Abstract: - Beginning with the year 1211 Crete is building up one of the most fascinating and significant forms of cultural identity that featured the Mediterranean Sea along its whole history. The current study investigates the cultural, religious and political background that generated the development and rise of the western music tradition in Crete and its forms during the entire of the Venetocracy period (1211-1669).

Key-Words: - Music in Crete, Venetocracy, Instruments, Organ, Church Music, Secular music, Polyphony

1 Introduction

Beginning with the year 1211, Crete becomes not only the most important Byzantine territory under the administration of the Republic of Venice, but also the ideal refuge space of Helinophones, once the last bastions of the Eastern Empire have disappeared. Subsequent to a rather uncertain and turbulent 13th century, beginning with the following one, Crete enjoys economic prosperity and political stability, which favours an unprecedented development of arts and literature, and especially visual arts: painting and architecture. For more than four centuries and a half, while the Venetocracy lasted (1211 - 1669), the interaction between Byzantine and Latin cultures, despite the doctrinaire differences, will give birth to an extremely original cultural and artistic identity. In this regard, remarkable personalities have arisen, poets such as Vincenzo Cornaro (1553 - 1613/14), author of the most important Cretan literary work - Erotokritos, or painters such as Nikolaos Philanthropinos (ca.1375 - 1435) - magister artis musicae in ecclesia Sancti Marci and Domenikos Theotokopoulos, alias El Greco (1541 - 1614).

While various specialists studied quite attentively the other arts, the Venetian Crete liturgical music [1], especially when influenced by the western culture still remains one of the most neglected territories and the most insufficiently researched. Therefore, the questions rising with regard to our subject are multiple and problematic: were there choirs in the Latin churches and monasteries on the island? Moreover, if there were, what types of repertoires were being promoted in the religious services: polyphonic or just the Gregorian monody chant? Were there orchestras, and which was their place in the life of the Catholic or Byzantine Churches? On the other hand, to what extent was the organ used in the liturgical space and by whom?

It is difficult to offer a satisfying and definitive answer to all these questions, since the sources, especially for the first part of Venetocracy, are rather indirect. The archives in the Italian libraries reveal that the western music art in Crete becomes a rather widely spread phenomenon beginning with the second half of the 15th century. At that time, subsequent to numerous unsuccessful intents to insure the domination on the inhabitants, the Venetians eventually are able to establish a moderate control over the island, thus favouring the penetration of Latin culture into its urban centres.

2 The Organ in the Church

Strictly musically speaking, without any shadow of doubt, the polyphony was the most significant impact of the West on the Cretan ecclesiastic music. The development on the island of western origin churches and institutions (especially Franciscan and Dominican ones), will encourage the promotion on the undertaken territory of the repertoire taken over from the great liturgical centres of the Italian peninsula, most probably Venice, Genoa and Rome. At the same time, it seems that that two choirs in the Eternal City - the choir in the Sistine Chapel or
Sacellum Sixtinum (the chapel or the Apostolic Palace, the Pope’s official residence in Vatican) and the papal choir at the San Pietro basilica - Giulia Chapel (a group that among others included Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina [1525/26 - 1594], the most important maestro di cappella of the Cinquecento and Domenico Scarlatti [1685 - 1757]) will play an extremely important part in dispersing the western music culture in Crete. The organ was surely the most important instrument transplanted in the Cretan Latinity musical-liturgical life. There are data confirming that ever since the first half of the 15th century, besides the catholic cathedral Saint Titus, located in the isle capital - Chandakas or Candia (Heraklion today), there were at least other three Latin churches where the service included organ music: the Great Monastery of Saint Francis (Franciscans) [2], the monastery of Saint Peter (Dominicans) [3] and the nuns monastery of Saint Catherine. We might add the San Marco basilica, which was a church belonging to the duke who did not pertain to the local catholic archbishop, but directly to the Venetian duke of Crete.

