

Christos Yannaras and Manos Hadjidakis: between East and West

Introduction

This is a somewhat unusual essay, since it compares the thought of two people from different areas. Theologians usually talk about theologians, philosophers about philosophers, musicians about musicians, and so forth. Depth of research is almost exclusively discipline-specific in our time, and to compare the approach of a philosopher and the approach of a musician on the question of modern Greek identity will take us beyond the usual categories of established academic thought. This is, however, precisely what this essay is trying to do. Greek identity is assumed to mean more than belonging to a race with common genetic material or to a certain religious denomination – and we can now say that the genetic origin is not very relevant in the way we consider identity. It is also assumed to exceed the definition of the common language, although this is certainly an important factor. But it is primarily the fourth among the criteria that define a nation as set out by Herodotus in his *Historiae*,¹ the common way – the *ὁμότροπον* – that will be examined here. This common *τρόπος* is something more interesting and deeper than simply a reference to common customs. As it will be argued here, the same *τρόπος vis-à-vis* modern Greek identity may be discerned in the writings of Yannaras and the music of Hadjidakis. A parallel exploration of these interesting and creative thinkers may allow us to understand their common *τρόπος*, and their thought.

There are a few interesting precedents for this kind of approach. Perhaps the most famous one known to Western readers is a book that was published about forty years ago, when Douglas Hofstadter took the cognitive sciences, as well as wider readership, by surprise in his parallel study of music, painting and mathematics,² according to which the exploration of each one of those fields illuminated something – by way of lateral thinking – for the other two. More relevant to our topic, when he was in charge of the journal *Tetarto*, Hadjidakis himself orchestrated intentionally a series of discussions between people from different areas, trying to push them beyond their formative or professional comfort zone in order to explore a kind of thought beyond the intellectual categories they represented.

Yannaras and Hadjidakis barely knew each other, even though they were essentially contemporaries – Hadjidakis, born in 1925, was ten years older than Yannaras, who was born in 1935. Yet, as this essay will attempt to demonstrate, although they followed different paths, they both encountered the problem of Greek identity in the context of an increasingly globalized world, or perhaps more specifically in the context of the quest for European integration, during a time of intense social and cultural transformation, and they developed a remarkably similar response to it. In short, what they both expressed in different ways is the clear realization of the Greek identity, and, based on it, a creative and meaningful cultural and intellectual participation of Greece within the European and the global context. Naturally, they are not the only representatives of such a view. Nevertheless, in evaluating the work of Christos Yannaras in this volume that is dedicated to him, it is interesting to

¹ Herodotus, *Historiae*, Book 8 (Ourania): 144, ed. A. D. Godley (Cambridge 1920), 153.

² Douglas Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

see that this approach, which Yannaras has expressed in his writings, has also been a strong formative principle within Hadjidakis's approach since the beginning of his career.

The question of Greek identity has been a difficult *topos* for a very long time. Christos Yannaras has dedicated a good part of his writing to the historical and cultural circumstances of this question in the context of the emergence of the modern Greek state. However, in *Orthodoxy and the West*,³ he goes further back and points to 1354 as a conventional date for the beginning of this tension between Greek identity and Western culture, when the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, a paradigm of Western thought, was translated to Greek by Demetrios Kydonis. In his *Europe was born out of the 'Schism'*,⁴ Yannaras goes even further back, to the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the break of what was until then a shared dialogue between Eastern and Western Christianity.⁵ As we shall see, however, with the seminal date of 1354 and the translation of Aquinas, Yannaras passes from observations that have to do with a wider historical background to an affirmation of a noticeable difference of thought, or rather to the acknowledgment of the divide between the East and the West.

This was certainly not the first time a Western idea or practice travelled eastward. We can recall very quickly practices that originated in the West and passed to the East, such as the celebration of Christmas (as a feast in the early fifth century and, more recently, as a commercial and cultural celebration in the nineteenth), the sign of the Cross using three fingers as opposed to the earlier practice of using only two fingers,⁶ and even significant theological ideas, such as the use of the concept of 'person' instead of the exclusive use of the philosophical term of 'hypostasis' for the triune complexity of the Godhead. Even more recently, in the last century, Orthodox theology has used extensively the theological strand of personalism, which has been present since the late eighteenth century in Western thought.⁷ Nevertheless, what usually happened until that time is that foreign ideas entered a process of dialogue with the Greek intellectual and cultural milieu, and were either eventually integrated into the existing practices and views or were rejected. The significance of 1354 and the translation of Aquinas into Greek is that in the mind of several Greek intellectuals of the time—such as the Kydonis brothers, the Chrysovergis brothers, and Maximos Planoudes—the Western direction represented a better way or, rather, a different paradigm, which could not be

³ *Ορθοδοξία και Δύση στη Νεώτερη Ελλάδα* (Athens: Δόμος, 2006).

⁴ *Η Ευρώπη γεννήθηκε από το "Σχίσμα"* (Athens: Ίκαρος, 2015).

