: it serves to create suspense which directs the listener towards the future, towards a new and unknown situation... This tension is felt all the more strongly for, at the same time, the listener experiences the physiological tension of the vocal cords, the effort of the voice, which gives this music a very direct effect, for it creates physical resonances in the listener.

The voice thus offers the composer an immense field of research, the aim of which is not exclusively musical. In fact, the composer is

aware that by using the voice, he is also setting in motion a whole chain of situations, emotions, even psychological reactions that affect the deepest emotional realms of performer and listener alike. The composer therefore chooses to exploit this fact to the full: the score is littered with comments such as *sereno – turbato – intenso – leggiero con gioia – triste – lamentando – misterioso con tensione – con esaltazione isterica – singhiozzando – accelerando con furore – prestissimo, scatenato – espressivo – teso, quasi parlato-con fuoco – parlato libero, con angoscia – doloroso – disperatamente*, each of which is accompanied by corresponding dynamic indications. In fact, each song constitutes a kind of rapid flash, illuminating in two or three minutes an inner situation appropriate to the dramatic development.

As it is, each drama refers to the human being. It is this human being, skilfully depicted by Christou's subtle sound palette, where passion and pathos rule, and expressed through the intimacy of a solo female voice, it is this human dimension that moves us to extremes.

It may be claimed finally that the *Six Songs* to poems by T. S. Eliot constitute the starting point for Christou's second period works, as much in terms of their music as of the profound meaning of their text and visionary, hallucinatory impact; works in which the composer seeks to express, through the illogical nature of madness and dreams, a world beyond the grave, prohibited to the living. Like Pythia, the mezzo-soprano in the *Six Songs* performs a poetic text full of confused, fantastic, nightmarish images, similar in its particular syntax and double meanings to those of the ancient oracles.

## Conclusion

The works discussed in this chapter belong to the first period of the composer's creative output as a whole inasmuch as they display a more or less clear and stable unity of style. Indeed, throughout the variety of musical genres employed, there is a coherence and unity of thought. This is due, on the one hand, to the constant musical borrowings that recur from one work to the next, such as the axial pitch B (a reminder of Berg?) in *Phoenix Music*, *Symphony no. 1* and the *Latin Liturgy*, or the interval class used in *Phoenix Music* (*Phoenix Music*, *Symphony no. 1*); and on the other hand, to a certain conducting wire of thought by means of which each work sows the seeds of the following one: the central section of *Symphony no. 1* → *Six Songs*, no. 4, *Latin Liturgy* → finale of *Symphony no. 2*; finally, in all these works, with the single exception of the *Latin Liturgy*, there is a common expressive vehicle: the orchestra.

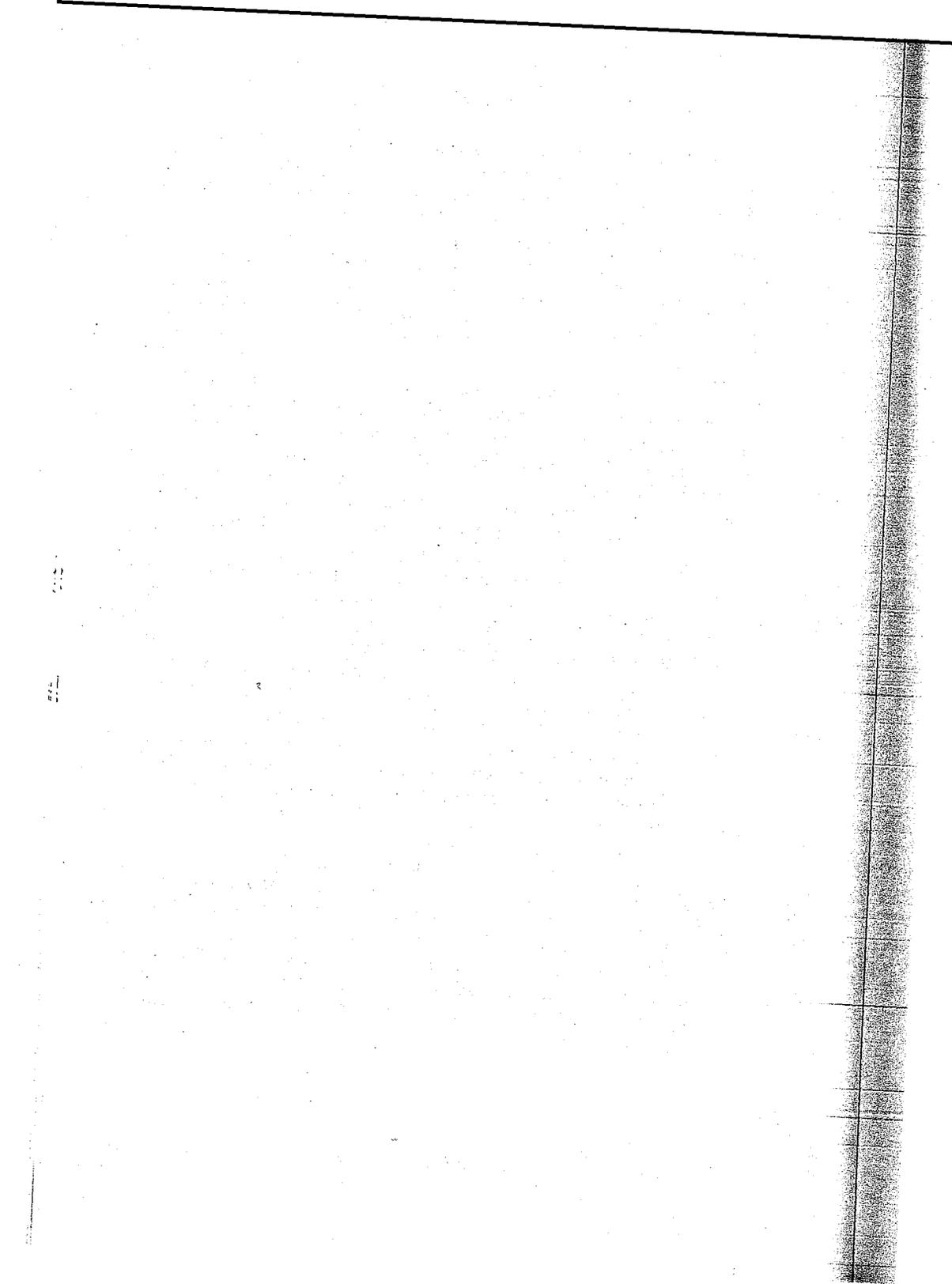
The principal features that characterize the subsequent development of Christou's musical personality are already apparent in these works. On the level of compositional technique, for example, a preference

for the motivic cell with intervals that lie within a narrow range (a second) as structural components of the musical discourse is revealed. On the level of language, dramatic purpose appears as an authentic and visceral mode of expression of the composer. The dramatic element is indeed common to all these pieces; it is the mirror of various human emotions, from mystery to paroxysm (*Phoenix Music*), nostalgia to virulence (*Symphony no. 1*), austere celebration to fervent glorification (*Latin Liturgy*); or joy to anguish (*Six Songs*). By running the whole gamut of human emotion in this way, Christou demonstrates that dramatic action, translated into musical style, no longer serves to express a limited group of specific emotions (tragedy, passion, for example) – as in the romantic conception – but as an authentic **mode of expression** determining a certain type of writing. Subsequently, as will be seen, his conception of dramatic effect grew wider and deeper until it came to represent a **spiritual choice** that had an effect on the operation of the potential components of every musical discourse. For the time being, however, this exploitation of drama as a means of achieving a very striking form of musical expression, although treated in an entirely original way, still lay in line of descent from the German expressionist school and was contained within a traditional formal framework. Not having created his own compositional system at this time, Christou did not question the use of existing forms and was content to contain his personal sound universe within them. These traditional forms ran counter to the resolutely modern conception of musical writing, as in *Symphony no. 1*, in which the technical resources demanded adaptation to new historical conditions.

In any case, his creative work contains at a latent state the primordial asset of any composer: it already bears the seal of originality of the musical result incomparable with anything written before or during his own time, sign of an extraordinary musical personality. In the words of the musicologist Nicolas Slonimsky:

'Christou's personal idiom is unlike any other composer's even though it is not absolutely original. The rhythmic canons, the ingenious displacement of natural accent, the subtle hammering on repeated notes, the fusion of incompatible instrumental colors, the complex but widely dispersed harmonies, the curiously meandering melodies gliding along an imaginary tangent, the sudden eruption of fanfare-like proclamations, all these traits of Christou's music look and sound familiar, but their ensemble is unique'.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Slonimsky, Nicolas, 'New Music in Greece', *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. LI, n° 1, January 1965, p. 228.



## Chapter II

### THE BIRTH OF A MUSICAL SYSTEM

#### Patterns and Permutations

As we enter the 1960s, we become aware that we are embarking upon a new phase in Jani Christou's development in which the composer gave vent to an unreservedly personal language, free from the slightest hint of any influence whatsoever. Now, every change of direction, every aesthetic turn in the history of creation may be attributed to a key work that establishes a historic date within evolution in general. In Christou's case, this work was *Patterns and Permutations* and, from its title alone, it is evident that this was a 'demonstration' work, for, through this work, Christou provided a musical illustration of the rational development of a new musical system. Seeking to distance himself from free atonality and loath to follow in the now long since outmoded spirit of strict dodecaphony, Christou strove in *Patterns and Permutations* to apply the principles of a specific type of musical organization that he called 'meta-serial' – literally 'beyond serialism', and not 'post-serialism'. Why 'beyond serialism'? Because although the series in its basic and orthodox form of twelve notes constitutes the point of departure for this system, the wider organization of the work depends equally on other components that are not related in any way to the serial system.

In order to understand this concept, it must be emphasized that **Christou's musical thought was constantly directed towards a dynamic a priori**, that is, the composer first conceives the dynamic evolution of the work; his initial sketch maps out the points of tension and relaxation, the *crescendos* and climaxes etc. Secondly, any attempt whatsoever to elaborate or organize the musical discourse in Christou's work is always founded on a **pragmatic**, rather than dogmatic conception of the project in hand. Christou did not seek to create a new school; moreover, he abhorred all musical institutions for he believed that sooner or later these all sink into academicism. He attempted rather to set his ideas out clearly so that he might realise his future musical aspirations, for he was aware that only from this solid foundation could he achieve complete musical freedom.

His system is not presented as a series of rules that must be obeyed as in a sol-fa exercise, therefore, but as a general inventory and point of reflection concerning sound phenomena (based on their dynamic characteristics) and the structural possibilities they offer. For this inventory, Christou re-uses accepted ideas, or creates new ones, the meaning of which may best be explained by Christou's own definitions.

The term PERMUTATION stands for the general process of multiplication of musical matter through the re-organization into different tonal and structural combinations of a given number of factors.

The term PATTERN stands for the constant regrouping of the same – or different aspects of the same – components of a musical statement.<sup>1</sup> The regrouping of these components is determined by sequences of permutations, so that no two expressions of the basic statement are ever identical.

Permutating components of a pattern's basic statement are usually spread amongst a group of instruments collaborating in the formulation of group-statements. Such statements may at times be delivered solely in succession or, according to the situation, they may also overlap, somewhat in the manner of the "stretto" in a fugue using group-entries. At other moments, different patterns may be evolving simultaneously – one pattern performing the function of "counter-pattern" to the other.

#### COMPLEX PATTERN

A musical statement may release simple or complex energy. My concept of complex energy is derived from the fact that a flow of sound ordinarily considered as raw material may nevertheless have inner rhythms of its own – very much like the ceaseless atomic activity "within" physical matter out of which ordinary objects are made. Now a statement is made up out of a set of structural components with definite "outward shapes". When these structural components are expressed in terms of raw material having its own independent rhythms – in terms, that is, of "live" raw material – it is as though we were contemplating both the outward appearance of a group of objects while at the same time we were aware of the infinite activities of the atomic particles generating the matter out of which the objects are made. We are, as it were, confronted with visible and invisible structures and activities, and it is this dual action in different categories which releases complex energy. The term COMPLEX PATTERN stands therefore for the type of pattern formed by the permutations of a statement's components expressed in terms of "live" material.

#### ISOCHRONES

"Live material" is serial material seen not only in terms of tones but of proportionate time-values too. A basic series of twelve tones will also express a basic succession of twelve time-values, and each time-value is seen as an intrinsic property of each degree of the series. Permutations of the degrees will also yield permutations of time-values and thus a variation in the arrangement of the twelve tonal degrees will give a different rhythmic structure each time. Horizontal energy is thus a built-in

<sup>1</sup> A 'pattern' is the result of a compositional procedure, a combinative act which represents a specific acoustic configuration that comes to life at the moment of perception created by means of the permutations of any musical statement whatsoever as its original material. [Author's note].

factor forming fresh structural combinations with each permutation of the basic series. Such derivative "live" series, although generating fresh rhythmic combinations with each permutation, will nevertheless have an identical total duration in common with each other and with the basic series – since this will always be the sum of the same twelve time-values, no matter how these are re-arranged. I have therefore used the term ISOCHRONES to designate any such group.

In this work isochrones occur in groups of six isochrones per group. I refer to this as I-6. In some cases one isochrone of an I-6 may be amplified, as for instance, in bars 724–738 where the strings do the amplifying, or in particular, towards the end of section 14, bars 986–1053, where such amplifying of one of the isochrones occurs at every restatement, until both groups release an amplified statement, bars 1036 and 1037, etc.

During the evolution of a complex pattern, statements in terms of I-6 are fired off at short intervals, so that one I-6 is closely followed by another, as in *stretto*. Such overlapping occurs everywhere throughout the complex patterns' area. For instance, in section 14 two groups overlap. In section 15, there occur the following: basic statement 19 occurs in terms of one group in bars 1057–1060; permutations of the statement follow with two groups: group (a) woodwind, enters in bar 1071; group (b) brass, enters two beats later in the same bar; next, three groups are used: group (a) F1. 1, F1. 2, Ob. 1, Ob. 2, C1. 1, C1. 2, enters on the first beat of bar 1081; group (b) Cor. 1, Cor. 2, Cor. 3, Trba 1, Trba 2, Trba 3, enters on the third beat of the same bar; while group (c) C1. basso, Fag. 1, Fag. 2, Cor. 4, Trbone 1, Trbone 2, enters on the first beat of the following bar (bar 1083).

Three such groups continue their permutations until the end of the section (section 15), while the use of four such groups of the same patterns occurs at the very beginning of the work, section 1, which thus begins with the most complex situation of all, by containing section 15. There the I-6 groups occur as follows: group (a) Ott. 1, F1. 1 and 2, Ob. 1 and 2, C1. 1 and 2, Xil. 1 and 2, enters on the first beat of bar 2; group (b) C1. basso, Fag. 1, Fag. 2, Cor. 4, Celli, C'bassi and Tuba, enters on the third beat of the same bar; group (c) Trba 1, Trba 2, Trba 3, Vlni 1, Vlni 2, Violen, enters on the first beat of the following bar (bar 3); and finally group (d) Cor. 1, Cor. 2, Cor. 3, Trbone 1, Trbone 2, Trbone 3, enters on the third beat of that bar (bar 3).

#### SIMPLE PATTERN

When a statement uses raw material with no independent rhythmic life of its own, the structural components express only "outward shapes" and the energy released is simple because the structural action takes place only in one category of perception as it were.

A pattern emerging out of the permutations of such components is consequently a SIMPLE PATTERN. And this is so even during multiple permutatory activity, as, for instance, when both the horizontal and vertical positions of these structural components are permutating in constantly shifting terms of further permutations affecting the composition

of tone sequences – which in their turn are subjected to serially determined transposition cycles. For all these concurrent permutations are only so many different expressions of a given set of “outward shapes”, different aspects of objects existing in one category of perception. It is as though the same furniture in a room were to be constantly rearranged in wildly different combinations, while trick lighting-effects were to light up each object differently each time – so that in one combination the sofa is blue and the adjacent armchair is red and the piano is black, while in the next combination the sofa, which has now switched positions with the piano, is red while the piano has changed to blue – and the armchair, now suspended from the ceiling appears to be black... and so on.

For the emerging pattern to be complex we should in addition have to imagine that the stuff out of which the sofa, armchair and piano are made is also miraculously lit up **from the inside**, enabling us to simultaneously follow the independent multiple activities and colour combinations to which a set of micro-structures “within” the objects are subjected.

#### MEGA-STATEMENT

In this work pattern follows pattern with growing intensity, but the drama inherent in the work is only fully revealed by the emergence of a unique mega-statement of mother series I, delivering only a few tones of the series at a time. These parts of the mega-statement – which are spread over the entire latter part of the work – are in effect an anti-pattern (or a protest), their function being to momentarily arrest – and to dramatically attract attention away from – the mechanism of relentless pattern formation into which the multiple activities of the numerous offspring isochrones are canalised. And this drama is completed towards the end when both patterns of isochrones and the single tones of the mega-statement are gradually submerged, as it were, by the rising waters of the “continuum”.

#### THE CONTINUUM: SUSTAINED SERIES – CONTINUUM BY ISOCHRONES – PEDAL CONTINUUM

Sustained series are horizontal expressions of a series spread over a number of parts, each of which plays and holds a tone. Saturation is total when twelve parts hold their corresponding tone so that a build-up of the twelve serial tones form a 12-tone “chord”. I express this by the symbol S-12 (saturation (S) may be less than total, the number of different tones held at any one moment is indicated by the numeral S-6, S-4, etc.).

Sustained series are used at various points throughout the work, and their function here is to represent a sound continuum “in” which the “action” may or may not take place. The continuum is not, of course, **heard** continuously: when it does appear it is as though it has emerged out of the inaudible into the audible, and it does this with various degrees of intensity. It may be faintly heard in the background as in the passage for divided strings, bars 11–38; or it may invade the sonorous

field entirely as in the passage scored for divided *vlni* 1 and 2 and *celli* developing into a *tutti*, bars 630-652; or, yet again, expressed as a slow but persistent rising from the depths of the orchestra, it may gradually overwhelm all other activity – drawing everything else back into the continuum, bars 1061 etc. (*timpani*, *c'bassi*, etc.).

There is a very close relationship between sustained series and a group of isochrones. Such a group may be interpreted as another aspect of the sound continuum, a more complex aspect, and this interpretation is especially justifiable when the isochrones are not interfered with the action of a structural statement expressing itself in terms of isochrones. Such is the case in the passage for *violas* A-B, *celli* A-B, *c'bassi* A-B, bars 738-762. I call this type of continuum a "continuum by isochrones".

The continuum can also be represented by other means, such as a pedal held by one or more instruments over a suggestive stretch of time. Such pedals may give an actual tone or tones (*S1*, *S2*, etc.) as in the harmonic for *violins*, bar 1054; or they may be created by percussion instruments (no determined pitches) as in the very outset in the passage for *pia*to solo, bar 1-10. I call this type of continuum "pedal continuum".

These definitions given by the composer himself are of great importance for they constitute the fundamental premises of a compositional system on which all his subsequent works (with the exception of the *Anaparastasis* and *Epicycle*) are based.

The following observations relate to these definitions:

(i) in order to determine the musical constituents of a complex pattern, Christou has recourse to a great variety of dynamic resources, such as different types of accentuation ( $\hat{m}$ ,  $\dot{m}$ ,  $\acute{m}$ ,  $\check{m}$ ,  $\text{st}$ ,  $\text{st}$   $\leftarrow$ ,  $\text{st}$   $\leftarrow$   $\text{st}$ ) for example, as well as many rhythmic combinations. The result is indeed impressive, particularly on the first page of the score where he presents the most elaborate complex pattern (in all the instruments of the orchestra), a huge ensemble of sound treated in the minutest detail from the longest note to the shortest rest, music that diverges at one and the same time towards infinity and the infinitesimal, triple *piano*, sound that is bristling with life, and yet imperceptible;

(ii) the concept of simple pattern does not pose any particular problems of interpretation, and neither does that of isochrones since it derives from a well known serial procedure in which rhythmic series derive from the dodecahphonic series;

(iii) the case of the mega-statement is more interesting: whilst the concept of pattern rests upon a perceptible reality and tends to define a certain type of organization of the acoustic material, and isochrones and permutations represent the technical means of distributing these sounds, the mega-statement, for its part, takes place within a profoundly mystical and metaphysical procedure. The mega-statement emphasizes the operation of the **drama** at its most fundamental 'atomic' level, one

might say, since it seeks to counteract the 'mechanism of the implacable formation of patterns'. As the composer himself points out, the drama is **inherent** in the work and reaches an apocalyptic end in that patterns and mega-statement – the two adversaries that 'act out' the drama – are 'submerged by the rising waters of the continuum'. In a note written in 1962, Christou refers still more explicitly to the function and impact of the mega-statement. He recalls first of all his method of composition: he creates initial statements that produce an 'image'; he then meditates on this image in order to multiply its variants:

'each group may suggest: a different orchestral group, a height or depth relation to the other groups, an intensity. After meditating on BASIC STATEMENTS, a factor to be held in mind is the overall force. Thus we may have micro-statements and mega-statements. The mega-statement contains the nucleus of MEANING – it is magic, it is powerful, it is soulful – and it addresses the soul directly. It should be remembered that the MEGA-STATEMENT does not express itself in toto without interruption, rather it comes and goes, mysteriously – is loud and insistent, or soft and mysterious. It breaks up the evolution of micro-statements – whether in the immense distance and depths or heights, when it is almost a shadow of sound – or in the full glory of its blatant presence, blazing with its overwhelming reality'.<sup>2</sup>

(iv) Finally, the dual function of the continuum should be observed, for it oscillates between a simple technical compositional procedure and a conception symbolized more by its role within the musical structure (an overwhelming and invading force).<sup>3</sup>

*Patterns and Permutations* is the first work that enables us to catch a glimpse, in the most sensitive way, of the mystical and deeply spiritual world of Jani Christou. Beneath the paradoxical surface of an exclusively technical work weave the subtle threads that connect the work to its metaphysical context: statements with almost biblical overtones follow the purely musical inventory and detailed explanation of the compositional process and link these diverse categories and sound entities to a universal symbolism.

The most important consequence of the preceding observations is, however, that the very concept of drama acquires an entirely new dimension. It is no longer a question of form or means of expression or even of a stylistic choice in the strictly aesthetic sense, but of the driving element of a personal musical aesthetic. In Christou's work, drama is raised to the rank of a cosmogonic force; it is the condition *sine qua non* of

<sup>2</sup> Composition note dated 18 September 1962.

<sup>3</sup> The concept of the 'continuum' subsequently grew progressively until it broke away completely from all notion of technique or process.

the existence of all evolution, and *a fortiori*, of all musical evolution, the condition from which all music is born.

Was this message understood at the first performance of the work? Certainly not. Its critics considered it arduous and too austere; even its supporters believed it to be merely a powerfully constructed work with great musical impact. It was difficult to perceive its lyricism which lay obscurely hidden, like the wild beauty of an arid landscape.

## Addendum

*Patterns and Permutations* witnessed many rebuffs before finally succeeding in receiving its world première, conducted by Andreas Paridis, on 11 March 1963 on the occasion of the sixteenth concert of the Athens State Orchestra's winter season. Having completed the work in 1960, Christou entered it in the international composition competition 'Premio d'Italia 1960' at the invitation of the Hellenic Broadcasting Institute. The work was subsequently refused entry, however, for the Broadcasting Institute later discovered that it had not been entered in the correct category: a radiophonic drama. The composer Yorgos Sicilianos, then director of the music section of the institute, suggested that they should hold onto the score so that it could be performed by the conductor Franz Litzschauer during the 1960 October–December winter season in Athens. However, during a long interview held in the broadcasting studios on 21 September 1960 between the composer and the conductor, the latter abandoned the initial idea of conducting *Patterns and Permutations* due to its technical difficulties, the mediocre ability of the orchestra and the limited number of rehearsals. He did, however, retain the scores of the more accessible *Phoenix Music* for a performance on 23 October 1960, and *Symphony no. 1* for performance in May 1961. Christou was thus able to submit his score to another competition organized by the Gaudeamus Foundation in Bilkthoven, but it was rejected by the jury (the reasons for this rejection were not given in writing):

'Christou submitted *Metatropes* [*Patterns and Permutations*] to the National Radio of Athens for a competition in 1962. It was selected for the finals, and after eleven rehearsals was recorded on tape. But the work was disqualified when the rumor spread that it had already been performed in America, thus breaking the *jus primae noctis* for the competition. The rumor was false. There was no American performance, but Christou's name was inadvertently (or maliciously, as Christou claims) disclosed, and since anonymity was essential, the score had to be withdrawn'.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Slonimsky, Nicolas, 1965, op. cit., p. 226.

The work was finally performed on the date cited above, inserted into the programme between Beethoven's *Coriolanus* overture and Schumann's Cello Concerto in A minor. On the evening of the première, for the first time in the history of the Athens State Orchestra, the audience (those in the pit at least) revolted against a work during the actual performance, and after the performance threats of scuffles between the supporters and critics of new music were made... The reasons for the audience's discontent are all too familiar: the aridity of the music and an 'annoying' abundance of percussive rhythms. If this reaction seems curious in 1963, it appears less so when considered within the framework of Greek society and musical life at that time. For it was only in this period that contemporary music began to gain acceptance in Greece through the efforts of a few devoted enthusiasts such as Paridis and Chatzidjakis. We should not be surprised by this cabal, therefore; neither should we regret it, especially as it was the only one that occurred during the composer's lifetime, and it was more than compensated for by the success he subsequently achieved not only in Greece but also on the international scene. Moreover, it allowed a few enlightened observers to discover this new work and enthuse over its diverse aspects (the review written by George Leotsakos on the occasion of the première lies at the root of the deep and lasting friendship formed between himself and the composer at that time, a friendship that never waned).

### Toccata and Tongues of Fire

The works that followed in direct line of musical descent from *Patterns and Permutations* are, in chronological order, the *Toccata*, *Prometheus Bound* and *Tongues of Fire*.

I will devote no more than a few words to the *Toccata* which, like *Patterns and Permutations* is an orchestral work. It should simply be pointed out that all the techniques discussed in connection with *Patterns and Permutations* (isochrones, mega-statement, simple and complex patterns, pre-figures, counter-patterns, continuum, etc.) reappear here. More specifically, as the mega-statement is presented in the orchestra the latter is responsible for organizing the musical discourse in terms of pitch, either by pre-figures of the meta-statement or the isochrone series. The piano part on the contrary, indicates that this instrument is envisaged as a percussion instrument and that pitch is not exploited in any way. In fact, in an early stage the solo part consists of patterns composed of rapid statements of dissonant intervals divided into triplets with notes far apart which translate a limpid performance in the medium-upper register of the instrument.

## Example 27

The musical score for Example 27 consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a piano part (Pfte) and a percussion part (Pfte). The piano part begins at measure 30 with the instruction "a tempo marcattissimo" and "il più *ff* possibile". The percussion part includes "Ped." and "lasciar vibrare" markings. The second system starts at measure 35 and includes the instruction "P staccatissimo, leggiero". Measure numbers 30, 35, and 40 are clearly marked throughout the score.

Subsequently, a more agitated, swelling sound like an incessant drum roll occurs in the piano's lower register, combined in a more or less complex way with earlier patterns (see example 28). This piano part requires exceptional powers of endurance and great virtuosity on the part of the pianist (ultra-rapid repetitions of semiquavers, becoming denser in texture as the intensity increases). More generally, the performance directions (*ff feroce*, *marcattissimo il più possibile*, etc.) demand infallible technical ability, completely justifying the title of the work.

The *Tocatta* was not performed until after the composer's death, however, which suggests that he did not attach sufficient importance to it to secure a performance during his lifetime; this indicates that the work represented a style of composition that he was soon to leave behind.

Descriptions of Christou's music by his friends emphasize its basis in his philosophical beliefs – at Cambridge he was a pupil of Wittgenstein. However, the main impression left by the *Tocatta* at this

Example 28

The musical score consists of 12 staves. The first staff is labeled 'Pite' and the last staff is labeled 'm.s. più in rilievo'. The score is divided into two main sections by a double bar line. The first section contains the first six staves, and the second section contains the last six staves. The notation includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamic markings are: *p* sub. cresc. (marked with an asterisk), *assai sfz secco*, *p.* sub cresc., and *assai*. Pedal markings are indicated by a horizontal line with a vertical tick and the word 'Ped.'. There are also asterisks marking specific points in the score.

*m.d. più in rilievo*

*p* sub. cresc. \*

*assai sfz secco*

*p.* sub cresc. Ped.

*assai*

*assai*

*assai*

Pite

*m.s. più in rilievo*

Ped.

performance was primarily physical, of fourteen minutes of hard-driving energy, gusto, exuberance. Behind this, certainly one felt a controlling mind and ability to prepare and place the big climaxes so that they are formally as well as emotionally satisfying'.<sup>5</sup>

'The programme book was full of fearsome phrases ... it suggested a deadly cerebral piece. Nevertheless, the impact of Christou's Toccata was entirely physical and emotional:

It is noisy and preserves the initial exhilaration almost without one drop in tension, but it never sounds either thick or vacuous. Christou was said to be much influenced by Berg, but the Toccata is nearer to the crystalline piano-cum-orchestra works of Messiaen ...'<sup>6</sup>

The Pentecost oratorio *Tongues of Fire* for soloists, chorus and orchestra, in two movements, brings this period admirably to a close. The texts of the work are taken from the Gospel, the book of Prophets and orthodox liturgy, with a few linking phrases by the composer himself. The subject concerns the early christians who, like a common crowd await with anguish and some uncertainty the miracle of the Pentecost that constitutes the climax at the end of the work.

The music of *Tongues of Fire* may be explained from two points of view: firstly, on a strictly technical level, it is a direct continuation from *Prometheus Bound* in terms of the relationship between music and text (see the analysis of *Prometheus Bound*, II. Music and Text). Secondly, in terms of the size and scope of the ensembles, the work is related to *Patterns and Permutations*. *Grosso modo*, it appears, therefore, as a synthesis of these two works, whilst extending and surpassing them. Indeed, in *Tongues of Fire* the vocal music is treated in a highly sophisticated hetero-rhythmic style which may be found in other contemporary works, but which occurs here within Christou's own musical rhetoric as a complex pattern. The numerous multiplications of linguistic accents in simultaneously scanned texts indeed constitute a prime example of live material.

In fact, *Tongues of Fire* represents the composer's first attempt to write for a collective vocal body, as he was to do later in *Mysterion* and would inevitably have done in *Oresteia*. The central core of the work is,

<sup>5</sup> Crichton, Ronald, *Financial Times*, 26 April 1971, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Mann, William, 'English Bach Festival, Oxford Town Hall', *The Times*, 24 April 1971, p. 17. Later in his article, Mann boldly states that the use of a large number of percussion instruments in the increasing impact of the work operates at a level much closer to a certain progressive instrumental rock (he cites the group Santana, for example) rather than to the direct line of avant-garde music in the last decade! In my opinion, although this view seems audacious and too narrowly based on auditory intuition alone, it is not without meaning if it is not taken literally, and the 'spirit of rock' and its socio-historical context rather than the style are considered (see the credo, pp. 92-93).

therefore, the vocal part, skilfully supported by the orchestra with sound continua (pedals, sustained series, or continua by isochrones). The 'melodies' are given only to the vocal soloists and always occur within a narrow range. By the way, the minor third motive of *Prometheus Bound* occurs quite blatantly towards the end of the work. The work closes with the sacred rejoicing of the faithful in an atmosphere of ecstatic fervour in which the key-word is 'light' (*phos*), before concluding on the final 'Amen'.