The Cretan Ioannes Papadopoulos, high clerk in the Venetian administration in Heraklion, refugee in Padova because of the island capital conquest by the Turks in 1659, relates in his memories written between 1625 and 1645 that in Saint Titus the organ was present along the whole Venetocracy [4], a fact also confirmed by several ecclesiastic authorities of the time [5]. Other sources indicate that not only the capital benefited of this instrument, but other cities on the island as well. Another example of the kind would be the Latin bishop Giorgio Perpignano (1619 - 1621), who, when describing the cathedral of the Saint Virgin in Chania, reminds us of the elegance and beauty of the instrument ornamenting the saint cult location [6]. As well, the same bishop speaks of a portable organ in the nuns Dominican monastery Madonna de’ Miracoli in the same town [7]. Quite astonishingly surprising for our topic is the fact that the ecclesiastical organ (probably in a small, portable format) existed not only in the catholic cult locations, but also in some Byzantine churches in the capital Heraklion and, most probably, in other towns and cities [8]. As one could notice, the organ history in Crete has such a longevity and significance the liturgical life of the Latin Church, which we could have hardly imagined. The level of appreciation of this instrument and the intensity it is required by the ecclesiastical environment makes it that important names of Italian constructors are invited to endow the respective institutions with an organ the. Such a constructor is Vincencius de Monferat, none other than the famous organ constructor Vincenzo Colombi de Casale Monferrato who worked in Venice between c. 1528 - 1571, called in March 1526, for the sum of 72 ducats, to build such an instrument in the church of Saint Francis monastery in [9]. With regard to the organ players, they were coming either from Italy, such as Paulo Colla (1563), Raphael (1563), Anibal Antegnano (1571) and Camillo (1584), or they were Cretan, such as priest Gabriel Faletro (1465) or lawyer Oliveiro Stella (1561 - 1562). The latter was an organ player at Saint Francis. All of the above worked in the capital Heraklion.

3 The secular music

After the IVth Crusade (1204), the Cretan’s reception and interest for the western musical art were rather high, as they penetrated all the cultural layers, no matter the class and religious orientation. Musicians from Italy [10], professionals known under the name of pifferi-who were supposed to be able to play at least two instruments and to benefit of cultivated voices-were leaving continental Europe in order to occupy a probably better remunerated position at the courts of Latin nobles and dignitaries in the newly conquered territories. As the doge of Venice was enjoying such an orchestra, it is obvious that the pattern would be taken over as well by the administration and high class in Crete. As a result, a formation composed by pifferi was established, and it was present at all the lay and religious feasts on the island [11]. The documents of that time leaves us to understand that the repertoire promoted by the pifferi at the Cretan duke palace and at the rich nobles and dignitaries courts was a traditional one, mainly Venetian, and preponderantly lay (cantilenas dishonestas). This was the case at least in the beginning of the 16th century when, at the decease of the Venetian aristocrats Zorzi Fradelo and Zuanantonio Muazzo-famous for their unorthodox behaviour, there were interpreted the most well known madrigals and lay chants, in Italian and Greek languages, that the youngsters were singing in their nocturnal peregrinations in the capital’s neighbourhoods.

One of the most important feasts that were “imported” from the world of the Serenissima republic was the Carnival held yearly in the island capital, Heraklion, after the celebration of Theophany. On this occasion in an atmosphere of
great celebration, one could hear besides serenades and madrigals, almost all types of instruments. But, which were these? The same memories writer of the 17th century, Ioannes Papadopoulos, tells us how at the ad hoc syndrophies during the Cretan hot summer nights, Latin and local nobles of various ranks [12], younger or less young, nevertheless always accompanied by musicians, were concerting in the streets of the city until late at night and, sometimes, till down [13]. The instruments accompanying them were named mandola, lute, violin, bass, flute and guitar, and the interpreters were either hired or, most times, rich local inhabitants coming the majority of them from the barbers crafts, who were joining the group for their own pleasure. Of the multitude of such repertoires circulating at the time, the only documents discovered so far are nine odes (lyrics and verses) composed around 1605 by the Cretan monk Cherubino Cavallino and dedicated to the island’s archbishop Aloisios Grimani. The manuscript is at Museo Correr in Venice.