⁵ *Ibid.* 124. Yannaras here points specifically to Augustine as the first major Western theologian who largely ignored the theological testimony of the Church preceding him, as it was written almost exclusively in a language he could barely understand. This is an interesting case study because Augustine became influential primarily after he was used by Frankish theologians in the service of Charlemagne, such as Alcuin of York, when the alienation between East and West had acquired an additional political background.

⁶ Cf. my study *The Sign of the Cross: the Gesture, the Mystery, the History* (Orleans, MA: Paraclete Press, 2006).

⁷ Despite modern claims or insinuations arguing for an Orthodox appropriation of the theology of the person, this strand has had a long tenure in Western thought before it reached the thought of modern Orthodox writers such as John Zizioulas. It was first used by F. D. E. Schleiermacher in his book *Über die Religion* in 1799. Moreover, although Zizioulas in his *The One and the Many* (Alhambra, CA: Sebastian Press, 2010), 19–24, argues that (Western) personalism is quite different from the (Orthodox) ontology of the person, even a brief examination of Western personalism shows that this is not very precise. Even if it is possible to read the ontology of the person in the work of Zizioulas and Yannaras as a different version of personalism, not quite the same as Western personalism, the connection between the two is perhaps largely undermined. For a short history of Western personalism, cf. Emmanuel Mounier, *Personalism* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1970).

integrated with the native tradition. Therefore, instead of exploring the possibility of synthesizing the thought of Aquinas with the intellectual tradition of the East, or trying to criticize it on the basis of its own merits, for several Greek intellectuals of the time it constituted a break with what was until then an essentially complete (even if open) intellectual and theological universe. The Western paradigm existed next to the Eastern paradigm, without a sufficient dialogue between them, and as an alternative to it, in certain respects casting doubt on its validity.

It is hard to know whether this tension would or could have resulted in a cultural synthesis, and what that synthesis might have looked like, because precisely a century after that date the East entered a very different phase of its history. The fall of Constantinople in 1453, and the subsequent collapse of scholarly theology and intellectual life in what was until then the Eastern Roman Empire, changed the terms of this divide. After the disappearance of the Greek-speaking Empire, the West had no reason to avoid things Greek (as it had when several lists with the *errores graecorum* were feeding this polarity) and embraced the Greek classical legacy as a part of its own past, while Greeks in the East were struggling to maintain their religious and cultural identity within the Ottoman state. Serious historiographic innovations with important political repercussions—such as the introduction of the term ‘Byzantine’ in the sixteenth century, which was used in order to distance the Eastern Roman state from its political roots and to stress the continuity of the Roman legacy in the West only—went completely unnoticed and unanswered in the East, as there was nobody there who could challenge it.⁸

The tension between East and West returned in the nineteenth century,, with the liberation of Greece from the Ottomans and the foundation of the modern Greek state, this time with the added question of the definition of Greek identity. The formation of Greek identity in the context of the revolution of 1821 is still part of a heated discussion which started in the nineteenth century with historians such as Jakob Falmerayer, Spyros Zampelios and Konstantinos Papanigopoulos (who introduced the tripartite yet continuous model of Greek history, divided to ancient, medieval, and modern). The debate continues today with people such as Christos Yannaras, Thanos Veremis,⁹ Helene Glykatzi-Ahrweiler,¹⁰ and Kostas Zouraris.¹¹ Other people, such as Stelios Ramfos, have regarded the Ottoman conquest as the end of Greek thought in the East, which could only be found thereafter in Western Europe, transplanted by the Greek intellectuals who found refuge there after the fall of Constantinople.¹² Ramfos, in this way, represents the other end of the spectrum

⁸ The term ‘Byzantine’ was used for the first time by Hieronymus Wolf in 1557 in his *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae*, and it is only fairly recently that its legitimacy has been questioned. Cf. Stratos Myrogiannis, *The Emergence of a Greek Identity (1700-1821)* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 70.

⁹ Cf. the views of Yannaras and Veremis on the historiography of 1821, collected on *Αντίβαρο*, accessed 1 June 2017, <http://www.antibaro.gr/article/3152>. It needs to be noted that while many such views have appeared in published form, the bulk of the dialogue and the disagreement over this historiography was carried out through the media, which is why most of the relevant references here are not from scholarly articles or books.

¹⁰ Cf. a wide collection of relevant views at *The Huffington Post*, accessed 1 June 2017, <http://projects.huffingtonpost.gr/elliniki-tayftotita/> and especially Yannaras’s, accessed 1 June 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.gr/2016/03/24/giannaras-sinedeyxi-elliniki-taytotita_n_9517726.html.

¹¹ Cf. his lecture in 2011 at the Theoharakis Institute, accessed 1 June 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZ3Qj6D6pmo>.

¹² This idea may be found in several of his writings, in different ways, such as in *Έλληνες και Ταλιμπάν*, Μούσες (Athens: Αρμός, 2001). For an overall appreciation of the way Ramfos considers, in opposition to Yannaras, the suppression of the person by the community, cf. *Ο Καημός του Ενός* (Athens: Αρμός, 2007).

deliberating on Greek identity, as he effectively negates the claim supporting Greek spiritual and cultural continuity that we see in the writings of Yannaras.