There are many elements in this grandiose work that cannot be accounted for in this brief discussion. In short, sound colours, orchestral and instrumental timbres, textural effects between the soloists and the chorus, everything remains very subtle and carefully wrought, even when the writing consists of blocks of sound; the structure of the work is relatively simple and the sections follow on logically without any kind of shematization. The music sounds constantly fresh and its riches are exploited with great skill. This work certainly belongs to the repertoire of masterpieces of religious music of the second half of the twentieth century. It is so clearly marked with the stamp of piety and ecstatic fervour that, on hearing it, it is difficult not to call to mind or compare it with the large mystical ensembles, now lost, of 1953-58. The descent of the Holy Spirit is represented as a final apocalyptic miracle that concludes this period in the composer's output with a final display of fireworks. This work was soon to be surpassed, however; or rather, it resumed its initial function and became a means by which man might come to know the profound and sincere feelings he had suppressed within himself.

**Interlude**  
**MUSIC FOR THE THEATRE**

## Introduction

Before embarking on the second part of this study concerning Christou's work during the last five years of his life, I will consider several aspects of his musical activity in the theatrical domain. I will not dwell on this aspect of Christou's work for several reasons, however: firstly because of the difficulties I encountered during the course of my research in obtaining complete recordings of the works, and secondly because I do not believe that these works of mixed genre may be discussed on a purely musical level alone, for they fall short in many respects due to the theatrical circumstances for which they were conceived. For example, if one has not seen the work performed, one cannot speak of the sound space or the synchronized action of light and sound or the relationship between sound and gesture; finally, and more generally, one cannot, in all fairness, evaluate the relationship between the production and the music.

In this chapter, therefore, I have confined myself to two tasks: first of all, to try to understand more fully the composer's philosophical ideas, deep convictions and intimate preoccupations. Thus, each work will be introduced by an extensive explanation of its subject and, where possible, by the composer's own commentary as a kind of spiritual preparation for the musical analysis proper. Then, in relation to this, I will attempt to reveal, from a historical point of view and in chronological order, the salient points within the development of his musical style.

Christou always referred to his music for the theatre as a *side-line* in the catalogues of works he drew up himself, and when he wished to choose a representative sample of works from his entire creative evolution, he never included any of his theatrical works.<sup>7</sup> However, when he selected 'representative' works from amongst his theatre works, he always cited *The Persians*, *The Frogs* and *Oedipus Rex*. This was undoubtedly not only because these works corresponded chronologically to his later, post-1964 style, but also because the director of these three pieces, Karolos Koun, shared the same convictions as Christou with regard to the artistic as much as the philosophical interpretation of the content of ancient tragedy. In these works, therefore, Christou expressed himself more freely and took entirely personal initiatives (particularly in the musical treatment of the chorus in *The Persians*) thanks to the understanding collaboration of Koun, as the composer himself noted.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, it appears that in his own mind as well as in his writings, Christou considered his activity in the theatrical domain as

<sup>7</sup> See note 1, p. xiii.

<sup>8</sup> Christou, Jani, 'In composing for the chorus', in *Art Theatre 1942-1972*, Greek Theatrical Society.

tangential to the rest of his creative work, which does not in any way signify that he underestimated it. On the contrary, he imbued it with his **constant concern with the drama of existence** in its deepest manifestations by emphasizing the psychodynamic roots of the ancient mysteries. In Christou's own words:

'It pleases me to believe that Attic drama arose from the terrible religious practices of Renewal, representing the martyrdom of the god and his resurrection. Tragedy was sacred for Dionysus and his spirit influences the chorus. These ceremonies were not devoid of content; fear, as much as ecstasy, was a very real feeling that had to be experienced. Shortly before his deliverance and apotheosis, Dionysus, taking on the shape of an animal, was bloodily dismembered ...

Fifth-century tragedians in Athens were initiates and knew much more about this than has been discovered about the mysteries... The tragedies were primarily sacred dramas in honour of Dionysus, and I believe that they used the chorus solely as a means of arousing fear and ecstasy through vigorous collective declamation together with song and bodily movements. In short, a public form of ritual acts aiming to create emotional renewal'.<sup>9</sup>

Christou thus applied to our modern century the age-old lesson of the ancient tragedians who aimed to create the psychological conditions necessary to bring about a final effect of catharsis in the listener or spectator. And as a result of this concern, a very clear line of musical evolution may be perceived from one work to the next. As it is, at the time of the composition of his first work for the theatre, *Prometheus Bound*, Christou already considered Greek tragedy to be closer to the operatic than the theatrical tradition. Once again, the composer considered his project closely on a philosophical level before committing any musical ideas to paper, and indeed, his composition notes for *Prometheus Bound* reveal as many philosophical thoughts concerning the Promethean idea as purely musical indications.

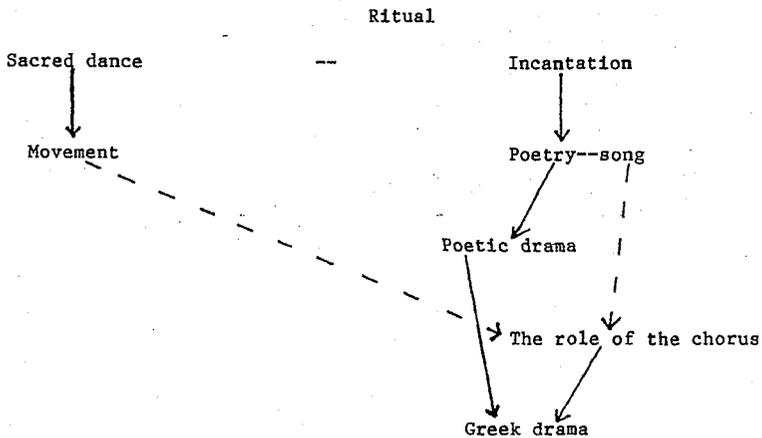
Christou gave his own explanation of the way in which Greek tragedy represented a combination of all genres:

- discourse gave rise to poetry;
- gesture gave rise to mime;
- dance gave rise to ballet
- speech, song and rhythmic declamation gave rise to opera.

These diverse functions subsequently separated and became independent of one another as they became increasingly specialized. The primary

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Christou by George S. Leotsakos, *Bima*, 22 August 1965.

phenomena of dance and magical incantations probably lay at the root of all of them, however, creating the following chronological schema:



The composer's view of the sacred origin of Attic drama must thus be emphasized if the way in which he chose to illustrate it musically is to be understood.

\*

Christou's entire output for the theatre comprises four tragedies and a comedy, and only treats subjects borrowed from ancient Greek theatre. These works span the period from 1963 to 1969 and follow a clear line of development in terms of musical style. Let us recall the dates of composition:

*Prometheus Bound* (Aeschylus). Tragedy.

Actors, chorus, orchestra and tapes.

Commissioned by the Greek National Theatre Company.

World première 6 June 1963 at Epidaurus Theatre.

*The Persians* (Aeschylus). Tragedy.

Actors, chorus, orchestra and tapes.

World première 20 April 1965 at the Aldwych Theatre, London.

*Agamemnon* (Aeschylus). Tragedy.

Actors, chorus and orchestra.

Commissioned by the Greek National Theatre Company.

World première 27 June 1965 at Epidaurus Theatre.

*The Frogs* (Aristophanes). Comedy.

Narrators, chorus, orchestra and tapes.

World première 19 July 1966 at the Herod of Atticus Theatre, Athens.

*Oedipus Rex* (Sophocles). Tragedy.

Tape.

World première 22 May 1969 at the Aldwych Theatre, London.

According to George Leotsakos, this cycle of works was the only one to reach a natural conclusion; indeed, he points out that the composer himself affirmed his intention not to concern himself any longer, or at least for a long period of time, with this musical genre.<sup>10</sup> Let us now consider each of these works in turn.

## Prometheus Bound

### I. *The Myth*

How does Christou, from a sensitive point of view, discover the character of Prometheus? For this purpose I will refer to one of his 'philosophical' notes, which always represented for the composer the indispensable psychological and spiritual preparation for the technical aspect of composition:

Athens, 19 June 1963

#### Prelude

'A musical representation of the cosmological conflict. After all, Prometheus's predicament is a result of the tremendous upheaval in the cosmic order. Zeus overthrows his father Kronos. The new Gods on Olympus are strange and hostile powers as yet. Prometheus transgresses against this new order. He steals the FIRE and this act of open revolt against the privilege of the Gods has to be paid for.

He (Prometheus) is struck down by the wrath of Zeus. There is both the feeling of tremendous **cosmic guilt** and of **open revolt** and a feeling of the struggle by forces acting for man to reach the stars, to acquire the FIRE (SPIRIT) which will turn him (man) into God, which will give him Godlike power. It is a **struggle for power**, but for COSMIC POWER, for power over DESTINY, power to beat HEIMERMENE (fate), power to rise over destiny, power over the unconscious; it is the one big step to

<sup>10</sup> Radio broadcast entitled 'Music for the Theatre: *The Persians* by Jani Christou'. Programme: 3. Code no.: 1 B6-42/76. Date: 6 January 1976. Time: 7.30-8.30 p.m. Producer and commentator: George S. Leotsakos. In the following discussion, passages which appear in quotation marks are extracted from this source, since it contains a vast amount of valuable information, the accuracy of which has since been verified by my analyses of the scores.

integrate the cosmic unconscious to the conscious. It is open revolt against an existing order of things. Unlike Job, Prometheus does not relent! But, at the same time, it is not the Job-like situation in which a man questions God because Prometheus is a Titan, a "god" himself. It is therefore more obviously a question of psychic force against cosmic force on one level at least.

It is not a question of anti-religiosity, but, if you like, a conflict of "religious forces", a conflict of forces struggling for psychic power through matter. There is also the knowledge of final victory, which means that the ecstatic element, the knowledge of "future happiness" is there, and it is this which gives Prometheus the power to *resist* calamity and to bear his present fate with Titan-like courage and endurance. But there is also a deep tragic and human element in his cries of pain. It is perhaps Christ-like in this respect, that knows about final victory, that this does not lessen the actual pain'.

'In assuming the responsibility of composing music for a tragedy for the first time, and all the more in the case of a tragedy such as *Prometheus*, I confess that I approached it with the fear that Aeschylus inspires in us all. From the start, however, I realized that it would have to be a cosmogonic work! This naturally suited my musical temperament, by which I mean that a cosmogonic work inspired me more than a banal or simple one; but the fact that I had to set Aeschylus to music filled me with immense fear. In the end, I overcame all the difficulties by appealing to my instinct...My Greek origin helped me to find within myself the Greek melodies and all the other elements I needed to produce a work that was neither cerebral nor "syrupy".<sup>11</sup>

## II. Music and Text

'In *Prometheus* the music "adheres" closely to the text. It acts directly with the drama, it has a remarkably personal style, but nevertheless remains an epithem. Despite its prolixity the text still fulfils the most important role. The composer considered the musical discourse and the spoken discourse to be closely linked with one another. He even envisaged the theatrical text as an element of the score to which he added sounds.<sup>12</sup>

In analysing a score that accompanies a text, it seems logical to investigate the links that occur between music and text. Indeed, the composer's notes leave no doubt whatsoever as to the veracity of the above statements and clearly confirm the conclusions reached through aural analysis. In fact, Christou undertakes the difficult and laborious task of first transcribing the entire recited text, whether by soloists or actors, into rhythmic notation, guided by the naturally rhythmic accentuation of the

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Christou by G. K. Pilichos, *Ta Nea*, Monday 20 May 1963.

<sup>12</sup> Leotsakos, George S., 'Music for the Theatre: *The Persians* by Jani Christou', radio broadcast, 6 January 1976.

Greek language. This minute dissection of the natural rhythm of the text enables the composer to 'combine' different musical rhythms in counterpoint with it, which is not the least interesting aspect of the score. Moreover, he turns to his advantage the breathing spaces provided by the punctuation of the verses. Thus the music 'adheres' to the text through the statement of a sustained *tutti* chord in the orchestra (*sff*) at the end of each verse, vigorously punctuating the poetic unfolding of the drama.

### III. The Experience of *Musique Concrète*

In *Prometheus Bound*, Christou used taped sounds for the first time. This adoption of *musique concrète* occurred much more as the result of a spirit of inquiry into the nature of sound and his shrewd use of resources in order to realize a stated aim than of a pre-determined aesthetic or theoretical position.<sup>13</sup> It cannot be stated often enough that Christou did not belong to any school or trend, as he himself liked to maintain... Indeed, by the time he came to compose *Prometheus Bound* he had already reached full technical maturity and developed his own system of musical elaboration through the process of 'patterns'. He thus directed his inquiry more towards the still unexploited possibilities of the sound material itself. One result of this exploration was that concrete sound, and therefore tape, came to assume more importance, and this use of tape came to respond much more closely to the expression of extra-musical ideas.<sup>14</sup>

For the time being, in *Prometheus Bound*, the composer assigns two entirely different functions to the tape which correspond to each of its two appearances: in the first, he uses it as an additional instrument designed to enrich the orchestral texture with a new timbre; this applies in the first series of concrete sounds (based on flutes) that occurs as a subtle thread of sound in the introduction. Moving within a medium-high register, this thread is notated simply by a sinusoidal symbol on a staff, beneath the flute part. In the second, *musique concrète* is used in the finale in an entirely different way; it corresponds to an apocalyptic moment in the tragedy in which Zeus sends down thunder, lightening and winds to precipitate Prometheus into the abyss... and the final words of the tragedy are those of Prometheus crying 'I suffer! I suffer!'. Together with the spasmodic activity of the woodwind and brass united in strident discordant clusters, (*quadruple forte*) in this passage the tape, which unleashes the sounds of thunder and lightening, the sea and the winds, participates in the final paroxysm that explodes on the words

<sup>13</sup> See the composition note written in Chios, 5 December 1958 cited on p. 115.

<sup>14</sup> See the discussion of the *Anaparastasis* and *Epicycle* in chapter IV.

'I suffer!'; Christou notes in Greek on the score: 'cataclysm'. This is one of the most humanly poignant and thrilling moments of the tragedy. More generally, the tape occurs throughout the final part of the work (exodium B of the play, then the finale proper), in which it enters into dialogue with the actor, assuming a structural function, whilst the role of the orchestra is reduced to one of strict punctuation; this function is maintained until Prometheus's cry, when the tape suddenly bursts into an eight-bar passage, quadruple *forte*, without any transition or fore-warning; the finale (*adagio solenno*) follows in which the tape returns to the initial *pianissimo* that concludes the work.

As far as the production of the tape itself is concerned, the various 'raw materials' used, such as the sounds of the sea, the typhoon, thunder, lightening, etc., have been subjected to sophisticated and ingenious procedures of mixing; thus the final sound result is conceived in a spirit of counterpoint: the 'continuum', composed of thunder, is punctuated rhythmically by lightening; calculated phase displacements of the dynamics of gusts of wind are counterpointed against the breaking of the waves of the sea, creating an internal play of nuances. As a result of this, Christou avoids the descriptive or anecdotal, and the concrete sounds become music in themselves, prolonging, without weakening, in the imagination of the listener the memory of the entire drama, and concluding the work alone, as they had begun it.

#### IV. *Orchestral Style*

It seems useless in discussing music for the theatre to refer to any kind of formal structure whatsoever since this is completely subordinated to the literary structure of the play. Throughout this brief analysis, therefore, I have chosen to concentrate on style rather than form, on the 'contained' rather than the 'container'. And yet, in *Prometheus Bound* the form and even the specific function of each section of the tragedy condition the style. For although the tone of the work is fundamentally dramatic, the means of expression differ according to the section (prologue, episode or stasimon) concerned. Indeed, it is interesting to note that in this period, which was in fact a transitional period in Christou's development, all the systems he had employed previously are associated in the score of *Prometheus Bound*, revealing once more the composer's pragmatic rather than dogmatic conception of the art of composition. There thus appear procedures familiar from the system employed in *Patterns and Permutation*, such as the continuum through sustained series or pedals, and isochrones<sup>15</sup> in distinct statements during the parade, the entry of the god Oceanus and the Dance

<sup>15</sup> The technical terms employed in this chapter are the composer's own and are defined in his analytical text concerning *Patterns and Permutations* cited on pp. 44-47.

of Io. At the basis of this dodecaphonic technique lies the following prime series: G sharp, A natural, G natural, F sharp, D sharp, E natural, D natural, C natural, A sharp, C sharp, F natural, B natural.

The musical discourse is also sustained by other features typical of Christou's style, such as those that obey only the dynamico-dramatic law of the work without referring to any pattern whatsoever.<sup>16</sup> For example, in moments of suspense, rhythmic cells composed of small intervals, like 'specks of sound', are used, with a very sober orchestral style. In passages in which the action is more rapid, repeated beats in the percussion and flutter-tonguing in the winds are used as well as stark contrasts in nuances located at the extremes of the range of intensities (pp-sfff). The writing becomes thus more vertical. A typical example is shown in Example 29 in which a long trilled note of low intensity leads to an anacrusic chromatic ascent, like a flash of lightening, giving way to a rapid *crescendo* and concluding on the following long note, *sff-p*, and so on.

#### Example 29



Christou varies this schema ingeniously in an infinite number of ways, playing on both the length of the trills by increasing and decreasing it, and the intensity, which together determine the tension capacity of the music.

A further example occurring outside the serial system is that of motivic treatment. Indeed, the orchestral accompaniment (except during the vocal and isochrone passages) is based on a motivic cell composed of a rhythmically varied rising minor second which appears in different registers and at different pitches and is reminiscent in its varied treatment of the 'Phoenix' motive, which belongs similarly to the world of atonal music. This cell is unquestionably the codifying element which, according to its quality or position, assumes a precise meaning and different musical functions, as will be demonstrated below.

#### V. The Treatment of the Chorus Parts

Whilst the purely instrumental passages or those accompanying the declamation of a soloist are written in a completely atonal or serial style,

<sup>16</sup> According to Christou's theory and method of musical organization, this passage is a 'non-patterns' section (see Table 6, 'Sectional Analysis: Patterns and Permutations', Appendix V, p. 157).

the orchestral passages that accompany the chorus have a modal colour, free from all dissonance; when the chorus begins to sing, the orchestra violently accentuates the rising interval of the cell, now transformed into a **major second**, thus placing it in the realm of **diatonicism**. The harmonious coexistence of two different sound worlds, that of the chromaticism and dissonance of the dodecaphonic language on the one hand and that of diatonicism and consonance reflecting modal sensitivity on the other, is not the least of the work's musical achievements. This dichotomy is not entirely apparent from the beginning of the work, however. On the contrary, the composer seems initially to play on the ambiguity of the relationship by seeking to exploit notes that are common to both the orchestra and the chorus.

Let us examine this ambiguity in greater detail: the 'stasima', which, as their Greek name implies, constitute the 'dead moments' of the drama, the static passages that enable the chorus to emphasize or comment on the action and indulge in various considerations of a philosophical and metaphysical nature according to the subject under discussion, are examined in detail here, for they represent the composer's only attempt to reconcile a modally influenced melodic line with atonality.

The stasima are presented, *grosso modo*, in a cyclic form in which the conclusion restates the structural components of the introduction (the initial cell of a second) in a slightly different orchestral treatment. Similarly, the vocal parts correspond to a more or less symmetrical structure depending on the "stasima" (especially in the first, in which the second and final repeat of the vocal line is an exact restatement of its exposition).

The following passage attempts to illustrate the observation made above that there is a progression from chromaticism or atonality to modality or diatonicism. Musically, the orchestral colour of the introduction of each stasimon announces its particular sound world.

(i) The introduction to the first stasimon belongs to the atonal world; its basic motive is, therefore, the ascending minor second that is subjected to the influence of every parameter. It appears initially in the horn and remains virtually unchanged until the entry of the chorus. The vocal line – or 'melos' – retains a certain ambiguity between modality and atonality inasmuch as it is richly ornamented with embellishments:

### Example 30



Theme : ' Canto Esso doloroso'

etc...

The curvilinear character of this melody, due in particular to its triplet crotchet rhythm, is reinforced by the orchestration of the passage (the woodwind double the melody in unison). This linear writing in unison is one of Christou's favourite means of expression, and he uses it especially when he wants to create moments of great spiritual intensity and concentration (as in the Latin Liturgy and Symphony no. 1, or the presentation of the mega-statement in *Patterns and Permutations*). The first repetition of the melody corresponds to the middle section and constitutes the climax point of the first stasimon in terms of musical structure. Example 31 shows the entire statement:

## Example 31

Example 31 is a musical score for a vocal line, consisting of five staves. The music is written in a single melodic line with a triplet crotchet rhythm. The lyrics are in Greek. The score includes various dynamic markings and performance instructions.

Staff 1: *ff* Ε-να μο-νον ως τώ-ρα έ-χω γνω-ρί-σει Θε-ό άλ-λο που

Staff 2: τέτοιο μαρ-τύ-ριο άγ-ριο με αρ-πά-για ατσα-λέ-νια δα-μά-ζει

Staff 3: *al rissando fff* τον Τι-τά-να τον 'Ατ-λαν-τα, ώ πό-νοι

Staff 4: που ό-λο πάν-τα το βά'ρος της γής και τ'ου-ρά-νιου του θε-λου ση-κώ-νει

Staff 5: και βου-βά-νασ-τε νάζει.

This repetition, occurring at a quicker tempo than the preceding melody, does not have the same 'smoothness' and reveals a more accentuated chromatic structure; it 'breaks free' of the mode by means of an ascending chromatic progression and switches to a broken rhythm. It thus emphasizes the **atonal context** and **dramatic tension** even more strongly. The semitone and 'diminished third' recur here also; these small intervals are omnipresent throughout the entire output of the composer.

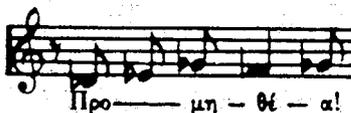
It may be seen, therefore, that the first stasimon prioritizes chromaticism and that modality occurs only fleetingly three times in the chorus parts. Modality is contested in the orchestra too; the very sober

orchestration of this stasimon is organized in two functional groups, the first doubling the choral melody in unison and the second comprising accompanying instruments (double basses, piano, percussion), merely punctuating the melody (continuum) with harmonic pedals. When the atonal context becomes more important, however, as in the middle section of the melody, the orchestra, whilst continuing to double the choral melody in unison, has dissonant chords composed of seconds, distributed throughout the instruments.

(ii) Second stasimon: shorter than the first, the second stasimon is based:

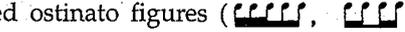
(a) in the vocal line, on the melodic motive that accompanies the name 'Prometheus':

### Example 32



(b) in the orchestra, again on the rising second, the fundamental element, but in a different rhythm: ♩ ♩. In contrast to the first stasimon, it is the diatonic element that predominates here. The clarinet states the interval of the ascending second in the first bar, as in the introduction of the first stasimon, but this time it is a major second (D flat-E flat) that anticipates the opening notes of the choral melody. This melody is now **syllabic** rather than melismatic, and overtly diatonic. This syllabic treatment of the melody clearly reveals the strong accentuation of the Greek language and illustrates the way in which the composer has subordinated the rhythmic structure of his melody to the accentuation of the sung word in order to retain a regular crotchet beat on the one hand and the melodic structure (open and closed phrases) to the meaning of the text on the other. The orchestral writing achieves at one and the same time both the greatest degree of verticality and maximum austerity of texture. The percussion instruments emphasize the strong beats of the four-square bars, throwing into relief the simple repetitive rhythms of the melody; the phrase structure of the orchestral parts faithfully follows that of the chorus. The overall effect is one of simplicity produced by an archaic monody, but also of ritual music, static and solemn. The orchestral colour of the unison accompaniment changes with each repetition of the melody, and new timbres appear in unusual instrumental combinations (for example, clarinet, bassoon, tuba, marimba) that throw a different light on the choral melody each time. The second and last repetition

of the melody employs the same motive which from this point on appears as a cell of repetitive music, infinitely varied in its inner substance. The melody loses its modal and melodic character and becomes merely a melodico-rhythmic ostinato which creates the throbbing effect of an obsessive phrase and provides a foretaste of what was to come in *The Persians*.

In the three stasima of the work, the declaimed parts conform to the same method of dramatic development of the musical discourse as that which occurs in the strictly instrumental passages of the introduction and finale of *Prometheus Bound* (see IV. Orchestral Style). In the second stasimon, although the chorus parts contain a high degree of inner tension, the declaimed passages reveal a much more dramatic character and are more sophisticated musically. In the second declaimed passage Christou's favoured ostinato figures (  ) appear and are developed in the third declaimed passage in combination with the initial figure . This too assumes the role of an ostinato and rhythmic punctuation and serves to emphasize the musical unity of the piece, which might easily be called into question by the alternation of spoken declamation and singing and consequently, of the compositional systems. In general, the musical climate of the second stasimon is more percussive, breathless and dramatic than that of the first as a result of Io's entry and the events of episode A.

(iii) Third stasimon: the orchestra plays the interval of a second (A-B), *pianissimo*, announcing the first two notes of the melody. The timpani, harmonium and piano alternate with one another, sustaining a continuous thread of muffled sound on long pedals. After a *pianissimo tutti* chord, the chorus enters (part B) with the following melody:

### Example 33



The third stasimon is the most important one as it also constitutes the lyrical climax of Aeschylus's text. The musical style of the third stasimon goes one step further than that of the second; it is explicitly diatonic and cast into the mould of a language that Christou described as 'simple and archaic, the extension of which may be seen in Byzantine music'.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Christou by G. K. Pilichos, Monday 20 May 1963, *Ta Nea*.

This melody forms the key moment of the drama and appeals to the contemplative mind (it is a supplication) through its density and spiritual intensity. The novel aspect of the style in this stasimon is the canonic interplay between the first soloist's declamation and the melody in the chorus which represents the musical projection of the tragic text, a lyrical reflection of its poetry. The musical conclusion of the work presents the clearest statement so far of the major second in descending motion:

Example 34



The piece ends immediately after this, on a perfect fifth (B flat-F), which sanctions the victory of diatonicism.

It may be concluded, therefore, that *Prometheus Bound* is, on the one hand, a work that still belongs to Christou's 'traditional' style in which many of the procedures already apparent in *Phoenix Music*, the *Six Songs*, the symphonies, the *Toccata* and *Patterns and Permutations* recur, and which is based, in particular, **on a small interval that assumes simultaneously the following functions**: it introduces the chorus parts by anticipating their first two notes and defines, by means of its quality, the system that is in operation (meta-serial or modal); finally, it serves to co-ordinate the parts, for it is frequently repeated in an instrument where it is perceived in a latent state by the listener.

On the other hand, *Prometheus Bound* proves an interesting work on several counts: firstly, it is a hybrid work, a melting-pot of different compositional styles; secondly, it is pre-eminent in the domain of electro-acoustic music; thirdly, it is the first musical setting of a text to include a chorus (apart from the Latin Liturgy, a minor work), and finally, it was composed after the many tentative projects of 1955-62 which, as far as I am aware, do not appear to have borne fruit.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, *Prometheus Bound*, perhaps to an even greater degree than any of the works previously discussed, possesses that spirit of spontaneity, apparent simplicity and authenticity that characterizes Christou's work as a whole. Thus, the following quotation seems particularly pertinent:

'The Christou of *Patterns and Permutations* here enriches his already striking personality through contact with a text dating back 2,500 years,

<sup>18</sup> See catalogue of works pp. 174-175, Appendix I, pp. 121-122.

subordinating the former to the latter. He records with impressive natural ease his inner heartbeat in music that sometimes seems to be nothing more than the breathing of the "Crucified Rebel" on the rocks of Scythia'.<sup>19</sup>

## Agamemnon

### I. Literary Drama and Musical Evolution

Discussion of *Agamemnon* ought to follow that of *The Persians* since its date of composition is June 1965, but its compositional style is so close to that of *Prometheus Bound* that it seems more logical to consider it immediately after this work.

It has been observed that *Prometheus Bound* is based on sudden outbursts produced by the indomitable will of the Titan, and that these outbursts are translated into music in a style full of nuances and sudden starts. Just as this Titanic will asserts itself increasingly forcefully following the appearance of the Oceanids, Oceanus, Io and finally Hermes, until Prometheus is swallowed up by Zeus into the entrails of the earth, so the music accompanying the drama expands and develops in an inevitable general *crescendo*. In *Agamemnon*, on the other hand, the text is enveloped to a large extent in a barely perceptible, continuous 'cocoon' of sound, punctuated at intervals by *sforzando* attacks, following the structure of the text. This constant yet calm sound world (*piano* to triple *pianissimo*) is created by the strings and percussion and occasionally the piano. This thread of sound, which sometimes unfolds throughout an entire section without interruption, may no longer be considered as an 'ostinato' as in the earlier works, but as an indication of the new concept of the 'continuum' that was to occur in Christou's music from the mid-1960s. Indeed, the play *Agamemnon* is based on the feeling of expectation, the anguished tension aroused by expectation, and the whole mood of uncertainty created by the fear of imminent catastrophe (the death of Agamemnon). Thus the play, littered with the enigmatic statements of the watchman, Clytemnestra and the prophecies of Cassandra, inspires in Christou a feeling of mystery, but at the same time the anguish aroused by the disastrous omens that increases incessantly from beginning to end of the play is illustrated in this muffled music, hatching the inevitable. There are few *fortissimo* markings in *Agamemnon*, except for in the intensely dramatic moments (Cassandra's visions, the murder of the king, the dispute between the chorus and Aegisthus) in which the orchestral

<sup>19</sup> Leotsakos, George S., *Kathimerini*, 17 July 1963.

style employed in *Prometheus Bound*<sup>20</sup> recurs. Christou once again adapts himself skilfully to the mood of the play and to the genius of Aeschylus.

## II. Innovations

### A. Notation

The composer modifies the conventional system of notation for orchestra; in *Agamemnon* the patterns are scrupulously marked in the score each time they appear and are identified respectively by number since, unlike in traditional notation such as that used in *Prometheus Bound*, for example, there are no regular bar-lines extending through every part in the score. Thus, bar 9 in the viola may not be aligned vertically with bar 9 in the horn but may be placed two or three bars earlier or later depending on the order of entry of the instruments. As a result, the bars are notated in absolute time: for example, one instrument may stop playing in its tenth bar whilst the other instruments continue to play for a period of time extending over three bars; in the following bar, the first instrument may begin to play again, but its bar will be numbered 11 and not 14. This 'horizontal' notation is possible since the piece is based on essentially rhythmic patterns, that is:

(i) each pattern is characterized by a particular time span that may be calculated approximately since the composer specifies the tempo of the first pattern ( $J=76$ ) and determines that of the subsequent patterns in relation to it (for example, pattern 2 a little quicker than pattern 1); in other words, instruments playing the same pattern are unified by the fact that they play the same number of bars. Clearly, a pattern cannot break off in the middle, for, once it has begun, it must complete its given duration;

(ii) the patterns are not developed melodically, for they are composed solely of rhythmic cells repeated in ostinato at the same or on two different pitch levels;

(iii) the patterns up to number 12 may be repeated for a long or short duration indiscriminately. When a pattern is restated many times the composer no longer notates it musically but indicates by means of a thick line that the pattern should continue to be repeated indefinitely until the symbol  $\Phi$ , signifying an interruption, appears.

The musical effect of the skilfully combined entries and interruptions of these patterns is one of subtle rhythmic polyphony embedded in the continuous string texture discussed above.