4 Music Schools

The best-known western ecclesiastic music education institution was the one at Saint Titus cathedral in the Cretan capital. It was founded towards the end of the 15th century, more precisely in 1474. Nevertheless, until then, a first reference regarding the presence of polyphonic music art of Western Europe orientation on the island, is supplied to us by Stephanos Sachlikis [14], a local poet who lived during the second half of the 14th century. This uses in one of his poems the verb μπισκαντάρω (biscantaró) [15], a well-known technical term referring to archaic polyphony for two voices known as biscantus, biscantare, discantus or cantus planus binatim. Surely, besides this type of primitive polyphonic chant, the Latin churches and monasteries were also promoting the Gregorian chant [16], in its various forms, since the time canons were stipulating that in order to become a catholic priest one had to be able to write and to read [17]. In the acts of a synod held in Heraklion in November in the same year 1474, a synod presided by the Latin archbishop of Crete Hieronymus Landus/Lando (†c.1497) and future Latin patriarch of Constantinople (1474 - c.1496), there is consigned that both the ecclesiastic music chant and teaching were going through a continuous state of decadence and that few members of the clergy at the famous catholic cathedral Saint Titus were still able to chant, “fearing that soon enough the chant would be no longer listened to not even at the religious ceremonies, which would scandalise the whole city” [18]. Thus, at the intervention of the high prelate, it was decide that two musicians (succitores) should be hired, paid from the incomes of the church or the capitulum (the canonists body of a catholic cathedral) in order to replace the chanter when he was to be absent [19]. As well, besides the liturgical tasks, they had to be able to teach music to clergymen who wished to improve in the art of chant, and the young clergy had to attend the courses at least one year [20]. As every western rite church had to own an organ, the above document imposes not only the hiring of an organist at Saint Titus, obviously subsidised from the same funds of the church or the archbishop, but also encouraged the clergy to study this instrument, most probably in Italy, and to return to the island after the studies period, so that the cathedral would not lack the organ during its religious services. Remarkably interesting is that, if in the Italian peninsula the orchestras were part of the religious services, in Heraklion this was never allowed, neither in the Latin ones, nor in the Byzantine ones [21].

The study of the same documents in the archive reveal that ever since the 14th century, the instruments taught on the island were the trumpet, the flute, the lute, the guitar, etc., which explains why, beginning with the second half of the 15th century and till the year of its conquest by the Ottomans (1669), most instrument players (piffari) in Crete were Greek orthodox [22]. It seems that these Cretans interpretative mastery was recognised not only locally, but also in the centres of a powerful music tradition, such as Venice [23] or the cities on the Dalmatian coast, especially Dubrovnic [24]. Moreover, even if some of them were not remunerated for their representations as they belonged to the crafts, as there were the ones in the barbers craft [25], nevertheless there also existed the “job” of the instrument player (sonatori), an occupation consigned ever since the year 1381. Surprisingly enough, some of the musicians were women, as it is the case of Petrinella de Armer, an exceptional chanter and instrument player in Crete, with a remarkable artistic career in Venice, Padova and Rome, lover of the well known patron of arts and writer Alvise Luigi Cornaro (1467 - 1566), author of Discorsi della Vita Sobria.

Besides the instruments, the dancing lessons were extremely appreciated and encouraged, especially by the aristocratic world, since in the
urban areas and at the palace of the Duke of Crete there were promoted not only all types of Italian dances, but also some Greek traditional dances, very much loved especially by the Venetian dignitaries and their wives. The Cretan piffarii were organizing real concert tours and numerous dancing nights that were taking place in the great square of Heraklion, in front of the duke palace and the Saint Marcus church. The whole city community was taking part, and sometimes even representatives of the ecclesiastic environment, although there were very strict orders prohibiting it to them [26]. In time, the musician profession would not only remain with the medium and lower classes, but it would become a passion embraced even by the nobles. During a musical night in 1584 in the catholic monastery of the Saint Virgin in Heraklion, along with the organist and harpsichord player Camillo, also two nobles interpreted string instruments: Petros Foscarini (lute) and Salamon (guitar). The latter came from the town of Siteia. Moreover, it seems that the music science was an essential component in the educational curriculum of a young person from the aristocratic class, since the Venetian-Cretan noble and mathematician Francescos Barozzi (1537-1604) was advising his own nephew to learn how to play not only the lute, but also the harpsichord, the violin, the viola da gamba, the lira and the whole basic vocal repertoire belonging to each genre, but also the counterpoint, the composition and music theory.