Either way, it is necessary to consider the historiography of the Greek East on its own merits and not in reference to the historiography of Western Europe. While Western Europe between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries is characterized by many changes at political, cultural and spiritual levels, which warrant the identification of that period as a distinct time— “in the middle” of antiquity and the Renaissance— the history of the Greek East during that time is virtually seamless. The state structure, quickly but effortlessly Christianized, continued to operate with remarkably little discontinuity from the fifth to the fifteenth century. When it did collapse, conquered twice within a few centuries by the Latins and the Ottomans, it entered what may be seen as the Middle or Dark Ages for the East, which lasted until the nineteenth or even the twentieth century — the time when the Christian East began to recover its cultural and spiritual identity. Therefore, the historiography of the East warrants a different approach from the tripartite historical model of antiquity, Middle Ages and modernity, which certainly does not correspond to the Western historical periods with the same name and from which the Renaissance and the Reformation are conspicuously absent.

To go beyond history, however, the exploration of Greek identity and the possibilities it may open for the future, especially to the extent that this implies a choice between East and West, has been a quest and a question in Modern Greek thought and culture, and it has been explored in various ways. We can find this exploration in poetry, literature, music, and philosophy, sometimes with an almost uncritical adoption of Western ways, even if the subject matter is nominally Greek. Such an example is the work of Kalomoiris and Skalkotas, whose music, though employing traditional Greek melodies, may be understood as a branch of the German musical tradition, even if it often uses traditional Greek melodies, appropriating folk elements in a manner typical to the classical tradition of the time (similar to the examples of Bartok, Szymanowski and Komitas). At other times, we find an image of the Eastern/Greek soul that does not fit comfortably in the heavily Westernized modern world, such as the gypsy of Kostis Palamas,¹³ the impoverished dervish¹⁴ and the magnificent oak¹⁵ of the childhood of Papadiamantis. Most of these examples, interestingly, express some sort of tension between the East and the West.

Here we come across a very important question. Whether this concerns philosophical directions or artistic creativity, Greek culture over the last few centuries has been reactive (rather than proactive) where structure is concerned. The post-Montaigne genre of the essay (as opposed to the ancient and Patristic genre of the dialogue, or the collection of questions and answers, for instance), the symphony, free verse poetry, the verse-chorus structure for popular songs, and the novel, are Western structures that were imported into Greece at one time or another. We could go even further and speak about artistic movements, such as surrealism, and philosophical or theological strands, such as the theology of the person. The question is whether, and to what extent, the use of

¹³ Kostis Palamas, *Ο Δωδεκάλογος του Γύφτου* (Athens, 1907).

¹⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, *Ο Ξεπεσμένος Δερβίσης* (Athens, 1896).

¹⁵ *Υπό την Βασιλικήν Δρυιν* (Athens, 1901). It is interesting that the ‘crime’ of cutting down the oak of the story, which represents an entire world that is lost, is committed by someone named Bargenis, literally “the son of the nation” from the Hebrew word *bar* (which would certainly be known to Papadiamantis through its use in the New Testament) which means son, and the Greek word *γένος*, which means nation. By doing so, Papadiamantis does not blame any outsiders for the decline of this (Greek) world, but sees it as a responsibility of the Greeks themselves.

such forms and patterns allows for the continuity and further creative development of Greek thought within a wider Western structure, or whether channelling Greek thought through Western riverbeds distances it from its origins, stunts its development, and ultimately transforms it to a subsidiary of Western thought. To put it plainly, how well can Western intellectual and aesthetic structures express Greek thought without betraying it?

The aforementioned examples of Kalomoiris and Skalkotas do not seem very encouraging. The structure in their work is too heavy to allow any meaningful cross-pollination with wider Greek culture. Nevertheless, to use a more optimistic case, we can examine the French narrative structure that Papadiamantis used in his own writings. Although the significance of hymnography and the imagery of traditional life in his work are quite thoroughly studied and well known, it is only recently that literary criticism has discovered and has started to analyse his translations of several works from English and French, such as Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (from the French translation), Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and also works by Alphonse Daudet, William Blake, Guy de Maupassant, Bret Hart, and many others.¹⁶ Although it has always been known that Papadiamantis was generally aware of the Western literature of his time, his career as a translator and his close engagement with such writings demonstrates that he had been schooled, as it were, in the best traditions of Western storytelling of his time. His use of the format of the novel, especially in his earlier works (such as *Merchants of Nations* and the *Gypsy Girl*), follows the layout of the Western novel type that was popular in Greece at the time.¹⁷ The format of his work is unquestionably Western. Yet, for reasons beyond the surface of his narrative—which is studded with village images, wise old men, and remote chapels—Papadiamantis's work is now generally received as a reflection of an almost unadulterated expression of the Greek spirit of his time. It arguably also constitutes the spirit of the continuity of Orthodox ecclesiastical experience and the experience of the Fathers, as it had survived in his time.¹⁸ We can say this with such conviction because, in his case, the French structure only served as a support for the expression of a series of reflections and thoughts that betray a very strong continuity with Eastern attitudes, such as forgiveness and compassion, opposition to pietism, understanding of God as an unlimited source of love rather than of judgement, opposition to clericalism with a simultaneous respect for the sacraments, and opposition to reductive rationalism. Certainly, what is essentially Greek in his thought is not his oft-celebrated folk imagery. If we were to think of Papadiamantis in masquerade as a French writer, and if we substituted his images of Greek fishing villages with images of French mountainous villages, the result would be a very anomalous, or rather atypical French writer, something like a Western-Rite Orthodox.