### B. Improvisation

Another phenomenon, related to the compositional system, is the appearance in *Agamemnon* of improvised or semi-improvised sections of music. For example, in the parade the instruments play the notes of the diatonic pentachord (C-G) at specified pitches, but the rhythm is free.

<sup>20</sup> See *Prometheus Bound*, IV. Orchestral Style.

This improvisatory element appears first in the percussion (timpani and tam-tam, on the notes D, G, C) and is indicated by the direction 'at random'. The general use of this element does not occur until the following page, however, which is marked *tutti: il più ppppppp possibile*; a pause mark above the orchestral parts indicates that the overall length of the section is aleatory, just as there is no synchronization of the instruments, each figure being followed by a pause. Later in the work, a number of semi-improvised passages occur, distributed amongst the instruments and superimposed on the non-improvised parts. For example, the bassoon and double bass play a muffled, constantly repeated sound whilst the different patterns are expressed discreetly in the instruments as the conductor requires: thus the element of chance is the arbitrary nature of the conductor's choice.

A second example is found in episode IV which corresponds to Cassandra's dialogue with the chorus and is written in a semi-improvisatory style: a single page of music corresponds to the entire text of the dialogue and bears the following direction:

'In the episode with Cassandra, off and on *pppp* sounds may be perceived, as if in the distance, at various opportune spots (these spots are indicated to the conductor by means of a red light), and come from different instrumental groups as pointed out by the conductor'.

The score is also marked *Misterioso - libero col Maestro*; each instrument plays at a designated pitch, which prevents the musical result from being completely aleatory, and here too the arbitrary choice is made by the conductor and not the performers.

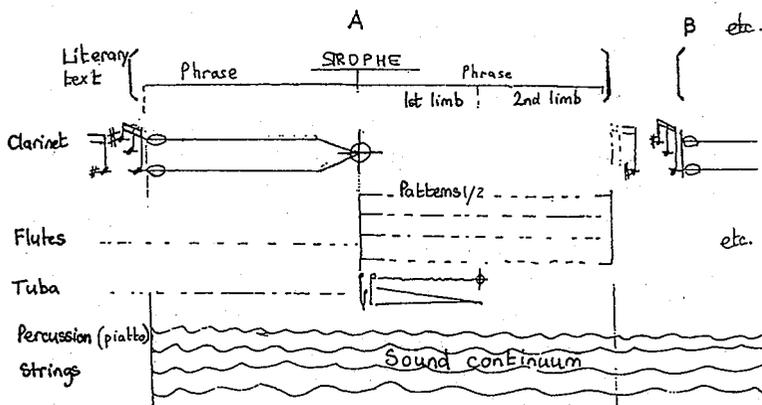
Why these passages? It may be conjectured that the composer wished to experiment with the semi-aleatoric construction of a complex pattern from given components of live material that was constantly evolving unpredictably in relation to the spatial effects. It should be remarked that the composer does not need to time these semi-improvised parts in any way since their duration is directly related to that required by the chorus to state a complete strophe. In this context it is appropriate to examine once again the relationship between the music and the text.

### III. Music and Text

In *Agamemnon* the music is still very much subordinated to the text; however, the relationship is different to that which occurs in *Prometheus Bound*: in *Agamemnon* neither the text of the actors nor that of the chorus parts are notated rhythmically, and as a result Christou no longer employs his isochrone series. Nevertheless, the music is totally dependent on the text to the extent that it punctuates in one way or another the breathing spaces between two phrases of the text (by the entry of a pattern, a different timbre or a *sforzando*, for example). One of the ways in

which Christou creates a relationship between the music and text consists of playing on the varying durations of the frequency between restatements of a musical section in relation to the literary text:

### Example 35



Another way may consist of using the sound continuum alone (third stasimon). In this case, only the parameters of timbre and intensity are in force: the musical phrasing is determined merely by the dynamics which are dependent upon the text. In both these cases, the change in the relationship between text and music arises from the fact that the composer does not conceive his musical discourse in terms of notes but of ensembles or expanses of sound.

## IV. Miscellaneous Comments

### A. The Chorus Parts

It is in the choral passages and the orchestration of the episodes that *Agamemnon* has most in common with *Prometheus Bound*. In the chorus parts Christou employs the same compositional style as in *Prometheus Bound* and retains only the division of the chorus into two groups and the polyphonic interplay of these from *The Persians*. However, he does not treat these aspects with the same originality and musical impact as in the latter work. Thus, whilst *Agamemnon* may not be described as 'stagnant' in relation to *Prometheus Bound*, it represents a step backwards in relation to the developments of *The Persians*. The four stasima differ only slightly from one another, principally in their orchestral treatment rather than in their intrinsic character. The chorus intones psalmody on a single repeated note instead of moving within the notes of the mode, and this

clearly emphasizes the sobriety of the music, giving it an austere and occasionally even rough-edged character.

### B. The Orchestral Parts

As in *Prometheus Bound*, the styles of writing differ from one passage to the next, and each change corresponds to a new section in the structure of the play. In addition to the improvisatory style described in section II (B) above, the dramatic orchestral style employed in *Prometheus Bound* (long trilled notes with flutter-tonguing in the wind, dissonant *tutti* chords, *sf*, etc. (see example 29)) recurs, especially in passages in which the action becomes more rapid. The passages concerned are:

- Episode II (*Marziale*) which has its own rhythmic motive;
- Episode III (*Strepitoso feroce assai*);  
(These episodes employ alternately measured and unmeasured notation.)
- The exodium (*Molto feroce*) which is characterized by a violent dramatic style and in which the words of the chorus are abruptly punctuated by dissonant *tutti* (*sfff*) in the orchestra;
- The finale (*Vigoroso marziale*) which restates the motive of episode II.

The piece ends on a triple *pianissimo* in the orchestra after a long *crescendo* followed by a rapid *diminuendo* (*perdendosi*), which is Christou's favourite symbolic dynamic progression.

In conclusion, it may be said that *Agamemnon* occupies an ambiguous historical position in the composer's creative output. It is a transitional work, but one which, unlike *The Persians*, does not mark any outstanding event, for it is not characterized by any particularly extraordinary features; rather, the composer appears to be trying to 'find himself', as it were. It is Christou's last work to be written in conventional notation; nevertheless, its tentative innovations place it halfway between his early style and the revolutionary style of his post-1966 works. On the other hand, in terms of its vocal treatment it conveys a world that is much more conservative than that of *The Persians* and is, in a way, a step backwards in relation to the sophisticated vocal treatment in this work. Neither are there any innovations in timbre—unless one includes the plasticity of the continuum (compare this with the use of the prepared piano in *The Persians*). Why was this so, since *Agamemnon* was performed after *The Persians*? Could it have been composed earlier? Was Christou forced to write such a piece by extra-musical imperatives (an excessively academic attitude of the National Theatre? vocal incompetence of the choirs?) ... Unfortunately, and somewhat unusually, notes or comments about this work have not been preserved in the archives of the composer, and neither are there any recordings. Thus, the mystery seems a long way from being solved ...

## The Persians

### I. Introduction

In *The Persians* Christou addresses a particular and original aspect of the problem of composition, namely, the use of the chorus.

#### *'In Composing for the Chorus.*

In writing the music for *The Persians*, I was not trying to create simple background music effects. I was attracted by the possibility of using the chorus as a means of reproducing the raw material of the tragedy, the basic elemental emotions. This is what I tried to achieve by selecting the position of the words and phrases in such a way that they create patterns of autonomous<sup>21</sup> vocal sounds of varied texture. Psalmody properly so-called was a secondary concern for me, and wherever it appears it is nothing more than one "acoustic" event in the work amongst many. For example, passages often occur in the "accompaniment" which require certain members of the chorus to pronounce different fragments of the text simultaneously and at different dynamic levels... For such a task, inspiration at rehearsals is essential and indispensable. In presenting these sometimes simple, sometimes more complex verses, the chorus must free itself from all inhibition. There must no longer be any impression of effort or anything artificial... Koun became inflamed and that was communicative... Passages that seemed affected and soulless suddenly began to sparkle. Throughout the rehearsals, new ideas came to us and we tried different things as we went along... It was a completely liberating experience.<sup>22</sup>

Why was the chorus used in this way? George Leotsakos claims: 'Christou rebelled against the fact that classical texts are frequently perceived as relics honourably mummified and presented before a public pilgrimage, whereas they ought to be the transmitters of an emotion that stirs humanity, that grows out of the collaboration between the director and the composer. In *The Persians*, the devastated people is like a crowd of young infirm, emaciated children who are beating their fists against the breasts of mother earth demanding that she return to them the king, father and brother, whom she has swallowed up for ever into her great Womb, the Tomb. The chorus members, in a savage, primitive style that makes one's hair stand on end, spit out their emotion in an agitated polyphonic texture of mass hysteria... The musical climax of *The Persians* is the scene of the invocation of Darius's ghost. This scene constitutes one of the greatest moments in Christou's creative work and in theatre in

<sup>21</sup> In Greek, literally, 'which support themselves'.

<sup>22</sup> Christou, Jani, 'In composing for the chorus', in *Art Theatre 1942-1972*, Greek Theatrical Society.

general. Christou seeks to invoke the terrestrial forces through his music; freed from all intellectual considerations, he succeeds in chilling the blood of the spectator with this polyphony of inarticulated cries accompanied by a "choreography" of appropriate movements'.<sup>23</sup>

In treating the text of the chorus as an autonomous sound entity, Christou permits us to study it independently of the instrumental accompaniment. Indeed, the music for the orchestra and chorus springs from two completely different compositional procedures and two complementary, but clearly parallel functions.

### *The Instrumental Music*

This is essentially electro-acoustic. The composer recorded the final result directly onto tape; thus, with the exception of the individual instrumental parts, there is no full score. The so-called 'conventional' instruments are represented by the wind and percussion; the wind instruments play only a minor role, however, creating 'specks of sound' scattered throughout the score which serve to punctuate the musical discourse. They also double the so-called 'Byzantine' melody in the first section of the second stasimon (see the analysis below). The percussion instruments, in contrast, occupy a prominent position since whole passages of music in *The Persians* are exclusively rhythmic (repeated drum rolls punctuated by cymbal strokes, various rhythmic effects, etc.) in such a way as to suggest the musical tradition of Near-Eastern countries. The electro-acoustic music consists for the most part of effects for prepared piano which result either in long threads of sound with reverberation or percussive resonances spaced out in time and manipulated in different classic ways (suppression of attacks, inversion, etc). This music is, however, clearly subordinated to the events that occur simultaneously in the chorus.

## *II. Music and Text*

Entitling this second section 'Music and Text' may seem something of a paradox for it is precisely this dichotomy between 'speaking' and 'singing' that disappears definitively from *The Persians*; henceforward a dialectical process brings into play a third sound source merging the former two, exploiting every quality and degree of vocal utterance.

Indeed, Christou here exploits in a rich, never tedious way – since intrinsically bound up with the inner dynamic of the drama – every possibility of the human voice from speaking to singing and singing to shouting, passing through every imaginable shade of expression from wailing to mournful psalmody, *glissandi* to the sound of the breath, and sighing to screaming and crying, by emphasizing words or key expressions

<sup>23</sup> Leotsakos, George S., *Bima*, 22 August 1965.

in the text that penetrate the listener's ear. He employs, moreover, every possible combination of the soloists and chorus (question and answer, canon), playing on large-scale effects and multiplying different texts in polyphony, and exploits a subtle palette of nuances, ranging from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*, together with the rhythmic possibilities presented by the natural accentuation of the Greek language.

#### *First Stasimon*

It may be observed that from the beginning of *The Persians*, Christou specifies his musical intentions in the score more precisely than ever before and meticulously annotates everything concerning the manner of performance of the vocal part in this case, alternating musical indications of vocal technique with those of a more psychological nature relating to the text of the drama: 'In the stillness, suddenly a frighteningly loud, choked cry of protest and despair ... very long *glissando* naturally spending itself out'; '*piano*, SLOW-TENSE, whispered hoarsely'; 'Slow, tense, sobbed slightly, choked grief, pausing fractionally between syllables as if grief stricken'; 'High-pitched, a wailing, little, broken voice, delivering the words in a fast unbroken sweep, grotesquely almost'.<sup>24</sup>

#### *Second Stasimon (structure)*

The second stasimon is divided into three main sections:

- (i) a vocal section that serves as an introduction to the prayer;
- (ii) a rhythmic section that extends throughout the first part of the prayer;
- (iii) a final section that extends throughout the second part of the prayer and, towards the end, includes the vocal material from the introduction to the first section.

(i) The second stasimon begins with the declamation of the soloist, beseeching Queen Atossa to appeal to the ghost of the late king Darius for his advice and to listen to his predictions. At the same time, the chorus restates the text to a slow melody occurring within the range of a fourth but including diminished fourths and fifths which give the vocal line a vaguely strange, disturbing, mysterious character. See example 36.

This solemn mood, punctuated soberly by a single tam-tam, prepares the listener psychologically for the invocation of the ghost of Darius.

<sup>24</sup> In Christou's earlier scores of his music for the theatre, annotations are in Italian or Greek but from *The Persians* on they are in English.

Example 36 Hieratic, with 'byzantine' gravity. Very slow, each note slightly stressed

$mf$  χι ε - σεις του κά πω κόσ μου ά - γιες Θε . ό - τη - τες Ερ - μή και Γη  
 $f$  στείλ - τε στο φως ε - πά νω την ψυ - χή του  $p$  στείλ - τε στο φως  
*ancora più*  
 $ff$   
*perdendosi*  
 ε - πά - νω την ψυ - χή του

(ii) *The invocation of the Ghost of Darius* In this section Christou makes use for the first time of the human breath, notated as  $\vee$   $\square$  signifying the inhalation and exhalation respectively, as a dynamic-generating element; the way in which this operates will be examined below.

Direction: 'Tense, arrhythmic breathing, at random, each individual sighing and breathing audibly on his own'.

Furthermore, he uses key-expressions taken from the verses declaimed by the soloist in which he introduces the element of the grotesque: 'grotesquely provocative, in a forced "disguised" voice'.

The invocation which, as stated above, represents the climax of the work in its dramatic intensity, philosophical significance and musical impact, is composed of patterns, the **differing functions of which determine its structure**. These functions are related once more to the treatment of the dynamics of the text, and each pattern has a specific role:

Patterns, 1, 2, 3 and 5 are exclusively rhythmic and are in a 'question and answer' style between three soloists from the chorus who provide a counterpoint to the solo actor's declamation. Thus, these patterns are always accompanied by a text and their intensity remains unchanged ( $mp$ ), for the most important aspect here is that the text should be understood by the spectator. They are sustained, moreover, by the panting breathing of the chorus which serves as a rhythmic ostinato. Over and above this *tutti* in the chorus which accompanies the three soloists, there are sections that consist solely of the sound of the breath. These sections occur immediately before the 'blocks' composed of patterns 1, 2, 3 and 5, 2, 3, thus occurring twice. The breathing becomes more and more rapid, like a bouncing ball, and creates a feeling of impetus which functions as an **anacrusis**.

Patterns 4 and 9 act as **dramatic catalysts** due on the one hand to their inner potential energy that derives from their very marked accentuation and quality of emission (see example 37), and on the other to the

fact that their intensity, connected to the agogic movement, does not remain constant but responds to the necessary demands of the mounting dramatic tension. The dynamic scheme may be described as follows: *p/crescendo* and *accelerando* – *fff*.

Example 37

Pattern 4 which may be accentuated as

audible inhalation

Γη μου, Γη μου. Γη μου, Γη μου

but with the sound of the breath and in rapid passages as

rapid audible inhalation

Γη μου, Γη μου

Pattern 9a

audible inhalation

varied 9b

'E - λα [hh], 'E - λα [hh], 'E - λα, 'E - λα,

Patterns 6, 7 and 8 are exclusively rhythmic and represent precisely this *fortissimo* outburst that occurs on different key-phrases of the text of the prayer.

The first phrase is composed of pattern 6:

'Hades, bring him from the earth'

Grouped *fff* Αϊ δω νέ α / solo *fff* στείλτον απ' το χώ μα!

The second phrase is composed of pattern 7:

'Send him, let him come into the light! Hades!'

3 στείλτον νάρ - θει στο φως! 3 Αϊ - δω - νέ - α!



## Example 38

***fff***  
very fast, maximum emotion  
(*battere in uno*)

**Groupe 1**  $\frac{4}{8}$

*fff*  $\mu\mu - A$  Ω - ρα καα κιά, ω - ρα πι - κρή α - φέν τη μου,

**Groupe 2**

**A.**

που τόσο σ'έ χουνκλάφει

στο θά - να τό σου οι φί - λιοι σου.

**B**

*fff* . . . maximum fervour

**B**  $\frac{5}{16}$   $\frac{2}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{8}$   $\frac{5}{16}$

*fff* ποού νά ναι τ'α - μάρ τη - μά μας πά - λι το βα - ρύ

σου κι' η συμφορά μας ήρ θε φο βε

and fired his imagination. It is the listener who has changed; the music remains the same but the listener perceives it from a different perspective and in a new frame of mind and feeling. As for the rest, this fleeting appearance of the Byzantine melody has not structural importance; it is merely a last-minute inclusion, four bars before the chorus cry the name Hades with the utmost anguish and fall to their knees at the moment of Darius's appearance.

### III. Conclusion

*The Persians* was an important work in Christou's compositional development from several points of view. On an instrumental level, the composer definitively adopted *musique concrète* and made fundamental, though not exclusive, use of it. In this treatment of the **voice**, his commitment was total, for it not only sanctioned the emancipation of the music

in relation to the text but took a huge step forward: strictly speaking, there no longer existed any dichotomy between text and music, but an integrated sound substance arising from these two heterogeneous sources. Moreover, Christou, ever committed to his philosophical perspective, skilfully exploited the immense musical possibilities of the voice, **no longer by simply valorizing its profoundly human dimension** – as in the *Six Songs* and *Tongues of Fire* – **but by going beyond this stage** and taking it to the limits of its sonorous possibilities, to the very boundary between the world of normality and that of madness, like a channel of sound connecting the familiar world of life to the unknown world of death.

It was perhaps here in this metaphysical dimension that the fundamental change in the composer's creative work occurred, for it was during the composition of *The Persians* that Christou appeared to become aware of the **radical change in his musical attitude**. He effected a sort of **ritualization of the musical act**, raising it to the level of the sacred, and producing a work of synthesis that united music, gesture, movement and group choreography. For it was indeed in *The Persians* that the **point of no return** that formed the boundary between his two compositional styles and the two different worlds of his pre- and post-1965 works occurred.

## The Frogs

### I. Myth and Music

The following commentary by Christou explains the aims of this work:

'With the music and especially the chorus parts, I tried – I do not know if I succeeded – to render prominent the elements of ritualism that occur in Attic drama. I do not want to give the impression of saying that Aristophanes wrote religious works... Quite the reverse. The contemporary issues with which he was concerned are well known. He was, moreover, very direct. He did not write with the help of innuendo... And yet, whatever the subject of his comedy, it unfolded according to a ritual "recipe" which, in *The Frogs*, may be identified with the "passions"<sup>25</sup> of Dionysus, with the mythological archetypal drama of the renewal of life after death.

Each comedy presents at its outset an important problem, puts forward a critical case. The situations to which these problems give rise lead the rival parties to vie with one another, and the comedy reaches its climax as it resolves triumphantly in an orgiastic renewal of the "good" elements.

<sup>25</sup> In the christian sense of 'suffering'.

God of Attic drama, Dionysus, with his "passions", created the form of comedy. Thus, on one level, the work is concerned with contemporary issues, whilst on a second level, it opens up the whole Dionysian mystery. This is one thing that Aristophanes did not need to emphasize, because it exists in the unconscious of the whole of the ancient world.

Today, through my music, I have tried to bring these ritual elements to the surface. It is only in this way that the extent of the parody, with the choral drama of the ceremony of the putting to death and resurrection of Dionysus, may be explained, and the fact that the chorus moves from highly comical situations to a ritual atmosphere, particularly at the end of the work, may be justified'.<sup>26</sup>

## II. Musical Content

The music of *The Frogs* is exclusively tonal (in the wider sense of the term, as opposed to free atonality and the dodecaphonic system) and its orchestration differs completely from that of Christou's other works. Why was this so? Was Christou provoked into writing in this style? Did he believe that his dodecaphonic music was too austere to be adapted to comedy? It was not, in fact, a question of musical style. Once again the problem went beyond the musical process. It was a matter of penetrating Aristophanes's state of mind, of adopting an 'Aristophanian' attitude with regard to music, and once he had achieved this, the solution to the dilemma of musical style came to him easily. As it is, the mind of the great playwright is characterized by two factors which are embodied within the language of the literary text: firstly, the **verve** or spirit he obtains from the 'popular' style of writing, and the **parodic style**, which both refer to elements drawn from current events, and secondly, on a different level, the feeling of ritual and sacred celebration. It is in relation to these factors that Christou modelled his attitude on that of Aristophanes, using highly coloured, even parodic music borrowed from everyday life in order to emphasize the sacred meaning of the text.

The following passage presents the composer's own explanation of his musical choices in a way that seems to anticipate his justification to his eventual critics:

'The music I used in *The Frogs* is basically the music of everyday life. I mean I used jazz elements and popular music from Greece and abroad. In short, anything you might hear on switching on the radio. I wanted to serve the theatre, a given theatrical work, by following Verdi's conviction that for the stage a bad but theatrical work is preferable to a beautiful but non-theatrical one. Besides, music has now gone beyond

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Christou by Vangelis Psyraakis, *Messimbrini* 18 July 1966.

the boundaries within which it was enclosed for so many centuries; within the term "music", the composer of our time includes even the sounds and the footsteps of the man in the street'.<sup>27</sup>

My claim that in this extract the composer expresses a kind of self-justification stems from the fact that, on the one hand, he refers to Verdi's statement concerning the theatricality of music, a *sine qua non* condition of all music for the stage, and on the other, from a personal letter expressing the poor opinion the composer had of this music, and the extent to which his motivation for *The Frogs* inclined more towards its extra-musical argument:

'The music for *The Frogs* does not of course represent the way I write, it's all a musical joke really, I did it as a relaxation on a "pop"-music basis. It was fun. But the play is interesting, quite openly reflecting the various stages of an Eleusinian Mystery: the descent to the Underworld, the fearful experiences (done very funnily), the "initiates", the flogging (martyrdom), the judgement and finally the triumphal outcome and the glorious "resurrection"-ascent (Aeschylus wins over poor Euripides in the poetic contest). Aristophanes was of course making points relevant to his day and times, and making fun of the Mysteries too, but deep down it's not all fun, and, in spite of all the irreverence and fun, the good old archetypes are certainly at work. I tried to bring this aspect out, by using liturgical elements, even in "pop"-style at times, as an under-current. E.g. during the funny episode when Dionysus is being flogged by Aiakos (to see whether this hurts him) I make the chorus begin to chant, "liturgically"; and during the final judgement-scene, during the poetic contest, I use the chorus in the same manner. I had accepted to do this play, the music that is, because the director, Koun, let me use the chorus in this manner. Otherwise "musically" it is not interesting at all'.<sup>28</sup>

The work consists essentially of a classical accompaniment (various strands of sound based on drum rolls, bell sounds, 'humming', etc.) and a series of short songs, each of which is attached to a particular character or group within the play, as in a masque. For example:

- Aiakos's song, the most highly coloured with popular elements, performed typically on the *gáida* (a sort of bagpipe of Cretan origin), full of freshness and poetry;
- Athenas' song, playful, very rhythmic, based on the pentachord A-D;
- Euripides's song;

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Letter to James Hillman dated 5 May 1967.

- The contest song, very cheerful and captivating, based on an interval of a fourth, transposed a semitone higher on each repetition.

Christou does not miss the opportunity provided by this mosaic of different musical fragments to experiment with the most unusual instrumental combinations, as, for example, in the parabasis in which the tonal song in the key of D played on the trumpet is accompanied by three mandolins, two guitars, two celli and a double bass. The musical passages that correspond to the exodium of the play are written in a jazz style, however. It should also be noted that the parodic element intervenes three times during the course of the play. At these points Christou in turn imitates the musical styles of Mussorgsky, Wagner and Verdi.

As may be seen, this work incorporates a large number of deliberately ill-matched elements coordinated by a powerful imagination which ensures that the listener does not experience the music as alien to the essence of the comedy. Christou's music conforms more closely than ever to the spirit of the stage production and it is in their theatrical justification that these seemingly incongruous elements find their coherence. Finally, it may be observed that, in the light of the examination of the score, this work is particularly well constructed in every detail.

### III. Conclusion

As in *The Persians*, the element of initiation is fundamental in *The Frogs*, for, once again, the subject matter concerns a descent into Hades.<sup>29</sup> Death, as we know, was the dominant theme in Christou's second creative period. From a purely musical point of view, the composer was faced with the problem of the immense proliferation of his themes, which ran the risk of jeopardizing the unity of the work. If the many eulogistic reviews concerning this matter are to be believed, it would appear that Christou not only overcame the problem but was also able to harmonize the fugacity of these contrasting elements by appropriate musical touches, thus offering a marvellous canvas 'rich in colours and characters, like a parade of thousands of masqueraders, alluring, as biting as a sacred insult'.<sup>30</sup>

## Oedipus Rex

The change in style that occurred in *Oedipus Rex* in relation to *The Persians* is so great that it is appropriate to seek an explanation in the director's own words:

<sup>29</sup> See chapter III, *Mysterion*.

<sup>30</sup> Leotsakos, George S., *Bima*, 19 July 1966.

'Many critics find the reserved style, removed from every "shrieking" dramatic element, in which I interpreted the play *Oedipus*, strange. But this was precisely my aim, and it is this that I consider to be my contribution. I would have done the same with any other tragedy; nowadays I think I prefer to emphasize the inner force of the text and the characters, rather than the "tragic exteriorization" to which we have been accustomed until now'.<sup>31</sup>

This interiorization of the drama has been emphasized by several critics:

'Right from the moment the curtain goes up on the sombre brown setting, figures slowly entering while hugging the walls like a moving bas-relief, the feeling of being present at a tragic event is inescapable. The carved-stone figures gradually take on life, and *Oedipus* enters to answer the pleas of his people'.<sup>32</sup>

'An empty stage, nothing to be seen but the walls of Thebes and ... the entrance of *Oedipus's* palace. In a long silence broken only by a distant throbbing hum, the people of Thebes move on very slowly and take up their place in front of the palace. A feeling of tension is generated at once'.<sup>33</sup>

'The terrifying opening and close of the play, when ghastly cowed figures crept from the darkness below a gaunt palace archway and made palpable for us the agony and the shame of plague-ridden Thebes. This set the mood at once'.<sup>34</sup>

'Ritual is never far off: *Jocasta* burns incense to her dead husband. The chorus's cheekbones and gestures are sharpened to the angularity of ikons'.<sup>35</sup>

'*Karolos Koun's* new production of *Oedipus Rex*, which forms the second half of the Greek Art Theatre's contribution to the World Theatre Season at the Aldwych, is an object lesson in control. At a pace which could hardly be slower, the tragedy is spelt out relentlessly, sensed in the first imprisoned movements of the chorus and consummated without climax. An evening of sustained oratory, too, but the poetic flow of *Sophocles's* stanzas is less important than the visual completeness of the omnipresent, inscrutable chorus, untouchable witnesses of disintegration'.<sup>36</sup>

'Nothing is for show, everything for the development of *Oedipus's* terrible knowledge. Along a wall in the quiet authoritative set, a slow figure moves on at the start, in a long complete silence into which

<sup>31</sup> Interview with *Karolos Koun*, *Bima*, 4 June 1969.

<sup>32</sup> D. F. B., 'Koun "*Oedipus Rex*"', *The Stage and Television Today*, 29 May 1969, p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> Young, B. A., *The Financial Times*, 24 May 1969.

<sup>34</sup> Barber, John, *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 1969.

<sup>35</sup> Bryden, Ronald, *The Observer Review*, 25 May 1969.

<sup>36</sup> Waterhouse, Robert, *Guardian*, 24 May 1969.

a sound begins to enter, like the hum of the air laden with what is to come'.<sup>37</sup>

This theatrical position without doubt influenced the style of the musical setting, which adapts itself marvellously once more to the theatrical conception. And indeed, the critics were not insensitive to the theatrical function of sound and music in this work:

'Karolos Koun's new production... seems designed to make a total impact on the senses, grasping attention both visually and aurally'.<sup>38</sup>

'At each revelation the chorus of elders rustle like dry leaves, groping together for comfort, while a drone of bells and wailing swells from the city around'.<sup>39</sup>

'The chorus of elders move in a ghostly rhythm against a background of throbbing'.<sup>40</sup>

'The remote buzz of Yanni Christou's music varies in texture or in loudness, but never suggests songs... The choruses are spoken by single voices, never chorically'.<sup>41</sup>

'Thebes is full of voices. They begin to murmur distantly like the stirrings of a supernatural menace before the first human beings appear on the steps of the palace of Oedipus. They continue as the chorus drag themselves like stricken ghosts up to the steps from the plague-ridden city. The undercurrent of menacing sound never ceases, rising at the climax to a wail of half-heard syllables hinting at inexpressible darkness and suffering behind Sophocles's lines. This is how Karolos Koun has woven the tragedy into a single musical movement with this remarkable score by Yanni Christou. It is the outstanding effect of the Greek Art Theatre's new production.

### Screaming

It produces a nightmare continuum in which there is no gap or chink for light to break in. All the chorus movements are in slow, liquid motion. The ragged grey ancients move like the figures on a medieval clock, driven by inexorable hidden machinery. Against this, the human figures seem pawns of their destiny, screaming silently as though trapped in glass'.<sup>42</sup>

'Indistinct sounds, highly allusive, expressively ambiguous, one might say, like those oracles who represent the channel, the "medium"

<sup>37</sup> Niven, Barbara, *Morning Star*, 24 May 1969, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> D. F. B., 'Koun "Oedipus Rex"', *The Stage and Television Today*, 29 May 1969, p. 13.

<sup>39</sup> Bryden, Ronald, *The Observer Review*, 25 May 1969.

<sup>40</sup> Say, Rosemary, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 25 May 1969.

<sup>41</sup> Niven, Barbara, *Morning Star*, 24 May 1969, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> Lewis, Peter, *Daily Mail*, 23 May 1969.

through which the divinity speaks in a code that is not easily understandable by ordinary mortals. Through this finely textured and carefully wrought music that envelops the work...it appears that the director intends to deliver the text'.<sup>43</sup>

This piece, created by means of numerous electro-acoustic manipulations, unfolds in a continuous sweep from beginning to end without interruption. It is composed on four channels, and the regulation of the dynamics (the emphasis or suppression of certain elements) varied in each performance according to the prevailing conditions. The work is no longer composed for orchestra; being the only exclusively electro-acoustic music in which no traditional instruments intervene with the tape, it clearly illustrates one of the aspects of Christou's later style.

## Conclusion

Christou's work for the theatre does not form the main axis or central core of his creative output. Nevertheless, it provided him with an opportunity to adapt his personal ideas, such as the concept of death and resurrection that was already present in his earliest work, *Phoenix Music*, and which recurred in *The Frogs*, to another quite particular art form adjacent to music and, at the same time including it. There is, in fact, a sense of evolution, a constant dialectic between this spiritual path and its musical application. For example, in *Prometheus Bound*, Christou presented his own interpretation of the myth in which the music bursts forth on the words of the hero, finally breaking out into a cataclysm that aims to capture the meaning of the text, of Aeschylus's world. The musical style however remains connected to his orchestral style of the early 1960s from an aesthetic point of view. In contrast, in *The Persians* the music is united with a cosmogonic vision and in this work Christou finally achieved his goal through the discovery of new styles and new means of expression.