Archbishop Lucca Stella supplies rather surprising and unusual information indirectly indicating the extent to which the western music tradition had been assimilated on the island and especially, in the ecclesiastic world. In one of his reports, he mentions that at the Dominican monastery Saint Peter, the cell of a monk, named Benetto Bertolini, had been transformed into a real concert hall. Almost every night, his cell was resounding instrumental music (violins, guitars, harpsichord, lutes) and especially lay songs. As these reunions were attended not only by monarachs, but also by numerous laymen, it is easily understood that the situation scandalized the older people community of the monastery, thus triggering the anger of a part of the Christ brotherhood. Fortunately, one of his friends accounted that, actually, brother Bertolini was the musician of the holy location, and one of his duties was to be a music professor, which explained the presence of laymen apprentices in his own monk cell [27].

As one could notice, the music education of western-European influence in Crete, under all its forms, was not an isolated event, but a lively one, paradoxically promoted by the various Latin monastic institutions on the island. Out of the few ecclesiastic schools that produced musicians following the western tradition, the catholic cathedral of Saint Titus seems to have been the most important, and Francescos Leondaritis the landmark representative of this remarkable school [28].

5 Conclusion

The coexistence for more than four centuries and a half of the two worlds, the Latin and the Byzantine one, and of the two dogmas on the territory of Crete was surely one of the most spectacular and exemplary phenomena of the intercultural dialogue featuring the Mediterranean during the Ars Nova and the Renaissance. The Latin and Italian education promotion onto the orthodox population and the tendency of many local inhabitants to study in the cities of the peninsula were the essential factors leading to the intensification of the interaction between the two cultures. On the ecclesiastical ground, despite the theological differences, the everyday contact between the Cretan inhabitants made it that the relations between the intellectuals of the time be ones of friendship and mutual appreciation. Clergymen and communities belonging to both confessions were taking part together in the official religious feasts, processions and events that were permanently taking place in the cities on the island. This makes the Cretan Byzantines involve and participate in the catholic services, and on the other hand the Latin priests were taking part in the orthodox ones, a usual practice especially in the rural areas where the Latin clergy was less numerous. The conquest of the island by the Ottoman troops in 1669 would lead to the loss of such a unique cultural tradition, born at the borderline of civilizations and religions, without leaving behind too many musical proves. Along with its inhabitants, part of the sonorous sacred art of Crete will migrate to the islands of the Ionic Archipelago, especially Corfu and Zakynthos, being found during the following centuries under the name of "Cretan music".
References:

[2] The archive documents indicate the existence of several financial donations for building, assembling or acquiring organs, sometimes even on behalf of famous constructors of such instruments, such as the Italian Vincenzo Colombi de la Casale Monferrato, probably one and the same with Vincenzo de Monfera. See S. Dalla Libera, *L’arte degli organi a Venezia* Venice-Rome, 1962, pp. LXI-LX, CLXXX, CCXV; N. Panagiotakis, *Η μουσική κατά τη Βενετοκρατία, Κρήτη: Ιστορία και Πολιτισμός*, Vol. II, Crete, 1988, pp. CCIII-CCXII, CCXCVI-CCXCVII.
[3] In MS B.P. 789 at the Biblioteca Civica di Padova, there appears the name of an organist in the person of Camillus Trapolinus (*†1556*) who probably worked at the Dominican monastery Saint Peter. See G. Gerola, *Le iscrizioni cretesi di Desidero Dal Legname: pubblicate per le nozze Vivaldelli Viglierchio, Verona, 1907*, p. IV.
[5] See, for example, the report to Rome by Lucca Stella, the catholic archbishop of Crete (1623-1632), written in 1625 on the catholic churches and monasteries in the island capital, which mentions the presence of an organ in almost all cult locations. Apud. Panagiotakis, *Μουσική..., pp. CCXCVI-CCXCVII.
[7] Ibid., p. CXIII.
[10] Out of the names of the Italian musicians who were recognized at the time and who temporary worked on the island, the documents only retain four: the Venetian Antonio Molino (Burchiella), a well known actor, musician and author of comedies, the first who has organized theatrical performances in Crete; Lodovico Zacconi, composer and theoretician of music in the beginning of the XVII century, abbey at the Augustinian monastery of the Redeemer in Heraklion; Giulio Zenaro and the Calabrese Giandominico La Martoretta.
[16] See, for example, the case of the catholic monastery of Saint Francis in Heraklion and its library that comprises 13 music manuscripts with Latin repertoire (MSS 269, 271-278, 286, 288-290), which indicates that there existed a certain music practice of western origin and even an education in this regard to allow their reading. See G. Hofmann, La biblioteca scientifica del monastero di San Francesco a Candia nel medio evo, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* No. VIII, 1942, pp. CCCCXLV-CCXLVI.
[18] Idem, *Μαρτυρίες..., p. XIV.