The case of Greek surrealism is quite similar. Although surrealism as an idea was conceived somewhere between Freudian analytical psychology and the French literary manifestos of the early twentieth century, its adoption by poets such as Sarantaris, Elytis, and Gatsos resonated with expressions and images that could be found in Byzantine hymnography and traditional Greek folk literature. Beyond that, surrealism actually liberated these hyper-realist elements that had always

¹⁶ Cf. N. D. Triantafyllopoulos and L. Triantafyllopoulos, 'Τεκμήρια για την Παπαδιαμαντική Πατρότητα Ανυπόγραφων Μεταφράσεων', *Παπαδιαμαντικά Τετράδια* 7 (Spring 2006): 152-154.

¹⁷ Such an example is *Les Misérables*, which was published in Greek in serialized form in the newspaper *Ημέρα* in Trieste (and later in other newspapers as well), in 1862, the same year as the publication of the French original.

¹⁸ Cf. Andreas Andreopoulos 'Alexandros Papadiamantis: the Saint of Greek Literature', *Sobornost* 32, no. 2 (2011): 19-36.

been part of the tradition from the romantic symbolist-academic poetic approach of the early twentieth century, which was much more foreign to Greek tradition. Therefore, the language of surrealism gave new strength to some of the most significant elements of the earlier Greek tradition, rather than try to replace it with the spirit of the West and its own version of modernity. Undoubtedly, surrealist methodology resonated strongly with traditional poetic elements, such as talking birds and horses or the dead brother who rose from the tomb, and ‘made the cloud into his horse, and the star into his bridle’ in order to travel to the foreign lands where his sister was, to bring her back to their mother. Such images find quite a natural continuity with Greek surrealism, especially in the poetry of Gatsos, which gives the impression that if surrealism had not emerged in Western Europe, it would have emerged in Greece as a result of the engagement with the more transcendental, magical realism of the *paraloges* songs. Therefore, Greek surrealism may be seen as an example of the use of a Western format that has served Greek tradition and development quite successfully.

We could identify many other similar examples where imported Western (or also Eastern, if we remember the rebetiko music) structural and expressive forms contributed to a renewed sense of Greek cultural identity. Kazantzakis, Seferis, and Theodorakis, just to take three random examples, constitute a good part of twentieth-century Greek culture. However, they were also in dialogue with Nietzsche and Bergson (Kazantzakis is often seen as Bergson’s literary translator¹⁹ and, despite his strong Cretan identity, his thought fits more precisely within the European rather than within the Greek philosophical and intellectual framework of his time), T. S. Eliot (Seferis was strongly influenced, or rather seriously guided, to put it mildly, by Eliot’s *Waste Land*²⁰), and Stravinsky (the orchestral arrangement for Theodorakis’ *Axion Esti* is directly copied from Stravinsky’s *Les Noces*, although of course it is also possible to find musical themes from a variety of classical composers in his work,²¹ as well as in the work of many other modern Greek composers). Undoubtedly, the history of Greek art since at least the beginning of the twentieth century is a series of struggles, appropriations, loans, tensions, but also creative dialogues with the West.

Nevertheless, this was not usually seen as a problem in the first part of the twentieth century. While both then and at the present we can discern a prevailing negative view about an increasingly Westernized world, leaving very little space for symbols, memories, and ways of life from the East, the overall feeling for most of the twentieth century has been not so much a lament for the loss of Greek identity as sorrow about the loss of its Eastern expression. During most of the twentieth century, we can discern a generally open, or rather optimistic, eclectic attitude toward external influences (even if this openness was tested by the sudden influx of refugees from Asia Minor in

¹⁹ Cf. D. J. N. Middleton, (2000), *Novel Theology: Nikos Kazantzakis's Encounter with Whiteheadian Process Theism* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000), and D. A. Dombrowski, *Kazantzakis and God* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).

²⁰ Cf. Edmund Keeley, ‘T. S. Eliot and the Poetry of George Seferis’, *Comparative Literature* 8, no. 3 (Summer 1956): 214-26.