After *The Frogs*, which appeared as an amusing distraction in the middle of the composer's complete output, a final and sparkling snub to death in relation to his total and irreversible concern with the macabre in the works that were to follow, almost three years passed before Christou decided to write for the theatre again. The musical style though of his last work no longer had anything in common with that of the preceding ones, and indeed, it is well known that Christou was not particularly committed to the idea of undertaking the musical setting of *Oedipus Rex*. He told his loyal friend, George Leotsakos, that he had accepted the task simply to please Koun because he was a friend, but that it interrupted

<sup>43</sup> Leotsakos, George S., *Bima*, 12 June 1969.

his progress on *Oresteia*. Nevertheless, this piece proves useful for the purposes of the present study since it forms the last of five landmarks in Christou's overall musical development which correspond respectively to five pieces, completely different in style, that represent the projection of the composer's central concerns into the theatrical domain: five pieces in which the essential content and metaphysical message are thoroughly absorbed and subsequently retransmitted in music in such perfect form that Christou's own words concerning his Greek origin indeed ring true.<sup>44</sup>

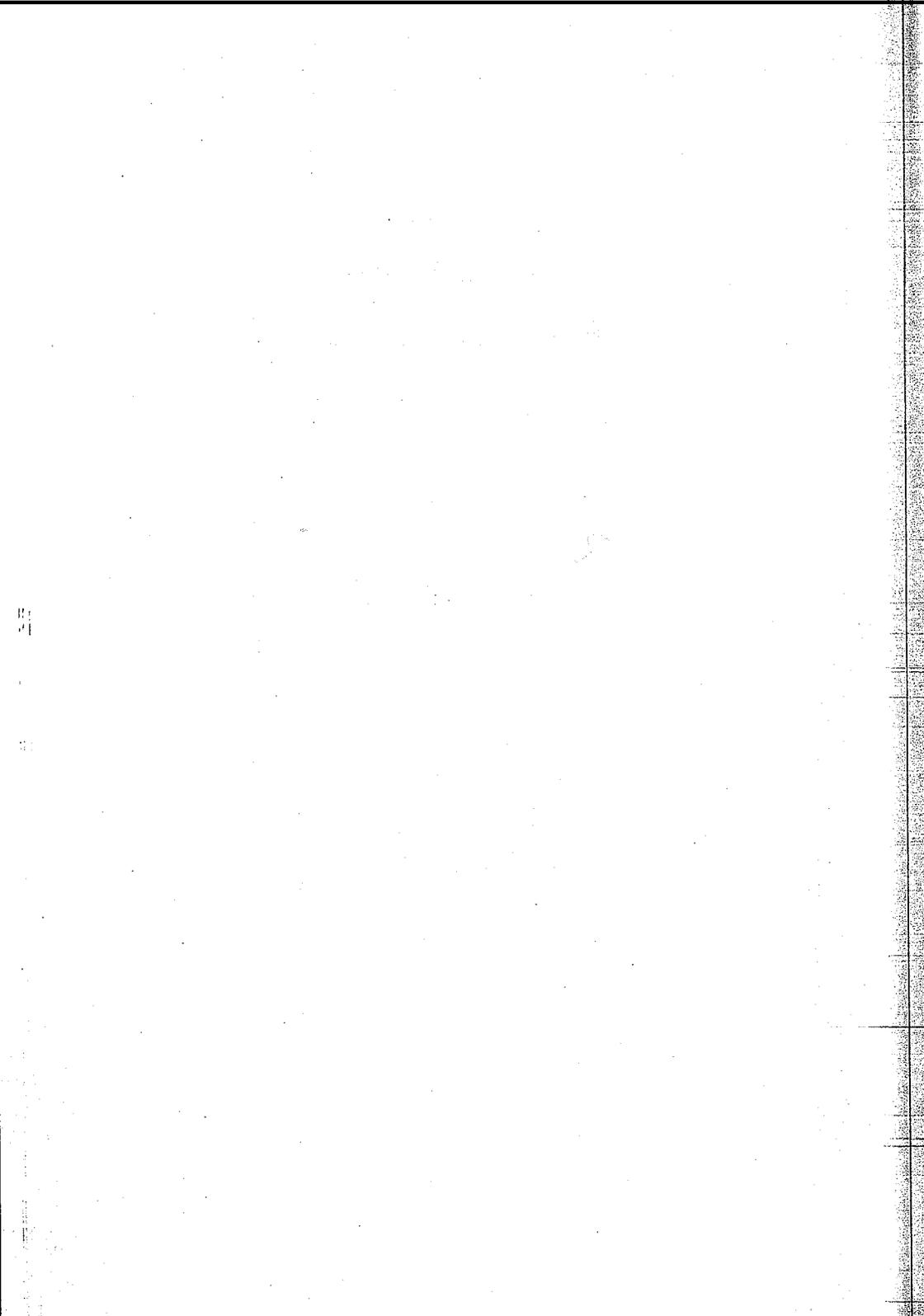
Finally, it should be noted that it was in writing music for the theatre that Christou perhaps became fully aware of the way in which the element of theatricality could be exploited in his music, for it was as a result of this experience that the composer appears to have developed his new musical ethic. Indeed, throughout his final period this element of theatricality formed a constant presence in his works, either as a function of 'metapraxis'<sup>45</sup> or as a rite.

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<sup>44</sup> See the quotation in *Prometheus Bound: I. The Myth*, from an interview with Christou by G. K. Pilichos, 1963, op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> See chapter III for an explanation of this term.

**Part Two**  
**THE LUNAR PATTERN**



# Chapter III

## A NEW MUSICAL ETHIC

Turning now to the study of Christou's post-1965 works, it must be emphasized in order to ensure a thorough understanding of the explanations that follow that the discussion will no longer focus specifically on music since almost all the issues considered will not be of a strictly musical nature. **Matters of sound syntax** are treated by the composer within the **mystico-musical perspective** of the evolution of patterns that began to occur in *Patterns and Permutations*. This does not imply, however, that Christou was not concerned with details of timbre, nuances and methods of sound production in general, but these concerns, although present, as the numerous annotations in the scores avouch, take second place within a study that aims to remain an introduction on a more general level to his complete work.

A second reason is that from this time on, music alone no longer sufficed for Christou. His **artistic expression** became part of a **synthesis of various art forms** (theatre and dance principally) of which music was but one, and it gradually lost its hegemony. The line of development from *Mysterion* to the *Anaparastasis* is very clear in this respect. Other factors must also be considered.

Elsewhere I have named 'manifesto' the credo published by Christou in the journal *Epoches* at the request of his friend George Leótsakos. This term may lead to confusion and requires some explanation: few people are aware that the composer did in fact have every intention of writing a manifesto (he announced this intention to another Greek composer, Theodor Antoniou, in a letter inviting him to collaborate on the project) and Christou himself drafted a rough copy outlining ten points. The text of this manifesto written six months later in a much more virulent style, is completely different to that of the subsequent article. In this manifesto, the author launches an attack amongst other things on the musical concert and even on the concert of contemporary music, as well as on festivals in general, considering them to be museums of culture, and believing that the means of expression in general and the relationship between the audience and the work had to be renewed. Thus, I maintain that in this credo, Christou is close to the spirit of the aborted manifesto, for it is concerned particularly with the **repudiation of the aesthetic value of music** (points 4 and 6) and the definition of its **liberating role**. Finally, it clarifies the composer's attitude towards music such

as rock and jazz (point 10), which he himself did not disdain to use in a parodic style (see the jazz piece in *The Frogs*). In this respect, a new musical aesthetic is suggested, envisaged from an entirely new metaphysical point of view.

### A Credo for Music<sup>1</sup>

'In elaborating these thoughts concerning music, which, as I write, constitute for me part of my deepest convictions, I will endeavour to be as brief and concise as possible. In the lines that follow it may be seen that I often refer to the question of "transformation" and this concept may be interpreted very vaguely as a synonym of evolution, or at least as related to it. I nevertheless believe that a fuller explanation is necessary:

The logic of transformation cannot be explained in terms other than those pertaining to itself. It is very difficult because the validity of such descriptions depend on whether or not we are talking or listening from experience. But an image can help. Let us take as a basic concept space-time. An object can be considered as situated in ordinary space-time, that of everyday experience. That same object can be considered not from this point of view, but from a wider sense of space-time (namely, solar space-time). We can go even further and consider the object as occupying space-time within space-time, when we reach out to galaxial space-time dimensions. We can go on into intergalaxial dimensions. That same object assumes vastly different meanings, yet it is the same object. If we now think in terms of acoustical objects or events, we can perhaps, by analogy, see how the same events can have ever deepening implications.

Transformations in music do just that. Absence of transforming powers keeps the acoustical events on one level, thus catering only to our sense of decoration. Art which does not rise above this level may be craftful, but it is no longer meaningful. [I think there is a much greater interest]<sup>2</sup> in art that is of a liberative nature than in art which is of a decorative nature; liberative in the sense of liberating us from the common space-time continuum, pointing to other areas of experience.

[I will try to classify my views in ten points here:]<sup>3</sup>

- (i) I am concerned with the transformation of acoustical energies into music.
- (ii) Basically the meaning of music is a function of our possibility of experiencing such transformations. Music which is meaningless for one person may not only be valid for another, but can also strike him with the force of revelation (for example, a person may listen to a piece of music without being able to relate it to anything he

<sup>1</sup> Christou, Jani, 'A "Credo" for Music', *Epoches*, vol. 34, February 1966, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> This phrase is in Greek in the manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> This phrase does not appear in the manuscript but is added in the Greek edition.

has heard previously. He nevertheless feels that something has moved him).<sup>4</sup>

- (iii) The points of interest in a composition are those at which these transformations take place, although the demarcation lines are never fixed.
- (iv) For both listener and composer the danger is of being seduced by the whore of decoration and aesthetics.
- (v) Most of the music written in the course of the historical period of music has succumbed to these temptations in varying degrees. And this includes the period stretching from the early polyphonic school with permutatory devices right up to the present day of shoots of serialism and the schools of chance, as well as those of computer-calculations.
- (vi) Decoration and aesthetics have been and are powerful negative factors in music.
- (vii) A manipulation of acoustical events which fails to generate the transformatory energies achieves nothing other than the more or less aesthetic and decorative saturation of acoustical space. Even "beautiful" music can leave one nauseated.
- (viii) Every age experiences transformations within an aesthetic characteristic of that particular age.
- (ix) The obstinate transplantation of an aesthetic of one age to another or even a generation to a generation is not only futile and invalid but is also a declaration of spiritual bankruptcy.
- (x) Contrary to what is commonly held against the music of our day, its frequent jarring and shock-provoking methods can be symptoms of the necessity for liberation from an inherited aesthetic and worn-out patterns of thought.<sup>5</sup>

## Mysterion

The manifesto clearly reflects Christou's state of mind during the years 1965-66. However, following his radical rejection of all aesthetic value in music, it became necessary to construct something new, built on new foundations. The oratorio *Mysterion* was the first musical consequence of this reaction. This large-scale work of some thirty minutes' duration requires no less than three choruses and sixty instrumentalists over and above the tapes for its performance. It was completed as early as 1966 but the world première was not given until June 1969 by the Copenhagen Radio Chorus and Orchestra. Its theme is as follows:

The action is set in the world beyond the grave, the underworld after death (known as 'Tuat').

'The underworld was a region shrouded in the gloom and darkness of night and a place of fear and horror. An enormous circular valley ringed

<sup>4</sup> The bracketed passage is in Greek in the manuscript.

<sup>5</sup> Points 8-9-10 in the ms. in the Greek edition are in the following order: 10-8-9.

by mountains. At each end of the Tuat (underworld) was a space which was neither wholly darkness nor wholly light, the western end being partially lighted by the setting sun and the eastern end by the rising sun. A river flowed through the Tuat with "inhabitants" on each of its banks (Nile-like). This river joined the great celestial waters (source of earthly Nile). Certain parts of this Kingdom of the Dead belonged by tradition to certain cities – Heliopolis, Memphis, Heraklopolis, etc., – each possessing its own "other world" and gods of the dead, and all this had to be considered by the theologians who formulated the general plan of the Tuat.

The underworld consisted of twelve divisions through which the Sun-god penetrated nightly, travelling in his "boat of a million years". The wants and needs of the "inhabitants" of this Kingdom of the Dead were provided for by the use of WORDS OF POWER.<sup>6</sup>

### Story Line

#### THE SHIP'S HEARTBEAT

Râ is in his boat on the river which runs through the underworld at night and flows into the "ocean of the sky" during the day. While in the underworld, the dismal inhabitants crowd both sides of his boat along the banks. In the eighth division of the underworld, which corresponds to events suggested by *Mysterion*, he must pass through a region in which other bleak inhabitants are shut up in "circles that are hidden".

### Formal Plan of the Oratorio Section

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| I  | Before reaching this point there is a confusion of anguished rejoicings at the light which emanates from him as he enters the division, and of despair as "words of power", which alone can save one from total destruction, are forgotten or mispronounced. |
| II | But Râ, occasionally struggling himself with the articulation of these "words", succeeds in formulating these indispensable formulas which he uses like weapons, destroying his enemies. He hurls these words like bullets and passes on.                    |

#### THE NIGHTMARE PULSE

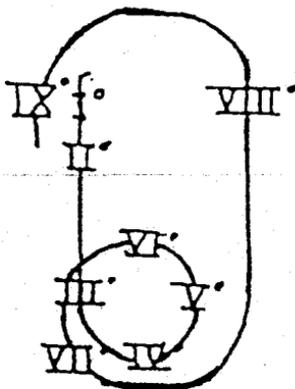
- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| III | When he gets to the "hidden circles", there is a strange stillness. Eventually he pronounces the right word and pierces through. He calls out, mysteriously, to each circle, and those that are "shut" within |
| IV  | are momentarily revived by his words of power and respond with strange stirrings and even stranger sounds.  |

<sup>6</sup> Extract from a note by the composer dated 19 October 1965.

- V "Like the hum of many bees, the sound of bulls and other male animals, of male cats weeping, of dead bodies, of those who lament,
- VI of those who make supplication through terror, of those who are killed on the battle-field, of the twittering of birds, of the confused murmur of the living..." This last is the key-phrase: the confused murmur of the living. So it is that those "hidden circles" could be our own world whose light is darkness and whose sound is "confused".
- VII But Râ passes on, and the gathering momentum of confusion turns to fearsome cries of triumph lit up by blinding, painful light.
- VIII Yet the triumph is Râ's, not man's, and as the boat passes out of the
- IX division, the gate closes, shutting out his light, and all returns to cold inertia, to the darkness of the "Chamber of Destruction". The throb of the ship's heartbeat is heard dying out in the distance.<sup>7</sup>

'Within this "climate", then, *Mysterion* unfolds with the logic – or, rather, the lack of logic – of a dream, of a dream dreamt today, tomorrow ... Words are articulated, but their meaning cannot possibly be clear. The text is not meant to be "followed". After all, it consists entirely of magical formulas in a remote language. And even if the words were contemporary, the distortions would still be the same. Here words do not describe anything, or perhaps they do, but we do not know what this is. They are, perhaps, exclamations, and as in exclamations it is the tone of voice which counts most.

This is a dream. There is form though. It is this:



<sup>7</sup> Extract from a note by the composer dated Copenhagen, June 1969.

and that which occurs in the circle in the centre is a nightmare. The opening statements, spoken in the language of the audience are carved in hieroglyphics on the walls of the tomb of Seti I.<sup>8</sup>

A number of conclusions may be drawn from this introduction written by the composer himself. Firstly, the subject serves Christou's musical objectives perfectly, for, in his own words, it is a ferment containing a 'mass of stimulating ideas'. This time, the 'stimulating idea' from which Christou produced a general draft of his oratorio concerns the relationship between two Egyptian divinities, Osiris and Râ (Osiris being the mythological substitute for the earth and Râ that for the sun).<sup>9</sup> Christou nevertheless faced the problem of deciding whether to translate these ancient texts into modern language. In the end he decided not to do so. His argument concerning the suppression of the meaning of the words is presented below:

'The essence here is not in the shape of the word; the word is not meaningful because of its conventionality, it is meaningful only insofar as the sound it carries is expressive. Thus the impact of unconventional language can be retained by keeping to Ancient Egyptian sounds while creating attitudes within these words – the expression... Thus, if chorus No. 2 or 3 are to react to this sound which expresses stern command they can do so using the same word, but articulating it in a totally different manner to express anguish, pleading, etc. The suggestiveness of such a procedure is far richer than using "intelligible words"'.<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, the composer renews and deepens the experience of the Incantatory Prayer in *The Persians* in which the words are exploited simply for their 'energizing' force, determining the impact of the musical result on the listener. In comparison with *The Persians*, however, Christou places greater emphasis on the psychological interpretation of the word due to the fact that, having renounced all aesthetic concerns, he has become oriented towards a kind of music extirpated from deep instinctive forces.

The performance of such a work nevertheless presents practical problems which give rise to an initial technical obstacle: that of conventional notation which Christou was eager to replace:

'Why the non-conventional writing? Answer: to free the performer (and composer) from inhibiting complexities and to provoke an uninhibited delivery of the event as "suggested" by the pictorial or optical layout.

<sup>8</sup> Introduction to the score.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix V, pp. 159–160.

<sup>10</sup> Note dated 20 October 1965.

(Graphic and, [much less so] optical notation are a step nearer to the composer's original idea).<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, it was with regard to notation that the extent of the influence of the composer's theatrical activity and his increasing involvement in a creative synthesis or osmosis between music and theatre may be seen:

'The way I notate music now, and the use of random effects (in controlled overall plans) means that rehearsals are more like theatre rehearsals; the players practise together trying out various possibilities. Ideally, the instrumentalists should learn their roles, like actors. They should avoid using their orchestral parts during a performance ... The use of textures or patterns for groups suits this purpose, as these are easy to memorize, and each player has only to recall one or two basic requirements. He is then stimulated by the conductor and by his own involvement (and "memory" acquired during rehearsals).<sup>12</sup>

Inasmuch as the composition notes for *Mysterion* represent only a very vague idea of his system of notation as a whole, I will reserve my discussion of this until chapter IV and will simply note that he uses the procedure of isochrones ('cyclic' figures in the violins which constitute 'active' clusters as opposed to the 'static' clusters in the violas (held notes, long bows as widely spaced and discreet as possible)) for the last time.

A further important point which is directly linked to the theatrical activity mentioned above may be seen already in this work and concerns the exploitation of an unusual situation, one that is 'out of the ordinary', operating beyond normal logical processes. This procedure was later to form the basis of his *Anaparastasis*.<sup>13</sup> In order to establish the presence of the unusual firmly in the mind of the spectator, Christou has recourse to a new concept, that of 'metapraxis'. His application of this in *Mysterion* is very conjunctural, however, and his philosophico-musical definition is formulated much more clearly in his next work, *Praxis for 12*, which will be discussed below.

For the time being, it may be emphasized in conclusion that his decision to cast the work as an oratorio enabled Christou to develop fully within the theatrical domain: he meticulously oversaw the entire production, even designing the masks and costumes worn by the chorus and instrumentalists himself:

'The orchestra as well as the triple chorus is located according to the precise directions of the composer himself. The members of the

<sup>11</sup> Composition note dated 4 November 1965.

<sup>12</sup> Composition note dated 1 January 1966.

<sup>13</sup> See the discussion of *The Strychnine Lady* in chapter IV.

orchestra sit in the centre. The choruses are arranged on three distinct, raised levels to the right, left and behind the orchestra, whilst the soloists are placed on an even higher platform ... All the musicians and soloists wear masks which serve to neutralize the performer's own personality and make him an anonymous member of a group. Moreover, according to the composer, the masks free the soul of the instrumentalist or singer. The soloists also perform certain predetermined movements. Nothing in *Mysterion* is orthodox. Sometimes the soloists utter inarticulate cries or sing in women's voices. They strike with bars a resonant piece of wood, which represents the symbolic situation of human sacrifice'.<sup>14</sup>

By eliminating all external anecdotal aspects that might distract the listener from the essential theme of the work, Christou leads him towards an understanding of his music no longer in terms of normal cerebral procedures, that is, semantically, but in terms of the direct sensation of the sound on a purely emotional level.

### Praxis for 12

*Praxis for 12* was written especially for Piero Guarino and his Accademia Musicale Napoletana Chamber Orchestra. Completely different to *Mysterion*, *Praxis for 12* appears as a work – one might almost say a 'technical exercise' – based on the traditional sound and medium of the orchestra.

'Praxis stands for action belonging to a certain logic. Metapraxis stands for action which threatens that logic, perhaps transcends that logic. They are opposites and imply each other, so that the title "PRAXIS FOR 12" implies the possibility of a metapraxis for twelve. "Twelve" refers to the twelve tones of western music's recent historic' past.<sup>15</sup>

The following text was written by the composer himself, and it must be pointed out that if there appears to be some ambiguity in its formulation, this is due to the fact that these concepts may be applied to the purely artistic domain as well as to life in general.

#### PRAXIS AND METAPRAXIS

'Any living art keeps generating an overall logic fed by a collectivity of characteristic actions. Whenever an action is purposefully performed to conform with the current overall logic characteristic of the art, that action is a "praxis", or a purposeful and characteristic of action. But whenever an action is purposefully performed so as to go beyond the current overall logic characteristic of the art, that action is a "metapraxis", or a purposeful non-characteristic action: a "meta-action". Thus, in the

<sup>14</sup> Messimbrini, 12 September 1966.

<sup>15</sup> This text was appended to the score of *Praxis for 12*.

performing arts, any action which requires its performer to go beyond the current logic of the medium to which he belongs, requires him to go beyond the logic of his world of action, as it were. That action is a "metapraxis", and it is purposefully "non-characteristic". Conversely, an action which does conform purposefully with the current logic of that medium is a "praxis" as long as it is purposefully "characteristic".

For instance, a conductor conducting during a concert is a praxis, but if he is also required to walk about, speak, shout, scream, gesticulate, or perform any other action not strictly connected to conducting, that could be a metapraxis. An instrumentalist playing his instrument during the course of a concert performance is a praxis, but if he is also required to walk about, speak, shout, scream, gesticulate, or perform any other action uncharacteristic of the current logic of his category, that could be a metapraxis.\*

On the other hand, if an actor, say, or dancer, is called upon to perform during a "mixed media" piece, and he is required to scream, laugh, move about, dance, gesticulate, or whatever, he could be merely performing a praxis, and not a metapraxis.

#### *The Meaning Barrier*

The last example suggests that a metapraxis is not a function of mixed media. A metapraxis is an implosion, a tension under the surface of a single medium which threatens that very medium's meaning barrier. An assault on the logic of the performer's relationship to his own particular medium. A violation within a single order of things. Or a subtle pressure against the barrier of meaning which any system generates for its own preservation.

#### *The Elusive Nature of Metapraxis*

The implication is, of course, that as the logic of the medium keeps changing in sympathy with the dynamics of the world-wide parameters of history, the manners in which metapraxis could be expressed must be constantly readjusted.

#### *The Opposites*

One can put it in various ways. For instance, the relationship between praxis and metapraxis corresponds to the relationship between physics and metaphysics. This is not to say that metapraxis is "metaphysical", only that just as metaphysics cannot be experienced in terms of the logic of physics, so metapraxis cannot be experienced in terms of the logic of praxis. Metapraxis is "beyond" praxis, yet not independent of praxis. And this points to the conclusion that just as metaphysics, if at all meaningful, is so only because of the "opposite" concept of physics, so metapraxis is meaningful only by virtue of its "opposite": praxis. Another instance of opposites illuminating each other or, at least, implying each other. And here one could add this: just as physics, when provoked, has a tendency to break through into metaphysics, so praxis, when provoked, has a tendency to break through into metapraxis. Continuing the parallel, an ultimate realization could be the identification

of praxis with metapraxis in a union of opposites, so that a metapraxis has no further reason to be any different to "praxis". The statement, of course, is an obvious target for questions of the type: "then why this whole business of metapraxis in the first place?" To which the only answer is, just as obviously, silence.<sup>16</sup>

\*But this is not the main reason why the examples quoted above only "could" be instances of metapraxis, but are not definitely described as such. The basic reason is simply this: the concept of metapraxis is essentially elusive. For instance, the same type of action which did function as a metapraxis in one work may simply not work as such in another, or even in the same work within the same overall period and conventions, but under different circumstances. When a metapraxis "works", there is no formula specifying why it should have worked.

This discovery of the concept of metapraxis proved decisive for Christou who was aware that it might lead to changes in the history of artistic expression and musical aesthetics. For the composer, it constituted a revolution that demanded the writing of a manifesto, as we have seen. I will attempt to summarize the new ideas brought about by this concept on a philosophical level.<sup>17</sup>

According to Christou, at the outset there exists the concept of TIME which may be approached by means of another concept: that of PATTERNS, the proliferation of which through varied types of repetitions<sup>18</sup> builds larger forms and more extended patterns according to the Phoenix principle (birth - growth - drama - end and new beginning). There are, moreover, two types of approach to these concepts: through action (praxis) or meta- action (metapraxis). The composer's text quoted above defines perfectly the respective attributes and concerns of these two systems of approach. The important point here is that, **historically speaking**, the composer relates the works composed between 1949 (*Phoenix Music*) and 1964 (*Tongues of Fire*) to the first type of approach (praxis). The method of manipulating the patterns employed in these works does therefore not necessarily ask for a complete break with aesthetics - in the musical forms for example or with a type of notation. For this reason, Christou considers that **all the works of this period are governed by the praxis approach, according to the Phoenix principle.**

On the other hand, the 'meta-action' approach that begins with *Mysterion* demands a complete abandonment of all previous European or western culture (and of all traditional types of notation in particular). This approach introduces the element of **chance**, the unpredictable, which exerts its influence on the multiplication of the patterns and every

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> This summary is derived from a draft that the composer appears to have prepared as an article for submission to an encyclopaedia.

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix III, pp. 133 s.s., Signs of Notation.

parameter of the work; it thus opens the way to a kind of music that makes use of extra-musical components.

THIS CHANGE OF APPROACH IS REPRESENTED BY THE REPLACEMENT OF THE EXPRESSION 'PHOENIX PRINCIPLE' BY THAT OF 'LUNAR PATTERN', for although the process of cyclic renewal existed already in the Phoenix principle, the lunar pattern, which implies this also, has a supplementary component: the ECLIPSE, that is, **the symbol of an irrational interruption** in the activity of a pattern, a basic image of the potential threat that hangs over every form or action.<sup>19</sup>

(i) The ECLIPSE thus implies the element of chance, and therefore improvisation, the notion of random in music. However, it would be incorrect to assume that the musical patterns that constitute the framework of Christou's music are no longer controlled due to the intervention of the aleatory element. On the contrary, the chance factor, which is always limited, permits better 'feed-back', a sort of mutual exchange between the performer and his pattern, thus developing the performer's creativity.

(ii) The ECLIPSE sets in motion the function of metapraxis; in extreme cases in which a pattern is interrupted, it thus lies at the root of the **Drama**. But it is aimed also at an action that occurs beyond logic, beyond rational norms; otherwise it obeys a logic different to that of Praxis, according to one's perception of the question. In Christou's view, however, one may not venture into the domain of the illogical without first having considered every logical implication of a possibility and having penetrated the laws of logic in general. In this respect, the composer recognized the utmost importance of his studies with Russell and Wittgenstein. The works of the second period (principally the *Anaparastasis*)<sup>20</sup> illustrate clearly these two levels of reality: on the one hand, they consist of gratuitous theatrical acts conceived as rituals, and on the other, of actions that achieve their stated aims.

(iii) Finally, a wider view of the confrontation between Praxis and Metapraxis introduces the notions of historical and meta-historical time, the historical events proving unable, in the long term, to call into question the unfolding, outside historical time, of the pattern. This idea is developed musically in *Enantiodromia* for orchestra, in which the composer emphasizes the fact that it is sufficient to follow the proliferation of the patterns, the extension of the sound material, without worrying about the extra-musical events that occur during the work. For, after these have burst onto the scene and just when everything seems lost, the initial live material after a rest reappears, imperturbably, out of the inaudible ...

\*

<sup>19</sup> Christou's fundamental text on the lunar pattern ('The Lunar Experience') is reproduced in full in Appendix IV, pp. 146-151.

<sup>20</sup> See chapter IV, pp. 111-113.

## The Combinative Nature of the System of Patterns: Summary of Musical Applications

'I am concerned with the transformation of acoustical energies into music.'

*Praxis for 12* and *Enantiodromia* represent precisely those pieces in which the composer works on the setting in motion of mass energies, and he is concerned with their points of appearance and disappearance, and the types of relationships between them. Each pattern represents a specific, evolving form of a mass of sound characterized essentially by its timbre. Its system of renewal is individual and is sometimes related to the subdivision into sub-patterns. The means by which these sub-patterns are activated differ in each of the two works, however. *Praxis for 12* begins with an initial pattern which divides into sub-patterns, thus corresponding to an increasingly sophisticated operation of the basic system. In *Enantiodromia*, on the other hand, the reverse occurs: the composer constructs what he calls a multiple pattern out of the basic patterns in which the latter become sub-patterns. The multiple pattern is termed thus for analytical reasons only, for in reality, it is perceived as a **single** pattern larger than the others. There exists a whole analytical terminology relating to these multiple patterns: mono-patterns, double and triple patterns and so on (only mono- and triple patterns are used in *Enantiodromia*). From a strictly musical point of view, each sub-pattern corresponds either to a more complex and subtle sound enrichment of the multiple pattern through the introduction of new figures (pattern 2 of *Praxis for 12* has no less than five!), or a structural change of dynamic within the pattern itself.

The formal framework within which these patterns and sub-patterns are contained covers every imaginable musical possibility, enabling the internal activity of a sound mass, varied *ad infinitum*, to be maintained. To this end, the composer does not hesitate to devote entire texts to the specification of the performance conditions for each pattern, the detailed indications of which relate amongst other things to timbral experiments on the sound itself and, therefore, to different methods of attack and unusual performance techniques on certain instruments, etc.

In this work, moreover, the smallest details of nuance may assume great importance, whether in order to create contrast between two sub-patterns played simultaneously or to express the acoustic impact and energy content of very rich sound material. For example, *Praxis for 12* begins with a sustained sound in the strings (of 55" duration, followed, after an interruption of 4", by a reprise of 62") of which Christou wrote:

'If these immense durations are to be effective and justified, the speed, as well as the violent intensity (*ffff*), must be kept "above" the maximum,

greater than the maximum; a gigantic effort producing acoustic energy of the highest voltage'.<sup>21</sup>

The extremely long duration of this initial pattern serves also to emphasize the implacably autonomous nature of its reproduction. This fact must be stressed if Christou's attitude towards composition is to be fully understood:

'A pattern is an independent system. By "independence" is meant that, once released, and up to its cessation as a whole, the pattern's flow is independent of factors lying outside itself: a pattern is autonomous; a pattern is ruthless! **Composing begins whenever a pattern's autonomous course is "interfered" with.**'<sup>22</sup> [my emphasis].

Last but not least, it may be deduced that a pattern begins to lose its 'intrinsic independence' from the moment it is integrated into a multiple pattern. For its evolving contour no longer depends on factors contained within its own structure but on ones that unfold 'outside' its own internal system and relate to the structural characteristics of the multiple pattern of which it is a part.