[25] See, for example, the case of the barber (tonsor) Alexius Malachias from Heraklion, who takes his son Georgantis to study the trumpet and the flute with the professor (magistro) Benvenuto, in the autumn of the year 1506. Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Notai di Candia, b. 177 (Michele Mellino), f. 53r, in: Panagiotakis, Μαρτυρίες..., p. LXII; Idem, Μαρτυρίες γιὰ τον Κρητικό μουσικοσυνθέτη Φραγκίσκο Λεονταρίτη και γιὰ τη μουσική στήν Κρήτη τούς δύο τελευταίους αίώνες τῆς Βενετοκρατίας, *Κρητικά Χρονικά* No. XXVI, 1986, pp. CC-CCI. Several decades later (1431-1435), there are consigned in Dubrovnik other six Greeks: Georgius Grecus, Johannes Grecus, Antonios Grecus, the brothers Theodoros (1424-1431) and Ioannis (1424-1444) and his son Markos (1437-1463). The first has a Cretan origin, and the other was coming from Arta. For the first half of the 16th century there existed other two instrument players on the island, Aloysius and Laurentius Manes, the latter signing in his testament in 1548 as *libros musices et instrumenta musicalia*. Demović, op. cit., pp. XXXVIII, CXX-CXXVIII, CXXVI, CLI, CICVI, CCLXXXXICLII, CCCIII-CCXCII, CDIX; Krekić, op. cit., pp. CCXCIIV, CCXCVI-CCXCIX, CCCI-CCXCIII.

[26] There are two dispositions issued between 1439-1443 and 1559 by the Latin archbishops of Crete, Fantinus Valaresso (1426-1443) and Petrus Lando (1536-1576), totally prohibiting to the priests to perform secular chants and to dance with women (ducere choreas cum mulieribus). Moreover, the order issued by the local ecclesiastic authorities also banned to clergymen the games of dices, cards, wearing weapons or becoming traders, making or wearing masks (especially during the carnival organized on the occasion of the Easter fasting period) and wearing mundane clothing. Xiroduakis, *Δικαίωμα...,* p. LX. Also see M. L. King, *Venetian humanism in an age of patrician dominance*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. CDXL-CDXLI.

[27] Subsequent to an investigation made in the monastery between 13th and 18th March 1626, no less than 11 monks, headed by the abbey Victorius Salamonus and Lucas Ugolinus, the vicar of the Dominican order in Crete, will testify against father (padre) Bertolini, the musician. Archivio de la Sacra Congregazione di Propaganda, Visite e Collegi, vol. 5, f. 292r-v, 294v-295r, 297r, 299r-v, 301r, 302v, 303v, 305r, 306r-v, 307r, 308v, 310v. Apud. Panagiotakis, Μουσική..., pp. CCCXI-CCXII; Idem, Μαρτυρίες..., pp. CLXII-CLXVII.

[28] Panagiotakis, *Φραγκίσκος Λεονταρίτης. Κρητικός μουσικοσυνθέτης του δεκατού έκτου αιώνα*. Μαρτυρίες για τη ζωή και το ύπαρξη του, Βιβλιοθήκη του Ελληνικού Ινστιτούτου Βυζαντινών και Μεταβυζαντινών Σπουδών της Βενετίας αρ. 12, Venice, 1990. Although he benefited of an ample monography, the music work of Leonarditis - known outside Crete, similar to his conational Domenikos Theotokopoulos, under the name of Il Greco -, did not benefit of musicological studies. The only achievement in this regard being the Phd thesis in Athens in 2009 by Konstantinos Mavrogenis, studying only the three litughias of Francesco Leontaritis: *Οι λειτουργίες του Φραγκίσκου Λεονταρίτη - Ανάλυση και συγκριτική μελέτη σε σχέση με τις εξάρτουσες και οκτάφωνες λειτουργίες της περιόδου με έμφαση στους συνθέτες της βαυαρικής αιώνος κατά την περίοδο του δούκα Αλβέρτου Ε’* (Athens, July 2009).