²¹ For instance, the song *Νύχτα Μαγικιά* (first recorded by Maria Dimitriadi in 1979), is almost entirely a creative adaptation of the opening theme from Brahms’s *Fourth Symphony* and the main theme from Tarrega’s *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*. Nevertheless, borrowing classical or other themes is not necessarily equal to plagiarism as it is understood in an academic context. Using a melody that has been used by someone else in the past may result in a very different artistic result, as we can see in the use of classical themes by Theodorakis or Hadjidakis (Χασάπικο 40 is a very obvious allusion to Mozart’s *Symphony no 40*). The point made here is about the mobility of ideas and themes.

1922). This sometimes comes across as confidence in Greek self-identity, and we can see it expressed in this way in the poetic view of Elytis, who wrote in *Little Nautilus*: 'If you take Greece apart, in the end you will see what is left: an olive tree, a vine and a boat. This means that you need just as much as that to put it together again.'²² While this aphorism may not be more than a poetic exaggeration, similar to many other poetic exaggerations in the work of Elytis, it certainly shows a strong faith in the perennial foundation of the Greek identity, shaped by its most immediate environment, in spite of the various external influences. Be this as it may, this kind of analysis, which could continue with more examples and with further questions about Greek identity, shows us that for several centuries there is a continuous dynamic tension between native Greek tradition and Western civilization in general. The reason I find the respective cases of Yannaras and Hadjidakis especially interesting is that in these two thinkers we can find a remarkably similar proposal for the future of this dialogue, expressed through ideas and through music.

Manos Hadjidakis

Manos Hadjidakis was one of the most original and interesting Greek thinkers in the twentieth century, and if he is not more widely known as an intellectual, it is because his thought had a poetic rather than a systematically philosophical character.²³ Also, for reasons that need to be studied thoroughly, his most important work was never noticed by audiences, researchers, or musicians in the West. It is not necessary to examine the basic biography of Hadjidakis here. Most people, especially in the West, know him through the commercial success of his youth—largely the result of the song *Never on Sunday*— which won him an Oscar. While this opened many doors for him, it was not part of his intended artistic trajectory. His most interesting work is very different. Although many of his early works (some composed as early as the 1940s) are promising, it is his mature period, which started in the late 1960s and ended with his death in 1994, that bears an artistic footprint comparable to that of Cavafy and Elytis. This brief analysis will strive to say something about his attitude as it emerges from his music rather than from his writings, which would warrant a different approach. It needs to be said, however, that a careful analysis of his work, which has yet to be fully attempted, would be significantly more extensive than an article or small chapter.

Dionysis Savvopoulos recently recognized the work *Μεγάλος Ερωτικός* of Hadjidakis (1972) as the greatest act of resistance against the Greek military dictatorship of the time.²⁴ This is work a series of songs written using Greek love poetry that includes ancient poetry, such as a chorus from Euripides's *Medea*, verses from the Septuagint version of *Song of Songs*, a poem by Sappho, but also poems by Dionysios Solomos, Cavafy, Sarantaris, and excerpts of demotic poetry. Along with Greek poetry, one of the songs is composed on verses by Federico Garcia Lorca, translated by Nikos Gatsos. However, either because of the similarity of the images Lorca uses and those which he draws from Greek culture, or because of the successful translation of Gatsos, this poem does not stand out as a foreign element.²⁵

²² Odysseas Elytis, *Ο Μικρός Ναυτίλος* (Athens: Ίκαρος, 1988).

²³ A brief critical evaluation of the work of Hadjidakis may be found in my article 'Imago Poetae: The Aesthetics of Manos Hadjidakis', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 19, no. 2 (October 2001): 255-68.

²⁴ *Έλληνες του Πνεύματος και της Τέχνης*, Σκάι, 12 December 2012, accessed 1 June 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHzady94aSc>.

²⁵ Perhaps this is the case with most of Lorca's work, which has been introduced to Greek audiences through translations by people such as Gatsos and Elytis, and it has been set to music by numerous composers,

Savvopoulos's political statement regarding a work that does not include a single reference to democracy, politics, oppression, etc., sounds strange, especially in referring to a time when the heavily politicized Theodorakis and his many clones dominated Greek music. Yet, the rationale of Savvopoulos was that Hadjidakis with the *Μεγάλος Ερωτικός* understood resistance at a very different level. Most of the politically active musicians and artists of the time, such as Theodorakis or Ritsos, essentially subjugated their art to political thought and used it as a didactic vehicle of their own ideas – something that is virtually synonymous with (or perhaps even the definition of) political art. Hadjidakis understood the political aspect of art at a deeper level. While it is possible to use music as the background of a political idea, he argued that—as the same background could easily be used for diametrically opposite ideas²⁶—this is not the kind of political thought that ought to emerge from within art itself.

The political thought of Hadjidakis had a different direction. Instead of becoming entangled at the didactic or partisan level of political life, what he does in several of his works (and *Μεγάλος Ερωτικός* is a suitable example) is to explore the theme of love in terms of an introspective – one could say ascetic – trajectory of self-discovery. The political implication of this is that Hadjidakis puts forth a different vision for what individual and common life mean, ultimately a different mode of being, a different *τρόπος*. As Savvopoulos in particular has noted, this was a criticism of the entire abusive political discourse of the time, an exploration of freedom at a different level, and a similar analysis of his later works can demonstrate that they were political in a very similar way.