*Praxis for 12* and *Enantiodromia* thus represent works full of contrasts and intense life, in which triple *piano* passages vie with one another to achieve maximum subtlety of sound, whilst other passages, occurring at the highest intensity, overwhelm the listener with their power. It should be noted, however, that the demands Christou makes on the performer not only to reach his limits but also to surpass them do not aim simply to 'transmit' maximum potential acoustic energy but are also part of the psychomusical condition preliminary to every occurrence of metapraxis.

In *Enantiodromia*, the specific organization of the sound material is clarified by the basic philosophical argument of the work. Its 'stimulating idea' is that of the play of opposites as defined by the philosopher Heraclitus:

'If patterns are understood as recurring forms dictating inevitable types of action, then Heraclitus's concept of the play of opposites – "enantiodromia" – is perhaps the most ruthless pattern of all. For here he speaks of a constant inter-transformation of opposites in an eternal flux, in the sense that any condition and its opposite are the same, only at different stages of oscillation: "THE WAY UP AND THE WAY DOWN ARE ONE AND THE SAME".

<sup>21</sup> Letter to Piero Guarino dated 5 June 1967 (French text).

<sup>22</sup> Extract from 'Key to listening to *Enantiodromia*' included in the score of the work.

Together, these two ways form one dynamic circle of tension, along the circumference of which their ending and beginning keep merging, relentlessly. An eternal process, with no beginning, nor an end. A pitiless process, terrifying in its implication of the inevitable succession of component patterns representing opposite conditions, because peace is a pattern, and war is a pattern, and the one will keep following the other, no matter what we do, until, perhaps, such a time when a total eclipse of the process is brought about by some giant-scale catastrophe, while this, too, would then only be part of a greater pattern, a vaster swing of a vaster pendulum, on and on, relentlessly, ruthlessly.

But from the point of view of the listener the main function of this piece must not be descriptive. Nor has the piece been written merely as a simple re-enactment of the process of enantiodromia. What this piece is intended for is as an exercise in listening-control: its function is like that of an acoustic mandala,<sup>23</sup> and the listener is required to be active in the sense suggested by the following key:

#### KEY TO LISTENING TO ENANTIODROMIA

As from the beginning and throughout the entire duration of the work, keep your attention fixed only on the high-pitched flow of sound. Do not be distracted by the gradual accumulation of other events, not even by the agitated and explosive violence of the final stages of the enantiodromia.

You are therefore required to keep "listening" only to those acute threads of sound and the flow of their various patterns. Laser-like, these will carry your concentrated attention both through the thickest activity and through the total silence preceding the end-beginning, and beyond'.<sup>24</sup>

The performance of *Enantiodromia* is thus based on the process of the self-multiplication of the raw material:

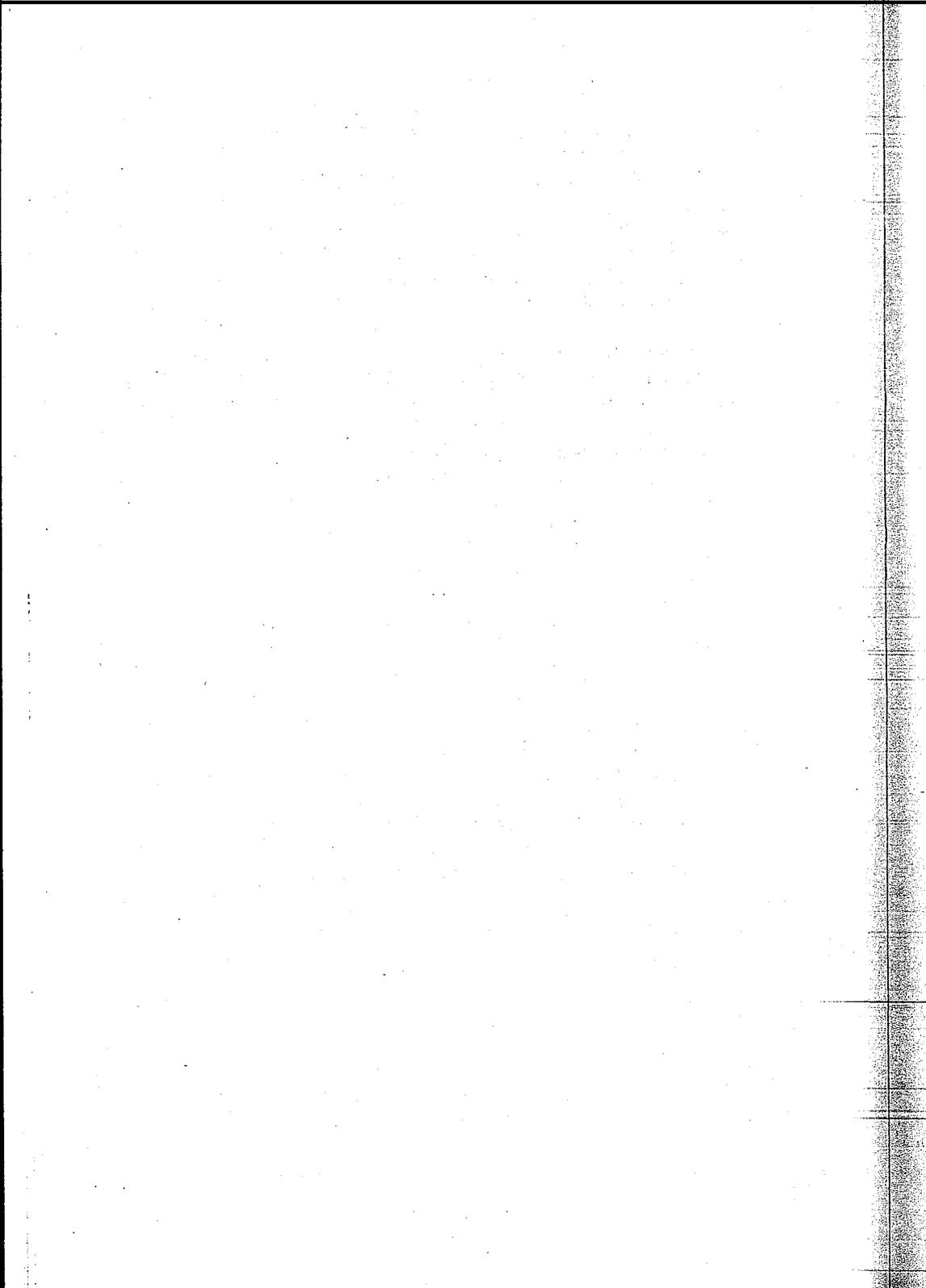
'The work begins with a single sustained high note in the violins, *pianissimo*. From this initial note, like a marvellous form of life whose mysteries may be revealed only through the microscope, a mysterious process of multiplication of the sound cells enables the listener to witness the formation of a living sound organism, protoplasmic matter, which, as it gradually gains in intensity, constantly changes in texture, substance and colour, creating in the listener the simultaneous feeling of the microcosmic and the macrocosmic'.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> 'Mandala' (sanskrit) signifies 'circle', also 'magic circle'. Its symbol consists of shapes arranged concentrically, every shape (round or square) having a common centre, as well as radially or spherically, to cite only the most important forms. In Jungian psychology, mandalas are symbols of unity that appear either in dreams or imagined visual impressions, and frequently compensate for the contradictions and conflicts that occur in conscious situations.

<sup>24</sup> Programme note published to mark the première of the work, 18 February 1969.

<sup>25</sup> Leotsakos, George S., *Bima*, 13 April 1969.

This capacity for proliferation is achieved in terms of the orchestration by the fact that the composer effects the almost total individualization of every instrument of the orchestra; in other words, unisons are almost entirely absent (which obliges the composer to write a separate part for **each** instrument). The listener soon begins to realize, however, that real tension is being created and that this will lead inevitably to an explosion. According to the composer, this is merely a supplementary event that cannot destroy the immutability of the initial sound material which recurs almost imperceptibly at the end of the piece. The entire structure of the work thus depends on the dual function of the patterns (27 in total), each of which exists within itself, independent yet fatally prone to alteration from the moment it becomes part of a synthesis. In *Enantiodromia* the characteristic feature of these patterns is that each one may suddenly disappear from the composition, leaving the listener with the particularly vivid sensation that it is not dead but is living on in some other place.



# Chapter IV

## LATE WORKS

### The Strychnine Lady

During the years 1967–69 Christou once again defined his conception of the act of composition. His basic philosophical notion of patterns is not called into question but is, on the contrary, extended and amplified. It is no longer applied simply to the setting in motion of acoustic energy – a pretext for ‘feed-back’ between performer and pattern that gives rise to metapraxis – but is extended to **all extra-musical activity**. Thus, a **new form of lyrical and theatrical expression** occurs. The arrival at this final stage in the composer’s development was first confirmed musically in an extraordinary work, *The Strychnine Lady*.

The initial philosophical stimulus for this work came from Jung’s *Psychology and Alchemy* in which the author cites a latin alchemical text concerning the self-mortification of Gabricus. Briefly, this text describes the way in which a woman (Beya) embraces a man (Gabricus) with such enthusiasm that she absorbs him completely into her womb, and together they form a new creature.

The title of the work has a second interpretation also that coexists with the first: an anonymous announcement in a newspaper refers to a lady who ‘supplies strychnine and unusual experiences’. The narrator relates the way in which he sets out in search of this lady and finds himself lost in a hotel without a façade, in the midst of a crowd. A scribbled note in the composer’s own hand reveals that this strychnine lady came straight out of one of his dreams and that the very next day he had the idea of writing a piece for female viola player and instrumental ensemble.<sup>1</sup>

The piece begins with a kind of ‘happening’ in which it is announced to the audience that, for technical reasons, the work will not take place. The text and the demonstrations of protest that are to be staged by an actress ‘disguised’ as a spectator seated amongst the audience, are all prepared. Several of the lines have been adjusted, however, in case genuine members of the audience, entering into the spirit of the performance, start to intervene. This **element of theatricality** is emphasized by the appearance of four actors on the stage performing a kind of **ritual** in a series of inexplicable gratuitous acts that occur from the very start: for example, actors 3 and 4, walking as if hypnotized, spread a red

<sup>1</sup> This is confirmed in a letter to the viola player Rhoda Lee Rhea dated 10 February 1967.

cloth in the middle of the stage in a sequence of predetermined movements, then, smiling grotesquely at one another, they greet the audience, give the cloth to one of the percussionists and leave in the same manner as they had entered.

The composer also exploits elements of 'psychological distortion' that affect the spectator-listener profoundly: the viola player thus remains completely indifferent to the events that are taking place around her throughout the entire piece, or, to give another example, three of the actors are even smoking nonchalantly, unaware of the panic that seizes the musicians in the orchestra and which is projected in their music.

The process of 'auto-disintegration' is symbolized by the viola soloist, withdrawing into herself, 'kneeling even while still playing, until, in a state of collapse, she breaks off to be swallowed up in a strange silence and to be covered with a red cloth, while some musicians, the trumpet-players, surround her, and with slow, ritual-like motions and otherworldly sounds, seem to be calling out to her to re-emerge... the eternal cycle of life and death'.<sup>2</sup>

The process of dissociation thus determines the way the various activities, whether musical or extra-musical, relate to each other, as the composer himself emphasizes in his introduction:

'The work is written for a solo woman viola player, two groups of massed strings, brass, percussion (including pianoforte), magnetic tapes, a metal sheet construction, sound-producing objects and toys, a red cloth, five actors and a conductor. The para-musical events (gestures, actions, theatrical fragments) do not always coincide with the musical activities. In other words, the music proper may exist without these other events and vice versa. Basically, there is no "communication" between the two - Nor, and this is more important, is there any "communication" between components within the same type of event. It is rather like individuals caught up in a crowd; they act with the crowd but do not communicate with each other. And if there does seem to be a relationship between components of a particular group, this is because they are reacting to identical signals, not because they are establishing a relationship with each other'.<sup>3</sup>

But why does the work contain this accumulation of heteroclitic information, of such dissimilar entities? What relationship might there be between the strychnine lady, the terrible Beya, and the viola soloist? The composer describes his work as a 'ritual dream' rather than musical theatre:

'The work is not descriptive, but it does share certain states in common with the "mortificatio" state: (Dionysus as Zagreus. - the

<sup>2</sup> Anoyanakis, Fivos, *Ethnos*, 13 April 1967.

<sup>3</sup> Note by the composer dated March 1967.

dismemberment is one of the many instances). The logic here, if you can call this logic, is that of a dream in which states melt into other states with no apparent outward reason'.<sup>4</sup>

The only way to understand this music is by means of a purely associative mental process. In the composer's view, it is the final result that counts, the impression received by the participant (performer or listener) at the end of this terrifying half-hour musical ritual.

The music itself is concerned principally with the solo viola which contributes to the general mood by playing a series of rapid, frenetic micro-figures, varied in attack and totally chaotic in sequence. The music for the viola, as for the other instruments, is 'anti-serial' in that there is no longer any relationship between one component and another or one event and another. Nevertheless, it is not in the least aleatory since the composer is concerned, as in his other works, to specify every technical detail with meticulous care.

The general mood of this original work, like its musical atmosphere, is well illustrated in the words of one critic:

'Now here, and as from the very first moment, the listener-spectator is caught up in a totally different world. A world in which "para-musical" and musical events combine, attracted to each other by some dark force, like that which brings seemingly unconnected things together in dreams. This world is both illogical and logical. Nightmarish, yet subtly luminous, even lyrical. A world in which subtle motions oscillate between states of dreaming and of painful awareness. This world of sound, spreading out like some vast cloud shot with fire, burning with self-generated creative energy, strikes one as having both a self-sufficient existence of its own and as sharing a common identity with the theatrical events. In other words, the music is also the action, while the action becomes the music. Yet the two are separate. And in this peculiar manner both form a whole in which the boundaries of music and theatrical action are impossible to define'.<sup>5</sup>

## Epicycle

The closer Christou's creative life came towards its end, the more clearly the mystical quality of the concept of 'continuum' was revealed and became omnipresent in his music. It is apparent in his work as early as *Patterns and Permutations* (1961) where it represents 'the ultimate stream submerging everything'; it constitutes the almost incessant orchestral thread in *Tongues of Fire* (1964) and is mentioned for its implacable character in both the ten-point article published in *Epoques* (1966) and the passage

<sup>4</sup> Extract from the letter to Rhoda Lee Rhea dated 10 February 1967.

<sup>5</sup> Anoyanakis, Fivos, 1967, op. cit.

'A Music of Confrontation' (1969).<sup>6</sup> As the concept became clearer metaphysically, it became so musically too. Indeed, the patterns are themselves continua due to a specific aspect: they are forms executing a real, imminent and constantly repeated action. This definition applies not only to music: there are also patterns in life, everyday patterns, such as breathing, eating, sleeping, etc. that are repeated indefinitely at regular intervals. And it is this aspect that is introduced in *The Strychnine Lady* by the performance on stage of 'experiences' that no longer bear any relation to the actual music.

This phenomenon is apparent above all in *Epicycle* (1968) where it reaches a colossal scale through the unlimited repetitions of both the musical patterns and the patterns of life. In this work, the listener's attention is attracted by the interplay between the continuum and the events that detach themselves from it. The most important feature is, therefore, the striking contrast (and constant dialogue) between this neutral, uniform, impassive continuum on the one hand and the varied events that project themselves with the full force of their personality against it on the other.

*Epicycle* formed the overture to the third Hellenic Week of Contemporary Music and lasted an entire day; the work consisted of a tape which provided background music to a film by the painter Kosmas Xenakis, which served as the 'stage set'. Anyone who wished could take part; the piece was thus presented as an open 'happening' in which the composer's personal initiatives and right to intervene were completely eliminated. In this respect, the work represents Christou's most extreme position, a sort of **self-mortification of the composer**. George Leotsakos emphasized this aspect of denial in a review,<sup>7</sup> to which Christou responded in the following letter:

In *Epicycle* Phase I there is a voluntary abdication of my role of composer, in the sense of organizer of a set of parameters within the limited stretch of conventional performance-time. Since there has been such an abdication, I must accept all the negative aspects of this action, i.e. loose form, no form, repetition, non-sense, lack of synthesis, abolition of the sense of "climax", neutralization of musical "impact", and so on and so forth. These disadvantages are over and above the accidental disadvantages of hardly any rehearsal, non-functioning of the electronic equipment, etc. On the other hand, the role of the composer has not been devalued simply for the sake of the surprise value of some "happening" (which quickly wears off anyway). The role of the composer has been devalued in order to allow whatever elements were available at the time to behave as symbols of events, and certainly not as "artistic events", nor

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix IV, pp. 150-151.

<sup>7</sup> *Ta Nea*, 30 December 1968.

as synthesized events. This is a dangerous game, I know, but it is essential if one is to get to the roots of protoperformance, the root of all art (in the last analysis this reflects a questioning of the validity of history itself, and of historical societies which make "art" meaningful). In *Epicycle* I was concerned also with a confrontation with chaos, not in its "composed" or decorative aspect (the safer, conventional attitude), but in its negative and "non-artistic" aspect. And apart from the unsynthesized events provided by the performers, the work expected contributions from the audience, and these contributions were plentiful and spontaneous.

The other point I wish to make is that both the symbolic re-enactments of events, as well as the spontaneous events contributed by the public, occurred within a conceptual framework: the concept supplied by the SCORE of *Epicycle*, with the an-historical (not relevant to history) continuum dimension carrying the historical dimensions of "events" in time. In this sense, *Epicycle* is similar to protoperformances in which actions are significant only because they belong to a larger outlook and not because of their decorative nature or their function as components in "art".<sup>8</sup>

It was in this same spirit that Christou conceived his last works, the *Anaparastasis* (re-enactments). This term refers to situations that 're-enact' types of symbolic actions or sequences. They are, therefore, momentary reconstitutions, ephemeral theatrical statements of a pattern. Out of the series of forty pieces<sup>9</sup> that had already been given a title, only nos I and III were performed during the composer's lifetime. The sketches of the remaining pieces are too incomplete (even if Christou had finished them in his own mind) to enable any kind of performance whatsoever. They indicate that the composer had entered a new phase in his progression towards the 'inner' human being; and this journey towards the innermost soul was accompanied by an increasing austerity of expressive resources. The musico-scenic treatment of the events followed by the spectator does not, of course, conform to everyday logic, but seen from the perspective of the unconscious it appears to occur within an order of things that goes back to original universal symbols.

### Anaparastasis I

The initial stimulus for the work, which forms the baritone's text, is a strophe from *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus:

'I ask the gods some respite from the weariness  
of this watchtime measured by years I lie awake

<sup>8</sup> Extract from a letter dated 30 December 1968, made public by the addressee in a lecture at the Centre for Plastic Arts in Athens, 19 December 1974.

<sup>9</sup> These forty pieces are part of a colossal cycle of approximately 130.

elbowed upon the Atreidae's roof dogwise to mark  
 the grand processions of all the stars of night  
 burdened with winter and again with heat for men,  
 dynasties in their shining blazoned on the air,  
 these stars, upon their wane and when the rest arise'.<sup>10</sup>

It is these words that the baritone seeks to express, but he is unable to pronounce them. They appear only in a distorted, unintelligible form, revolving around a key-phrase, 'I lie awake ... to mark the grand processions of all the stars of night', and a key-word, 'respite'. These words are accompanied by unusual mimicry, gestures, grimaces and trembling, etc.... The piece thus consists of a performance which, as in *The Strychnine Lady* and *Anaparastasis III*, seems more like psychodrama, unfolding in a theatrical spirit of ritual, a sort of laying bare of the human soul, expressed in movement and song. These acts of theatrical ritual may induce a feeling of fear in the spectator, but it is a sacred fear comparable to that produced by the effect of catharsis in the theatres of antiquity; the spectator may, moreover, project himself onto the principal character in a kind of self-analysis. As in Christou's other works, the positions of each musician-actor (who perform situations of metapragmatics in addition to the music) as well as those of the soloist and conductor are meticulously specified. The 'music' is reduced to a very sober appearance, however, since the interest is centred upon the principal character, accompanied by a continuum recorded on tape.

### **Anaparastasis III or The Pianist**

At first sight, this work may be described in very simple terms: a pianist comes on stage to perform his piece. He tries to play, but an insuperable barrier of incommunication separates him from the instrument. Both the dramatic tension created by the soloist-actor and the musical tension reach their climax in a *crescendo* that rises to the utmost intensity, ending in defeat and dissolution.

On closer examination, however, *The Pianist* reaches a much more fundamental state, as George Leotsakos emphasizes: 'In this work, the psychologically handicapped pianist, whose inhibitions when confronted with his piano stifle all desire to play and lead him to this paroxysm which transforms him into a suffering victim, is merely

<sup>10</sup> Aeschylus, *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, vol. I (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1959), p. 35. This strophe is stated at the beginning of the play by the watchman who is charged with keeping vigil for the return of the Greek ships and of Agamemnon's ship in particular.

the symbol of psychopathological castration, of the greatest distress a human being may experience'.<sup>11</sup>

On a strictly musical level, the continuum (recorded on tape) plays an essential role in that it gradually leads the performer, along with the audience, to experience this climactic situation; it acts on the psyche of the listener like a subterranean thread of sound, similar to that in *Oedipus Rex*.

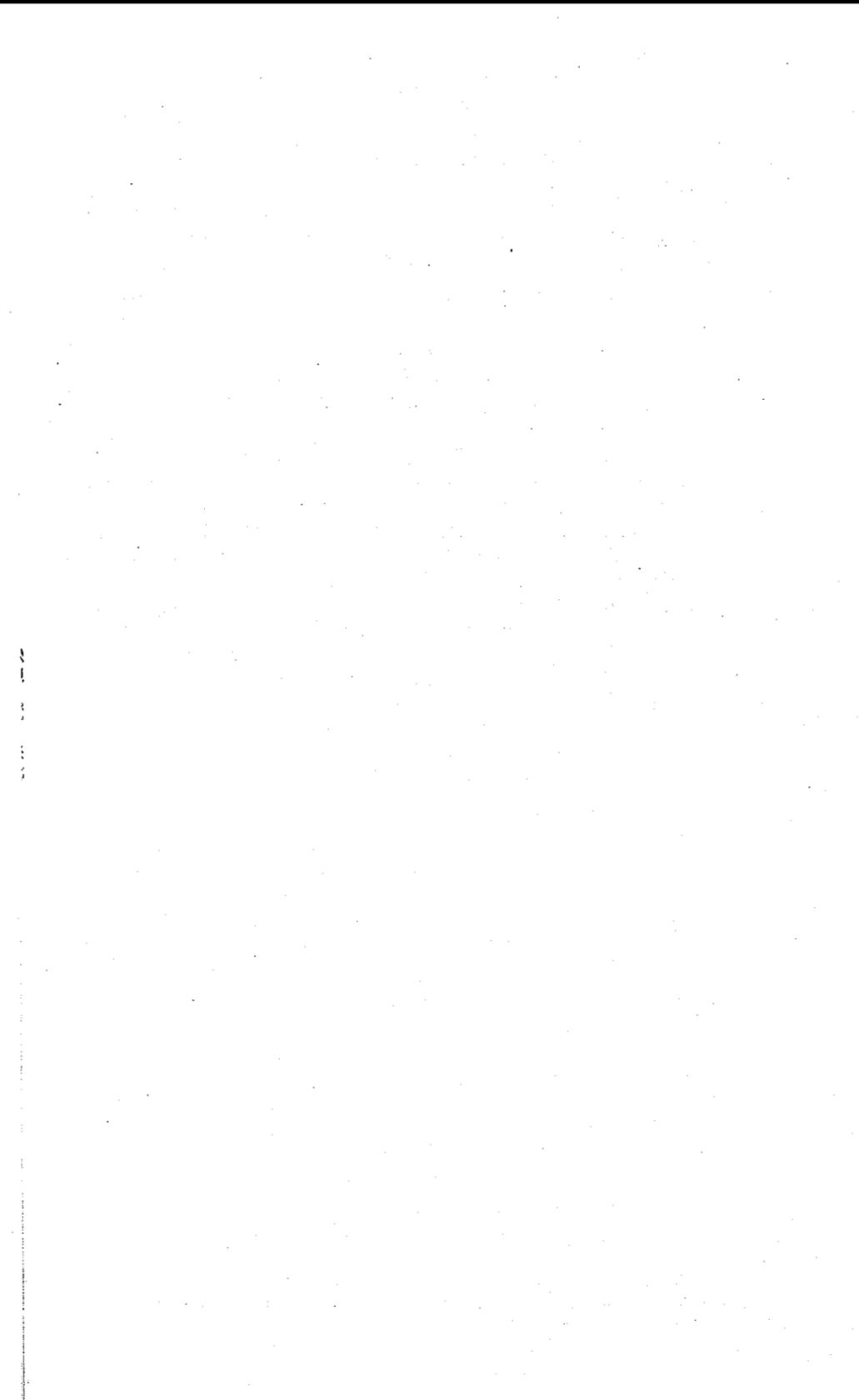
On the other hand, the continuum represents the so-called neutral ground on which a system and an anti-system that opposes the system, confront one another. In the composer's own terms:

'System: The conductor and his team belong to a world which, although it wants to be controlled by some "system", cannot manage to ignore the events that threaten the coherence of this system.

Anti-system: On the other hand, the soloist, with his activities and efforts at the end of the work to make an explanatory gesture, aims at breaking through the barrier of the coherence of the "system", and capture a meaning beyond the "system". This gesture is the signal for the "scatter" that urges the members of a team, who are bound to a pre-arranged course, to perform their "programme" in their own individual and uninhibited fashion. But since, perhaps, such an initiative is a false illusion of freedom, the gesture is never completed'.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Ta Nea*, 3 December 1969. The interpretation was endorsed by Christou.

<sup>12</sup> Composition note reproduced by Christou as an introduction to the work for the concert on 28 November 1969 in Athens.



## SUMMARY

This summary enables Christou's entire development to be retraced and interpreted on a global level. First of all, his musical personality may be described as a talent reflecting both strength and wisdom. His wisdom is the sign of an astonishing spirit of self-discipline that never once made the mistake of confusing means and ends and which, at a time when the 'avant-garde' was all the rage, did not allow itself to be seduced by new and sophisticated means of expression such as the electronic techniques that excited so many composers. Christou, for his part, was one of those composers who still proved capable of exploiting the 'old' orchestra (*Patterns and Permutations, Toccata*) in an original way during the decade 1955-65 and he disciplined himself into devising an individual and perfectly coherent musical system:

'Although I do not exclude the possibility of using unconventional ensembles or electronic procedures in the future, the contemporary conventional orchestra satisfies my present aim'.<sup>1</sup>

Christou's success in realizing his aims was due to his strength of character mentioned above, and this was drawn from his entirely original vision of the world. Strength and wisdom: these two qualities prevented Christou's music from remaining on an anecdotal or superficial level and ensured rather that it penetrated to the heart of the matter.

The following extract reflects the composer's state of mind during this period and demonstrates that his fundamental concerns lay on a strictly individual as much as on a cosmic level:

'Music is being written today in a variety of styles and for a variety of instruments ranging from the human voice to electronically produced sound. And why not?

As long as the composer is being true to himself, or as long as he is genuinely struggling to come to terms with the universe via himself, his works are valid in whatever manner or system they are written.

As I see it, the creative person eventually comes to recognize the existence of a mysterious inner way of his being, with which he presumably must come to terms. Thereafter he is committed to this way and if he is

<sup>1</sup> Extract from a note written in Chios, 5 December 1958.

able to follow it and to act in accordance with his true nature, his works stand a good chance of becoming valid expressions of a form of life. Thus, these may illumine, at least for him, some aspect of the general way of the universe'.<sup>2</sup>

Christou therefore saw himself as a seeker; he pursued an ineluctable inner adventure and embarked upon a path of mystic initiation which, it may be claimed, guided him until his death. Christou's deep conviction that composition should spring and grow from firm philosophical foundations thus lay at the root of all his work and the above quotation illustrates the way in which the composer, as both musician and philosopher, refused to separate these two activities in his own mind (see his 'stimulating ideas'). This conviction subsequently developed into an attitude that led him to compose music which was influenced much more by metaphysical concepts than by technically sophisticated musical resources or sound syntax. Thus, the most astonishing fact for the assiduous observer of Christou's life or for those who have shown a posthumous interest in his work through listening or seeking to analyse it, is the realization of the extent to which his inner spiritual evolution determined his parallel musical development.

If Christou's entire musical journey were to be sketched in a single stroke, it would be clearly apparent that the musical and philosophical characteristics of his works may be discerned as early as his opus 1, due to the symbolic principle of the Phoenix. In this first period his compositional style revolved around the idea of states of tension that

'are either points of departure or points of arrival. They are sometimes resolved, and sometimes unresolved, while at other moments they are not openly declared at all but nevertheless exert their mysterious influence on what, in appearance, may seem to be a stretch of calm.'<sup>3</sup>

As a result, pitches, like rhythmic structures, assume meaning only in relation to the degree of tension they create through their horizontal and vertical relationships with one another.

Starting from a flexible form of an atonal symphonic piece and a still rather simplistic realization of a higher principle, Christou's thought proceeded towards ever greater complexity, and from 1960 on, he possessed a conceptual weapon, the pattern, as a philosophical and technical principle. In its earliest application in *Patterns and Permutations*, the system of patterns as conceived on a cosmogonic scale is restricted to a kind of musical equivalent of a sculptor's miniature working model and operates on the same principle. The sounds and organization of the whole are governed by the laws of evolution of these musical patterns. In this

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

period, the quality of the pattern (simple or complex), the combination of the permutations, the succession of the isochrones and the internal development of the mega-statement, including the 'implacable character of the rising waters of the continuum', are all controlled by the composer. The composer still 'sets the rules of the game' and the piece appears before the listener as a **representation** of a cosmogonic vision. This view of art as a means of representing or expressing reality<sup>4</sup> continues to place it within the framework of aesthetics. Thus, until *Tongues of Fire*, Christou's works remain bound up with a whole technico-metaphysical vocabulary that is applied to music that is **still considered as a sound object**.<sup>5</sup>

From *The Persians*<sup>6</sup> on, however, we enter Christou's second period in which concepts such as 'lyricism' and 'pathos' disappear, and new expressions such as 'ritual act', 'frightening', 'nightmarish', 'disturbed and subterranean world', 'unreal', 'paradoxical', 'poetic', 'illogical', 'fear', 'ecstasy', etc. begin to dominate the writings of contemporary music critics. We are transported onto a different emotional level. Between *Tongues of Fire* and *Mysterion*, we not only pass from the celestial to the infernal world, but we witness a change in the function of the art and the relative roles of the composer and audience also. Between these two oratorios an insuperable abyss has opened up for eternity due to the fantastic experience of *The Persians*. Let those who dare, venture with Christou in his exploration of the precipitous, uncharted rocks that lead to the essential ontology of art on the other side of the abyss.

*Mysterion* opens the way to a mode of creation lying between several arts, stemming from the composer's need to appeal increasingly to new means of expression. This resulted in a ritualization and sacralization of the musical act which aimed to create transformational experiences in music, and corresponded to the birth of a new musical ethic. For from the moment Christou entrusted to music the role of liberating the individual, he adopted a position that was firmly opposed to the concept of beauty, since this no longer represented the sensibilities of modern man and neither did it respond to the various questions he asked himself, offering him only subterfuges in return.

<sup>4</sup> In the wider sense, this reality may be metaphysical, imaginary or symbolic, etc.

<sup>5</sup> This procedure is similar in spirit to that of Scriabin, but, unlike the Russian composer, Christou never encumbered himself with descriptive mystico-metaphysical jargon. Nevertheless, it cannot help but be observed that, in his *Mysterion*, Scriabin sought to effect what might be called a transition to the musical act, which directly anticipated Christou's *Epicycle* and the *Anaparastasis*. Death prevented Scriabin from realizing his project. Should we consider the fact that the first work in which Christou effected this type of approach was also called *Mysterion* as a sign of historical destiny?

<sup>6</sup> It should be recalled that *The Persians* was the first work in which Christou collaborated with Karolos Koun, and that it was perhaps as important for these two artists as was that between Bertholt Brecht and Kurt Weill with their common view of epic theatre.

Consequently, for Christou music had to represent a means of liberating man's deepest forces and impulses; in order to fulfil this role, it must be capable of transmitting LIBIDO and enormous psychic energy. When the unconscious sets loose from the super ego, it brings about what the ancient dramatists used to call 'purification' or 'catharsis'. Moreover, Christou had recourse to the Jungian concept of the collective unconscious which conceals bio-cosmic archetypes dating back to the beginning of time which Christou used frequently in his works.

This radical change of attitude had a number of consequences; indeed, if the aesthetic position that Christou rejected definitively after 1965 represents a state of mind, then musical **form** represented its correlative state of being. Thus, it is not surprising to note that the composer gradually moved towards the complete dissolution of form, particularly in the *Anaparastasis* and *Epicycle*. The problem that confronts us, therefore, is that of the relationship – or conflict – between the creator's desire to attain maximum authenticity of expression on the one hand, and the means by which he sought to achieve this on the other. These means conform more or less closely to the typical aesthetic of their time.<sup>7</sup> The aesthetic of the 1960s was concerned precisely with the exploration of space-sound, the problem of the relationship between composer, work and audience (new dispositions of the audience, 'happenings'), investigations into the nature of sound and unsuspected formal and instrumental possibilities (so-called 'open' forms, 'prepared' instruments, etc.), and the problem of improvisation (the introduction of chance elements, etc.).

Christou integrated these diverse ideas completely into his compositional process and exploited them **simply as a means** to an end; in this respect, his creative work may be regarded as typical of the 1960s. This idea may be taken significantly further by considering the dialectical relationship that existed between these stylistic manifestations of the time and Christou's musical development. That is, if the composer had not had these idioms at his disposal, or if he had lived at a different time, he would have had to conceive a liberating music of a completely different kind. Nevertheless, it should be remarked that in aiming to overthrow a centuries-old musical tradition associated with western music, Christou did not revert to a style of composition that would seem to be its logical opposite, namely, oriental or other pre-existing styles that would have created a new musical sound and represented a revolutionary approach for a western composer. For although Christou felt the imperious need to renew his entire musical language, he chose to exploit the immediate achievements of the elite of his own time in order

<sup>7</sup> See the manifesto, point 8 (p. 93).

to create a personal approach to expression, and it was in this that his genius lay.

At this point in the discussion, and with regard to form, we must return to Christou's early works which marked him out initially as a lyrical, dramatic composer. The omnipresence of **drama**, even in these early works, leads me to comment that, although in this first period Christou did not question the use of form, he did not employ it as a pre-established mould; rather, it was created by the drama itself. Thus, in this period, Christou had already freed himself from all aesthetic preoccupations, not by destroying form but by exploiting it or subordinating it to non-aesthetic ends for the purpose of **pure expression**. This notion underwent constant and irreversible change until Christou finally abandoned the view of art as a finished product and rejected the idea of artistic expression in order to definitively adopt the concept of 'protoperformance'.

It was during the last four years of his life that Christou created an entirely successful synthetic art that reached its apogee and fulfilment in the *Anaparastasis*. Any attempt to define the concept of continuum or the musical events in these pieces in terms of strictly orthodox notions of musical form and organization represents a step backwards in relation to the composer's new-found freedom, for in them the creative mental process gave birth to a system of symbols that became immediately established both musically and theatrically. We must not fall prey, however, to the spurious view that in a symbolic art the listener must decode its symbols intellectually, emotionally or, still more, sociologically, for these symbols appeal to us directly as part of our collective unconscious, and it was in order to reduce their substance to the maximum degree of concentration so as to distill only the true expression, the genuine 'experience', that the composer, ingenious sculptor of plastic sound, meticulous chiseller of his material, rejected form. But did this persistent search, this 'attempt on the part of an artist no longer simply to express himself but to come to know himself more deeply through his creative material'<sup>8</sup> not lead to the dissolution of the art, as in *Epicycle* in which the composer relinquishes his very *raison d'être* through the renunciation of all intervention of artistic forms?

During a lecture, his friend George Leotsakos recounted the poignant confidence that Christou had entrusted to him:

'Music is dead. Man has failed ... more and more often I hear people speaking of their anguish and nightmares which may be interpreted clearly as expressing a form of mutilation. They say they have lost a tooth or some other part of their body ... Man has failed.'<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Leotsakos, George S., unpublished lecture, 1970, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

And speaking of his 'opera' *Oresteia* in his last interview, the composer confessed the following pessimistic, almost prophetic vision:

'The panic in the face of the lack of a solution to the problem of existence never wanes. The fall of Troy represents an event that Orestes cannot understand... There is no concrete and definitive solution to the human drama; not only do the Erinyes not change into Eumenides, as in the conventional Aeschylean 'Happy End', but on the contrary, they multiply: evil grows, panic spreads, the solution doesn't come.'<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with Christou, 'Jani Christou speaks on contemporary music' (Greek text), *Dhimourghies*, Vol. 1, January 1970, pp. 6-7.

# Appendix I

## LOST WORKS: COMMENTARY

Between the works of Christou's first period, namely, *Phoenix Music*, *Symphony no. 1*, the *Six Songs* and the *Latin Liturgy*, and those of his second period, which began with *Patterns and Permutations*, there was an obscure period of time which extended from around 1955 to 1959 inclusive, about which very little is known at present. With the exception of *Symphony no. 2*, no works from this entire period survive, whereas, paradoxically, the number of titles increased and these were principally of large-scale works such as oratorios and operas. A long silence befell the composer which was corroborated by the chronological study of the critical literature and interviews with Christou: the last interview dates from 1956 whilst the next articles concern the performance of *Phoenix Music* in Athens in 1960.

This fact may be interpreted in several ways. In my view, it would be untenable to maintain that a certain amount of planning and even writing of these works did not occur (although the extent of this work is unclear), for there are numerous accounts that testify to the contrary: for instance, during his stay in Platres, Kalomiris found Christou engaged in composing the *Latin Liturgy* and a choral and orchestral ensemble based on the *Psalms of David*.<sup>1</sup> In 1954 Piero Guarino wrote that Jani Christou was in the process of completing a second symphony and the *Psalms of David*, and that he had been working on an opera-oratorio based on the Assyrian myth of Gilgamesh for a number of years.<sup>2</sup> The *Psalms of David* and *Gilgamesh* are mentioned by another journalist around the same time also, and in his last interview before he fell silent, given in February 1956, Christou stated:

'I have put the finishing touches to *Symphony no. 2* which I hope will be performed in the 1957-58 New York season... I am working on an opera based on a libretto by the Italian musicologist Domenico de Paulis, the subject of which concerns the reactions of different classes of humanity in the face of death'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kalomiris's recollections thus prove that he visited Platres in 1951, since Christou states that the *Latin Liturgy* was composed in that year (see the text by Kalomiris, Appendix II, pp. 123-124 and *Latin Liturgy: Introduction and Commentary*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Guarino, Piero, 1955, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Christou by Jean Marcelin, 1956, op. cit. The libretto is preserved in the archives of the composer, together with several letters between Christou and de Paulis.

This date, and the month of February in particular, is significant, for it was only four months later that the terrible accident that was to lead to the death of the young psychoanalyst Evangelos Christou, brother of Jani, occurred, and this was to affect the composer for the rest of his life. In the words of his friend, George Leotsakos:

'In this death more than any other event in his adult life, we see the greatest single factor that affected Christou's entire subsequent development. The memory of his brother was more than sacred to Jani Christou. Throughout the entire duration of our friendship (7 years), I never once heard him mention his name, even in the course of what one might call intimate conversations between us. His portrait held pride of place in the studio where he worked. Indeed, it would not be absurd to consider the descent into the nether world that occurred during the final period of Christou's creative output as an attempt to complete a poignant and dangerous spiritual journey he had embarked upon with the dearly beloved deceased'.<sup>4</sup>

If the second symphony was indeed composed almost in its entirety before 1956, then, strictly speaking, no other works dating from the period 1955–59 exist. A document dated September 1956 – and therefore after the death of his brother – indicates that at that time Christou was engaged in securing the publication of Evangelos Christou's book *The Logos of the Soul* and that he produced personal commentaries on several passages which gave him the principal idea for his future opera *The Breakdown*, which he dedicated to the memory of Evangelos with the inscription 'To my brother, to whom I owe so much'. Only a few pages of music of this opera survive.

All that remains from this period, therefore, are a number of titles that testify in their spirit to the composer's profoundly metaphysical and mystical orientation and his preference for lyrico-dramatic style. I do not believe that any of these works were actually completed, each one remaining in a more or less advanced sketched state.

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*Symphony no. 2*, the 'neat' copy of which took over a year (1957–58), was never performed in New York. A second attempt in Athens in 1960 failed also and the work was laid aside in favour of new works such as *Patterns and Permutations*.

<sup>4</sup> Leotsakos, George S., unpublished lecture, 1970, op. cit.

## Appendix II

### TEXT BY KALOMIRIS

It seemed important in the present context to quote the historic text concerning Christou by Manolis Kalomiris, leader of the Greek national school, who met the young composer in the Cypriot village of Platres. This text was published in *Bima* on 7 April 1973 with the following introduction by George Leotsakos:

'According to Christou's mother, this meeting took place during the summer of 1950 or 1951. That summer, Jani Christou, having completed his studies with the Italian composer F. Lavagnino, had returned to his family home. Kalomiris was in Cyprus at that time and, amongst other places, visited Platres. He heard that Christou was staying there and paid him an unexpected call. In his text Kalomiris adopts the slightly paternalistic tone he tended to assume when dealing with young composers. He tried to see Christou through the eyes of a composer of the national school. It is perhaps for this reason that he does not mention anything definite about his meeting with Christou. However, if the meeting took place some time before the text was written on 9 July 1953, it is possible that Kalomiris was unable to remember all the subjects discussed, and therefore simply conveyed the indisputably profound impression the young composer made on him'.

#### Text by Kalomiris

'I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Jani Christou last summer through Gina Bachauer and Alec Sherman. They told me about a new composer of exceptional talent on whom Greek music may pin great hopes. The following day I had the opportunity of listening to a recording of one of his symphonies (no. 1). This symphony, from what I heard, is certainly not an 'apprentice' work. I realized with great surprise that this young man was an artist who possessed all the secrets of the new music<sup>1</sup> and, at the same time, revealed an extraordinary aesthetic and spiritual maturity that is difficult to find even in artists with a long creative past. One has the impression that Jani Christou does not attempt to compose according to recipes or formulae. Rather, he controls the formulae and recipes of the new music to perfection. In his music, novelty

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<sup>1</sup> Kalomiris is referring here to atonal music in general, including dodecaphonic music.

fulfils a psychological need; his modernism appears natural and pure, without any affectation or effort whatsoever. I had the good fortune to meet this young composer recently in the wonderful Cypriot countryside of the village of Platres, and just as I experienced the pride of being the first to predict the genius of Dimitri Mitropoulos and to introduce him to the press, so today I am proud to introduce this young composer who I am sure will before long arouse much interest in the musical world.'

Kalomiris's prophecy was indeed to come true. Four valuable letters exist from his acquaintance with Jani Christou which reveal the amicable nature of their relationship; these letters clearly belong to the last years of Kalomiris's life (d. Athens, 3 April 1962) since they are dated 1960.

# Appendix III

## NOTATION: SYSTEMS AND SIGNS

### Introduction

If *Mysterion* belongs to the period of development of the new system of musical notation, *Praxis for 12* lays the official foundations of this system which were subsequently confirmed and deepened in *Enantiodromia*. The explanations that follow present a summary of the signs employed in the latter two works. They do not pretend to be exhaustive, however. Alongside the list of the various systems and schemes figures a detailed analysis of the different relationships existing between specific functions and concepts, such as the continuum, patterns, the act of improvisation, etc. This analysis is not reproduced in full here due to lack of space; nevertheless, reference is made to it at relevant points throughout the work.<sup>1</sup>

Christou was particularly sensitive to the problems of notation for he was concerned to ensure a high standard of performance of his works. Thus, he never stopped trying to improve its form. *Praxis for 12*, for example, was rewritten twice in 1968 and 1969. In the 1969 version, the notation is presented in a more synthetic form and the overall organization of the score is more simple. The transcription on tracing paper was completed in November 1969, but the composer continued to study it and correct it until his death on 8 January 1970. Christou had originally envisaged a score without any written indications. However, he was constantly aware that the conductor, as well as the scholar, would need a code in order to decipher the score. To this end, in December 1969, he began to write the introduction and appendices to the score which were almost complete on his death, with the exception of the overall specifications for each pattern. These may, however, be based on the earlier specifications given in the 1968 edition since they do not differ in any way.

<sup>1</sup> See chapter III, 'The Combinative Nature of the System of Patterns: Summary of Musical Applications', pp. 102-103 and the discussion of the implications of the notion of metapraxis, pp. 100-101.

### Systems of Notation<sup>2</sup>

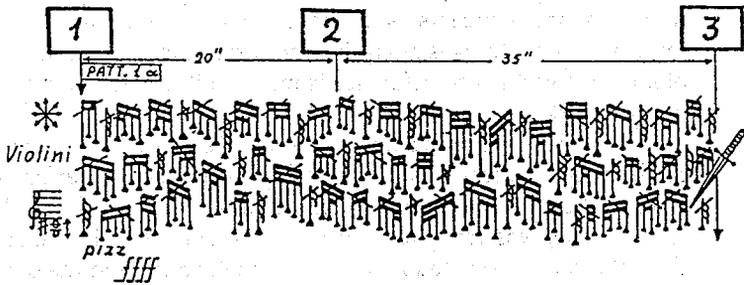
Three separate types of notation are used:

1. Synthetic
2. Proportionate
3. Measured

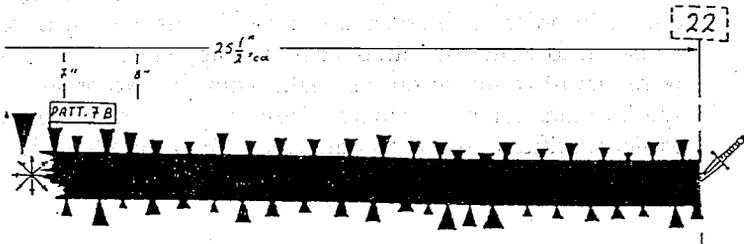
#### 1. Synthetic Notation

Synthetic notation is used for characterising patterns optically. Elements of more or less familiar notational material expressing components of a pattern are assembled into a pictorial synthesis of marks that suggest the nature of the end-result.

*Example i:* The individual hailstorms of short figures plucked uninterruptedly at breakneck speeds is suggested by a thick collective torrent of closely packed grouplets of fast heavy notes:



*Example ii:* The accelerating hammering effect of instruments furiously delivering their individual outbursts of random chords is suggested by the appearance of a thick collective mass into which chords seem to be nailed.



#### Instant Pattern Recognition

Contrary to proportionate and measured notation, which are both analytic with respect to their horizontal lay-out (in that they specify how the

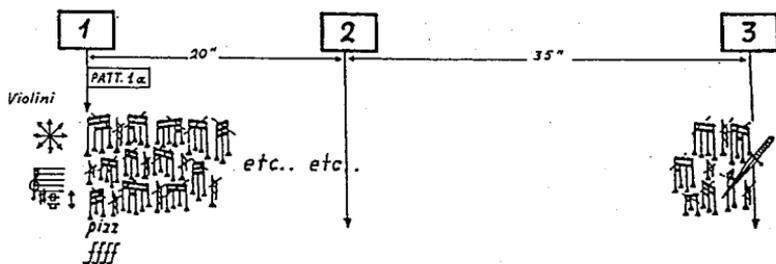
<sup>2</sup> Extract from the appendices to the 1970 edition of the score of *Praxis for 12* (J. and W. Chester, London).

separate components of a given pattern unfold in time in relation to each other), synthetic notation is *not* analytic and is therefore not intended to mirror occurrences on a one-to-one basis in time. In short, synthetic notation does not read normally. Designed primarily to communicate general characteristics, synthetic notation creates a picture, as it were, with a visual impact conveying the essence of a pattern immediately as a whole, and not analytically in stages.

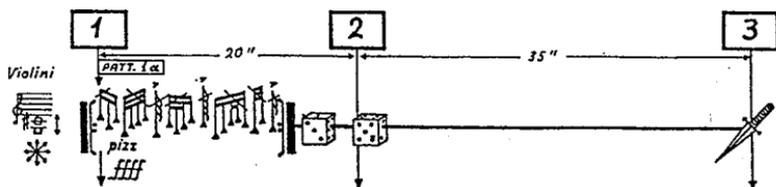
*Economy*

Concerned as it is only with general characteristics, and not specifics, synthetic notation has no use for a separate line for each "divided" member of a group caught up in the same pattern. One notational "picture" is shared by the group as a whole, so that there is a substantial economy on the length of the score page.

Economy is, of course, not the main concern of synthetic notation. Depending on the circumstances, the other types can be far more economical. For instance, patterns proceeding in scatter motion (see "scatter signs") ipso facto eliminate any possibility for a separate "line" for each member of the group involved, no matter what notation is used. *Example:* because of the operation of the scatter sign, the "divided" collective string pattern in cue 1 can be analytically notated along a single "line" as follows:



this is, of course, much more economical than the synthetic lay-out in the score, where the acoustic thickness of the collective activities is suggested optically by a thick torrent of notes, extending, moreover, right through to the pattern's "switch-off" at cue 2



But the economy of the analytic expression does away with a substantial part of the pictorial element, and this impoverishment reduces the possibilities for "listening with the eye" to the total effect of any point in the score.

*Optical control over the Score*

The advantage – it is hoped – of synthetic notation is that by providing instant pictorial identification of events, any moment in the score, no matter how complex, becomes optically intelligible at a glance, and in as compact a space as possible. While in works for larger forces, and with a plurality of separate overlapping patterns and other events, the advantages of such optical control over the notated page are even more apparent.

*Decoding Synthetic Notation*

Obviously, to be fully understood, the “pictures” of each synthetically notated pattern must be “unscrambled”: Decoded by reference to the corresponding specifications in analytic notation which precede the score proper. As will be seen, this is a simple process.

*2. Proportionate Notation*

Unlike synthetic notation, proportionate notation is analytic in the sense that its lay-out does mirror the separate components on a one-to-one basis in time, showing, that is, how they unfold in time in relation to each other. In short, proportionate notation reads normally, and no “unscrambling” is needed (it should be stressed that prior reference to what signs mean does not constitute “unscrambling”).

As used here, the term “proportionate notation” is derived from the relative way time, and not pitch or any other parameter, is expressed within any given pattern. This is an optical operation: long notes are shown as occupying longer space, short notes shorter space, on the space = time principle. While further definition may be given by dividing space into regular units of time:

*Example i*

The image shows a musical score for two violins, A and B. At the top, a box contains the number '18'. Below it, a series of vertical lines are labeled with time intervals: 1'', 2'', 3'', 4'', 5'', 6'', 7'', 8'', 9'', 10'', and 11''. To the left of these lines, there are two staves labeled 'Violini A' and 'Violini B'. The notes on these staves are proportionate to the time intervals, with longer notes for longer intervals. There are also dynamic markings like 'PPP' and 'subito' at the beginning, and a 'PAT. 6 ca' marking above the first interval.

Either way, built-in time relationships between separate values do not exist, neither are these desirable.

The use of notes with seemingly built-in values, as in example (ii) above, does not imply any fixed value relationships, only approximate

Example ii: or by quoting an over-all time measurement for a given passage:

26

PATT. 11 α

4"ca

15"ca

left hand INTERIOR

S

A ruler

T

accel... wildly

B ffff etc...

Pfte

right hand INTERIOR

with panic-stricken energy

Pad.

ones: shorter than, longer than (or much shorter than, much longer than, and so on as the case may be).

In principle, the use of "approximate" value-notes is superfluous, since spatial characteristics alone could convey the same information. Nevertheless such "suggestive" use of "value-notes" may on occasion be useful, whenever for structural reasons, or because of the total lay-out of the score page, additional optical clarity is required within any given passage.

### 3. Measured Notation

Measured notation, like proportionate notation, is analytic (reads normally). But whereas proportionate notation can only indicate approximate time values, measured notation gives a specific value for each component independently of the lay-out.

*Two types* In this work, two types of measured notation occur, as the following examples show:

*Type (i):* this is the familiar conventional notation with built-in values bearing a fixed relationship to each other:

29

PATT. 12

10"

30

six violins

Vlni A I, II

4<sup>o</sup> h 2 be be be be etc. be be be be be be etc..

non dir

Vlni B I, II

4<sup>o</sup> be be be be f. be. be. be. be be be be etc..

non dir

Vlni C I, II

4<sup>o</sup> e be be be f. be. f. be. be be be etc..

non dir

pp ff



#### 4. Labelling the Different Types of Notation

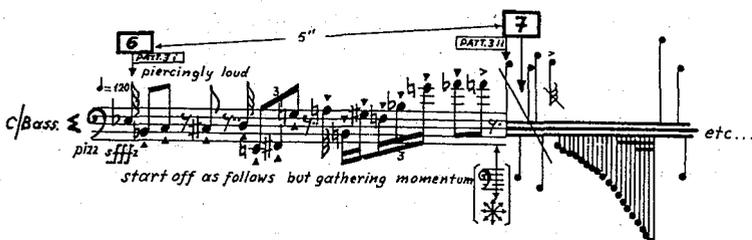
To avoid confusing the "logic" of synthetic with that of one of the analytic types of notation, each separate type is, labelled at each appearance, as follows both in the score and in the part material:

- SN = in synthetic notation
- PN = in proportionate notation
- MN = in measured notation

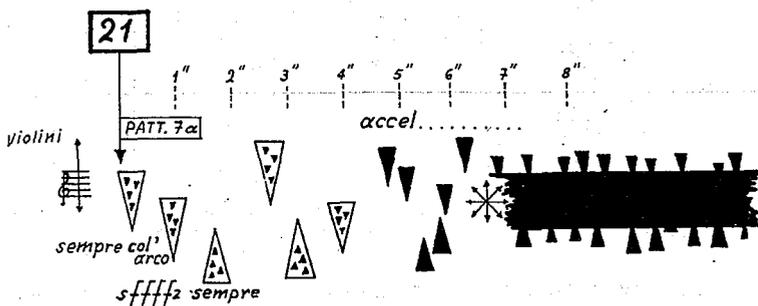
In this manner, any ambiguity (particularly in the event of border-line cases) is avoided, so that what is intended to be read normally with regard to the horizontal succession of events unfolding in time will not be confused with a synthetic "picture" which does not show the horizontal succession analytically – and which should therefore be unscrambled prior to performance.

#### "Labelling" the succession of different notation

For instance, different stages of a given passage may call for a change in notation, and although this is usually optically obvious, it may nevertheless prove useful to mark the switch-over into a different reading logic with the appropriate "label": SN, PN or MN, as the case may be.



(i) the passage begins in measured notation then changes to synthetic;



(ii) the passage begins in proportionate notation then changes to synthetic.

### 5. Overlapping of Different Notations

When the overlapping activities of separate passages are expressed in different notations, there need be no implied proportionate relationship between the durations of the components within the different lay-outs. This point is best explained with an example:

Example 13 illustrates overlapping notations for different instruments. The score is divided into three main sections:

- Top Section:** Labeled '13' and 'PATT. 5A'. It features three staves for Violins: Vlni A, Vlni B, and Vlni C. The notation is highly complex and overlapping.
- Middle Section:** Labeled 'PATT. 5B'. It features staves for Violin (Viol.) and Viola/Celli (V/Cell.). The notation is also complex and overlapping.
- Bottom Section:** Labeled 'Pfte' (Piano-forte). It features a single staff for the keyboard right hand. The notation is measured and includes specific durations: 15" ca, 2", 8", 10", and 5". It also includes performance instructions: 'INTERIOR left hand', 'simile', 'slowly with great tension', and 'shff'.

The overlapping nature of the notation is evident as the piano-forte passage is laid out horizontally below the string and woodwind passages, which are laid out vertically. The piano-forte notation includes specific durations and performance instructions, while the string and woodwind notation is more complex and overlapping.

Here the durations specified for the components of the piano-forte passage, which is in measured notation, do not also provide a relative manner of optically measuring any of the durations of the synthetically assembled components within the collective passage for strings. The logic of the synthetic lay-out is different to that of the measured notation, and the details of the former can only be "read" by reference to the corresponding specifications preceding the score.

This is another instance where it may be useful to draw attention to the operation of different reading logics with the application of the appropriate "labels" (SN, PN or MN).

### Signs of Notation<sup>3</sup>

#### 1. Patterns and Energies

The term "pattern" stands for any independent system of either static or active events. Any pattern, whether active or static, calls upon the

<sup>3</sup> Extract from the introduction to the score of *Enantiodromia* (J. and W. Chester, London, 1971).

participant's energy for its expression in time. Patterns should be understood in terms of forms for action requiring a constant feed-back between a pattern's possibilities and the participant's energy. What is implied is something other than the self-evident relationship between a notated form and the action necessary for its performance. What this "something other" is can only be suggested here by amplifying the proposition that a pattern should be understood in terms of action (2i) with the statement that a pattern's justification is its function as a dynamic form eliciting the participant's energy and canalising this into characteristic types of action - Whatever these types may be, a process which may, just as it may not, involve sound itself.

For example:

silent patterns involving gesture only (Enantiodynamia, conductor's Metapraxis, pattern 29, cues 69 and 117) Moreover, the above definition of pattern covers any "life pattern" in which sound occurs only as a by-product

||: WALKING: || —

||: EATING: || —

||: BREATHING: || —

||: MOB PANIC: || —

(Enantiodynamia, General Metapraxis,  
pattern 30, cue 116)

## 2. Energies and Signs

- i This music works with the energies that develop and sustain patterns:  
The energies of single individuals  
The energies of massed individuals

To provoke, develop and control these energies two main groups of signs are used:

- a. Those functioning like traffic signs which organise and direct the movements of both individuals and mass circulation, and therefore called "TRAFFIC SIGNS".

- b. Those determining the manner in which energy is released by specifying how the events forming a pattern are to be multiplied in time, resulting in the pattern's continuity, and therefore called "CONTINUITY SIGNS".

### 3. Traffic Signs

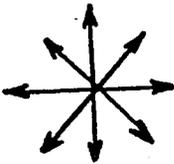


←20"→

AREA-MARK

The score is divided into areas of duration. The area-mark indicates the beginning of each area of duration and encloses its cue number. The duration of each area is given in seconds.

The conductor signals each successive area with a downward gesture of the arm.



#### SCATTER

This applied to a group performing the same pattern. The sign directs each member of the group to carry out the pattern's specifications on his own, to go his individual way along an independent path of own spontaneous invention.

The main characteristic aimed at with the scatter process is the proliferation of constantly shifting indeterminate relationships, achieved by compounding the unique activities of each individual caught up in a collective pattern, like the chirping of many birds, the murmuring of a crowd, the sound of hail, the trumpeting of a flock of geese, the uncoordinated movements of people in a public square – or the sound of their panicking.



#### SYNCHRONISE

The opposite of "scatter". The sign calls for synchronised delivery.



**STOP DEAD**

The cut must be sudden, with no trailing of unfinished material: an abrupt and total "switch-off".

**4. Continuity Signs**

*Preliminary Remarks*

The elements with which continuity signs are constructed are three:



REPEAT-BRACKETS: (enclosing pattern-sample)



DURATION-INDICATOR



AT RANDOM: in the sense that freedom of choice is always limited to the set of specifications ruling the pattern (the "overall specifications"). This limitation is symbolised by numbers on the dice (specific numbers have no particular significance).

Components of the pattern-sample enclosed in the repeat-brackets have a double aspect:

- a. STRUCTURE (this includes both "shape" and duration)
- b. POSITION (with respect to the other components)

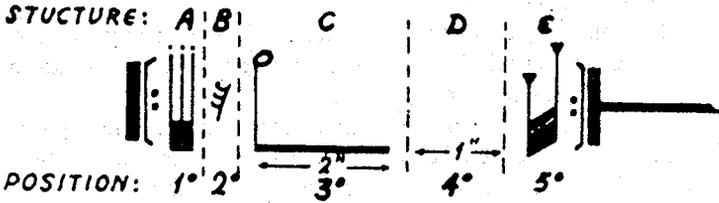
The absence or presence of one or two dice in a continuity sign determines whether these aspects remain unaltered or not (see below).

*A-The Signs*

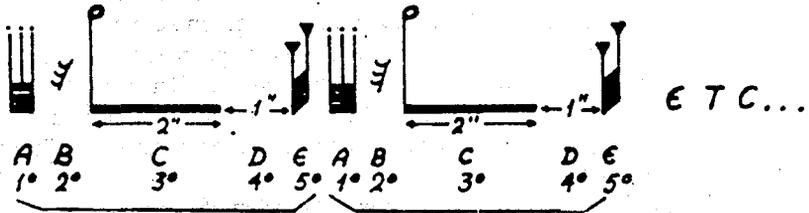


KEEP REPEATING up to point shown by duration-Indicator. The absence of dice (the random element) from this continuity sign means that the simplest sort of event multiplication is involved: strict repetition. Here both the structural and positional aspects of the components (or "events") forming the pattern-sample

(enclosed in the repeat brackets) remain unmodified example:



"MULTIPLICATION" of above pattern-sample by strict-repetition.



i.e. The structure of each component remains fixed, together with its position within the sequence forming the pattern sample.

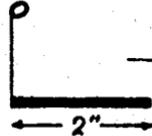


KEEP PERMUTATING at random, up to point shown by duration-indicator.

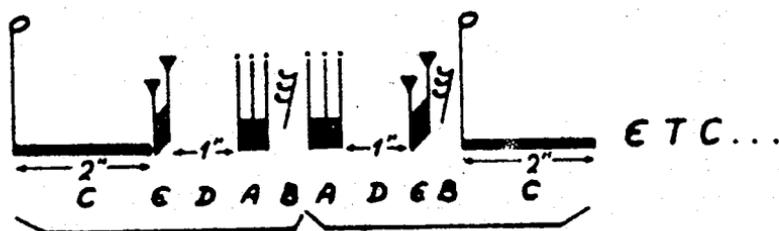
The presence of one die in this continuity sign indicates the operation of the random element with respect to only one of the two aspects of the components of the pattern-sample. The affected aspect is the POSITIONAL ASPECT. The structural aspect remains fixed. Thus components remain structurally fixed, but their position within the sequence shown in the pattern-sample keeps changing at random with every repeat.

Or, from the structural point of view, the separate components of the pattern-sample keep their strict structural constancy throughout the permutations of their positions within each sequence.