Hadjidakis's mature music has absorbed much from classical sources – one can find musical phrases in his work from Mozart, Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Beethoven, to name a few – and it includes some of the more advanced modes of the classical music of modernity. Even in his early work, we can discern unprepared modulations and dissonant phrases that refer directly to Prokofiev and Shostakovich. However, this tendency is much more developed in his later works, such as *Αμοργός* (which he never got round to arranging himself), which explores different tonal centres in a much more mature way, and is also impressively close to what we may generally term as 'Greek modality'. His later works explore the collapse of traditional tonality and its rediscovery in different tonal centres, without, however, passing through the phase of atonality. Notably, while this direction is part of international classical music, Hadjidakis explores it completely from within the Greek tradition without imitating the external, nominal style of Western music. If we can discern an influence from or a dialogue with Western postmodernism, it is at the level of the conceptual structure of his work, rather than in his outer style.

Nevertheless, Hadjidakis never fully embraced the deconstructive postmodern trajectory. For instance, he never considered using electronic music, despite his respect for Xenakis. Rather than explore a withdrawal of the narrative element, his work always implied a dramatic structure, as if it belonged to a theatre play with archetypal characters that transform and transcend themselves and each other – something that may be seen very clearly in *Οδοιπόρος, Μεθυσμένο Κορίτσι και*

including Hadjidakis, Theodorakis and Xarhakos, and Mamangakis. Lorca is perhaps a unique case of a non-Greek whose work was so successfully integrated within Greek culture.

²⁶ The example he used was of a symphonic musical piece written in the 1940s (probably *Εμβατήριο* by Menelaos Pallantios), which was understood as having a hidden leftist meaning by the political left, and at the same time a hidden rightist meaning by the right. Cf. Manos Hadjidakis, *Ο Καθρέφτης και το Μαχαίρι* (Athens: Ίκαρος, 1999).

Αλκιβιάδης and in *Μπαλλάντες της οδού Αθηνάς*, for instance. Stylistically, such works, which are defined by the might of poetic abstraction, are remarkably similar to Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and *Pierrot Lunaire*: the figure of the clown in the latter work, for example, is very similar to the figure of the Οδοιπόρος/Αλκιβιάδης. Yet, the narrative structure in Hadjidakis is clearly borrowed from the ancient tragedy: there is an initial balance (Οδοιπόρος/Είμαι της Αγαύης γιος) that is disturbed (Μεθυσμένο Κορίτσι/Μαριάνθη των Ανέμων) and leads to an inner realization and transformation (Αλκιβιάδης/Μεταμόρφωση-Στη Μνήμη μιας Παλιάς Φωτογραφίας). We can also recognize the elements of Aristotelian *peripeteia* and *catharsis* in his work. Moreover, as in the case of the tragedy, *catharsis* leads to a new balance, which comes about through the acknowledgment of the shadowy and elusive part of the self and through learning to live with it. The tragic dimension of Hadjidakis, and ultimately one of his strongest points, may be found primarily in the pursuit of this balance, something that can be seen very clearly in the *Τελικός Συμβιβασμός* (the Final Compromise) from *Η Εποχή της Μελισσάνθης*. Usually, as is also often the case in ancient tragedy, the catalyst of the events and the changes in these archetypal cycles is *eros* in its deepest, existential conception. It is for this reason that we can think of love in the work of Hadjidakis as an ascetic love, that is, as a way to discover and understand the self at a deeper level.

In *Χωρίον ο Πόθος* Hadjidakis brought dramatic development to its limits. The work does not have an obvious or, rather, an open dramatic structure. It is not possible to discern characters such as Μαριάνθη, Αλκιβιάδης or Μελισσάνθη, or any kind of implied dramatic action, such as the *Μεταμόρφωση*, at any level. Yet, the music follows a very carefully weighted development with each instrument assuming a dramatic role in its interaction, with the other instruments or with the voice. Rather than emulating a large-scale inner drama, as he does in some of the aforementioned works, Hadjidakis here internalizes the dramatic quality and brings it to a subtle liminal level, almost with the power and the tone of an internal dialogue. This work touches on some of the most usual themes in the work of Hadjidakis, and also on the theme of mortality, probably in the clearest way compared to the rest of his works. This work, moreover, perhaps more than any other of his works, demonstrates the significance and the depth of the tragic themes that Hadjidakis explored in his music. It maintains in a meaningful way his rootedness in ancient Greek 'ways' of thinking, translating that way of thinking into a modern idiom which stylistically includes Eastern and Western elements.