Consider the components of the pattern-sample given above:

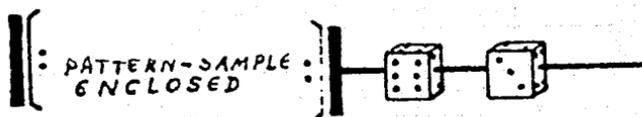
COMPONENT	STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION
	very fast grouplet of three reiterated notes
	fractional pause
	note sustained for 2 seconds
	pause of 1 second
	very fast ascending figure of two accented notes

The following example could be typical of a stretch produced by any one performer multiplying the above material according to the "keep permutating" process:



It represents a stepping-stone process between the simple "KEEP REPEATING" type of continuity and the more complex "KEEP IMPROVISING" type.

KEEP IMPROVISING



at random within the limits of the overall specifications for the pattern, up to point shown by the duration-indicator. Here the presence of TWO dice

indicates the operation of the random element upon the two aspects of the components (structure and position) of the pattern-sample. Thus during this multiplication process both structural and positional aspects of these components are constantly varied. The positional aspect is affected in the same manner as in the "KEEP PERMUTATING" process: the components position keeps permutating at random. But unlike the "keep permutating" process, this "KEEP IMPROVISING" process calls for the continuous random variation of the components' STRUCTURAL ASPECT – a process which is at all times controlled by the overall specifications (see onwards below). The compounded effect of random permutations and "controlled" structural variation is expressed by the term "KEEP IMPROVISING". And the implication is that while "IMPROVISING" the performer need not be conscious of two processes: component-variation and permutation, but of a single, spontaneous improvisatory flow. (Example: see onwards below under B: Structural characteristics). As stated above, the randomness of this improvisatory flow is controlled by the limits set by the OVERALL SPECIFICATIONS (see onward below). Overall specifications include a pattern's STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS by which a pattern is identified. Now since one of the functions of continuity signs is to provide various manners for multiplying any given pattern's components in order to achieve the dynamic continuity of the PATTERN ITSELF It is self-evident why continuity, even though involving "IMPROVISATION", must nevertheless not destroy the structural characteristics which give the pattern its identity. Whenever, inadvertently perhaps, improvisation does destroy these characteristics, then, although the performer "continues" performing something or other, he cannot be considered as performing the specific pattern involved which, in effect, is discontinued. And this discontinuity is in contradiction to the presence of this particular continuity sign.

### *B-Structural Characteristics*

What is meant by a pattern's structural characteristics can be suggested by a comparison of its components "STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTIONS", which are particular, with the same components "STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS", which are several.

Consider the components of this pattern-sample:

COMPONENT	STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION (particular)	STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS (general)
A 	very fast grouplet of 3 reiterated notes	very fast grouplet of reiterated notes
B 	fractional pause	fractional pause
C 	note sustained for 2 seconds	sustained note (short)
D 	pause of 1 second	short pause
E 	very fast ascending figure of 2 accented notes	very fast and short figure of accented notes

Note that "structural descriptions" include both general information – i.e. a component's structural characteristics – and particular information (if any, see below)

For instance, the "structural description" of component A gives both its "characteristics" (very fast grouplet of reiterated notes) and the particularity: three reiterated notes.

However, there are instances in which "general" and "particular" coincide, as in the case of component B – where the description "fractional pause" need not be measured precisely, since the term "fractional" is, for practical purposes, sufficiently specific in this context (the use of does not have any fixed metrical meaning; it is used "suggestively" in the context of proportionate and optical notation). The injunction not to destroy a pattern's structural characteristics – to keep within these characteristics – can now be considered in terms of the table given above.

- a. Whenever a variation of a component's "particulars" does not cause any change in the wording of the "general structural characteristics" in the final column of the table (see above), that variation is in keeping with the pattern's structural characteristics: the "improvisation" is "correct".
- b. On the other hand, whenever a variation of a component's "particulars" does bring about a change in the wording of the "general structural characteristics" in the final column of the table (see above), that variation is not in keeping with the pattern's structural characteristics – and the process is to be avoided (in the context of the continuity sign under discussion) because the "improvisation" involved is not "correct".

EXAMPLE

COMPONENT	STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION (particular)	STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS (general)
A1 	very fast grouplet of 3 reiterated notes	very fast grouplet of reiterated notes
A2 	- . . . 2 " "	. . . . " "
A3 	. . . . 4 " "	. . . . " "
A4 	. . . . group - 10 . .	. . . . group of many . .

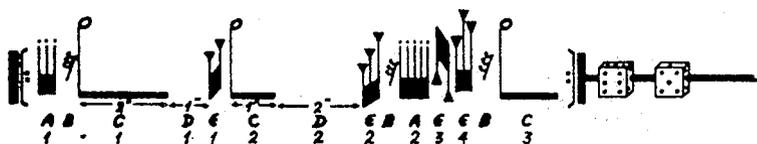
A1 represents the component's original condition. A2, A3, A4, are variations. Note that while A2 and A3 do not alter the wording of the original structural characteristics, A4 does – and cannot therefore be considered as a "correct improvisation" (see above 6. B). "Correct" are A2 and A3 (see above i, a). Now the example shown above suggests that unless there is some way of defining the limits to which improvisation can go

without altering a component's structural characteristics, there is bound to be a lot of ambiguity. For instance, the number of reiterated notes in component A4 is admittedly just a little too large for this component to be classed as a "grouplet" (which suggests a small group, a group with only a few notes). A4 thus becomes something else: a "group" (of many notes), and this different characterisation constitutes a "threat" to the pattern's identity. On the other hand, just what is a "grouplet"? A small group of 3, 4, 5, perhaps 6 notes, may be even 7 notes? or maybe not as many as 7 notes ... To avoid this sort of ambiguity the following procedure has been adopted:

The pattern-sample enclosed by the 'repeat-brackets' of a "keep-improvising" continuity sign specifies or suggests the minimum and maximum limits within which a component can be varied, whenever not doing so could result in an ambiguity which could threaten the pattern's structural identity.

Consider, for instance, the pattern-sample in chapter signs, i (above). There was no question there of showing the limits to which improvisation could go, since the continuity process involved was "keep permutating" – which calls for structurally fixed components throughout: only their positions permute.

But if the pattern is to be multiplied according to the "KEEP IMPROVISING" continuity process, then the sample shown within the repeat-brackets must be enlarged to accommodate two or more variations of any given component between which its structural limits are specified or suggested. Example:



### 5. Overall Specifications

The continuity sign has been described as: "KEEP IMPROVISING AT RANDOM WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE OVER-ALL SPECIFICATIONS ...."



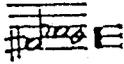
So far only structural aspects have been discussed (see "KEEP IMPROVISING" and "MULTIPLE PATTERNS", above). But besides specifications determining a pattern's structural characteristics, overall specifications include, amongst others, those which determine a pattern's pitch or pitch-area. These specifications are given by means of "pitch-indicators".

*A-Pitch Indicators*



Each member of the group performing the pattern keeps delivering the pattern only on one of the notes of the cluster specified by the vertical sign|. The horizontal arrow indicates one pitch level, or one note only per performer. In the synthetically notated score the analytic information specifying who plays what note of the cluster is not relevant. Strictly speaking, the conductor need only know what the pitch-area is, not how it is distributed.

But in the analytically notated orchestral parts information as to who plays what note is supplied: Thus the analytic sign  means: keep performing the pattern only on the one specified note.

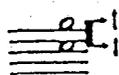
Whenever it is not feasible to supply each member of a group with a separate pitch-indicator, several or all members of the group share one pitch-indicator on which their respective pitches are marked: i.e. 



Each member of the group keeps performing the pattern throughout the range specified, including the limit notes.

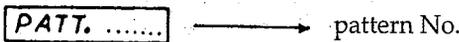
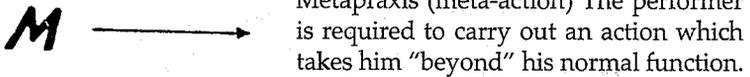
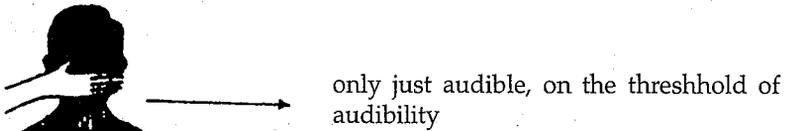
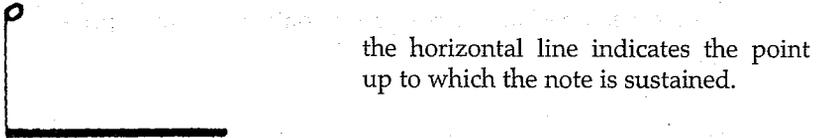
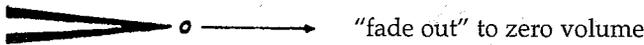
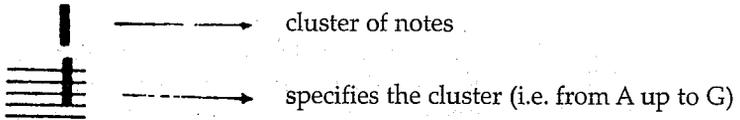


Each member of the group keeps performing the pattern throughout an extensive range, as suggested: middle to acute, entire range, etc.

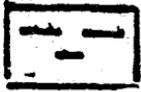


Each member of the group plays more than one note within the specified cluster, but not all the notes.

B-Other Signs



psychoid factor:  
For instance, when the volume is at a maximum already and the sign  $\psi$  calls for a further crescendo, this suggests that the crescendo can only be conveyed by the manner of playing: a frenzied attempt to break the volume barrier.



impassivity



blaring gaiety



aggressivity



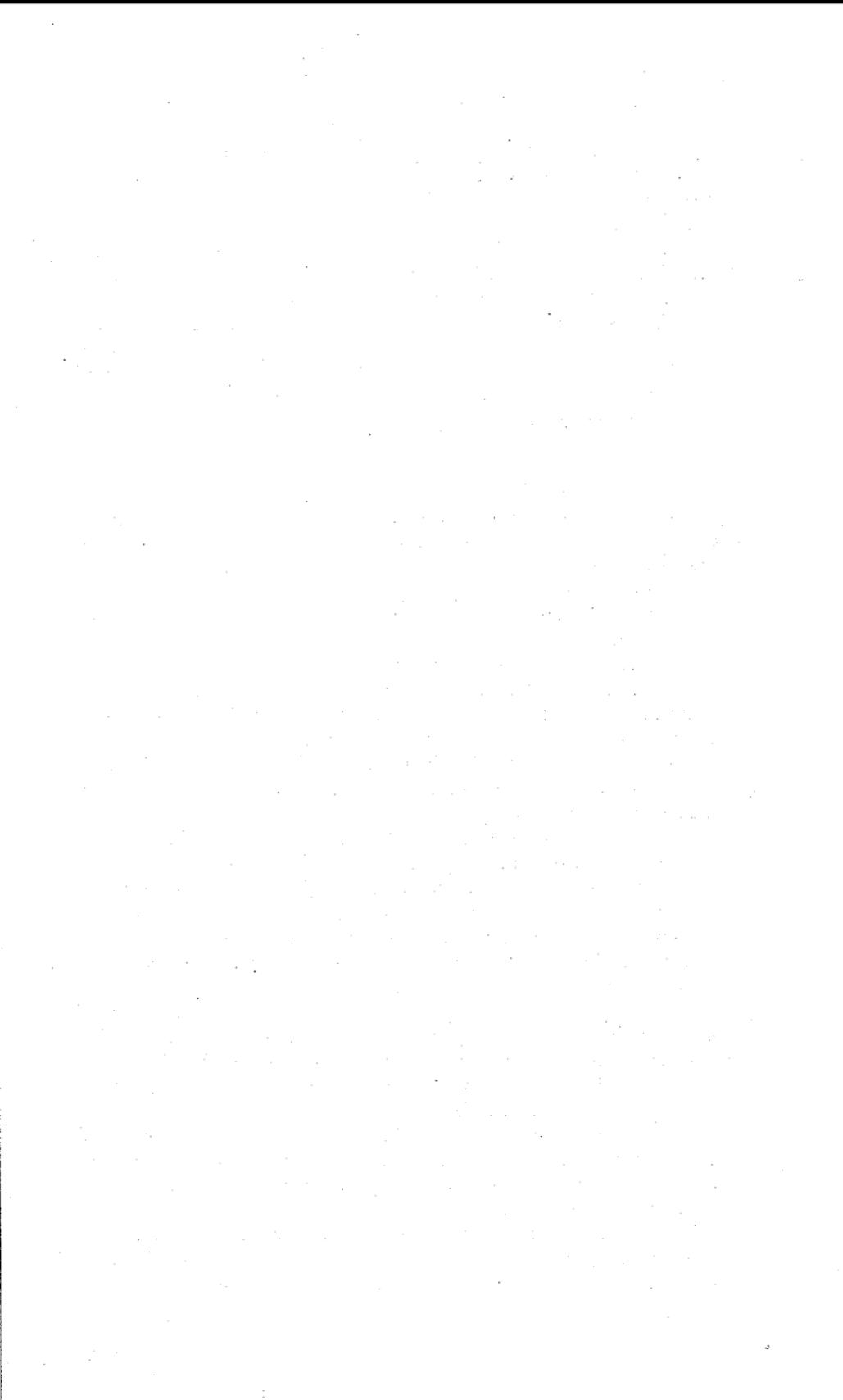
fear



panic



infantile well-being



# Appendix IV

## THE JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVE: SYMBOLS AND DYNAMICS

### Introduction

The following text by Christou is of fundamental importance since it represents the composer's only written statement of his vision of the world in general and the direct relationship between this and his philosophy of music; it is therefore reproduced in full.

If Christou's mode of presentation and expression appear surprising and unapproachable at first sight, this is due to the fact that much of the text is written in a metaphorical (or poetic) style. The deeply pessimistic character of the composer's thought due to his ultra-determinist conception of life and death, plays here a major role in defining the place and function of music in contemporary society. The opening lines of 'A Music of Confrontation' are most explicit in this respect: 'I am therefore concerned with a music that confronts; with a music that wants to stare at the suffocating effect, even terror [one is reminded here of *Anaparastasis I*], of much of our everyday experience of living'.

How might this relationship between metaphysics and music be expressed? Christou, at once a musician and a philosopher, refused to separate these two functions.<sup>1</sup> The one represents the phase of inner reflection on ideas concerning the universal questions of existence, whilst the other represents the phase of application, active and external, expressed through the privileged means of music. As an active phase, music is not content with expressing ideas or revealing the cosmogonic vision of the composer. **It acts as a riposte** to the formation of patterns or life cycles that Christou perceives in a dramatic spirit when he refers to their 'relentlessness'. The music thus confronts these patterns, 'eating them up, and throwing them up again', but, in order for the effect of catharsis to be achieved, it must unfold within an unusual space-time that leaves the spectator disarmed and therefore all the more susceptible to its effect. For this reason, Christou situates his work in the world of the dream, in the domain of the irrational.

**The following text was written within the framework of the Jungian conception of the world.** Thus, one may go so far as to claim

<sup>1</sup> This unity of thought is apparent in his composition notes in which certain symbolic pictograms also signify dynamic musical functions.

that Christou composed music that was 'Jungian' in its fundamental philosophical principles, for it aimed to liberate the individual (see the manifesto, pp. 92-93) whilst connecting his ego to an archaic yet eternal collective unconscious through the use of the musical rite. The expression of the existential anguish of modern man and the therapeutic powers of music are the subjects discussed in this text:

#### PROTOPERFORMANCE

June 1968

The early archetypal point of view did not know history. Instead, it looked upon everything that took place, whether processes of nature close to man, or in the environment at large; whether single activities of individual men, or the compounded activities of many men; whether the fate overtaking some single individual, or the fate overtaking the group as a whole; it looked upon all of these as repetitions of some aspect of a numinous original, an archetypal pattern – or MASTER-PATTERN, even to the point of identification.

Under such circumstances nothing had any meaning, or any proper existence, unless it could be considered as a repetition of the master-pattern, or as a component of such a pattern; of a master-pattern of being and action existing both out of time and in the centre of every moment of time. This is certainly not what history is about. But it is what myth was about.

And it is also what rituals of renewal were about. These were PROTOPERFORMANCE – re-enactments of the original proto-pattern – the master-pattern; re-enactments in terms of corresponding mythic imagery; key-performances re-vitalising the master-pattern, when its cycle was exhausted, through forms of sacrifice, life for life, keeping it going. Because the pattern simply *had* to keep on renewing itself, if man and nature were to do the same.

Such rituals were vital acts of re-affirmation, of participation and identification with the master-pattern. Through these "protoperformances" man related – connected – by activating a process of feed-back between the numinous and himself; not for his own benefit only, but for the benefit of the total environment in which he lived and of which he was a part.

So, with this feed-back fuelled by sacrifice during ritual, life continued. Life passing into the master-pattern from that which was sacrificed in ritual, and back-lashing a thousandfold as life renewed for all.

Bio-cosmic cycles did not of course depend upon man's rituals for their renewal, but something was being renewed, nevertheless: this was man's positive relationship with all that came within the range of his experience, therefore providing him with renewed energy for life. And in this sense rituals were effective, and the renewal of life a reality.

Or, in another terminology, the feed-back activated during man's proto-performances managed to activate his psychic energy: man would first invoke the symbols representing the archetypal forms of his myths, then these symbols, in their turn, by constantly exciting and attracting his attention, would mobilise his psychic energy making it abundantly available for some life-task, or for life in general. A transmutation of dormant psychic energy into available power.

But man's rituals were effective only in so far as they could activate a positive feed-back between himself and the symbols drawn from the depths of his mythic experience. And I propose to use the term PROTOPERFORMANCE only in connection to such effective forms of ritual – or performance.

### THE LUNAR EXPERIENCE

For countless generations the renewal of vital processes has been experienced according to a common basic pattern of: generation – growth – destruction – cessation, repeated on and on. The pattern of renewal.

In the depths of man's prehistory it was the moon's monthly performance that originally drew attention to this pattern. So lunar mythology suggests. And a large luminous object in a dark sky, visibly waxing and waning, and disappearing altogether – to reappear again, only days after, for a repeat performance – must have made the point thousands of years before man could ever have had the opportunity of recognising the pattern at work in vegetation. For originally he was a hunter, and an incredibly long stretch of time had to pass before he could settle down to agriculture, upon which his survival was eventually to depend. But the moon was there, always.

And there is this suggestion too: that there was an epoch, sometime within the range of human experience, when the moon was closer to the earth than what it is now. Perhaps much closer. If so, its enormous appearance must have dominated the night-sky, overwhelmingly. And its luminosity may have been rivalled that of the sun itself.

Even if the moon did not provide man with his first experience of the pattern of renewal, it must have certainly given him one of his first awe-inspiring experiences of this pattern. Not only because of its nocturnal setting in the sky, and of the night-dark that follows the extinction of its light; and of the way with which man reacts to darkness, relating it with what cannot be known – or with what may be lurking in the dark; therefore relating darkness with fear, sometimes with wonder, or both.

But also because it is not hard to imagine the state of alarm provoked by the spectacle of a giant moon decaying into total extinction, and the anguished stirrings screaming for expression in minds still not separated from a hostile nature.

Nor is it hard to picture what the response of those minds could have been to the moon's most spectacular performance of all: its eclipse. For early man, with nothing even remotely resembling a sense of primitive

astronomy, this was an IRREGULARITY and it could have caused much terror, even panic.

While the threat of yet another eclipse must have hung like some dread prospect in the firmament of man's dawning consciousness, a constant menace of sudden doom, impossible to tell when it would strike next. There seems to be a good case for selecting the lunar eclipse as the archetypal image of some calamity which one fears, and fears the more because there is no telling when it may break out. A root image for the feeling of impending doom on a giant scale.

If the normal succession of the moon's phases can serve as the image of the general phenomenon of the regular renewal of bio-cosmic processes, then the term LUNAR PATTERN may be used to describe this phenomenon, i.e. the pattern of renewal: generation followed by growth followed by destruction followed by cessation, repeated endlessly. Or, in lunar imagery:



the nascent moon becoming the full moon becoming the dying moon swallowed up by the dark, in regular succession, on and on.

On the other hand, the term LUNAR EXPERIENCE can be used to include BOTH man's expectations with regard to the lunar pattern – that is, his fundamental awareness of life as a dynamic system of recycled patterns, AND an elemental fear of a non-renewal of any one of those patterns, a fear which is made worse by the additional of an ECLIPSE<sup>2</sup> threatening the overall process during every stage of its operation.

We may have come a long way since man's prehistory, having travelled down paths of the spirit and down paths of the mind to get to where we are today. But there are times when all our achievements really do seem to add up to so much litter along our journey through history, monumental irrelevancies, because most of the indications are that maybe we have not been travelling at all; or perhaps, yes, a round trip, back to square one, looking up again at the moon in a dark sky, wondering whether it will be renewed after being swallowed up by the dark, and all the time afraid of that constant menace – very real now – a sudden and total eclipse.

As never before perhaps, we are all in the grips of the LUNAR EXPERIENCE, and there simply does not seem to be much we can do about it, except perhaps to take refuge in fantasy (myth's poor relation, or substitute). Fantasies about ideal societies and technological paradises.

\* The proto-continuity sign.

<sup>2</sup> There is a connection between ECLIPSE and the RANDOM element .

Fantasies about controlling the course of our political evolution, and fantasies about controlling our environment through science.

But occasionally some of us may be allowed to retaliate, by attempting to recreate something of the climate of effective myth. Not a mere descriptive activity involving the invocation of fossilised myths, but the activity itself, with its energy, like the energy released by those deeper dreams which somehow do not need to be explained rationally in order to be understood.

Because effective mythic activity is man's spontaneous response to the numbing terror of his lunar experience: nature's way of coming to terms with nature's terrors – or man's terrors. And what lies at the root of this natural response of nature at work in man is his natural capacity for soul. One could say that soul formation and myth formation are aspects of the same thing, the same process, both emerging out of man's deepest experiences acquired through his confrontation with the facts of living and the facts of dying throughout countless thousands of years. The capacity for soul means the capacity to experience these facts in depth, to feel the weight of humanity's compounded experience bearing down on one's own individual experience. And these are the indelible impressions which stamp man's soul with the substance of myth.

But we are without any effective myth today, and it is for each one of us to rediscover the natural language of our souls, our myths. And for this it may sometimes be necessary to undo all other "languages", all other forms of communication which we have inherited without questioning.

In art this means, for some perhaps, getting out of history altogether to return to the conditions of *PROTOPERFORMANCE*, in which it is not the luxury of an aesthetic that is important, not the wrapping, but the content with its urgent symbolic re-enactments of the master-pattern of experience, in an elemental effort to relate to this experience in depth.

Far from ignoring history, this position uses it in the only way which now seems acceptable – as material for a confrontation between history and meta-history, because the sacrifice in this type of *protoperformance* may be just this: the dismemberment of history or of that surface reality – which is our everyday reality, our everyday history. What this implies is something for each individual to work out for himself. There can be no general rule. But some life has to be bled out of the bloated body of that which has monopolised reality and calls itself history, into those other forms, which lie outside history but whose reality is exhausted. This may involve a weak trickle of light, and perhaps not even that much, into the fathomless dark; but for some of us there may be no other choice.

#### A MUSIC OF CONFRONTATION

I am therefore concerned with a music that confronts; with a music that wants to stare at the suffocating effect, even terror, of much of our everyday experience of living; with a music that does NOT seek to escape the

relentlessness of the patterns in which this experience keeps unfolding. With a music that not only does not attempt to escape this experience, but that seeks out its forms – and eats them up, and throws them up again, just as dreams do.

I am not advocating a music of violence, although some of it may often appear to be just that. On the contrary, what seems to me to be important is a subtlety of operation: a quiet picking at the threads of reality; a loosening of the fabric; a soft collapse into pictures of distortion; a slow disintegration; maybe a glimpse into the void beyond – or at nothing.

If there is a logic to such a music, it is, perhaps, something like the logic at work in dreams – or nightmares – with their paradoxical counterpointing of events and their irrational fragmentations; and their obsessive repetitions, or their dark insinuations, and obscure revelations . . .

With this logic there can be no barriers. Just as anything – no matter how common, nor how complex, nor how incongruous, whether distorted or not, recognisable, or utterly irrecongnisable – may turn up as a component in a dream, so anything, or any action, and in any combination, is a potential component of this music.

Musicians, and non-musicians; actors, and non-actors; dancers, and plain people. Any or all of whom may perform some gesture, some action, or move about formally, as in some dance, or not formally, as in some life-situation. Any or all of whom may play musical or non-musical instruments – plain objects which are struck or stroked, or otherwise handled for their sound, or sophisticated electronic equipment processing live sound or play-back; producing calculated effects, or random effects; sounds that are musical or concrete, or that reproduce the ordinary sounds of living. Any or all of whom may perform within their category (praxis) – a violinist playing the violin, or beyond their category (metapraxis) – the violinist screaming.

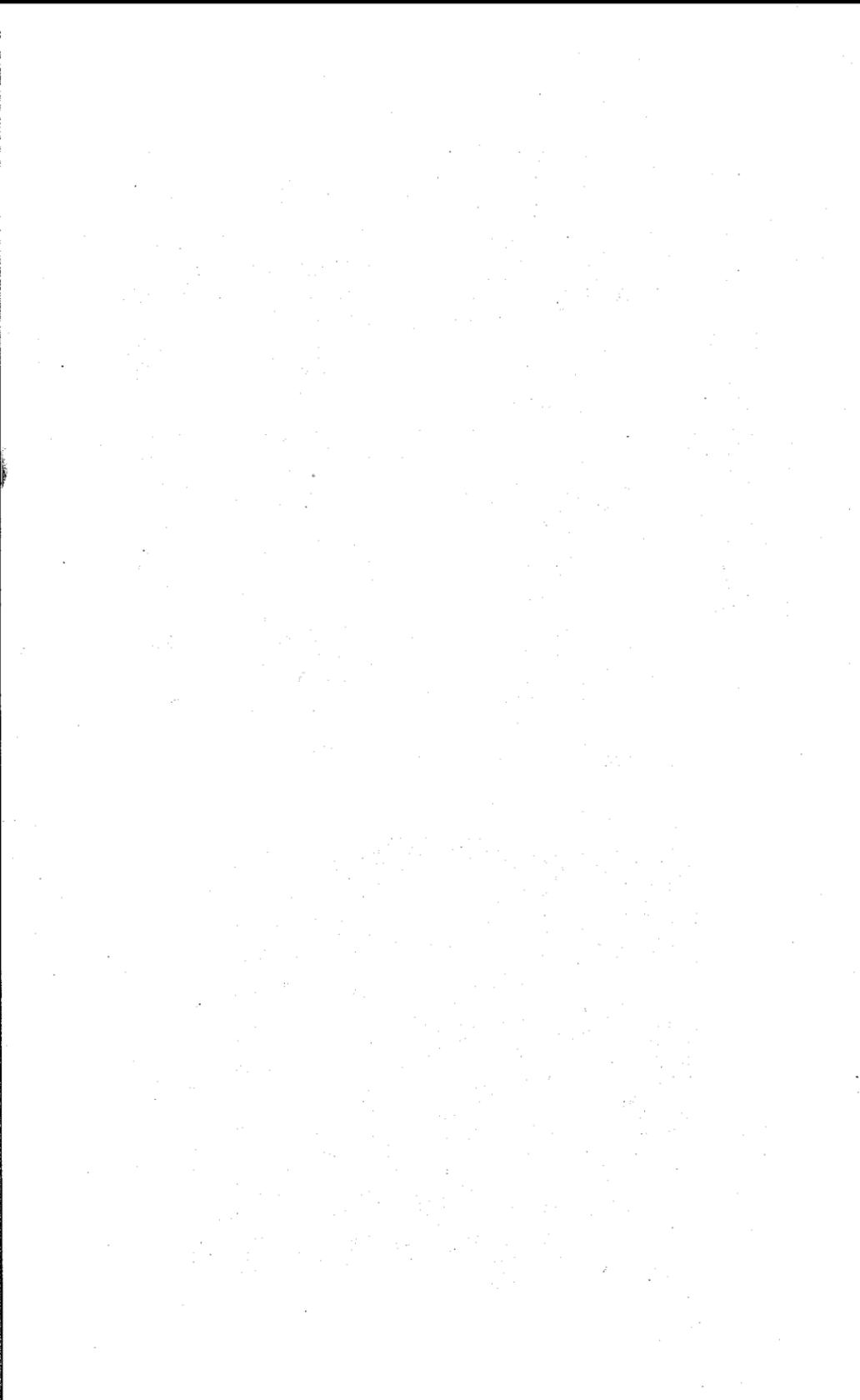
While all these participants may be subjected to processes of dissolution: amputation of the material they produce, and its dissociation: a performer goes through the motions but we hear no sound; or we hear sound, while there is no corresponding action which would produce it. Or separate events, representing totally different systems, occurring together. Abrupt cessations; abrupt resumptions; fragmentations; exaggerations; distortions: ECLIPSE.

And these activities may take place not only in conventional areas of performance, but anywhere, **depending on the work**: outside the auditorium, in public squares, in the streets of a city, anywhere. Attempts at proto-performance outside conventional cultural strongholds.

But there is no validity in any of these processes unless the components come together in *SYNTHESIS*, because otherwise there is no "music". This is a synthesis which may work for some, while for others it may not. No rules can ever be written. Like alchemy: the ingredients may be common: but the manner of their synthesis remains obscure. Or like ritual: which works for some while not for others. And for those for whom it does not work, ritual, at best, represents mere ceremony.

Again, as in some ritual of participation, whatever substance there may be to this music can only be conveyed by the actuality of the physical action of its performance and the communication of the tension, the energy and the psychoid factors involved.

But unlike ritual, this sort of synthesis has no formality of structure. Not that some of the components cannot have a strict formality of their own. Even so, components are not synthesis, they are only material; and theirs is a vulnerable type of formality, anyway, which can be shaken up and violated at any moment (constantly menaced by an "eclipse").



## Appendix V

### POSTSCRIPT

Some photographs of the composer are included in Appendix V together with photocopies of several original manuscripts. These consist primarily of the synoptic sectional table for *Patterns and Permutations* which provides an overview of the diverse procedures employed and their distribution throughout the work, tables of permutations of a series and, finally, an extract from a text by the composer in which he develops one of his 'stimulating ideas'.





Jani Christou during his studies in Siena.  
© Jani Christou Society, Athens.



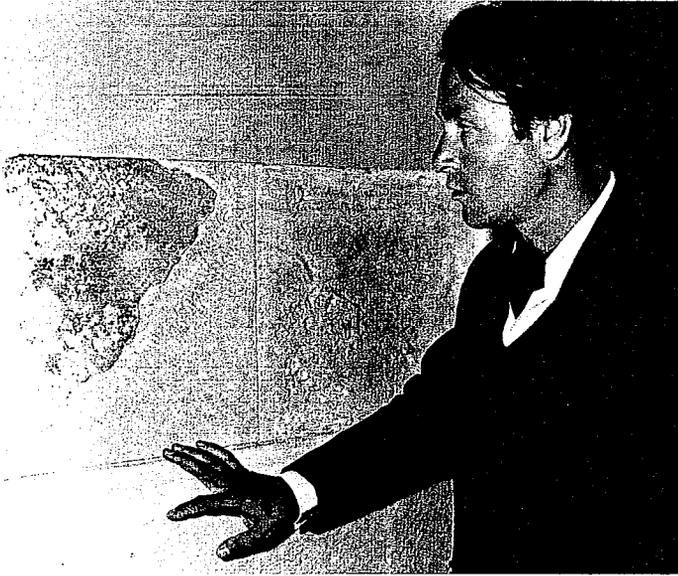
Christou at the rehearsal of one of his works in an antique theatre.  
© Jani Christou Society, Athens.