This overview of the mature period of the work of Hadjidakis is too brief to qualify as a complete analysis. Such an analysis would include all of his works in considerable detail, as well as several examples of his writings. Nevertheless, what this cursory discussion tried to do here is to indicate the significance of Hadjidakis in terms of the deep conceptual structure of his work (unique in comparison to all the other musicians of his generation), which ultimately points to a different mode of thinking. It is unfortunate, however, that although Greek artists such as Hadjidakis may be able to understand and critically use Western approaches, the opposite is not true. Western musicians have not (yet, perhaps) discovered his music, which poses the question of whether his musical thought is ultimately incompatible with Western thought.

Christos Yannaras

The same question of whether Greek and Western thought are ultimately compatible with each other is central in the thought of Christos Yannaras, and it weighs heavily on our consideration of Greek identity. With Yannaras however, we will consider this issue with a wider lens.

Yannaras has often been criticized for what appears to be an anti-Western rhetoric,²⁷ recently even by the Ecumenical Patriarch.²⁸ However, it is inaccurate to consider his criticism of modernity and the Western paradigm in quasi-partisan terms as an attack on Western Europe and North America, or as an exultation of a Greek nationalism. Instead, it is a criticism directed towards a way of life that at present may be found equally in the East and the West, and it has become the dominant way of life for Greece, the immediate environment of Yannaras. One could add here that since modernity—however we may define it—is a result of the intellectual and cultural trajectory within the West, it is possible to find several internal contradictions within the ‘Western condition’ itself that eventually may lead to a transcendence of that paradigm. The problem is more difficult in the East, however, where such paradigms were imported without their cultural and metaphysical background, and therefore without the proper integration and harmonization with its historical and cultural past. The result is a cultural and spiritual colonization, where the traditional Eastern ways are gradually replaced by Western ways. Orthodoxy, which Yannaras presents as the Eastern antagonist of modernity, may be equally eclectic, but the difference is precisely in the harmonization and eventual assimilation of its external influences. All this is important in light of the thought of Yannaras and his opposition between East and West because when he criticizes the Western paradigm, he does so much more—we would daresay almost exclusively—in relation to the Western paradigm’s imposition and its unassimilated presence in Greece, rather than in relation to Western cultural and spiritual history in itself.

In addition, the political dimension in the works of Yannaras is generally dedicated to an exploration of communal (co)existence, which finds its fuller expression within a theological context rather than within the limits of political science. The key difference for him is the approach to *communitas* within a theological and, specifically, Eucharistic context. This involves an ascetic approach, a continuous attempt towards self-limitation and the transcendence of the ego, or rather its transformation following an ascetic of love – a concept that cannot be expressed through political science, whose core concept of human rights is founded on the negotiation of power between the individual and the state. This may be a sweeping claim. However, in one form or another we can see it in all philosophies of natural or human rights, whether it pertains to a community of citizens who freely establish institutions that limit their freedom by protecting them, as expressed in Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, or to the appropriation of violence and terror by the state, as articulated and practiced in communist regimes.²⁹ From this point of view, Yannaras is a theologian instead of a

²⁷ Cf. Vasilios N. Makrides, ‘Orthodox Anti-Westernism Today: A Hindrance to European Integration?’, *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 9, no. 3 (2009): 209–24; Pantelis Kalaitzidis, *Ελληνικότητα και Αντι-Δυτικισμός στη Θεολογία του ‘60* (Greekness and Anti-Westernism in the Theology of the ‘60s) (PhD dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2008), 209–584.

²⁸ Panagiotis Kapouranis for Deutsche Welle, accessed 3 June 2017, <http://www.dw.com/el/%CF%83%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B7%CE%B3%CE%BF%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CE%B2%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%B8%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%B1%CE%AF%CE%BF%CF%85-%CF%85%CF%80%CE%AD%CF%81-%CF%84%CF%89%CE%BD-%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%B8%CF%81%CF%89%CF%80%CE%AF%CE%BD%CF%89%CE%BD-%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B9%CF%89%CE%BC%CE%AC%CF%84%CF%89%CE%BD/a-39092916>.

²⁹ Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994) 402–3.

sociologist because the Eucharistic asceticism of love offers a wider and more complete exploration of the I-Thou relationship.³⁰

Nevertheless, perhaps the most celebrated among the themes that Christos Yannaras has explored in his writings is his criticism of noesiarchic rationalism. The apophatic in the thought of Yannaras is, to begin with, an expression of the inability of positivist thought to process what is a non-reified reality,³¹ but it is much more than that. Here we can see, in a way never before articulated in Orthodox thought, apophaticism as the beginning of a different kind of knowledge, which breaks down the barriers between the subject and the object of knowledge. The kind of gnoseology we find here, highly informed by hesychastic gnoseology,³² is based on empirical participation and social consensus, and it necessitates the acknowledgment of the transformation of the knower/lover in a way that brings him/her closer to the object of knowledge and love. While this gnoseology is similar to the Neoplatonist concept of knowledge by participation, in modern Greek theology and perhaps especially in Yannaras, it is inextricably connected with the ascetic of love. This kind of apophaticism, a bowing, as it were, of rationalism to empirical knowledge and raw experience or, perhaps, a conception of reason as rooted in experience rather than as an autonomous, self-sufficient and self-evident axiom, is central to the thought of Christos Yannaras.