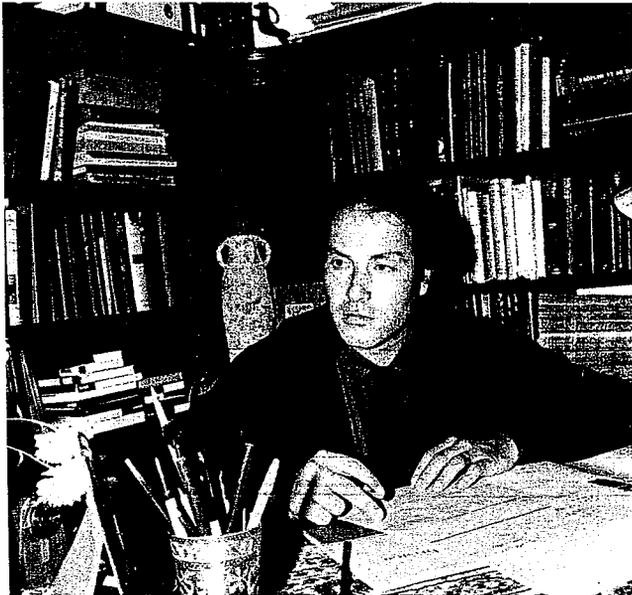
Jani Christou conducting his own works. © Jani Christou Society, Athens.



Jani Christou (left) with the conductor Andreas Paridis.  
© Jani Christou Society, Athens.



Christou in front of slabs of marble with Delphic hymns.  
© Jani Christou Society, Athens.



Christou in his study. © Jani Christou Society, Athens.

TABLE 6: Sectional Analysis (Patterns and Permutations)

Section	bars	SIMPLE PATTERNS	NON PATTERNS	COMPLEX PATTERNS	BASIC STATEMENTS	FORM STATEMENTS	FIGURES (pre-figuring statements)	the MEGA statement	the CONTINUITY
					TABLE 1 item(s)	TABLE 2 item(s)	TABLE 3 item(s)	TABLE 4 item(s)	TABLE 5 item(s)
1- Agitato	1 - 10				19	-	-	-	1
2- quasi Lento	11 - 42				-	-	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10	-	2, 3
3- Allegro con spirito	43 - 110				1, 2, 3	1, 4a	-	-	-
4- Agitato	161 - 212				4	2, 4b	22, 23, 24	-	-
5- con Spirito	213 - 280				3	4a, 4b	-	-	-
6- Leggero e misterioso	281 - 349				5	3	18	-	4
7- Allegro molto	349 - 547				6, 7, 9	-	-	-	-
8- molto deciso - e un vigore	548 - 590				-	4c	6, 7	-	-
9- (cres. ed accel.)	i 591 - 612				-	4c	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20	-	5, 6
	ii 612 - 652				10, 11	4c	21	-	7, 8, 9
10- Robusto	652 - 667				11	-	-	-	-
11- Allegro con Spirito	668 - 699				3	4a	-	-	-
12- Vivo	700 - 706				-	4d	-	-	-
13- Leggero misterioso	707 - 717				-	3	-	-	10
14- i	718 - 718				12	4d	-	-	11
Vi Vo ii	763 - 800				13	4d	-	1, 2	12
strepitoso iii	801 - 836				14	4c, 4b	-	3, 4	13, 14
assai iv	837 - 852				15	-	-	-	15, 16
v	853 - 870				16	4c	-	-	-
vi	871 - 915				17	4c	-	5, 6, 7	17, 18
vii	916 - 924				-	-	25	-	19
viii	925 - 939				18	4f	-	-	-
ix	940 - 951				17	-	-	-	20
x	952 - 963				18	4f, 4c	-	8	-
xi	970 - 972				-	4f	-	9	-
xii	973 - 986				17	-	-	-	21
xiii	986 - 1053				18	4f, 4c	-	10, 11, 12	22
15- Meno mosso, misterioso	1054 - 1118				19	-	-	-	23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
16- Lento (finis)	1119 - 1132				-	-	-	13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19	35, 36

The Synoptic sectional table for Patterns and Permutations.

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cyclic 2 Permutations cyclic 3

* 1	A <sup>2</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>9</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>12</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>	1	A <sup>1</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>
2	G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>9</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>	v2	G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>
v3	F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup>	v3	F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup>
4	C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>	v4	C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>
v5	B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>	v5	B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>
v6	A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>	v6	A <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>
7	F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup>	7	F <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup>
8	D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>	8	D <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>
v9	D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>	9	D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>
10	A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>	10	A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>
v11	G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup>	v11	G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup>
v12	B <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>	v12	B <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>

cyclic 4

cyclic 5

v1	A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>	1	A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup>
v2	G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup>	2	G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>
v3	F <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup>	3	F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>
v4	C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup>	4	C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>
v5	B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>	5	B <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup>
v6	A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>	6	A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup>
v7	F <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>	7	F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup>
v8	D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup>	8	D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup>
v9	D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup>	9	D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>
v10	A <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup>	10	A <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup>
v11	G <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup>	11	C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup>
v12	B <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup>	12	B <sup>10</sup> G <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> D <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> A <sup>10</sup> F <sup>10</sup> E <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup> C <sup>10</sup>

\* Row 1 starts on the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree because this first row proceeds through cycles ending...  
 not from C... k.l.l. d in combination with

Chus 19 Oct 1965

idea ①

STIMULATED  
 it seems to me that the Osirian beliefs are  
 Chthonic - while those centering around Ra  
 are Solar - :

So OSIRIS is earth and its regeneration  
 while Ra is the Sun with its circular motion  
 (physically the Sun crosses the heavens)

Thus OSIRIS is earth acted upon  
 while Ra is Sun acting upon the earth

Earth reacts  
 Sun acts

Osiris suffers  
 Ra vivifies

Ra's progress through the underworld during the  
 dark hours of the night does not contain  
 the mystery of his personal suffering in the  
 way that Osiris' passion does. (? him  
 thinks well)

Besides - Osiris is also identified with the underworld  
 - the land of the dead

Ra is active nightly, daily  
 Osiris suffers his passion once for all time,  
 They are two aspects of the same thing -

stimulating idea

Chios 19 Oct 1965

Idea 1

It seems to me that the Osirian beliefs are  
Chthonic – while those centering around Ra  
are Solar –:

So OSIRIS is earth and its regeneration  
while Ra is the sun with its circular motion  
(psychologically the sun crosses the heavens)

Thus OSIRIS is earth acted upon  
while Ra is sun acting upon the earth

Earth reacts  
Sun acts

Osiris suffers  
Ra vivifies

Ra's progress through the underworld during the  
dark hours of the night does not contain  
the mystery of his personal suffering  
in the way that Osiris' passion does (?hm, think well)

Besides – Osiris is also identified with the underworld  
– the land of the dead

Ra is active nightly, daily  
Osiris suffers his passion once for all time

They are two aspects of the same thing – .

## SOURCES

All my sources are currently housed in the private archives of the composer, kept by his daughter Sandra Christou.

### 1. Unpublished writings:

Notes and essays about his music and philosophy of art in general, catalogued under the title *Thoughts* (English text; the quotation on the fly-leaf is an extract from this collection).<sup>1</sup>

Composition notes concerning different works assembled in a separate file for each work.

Accounts of his dreams over a period of several years.

Professional correspondence classified by year.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. Publications:

#### a. Writings by the composer:

'A "Credo" for Music' (Greek text), *Epoches*, vol. 34, February 1966, p. 146. Commentary on *Enantiodromia* in the orchestral score, published in *Source*, no. 6 (Sacramento, California, U.S.A.), 1969.

#### b. Interviews (in chronological order):

'Un Alexandrin de moins de trente ans, Jani Christou, est un musicien dont la notoriété ne cesse de grandir' (French text), *Le Journal d'Egypte*, 3 February 1956 (interviewer: Jean Marcelin).

'Mousiki tou Promitheia me ti voithia tou enstiktou' (The Music for *Prometheus* aided by instinct), *Ta Nea*, 20 May 1963 (interviewer: G. K. Pilichos).

*Messebrini*, 16 April 1966 (interviewer: Vangelis Psyraakis).

*Messebrini* 18 July 1966 (interviewer: Vangelis Psyraakis).

'A Greek's Wild Revolt Against Musical Form', *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17 February 1969 (interviewer: Marilyn Tucker).

*O Chiakos Laos*, 22 March 1969 (interviewer unknown).

<sup>1</sup> These thoughts, termed 'stimulating ideas' by Christou, act as catalysts to the composer's mental process of creation. Other pages concern the deciphering of his notation; these are the 'explanatory keys'.

<sup>2</sup> The correspondence enables the intensity of the composer's activity in the artistic field and the size of audience and amount of interest his work aroused on an international level to be assessed.

*Eleutheria*, interview conducted in 1969, name of journalist and exact date unknown.

'O Yannis Christou milai yia tin synchroni mousiki' ('Jani Christou speaks on contemporary music'), *Dhimiourghies*, vol. 1, no. 1, January 1970, pp. 6-7.

### 3. Scores:

The manuscripts – originals on tracing paper and unpublished copies – are also housed in the archives of the composer. Christou's works are published by four publishers:

Ricordi Americana (Rome and New York)

De Santis (Rome)

Impero/Heinrichshofen (Wiesbaden and Tel Aviv)

Chester/Hansen (London and Copenhagen).

Ten of Christou's works were published during his lifetime and seven were published posthumously by Chester (see catalogue of works).

### 4. Discography:<sup>3</sup>

- a. There are two records dating from the first period of composition, comprising *Phoenix Music* and *Symphony no. 1* respectively. These records were made in private studios, however, and were never made available commercially.
  - i. 'Phoenix Music', New London Orchestra, dir. Alec Sherman (Modern Recording Co., Picadilly Arcade, London, S.W.1) 2 record 78 rpm/M/312-315.
  - ii. 'Symphony no. 1', New London Orchestra, dir. Alec Sherman (Modern Recording Co., Picadilly Arcade, London, S.W.1) 1 record 33 rpm/ monox [without reference number].
- b. Records that have been released commercially.
  - i. Title: *Yannis Christou, Teleutaia Erga (Jani Christou, Late Works)*  
 Production: Hellenic Association for Contemporary Music (financed by the Ford Foundation)  
 Recording location: Sifilms Studio, Athens  
 Performers: Hellenic Contemporary Music Group directed by Theodor Antoniou Reference: 14C 063-70030, 33 rpm, stereo.  
 Works performed: *Praxis for 12, Anaparastasis I and III, Epicycle II.*
  - ii. 'Mysterion' in 'Greek Discography'  
 Live in Hamburg, 30 October 1980  
 Soprano: Eva Czapó

<sup>3</sup> Discography completed for 4a. and updated for 4b.ii and 4b.iii according to information from G. Leotsakos in 1987.

Tenor: Lutz-Michael Harder, Das Symphonieorchester des Norddeutschen Rundfunks, dir. Francis Travis (Greek Cultural Department, 1986). 33 rpm, stereo. 91.025

- iii. 'Six Songs' in 'Alice Gabbai chante', Orchestre de la Radio d'Athènes [in French on the cover], MV p. 14b., SIAE, Italy. 33 rpm, mono.

probably live of the world premiere (See Catalogue of works).

The archives also contain two cupboards full of tapes. These consist of unperformable personal recordings corresponding to different stages in the composition of each work (raw sound material/first edit/intermediate mixings/final mixing) and concern the following pieces:

*The Persians, The Frogs, Oedipus Rex, Enantiodynamia, The Strychnine Lady, Epicycle, Oresteia.*

In addition, there are recordings of performances of works, including: *Phoenix Music, Symphony no. 1, Six Songs, Patterns and Permutations, Tongues of Fire, Praxis for 12, Enantiodynamia, Mysterion, The Strychnine Lady, Anaparastasis I and III, Epicycle.*

And in the theatrical domain: *Prometheus Bound.*



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#### a. Encyclopaedia entries:

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Papaïoannou, Johann G., 'Christou', *Sohlman's Musiklexikon* (Stockholm, 1980).

#### b. Articles in musicological journals:

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Leotsakos, George S., 'Teleutaia Erga' [Late works], *Journal of Discographical Criticism* (Athens Record Club, 1975).  
Lucciano, Anna M., 'Iannis Christou, métaphysique et musique', *Revue d'esthétique*, vol. 20, pp. 100-106, (Jean-Michel Place, Paris, 1991).

#### c. Numerous articles by music critics in the newspapers Bima, Messembrini, Ta Nea, etc. (in Greek).

There are too many articles to list them here, but some of them are referred to in this volume.

d. *Monographs*:

'Jani Christou: Im Dunkeln singen', symposium report of the Hamburg Music Festival; articles by W. Gieseler, J. Papaioannou, T. Schäfer, G. Leotsakos, K. Trappmann, H. Koch, A. Lucciano, K. Angermann, Ed. Klaus Angermann (Wolke, Hofheim, 1993).

2. *General texts*:<sup>1</sup>

Aeschylus, *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, vol. I (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1959).

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\* Eliot, Thomas Stearns, 'The Hollow Men' (1925), *The Complete Plays and Poems of T. S. Eliot* (Faber, London, 1969).

Euripides, *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, vol. IV (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1960).

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<sup>1</sup> Books which had a strong philosophical or metaphysical influence on the composer are marked by an asterisk.

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- Sophocles, *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, vol. II (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1959).
- Stravinsky, Igor and Robert Craft, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (Faber, London, 1959).
- \* Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B. Russell (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1961).
- \* Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Lecture and conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (Rusha Rees).



# CATALOGUE OF WORKS<sup>1</sup>

(In chronological order)

## A. Early works now lost:<sup>2</sup>

- 1943? *Fantasia* for piano  
Received at the 'Betsy Stross' competition  
Performed by Dr Hans Hickmann, 26 January 1944  
Oriental Hall, Cairo.
- 1944? *Sonata* for two pianos: first movement  
Performed by the composer and Gina Bachauer, 4 June 1944  
Royal Cinema, Alexandria.
- Everyone sang a poem* for soprano and piano, 17 February 1944.
- Prelude and Fugue in D minor for two pianos, 13 October 1944.
- Allegro quasi una fantasia* in E flat major, (*veloce*)  
Untitled piece in E minor for two pianos, 151 bars (may be  
linked to the sonata referred to above).

## B. Works acknowledged by the composer:

- 1948–49 *Phoenix Music* for orchestra in five continuous movements:
1. *Calmo e profondo, lentamente*
  2. *Allegro ben ritmato*
  3. *Con atteggiamento marziale*
  4. *Mosso ma non troppo, ostinato e angoscioso*
  5. *Tempo Primo, lentamente*
- Duration: 11'  
(Ricordi, Milan, 1950)  
World première: 5 March 1950  
New London Orchestra  
Conductor: Alec Sherman  
Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London.

<sup>1</sup> This list is taken from the catalogue (completed and updated) in the article by George Leotsakos in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Macmillan, London, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> This category consists of works that the composer deliberately discarded, considering them to be unrepresentative or of insufficient musical worth. Christou himself referred to *Phoenix Music* as his first work in several interviews.

- 1949–50 *Symphony no. 1* for mezzo-soprano and orchestra in three continuous movements:  
 1. M.M. ♩ = 126  
 2. *Andante*<sup>3</sup>  
 3. *Allegro*  
 Duration: 30'  
 (De Santis, Rome, 1953)  
 World première: 29 April 1951  
 New London Orchestra  
 Soloist: Eleanor Houston  
 Conductor: Alec Sherman  
 Royal Albert Hall, London.
- 1953 *Latin Liturgy* for mixed chorus, brass and percussion  
 World première:<sup>4</sup> 26 September 1971  
 University of Salonika Chorus and members of the Greek Contemporary Music Group  
 Conductor: Yannis Mandákas  
 Rex Theatre, Athens.
- 1955 *Six Songs* for mezzo-soprano and piano  
 Texts by T. S. Eliot  
 1. 'New Hampshire' (*Landscapes I*)  
 2. 'Death by water' (*The Waste Land*, Part IV)  
 3. 'Mélange Adultère de Tout'  
 4. 'Eyes that last I saw in tears'<sup>5</sup>  
 5. 'Phlebus the Phoenician'  
 6. 'Virginia' (*Landscapes II*)  
 Duration: 15'  
 (Impero-Verlag, Wiesbaden)  
 World première: 13 January 1956  
 Mezzo-soprano: Alice Gabbai  
 Pianist: Piero Guarino  
 The British Institute, Alexandria.
- 1957 *Six Songs (idem)*, transcription for orchestra and mezzo-soprano  
 World première: 4 December 1958  
 Mezzo-soprano: Alice Gabbai  
 Greek Institute of Radiodiffusion Symphony Orchestra, Athens.

<sup>3</sup> T. S. Eliot's poem 'Eyes that last I saw in tears' appears in the second movement.

<sup>4</sup> See the commentary on p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> This is the song from the central movement of *Symphony no. 1* with different orchestration.

- 1957-58 *Symphony no. 2* for mixed chorus and orchestra in three movements containing various tempo indications:  
 1. *Lento-Allegro con spirito*, etc.  
 2. *Con spirito ma misterioso*, etc.  
 3. *Vigoroso-Lentamente*, etc.  
 Duration: 40'  
 World première: 4 August 1987  
 Radio diffusion Symphony Orchestra and Chorus  
 Conductor: Miltiadis Karydis  
 Herode Atticus Theatre, Athens
- 1960 *Patterns and Permutations* for orchestra  
 Duration: 24'  
 World première: 11 March 1963  
 Athens State Orchestra  
 Conductor: Andreas Paridis  
 Rex Theatre, Athens.
- 1962 *Tocatta* for piano and orchestra  
 Duration: 16'  
 World première: 23 April 1971  
 English Bach Festival  
 Piano: George Pludermacher  
 Royal Philharmonic Orchestra  
 Conductor: Elyakum Shapirra  
 Town Hall, Oxford.
- 1963 *Prometheus Bound*  
 Text by Aeschylus in modern Greek  
 Adaptation for actors, chorus, orchestra and tape  
 World première: 16 June 1963  
 Greek National Theatre Company  
 Epidaurus Theatre
- 1964 *The Inner World* for actors, chorus and orchestra  
 Television programme with extracts from Greek tragedy:  
 Euripides, *The Hecuba*  
 Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*  
 Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*  
 World première: 19 April 1964  
 Narrator: Robert Graves  
 Actors: Alexis Minotis, Katina Paxinou  
 American television  
 Producer: Esso World Theatre

- 1964 *Tongues of Fire* for mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, mixed chorus and orchestra  
 Pentecost oratorio based on biblical texts in modern Greek  
 Commissioned by the English Bach Festival  
 Duration: 25'  
 World première: 27 June 1964  
 English Bach Festival  
 Performers: Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano)  
                   Gerald English (tenor)  
                   Kostas Paschalis (baritone)  
 English Bach Festival Chorus and Orchestra  
 Conductor: Piero Guarino  
 Saint Mary, Oxford.
- Agamemnon* for actors, chorus and orchestra  
 Text by Aeschylus in modern Greek  
 World première: 27 June 1965  
 National Theatre Company  
 Epidaurus Theatre
- 1965 *The Persians* for actors, chorus, orchestra and tapes  
 Text by Aeschylus in modern Greek  
 World première: 20 April 1965  
 World Theatre Season  
 Art Theatre production  
 Director: Karolos Koun  
 Aldwych Theatre, London.
- 1965–66 *Mysterion* for narrator, actors, three choruses, orchestra and tape  
 Theatrical oratorio based on ancient Egyptian funeral texts  
 Duration: 25'  
 World première: 13 June 1974  
 Danish television  
 Copenhagen Radio Chorus and Orchestra  
 Conductor: Miltiadis Karydis.
- 1966 *Praxis for 12* for eleven string instruments and a pianist-conductor (there is also a version for forty strings)  
 Duration: 10'  
 (J. and W. Chester, London, 1970)  
 World première: First Hellenic Week of Contemporary Music  
 Accademia Musicale Napoletana Chamber Orchestra  
 Conductor: Piero Guarino  
 Zappeion Building, Athens.
- The Frogs* for actors, chorus, orchestra and tapes  
 Text by Aristophanes in modern Greek  
 World première: 19 July 1966

- Art Theatre production  
 Director: Karolos Koun  
 Herod of Atticus Theatre, Athens.
- 1967 *The Strychnine Lady* for solo viola (female), five actors, instrumental ensemble, tapes, various sound objects and a red cloth  
 Duration: 25–30'  
 (J. and W. Chester, London)  
 World première: 3 April 1967  
 Second Hellenic Week of Contemporary Music  
 Hellenic Week of Contemporary Music Ensemble  
 Conductor: Dimitris Agrafiotis  
 Soloist: Rhoda Lee Rhea  
 Hilton Hotel, Athens.
- 1967–68 *Oedipus Rex*, film score  
 World première: 1968 (exact date unknown)  
 Director: Philip Saville  
 Actors: Christopher Plummer  
 Orson Welles  
 Lilli Palmer, etc.
- 1968 *Anaparastasis I* ('astronkatidhanykteronomighyrin')  
 ['I have become familiar with the assembly of the stars of night'] for baritone, viola and instrumental ensemble  
 Text by Aeschylus  
 Duration: 10'  
 (J. and W. Chester, London, 1972)  
 World première: 12 November 1968  
 Baritone: Spyros Sakkas  
 Conductor: Theodor Antoniou  
 Studio für neue Musik, Musikhochschule, Munich.
- Anaparastasis III* ('The Pianist') for actor, instrumental ensemble and tapes  
 Duration: 19' 50"  
 (J. and W. Chester, London, 1971)  
 World première: 13 November 1969  
 Actor: Grigoris Semitecolo  
 Conductor: Theodor Antoniou  
 Studio für neue Musik, Musikhochschule, Munich.
- Epicycle* for continuum and variable ensemble comprising one group of performers for the continuum and one group for the 'happenings'  
 (J. and W. Chester, London, 1970)  
 World première: 20 December 1968, Third Hellenic Week of Contemporary Music

Zouzou Nicoloudi Dance Group and others  
Hilton Hotel, Athens.

1965-68 *Enantiotropia* for orchestra  
Duration: 15'  
(J. and W. Chester, London, 1971)  
World première: 18 February 1969  
Oakland Symphony Orchestra  
Conductor: Gerhard Samuel  
Oakland, California.

1969 *Oedipus Rex* for tape  
Text by Sophocles in modern Greek  
World première: 22 May 1969  
World Theatre Season  
Art Theatre production  
Director: Karolos Koun  
Aldwych Theatre, London.

C. *Lost works*:<sup>6</sup>

1953 *Psalms of David* for baritone (David), tenor, mixed chorus and orchestra.<sup>7</sup>

1955 *The Conception of Saint Anne* for mezzo-soprano, chorus and orchestra  
(Reference is made to the exceedingly ecstatic character of the work.)

1955-57 *La ruota della vita*  
A trilogy of operas based on a libretto by the Italian musicologist Domenico de Paulis<sup>8</sup>  
1. 'Una mama'  
2. 'Savitri'  
3. 'Il trionfo della morte'  
Different copies of the libretto and eight pages of musical sketches were found in Liopessi (11 October 1972); the libretto is dated July 1955.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix I, pp. 121-122. The original titles are in English with the exception of *La ruota della vita*.

<sup>7</sup> According to Athena Schina, the composer's secretary, this work remained in sketch form (interview of 31 December 1985).

<sup>8</sup> The three operas are short and connected in such a way that the total duration of the trilogy does not exceed that of the normal duration of one opera.

*Gilgamesh*<sup>9</sup> for mixed chorus, orchestra and soloists (six narrators (three men and three women), one soloist (Gilgamesh))  
Opera-oratorio based on the Assyrian epic.

1959–62 *Symphony no. 3* for orchestra.

1962 *Concerto* for piano and orchestra  
(Probably the same work as the Toccata, which the composer sometimes called a 'concerto'; a manuscript bearing the title 'concerto' was found in Liopessi, 11 October 1972.)<sup>10</sup>

*The 12 Keys* for mezzo-soprano, flute, oboe, string trio and piano

Based on medieval alchemical texts.

1963 *The Ship of Death* for mezzo-soprano and orchestra Text by D. H. Lawrence.

1964 *The Breakdown*  
Large-scale opera in three acts and twelve scenes  
Based on a libretto by the composer.<sup>11</sup>

*The Testament* for mezzo-soprano, flute, double bass and piano  
Based on medieval alchemical texts.<sup>12</sup>

#### D. Incomplete works:

##### *Anaparastasis:*

1966 'Reconstruction of an Event'  
'Lapidation I'  
'The Ship' (ritual music based on ancient Egyptian customs)  
'Walk I'  
'Advertisements'

1967 'Continuity'  
'Anaparastasis II' (Sacralization of Eating)<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Athena Schina has testified to having seen two or three versions of *Gilgamesh* written in pencil, but has been unable to confirm whether these were complete or not (interview of 31 December 1985).

<sup>10</sup> According to Athena Schina, one of the movements of the concerto subsequently became the Toccata (interview of 31 December 1985).

<sup>11</sup> An incomplete work concerning the moral problems of contemporary science.

<sup>12</sup> According to Athena Schina, the ideas found in *The Testament* passed directly into *The Strychnine Lady* in that both works contain elements of alchemy: 'It is probable that the concepts of an older incomplete work that the composer had in mind passed transformed and newly worked into the final part of *The Strychnine Lady*'.

<sup>13</sup> According to the actor Grigoris Semitecolo, this scene or a similar one was rehearsed with a view to including it in *Oresteia*.

- 'Clock' for actor and instrumental ensemble  
 'Dream'  
 'Aspirin' for actor and instrumental ensemble  
 'Water Music' for tape and instrumental ensemble  
 'Piano I' for actor-pianist
- 1968 'Lecture I' for male speaker and tapes  
 'Lecture II' for female (very pretty) speaker and instrumental ensemble  
 'Lapidation II'  
 'Piano II' for actor-pianist  
 'Anaparastasis IV' (The Screaming Mother for female actors and instrumental ensemble ad lib.)  
 'Consecration' (without music)  
 'Prosodion' (parade through the streets with or without music)  
 'Pattern'  
 'Pattern and Antipattern' for singer-actor and instrumental ensemble  
 'Piano III' for sector-pianist  
 'Dissociation'  
 'The Death of Calchas' for two actors and instrumental ensemble  
 'Have you cut off her hands?'  
 'Pendulum'  
 'Walk II'  
 'Music Evoked' for solo actor  
 'Praxis and Metaprxaxis' for solo piano, symphony orchestra and other media  
 'Silent Action'  
 'Let me try too' for two instrumentalists-actors  
 'Moving my arms in an unusual way'
- Oresteia*: Designated by the composer as a 'contemporary opera' based on the Aeschylean trilogy in a free adaptation for soloists, actors, instrumentalists, chorus, orchestra, tape and visual effects.
- A. 6 soloists:<sup>14</sup> Clytemnestra  
 Cassandra  
 Orestes  
 Watchman  
 First priest (leader of semi-chorus I)  
 Second priest (leader of semi-chorus II)

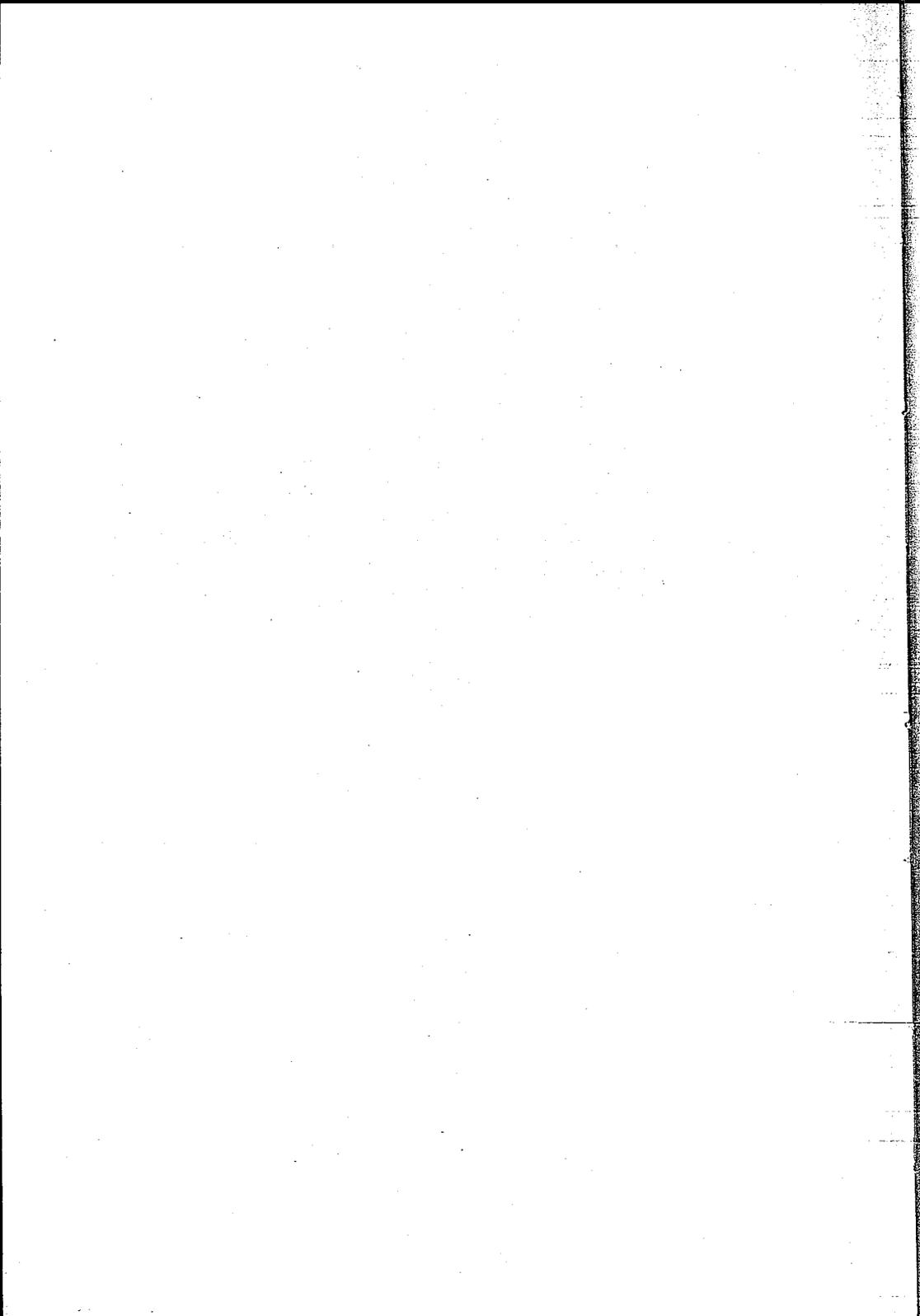
<sup>14</sup> The vocal ranges of the soloists are not specified.

- B. Chorus: 12 men  
12 women
- C. Instrumentalists: 12 soloists (actor-performers)
- D. Conductors, technicians, etc.:
  - 1 principal conductor
  - 1 assistant conductor
  - 2 sound engineers
  - 1 lighting engineer
  - 1 costume technician
  - 1 assistant to the composer
  - the composer

In total, 50 people.

There is no conventional orchestra or orchestra pit. The sounds radiate from several points through loud-speakers. The sound engineers operate the tapes in accordance with the action on stage. Freed from the conventional orchestra, the actor-singers are in direct contact with the audience. At times, the instrumentalists detach themselves from the chorus and play as if they are taking part in a ritual.

\*



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