The vast majority of the modern critical approaches to noesiarchic rationalism is (necessarily) written in the rationalist language of argumentation itself. There is a small category of works, however, composed in a different way. Christos Yannaras wrote his *Variations on the Song of Songs*³³ in an attempt to articulate a theological language that responds to the Biblical text rather than trying to reduce it to a rational understanding. In this work, he explores and collapses, the boundaries between philosophy and poetry or, even more impressively, between theology and poetry. This work explores the direction of a different language of thought and, by extension, also a different kind of thought that seeks a less polarising relationship between reason and experience. This, ultimately, points to the different *τρόπος*, the different way of being that Yannaras brings forth as a modern Greek proposal of life, following his ancient philosophical roots through the Orthodox Christian route.

Conclusion

To return to the first question, why and how can Hadjidakis and Yannaras be examined together in the context of modern Greek identity? What can be gained from a parallel consideration of these modern Greek thinkers?

³⁰ Of course, Yannaras is not alone in this. The 'I-Thou' (interpersonal) relationship was explored in these terms first by Martin Buber in his monumental *Ich und Du* (1923), and later also by Emanuel Levinas. Yannaras however, has largely extended this in his work, and he has approached the loving relationship as an ascetic of love.

³¹ Cf. Christos Yannaras, *Elements of Faith* (London: T&T Clark, 1991), 1-19.

³² There is a significant number of Greek theologians who have developed this approach, such as Stavros Giagkazoglou, *Βίος και Λόγος στην Ησυχαστική Παράδοση* (Athens: Δόμος, 2016); Vasileios Tsigkos, *Προλεγόμενα στη Θεολογική Γνωσιολογία του αγίου Γρηγορίου του Παλαμά* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Πουρναράς, 2010); and Nikolaos Loudovikos in many of his works.

³³ Christos Yannaras, *Variations on the Song of Songs* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2005). The original Greek edition was published in 1991 by Δόμος.

First, I believe that such a comparison allows us to consider them more seriously outside their usual frame of reference. It is useful to examine the thought of Yannaras not only where he writes as a philosopher and theologian, but where he grows beyond this shell. Despite his unquestionably strong academic background, most of his books do not follow the format of the scholarly monograph (an extensive literature review, the examination of modern scholarship, and the identification of a gap in scholarship). Conversely, having possessed and absorbed philosophy, the depth of his analytical thought and the critical insight which he has developed does not allow us to confuse his writings with even the most well-researched journalistic editorials, even when engaging his weekly writings in the *Καθημερινή* newspaper.³⁴ Interestingly, the peculiar poetic essay format that Hadjidakis used bears several similarities with the more poetic texts of Yannaras, although, perhaps, in both we can discern also the influence of Elytis.

Likewise, the significance of Hadjidakis for modern Greek culture is not exhausted in musical analysis, and it cannot be measured through his direct impact on the renewal of Greek music (whether this refers to the role he played in the appropriation of the rebetiko music from Asia Minor by mainstream music, or to the various ways through which he affirmed his presence in modern Greek musical matters). Although Greek music has been deeply influenced by him, it is hardly possible to recognize anyone who was able to continue the 'school' of Hadjidakis, especially with respect to the depth of his work. But this, precisely, suggests that we should look for the significance and value of his work beyond the level of music.

While Hadjidakis was aware of the difference between a systematic philosophical approach and a poetic one, he deliberately chose to follow the latter one.³⁵ Nevertheless, this distinction, both for Yannaras and for Hadjidakis, is valid only at the level of the genre they chose in order to develop their thought. At the deeper level, we can see their much more important similarities.

Both Yannaras and Hadjidakis became part of a philosophical or a poetic/artistic dialogue beyond Greece, yet both of them managed to maintain, or rather to develop, a distinctly Greek thematic, which was aware of the wider European and international philosophical or artistic scene. In other words, Greek identity as it is defined by both of them is secure enough of in itself to allow it to participate in its wider intellectual or artistic context, in dialogue with but not swept by Western culture, and therefore to attempt to contribute dynamically to the European and the international community. The dynamic relationship of Yannaras and Hadjidakis with the East and the West, without guilt or condemnation, shows that the Greek identity can be ecumenical; specific as to its history and its language, it is nonetheless applicable to the entire human condition, as a proposal for a *τρόπος* of thought, feeling, and life.

³⁴ Yannaras is not the only philosopher who writes in this 'intermediate' way. An interesting case is that of Elias Malevitsis, whose work is currently being (re)discovered. Perhaps the most influential thinker who employed this kind of educated reflection however, is Odysseas Elytis, in works such as *Ανοιχτά Χαρτιά* (Athens: Ίκαρος, 1982) and *Εν Λευκώ* (Athens: Ίκαρος, 1992).

³⁵ Cf. Andreopoulos 'Imago Poetae: The Aesthetics of Manos Hadjidakis', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 19, no. 2 (October 2001), 255-268.