

New Information from the Solon Michaelides Archive

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Solon Michaelides was a Cypriot composer, musicologist, and conductor with a considerable reputation in Cyprus, Greece, and abroad. Although several sources deal with various aspects of his life and work, they are often inconsistent with respect to the information they contain. Until recently, consulting the primary source material found in the Solon Michaelides Archive has been difficult because no catalogue existed for it prior to 2014.¹ To correct this situation, I began compiling a catalogue for the archive, which I completed in March 2015.² The archive offers the researcher much information about the composer's life and musical activities. The numerous pieces of personal correspondence, for instance, open a window on Michaelides's collaborations and relationships with various publishers, musicologists, conductors, partners, and public services. The archive also contains files of Michaelides's clippings from magazines and newspapers about various aspects of his life and activities, including his publications, participation in conferences, concerts of his works, performances as conductor, reviews he had written and received, and his evolution as artist and person. Additionally, the archive contains many documents relating to his works and compositional methods, especially in the form of original scores, notes, and sketches.

Biographical Materials

My work in the archive revealed that much of the biographical literature on Michaelides presents inaccurate information. Below are some examples:

1. In his *To Λεξικό της Ελληνικής Μουσικής: Από τον Ορφέα έως Σήμερα*, Takis Kalogeropoulos gives 1903 as Solon Michaelides's year of birth.³ However, the composer's birth certificate indicates that he was born on 30 October/12 November 1905.⁴ Incidentally, the certificate also includes details about Michaelides's baptism. The

1 Loizos Panayi, Σόλωνας Μιχαηλίδης: Ζωή και Δράση Μέσα από το Αρχαιακό Υλικό του Δημοτικού Μουσείου–Αρχειού Σόλωνα Μιχαηλίδη [Solon Michaelides: Life and Works from the Archival Material of the Municipal Museum–Solon Michaelides Archive] (Nicosia: Piasr Copy Center, 2016).

2 *Ο φιλελεύθερος* [online newspaper], “Ηλεκτρονική Καταλογογράφηση του Αρχείου Σόλωνος Μιχαηλίδη” [Electronically Cataloguing the Solon Michaelides Archive], 23 March 2015, accessed 13 March 2016, <http://archive.philenews.com/el-gr/politismos-kypros/162/248304/ilektroniki-katalogografisi-tou-archeiou-solonos-michailidi>. The creation of the catalogue was part of my undergraduate studies at the Music Department of Ionian University under the supervision of Konstantinos Kardamis.

3 Takis Kalogeropoulos, “Μιχαηλίδης, Σόλων,” in *Το Λεξικό της Ελληνικής Μουσικής: Από τον Ορφέα έως Σήμερα* (Athens: Yialleli, 1998), 143–45.

4 Certificate of Solon Michaelides's birth and baptism, “Πιστοποιητικόν Γεννήσεως και Βαπτίσεως,” 30 October 1905 and 25 November 1905, no. 424(7), Solon Michaelides Archive, Solon Michaelides Municipal Museum, Limassol, Cyprus (henceforth Michaelides Archive). Dual dating is needed since Greece adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1923 with a loss of thirteen days.

ceremony took place at the Holy Church of Phaneromeni in Nicosia on 25 November/8 December 1905, and his certificate was signed by the pontifical commissioner Kallinikos.

- Galatia Balta states that Michaelides became a fellow of Trinity College in 1959.⁵ However, the archive contains a certificate signed by Harold Kenyon, Kt. Alexander, and T. Rees, indicating that that he was named fellow of Trinity College on 22 February 1952 by resolution of the Trinity College Board.⁶ This date is also confirmed by another archival document from July of the same year.⁷
- In her biographical study, *Σόλων Μιχαηλίδης: Η Ζωή και το Έργο του*, Elena Lamari states that Michaelides was commissioned by Archbishop Makarios to compose the Cypriot national anthem sometime in 1963.⁸ Interestingly, the archive contains the composer's manuscript score, which indicates that it was completed on 31 December 1962.⁹ Based on this, it would seem that either Makarios commissioned the anthem earlier than suggested by Lamari (probably in 1962), or that Makarios had requested the work only after it had already been composed.

Several documents in Michaelides's archive testify to his active participation in the institution of Freemasonry, including the following:

- Michaelides's copies of the internal regulations of Freemasonry.¹⁰
- The text of his salutation on behalf of the Zenon Lodge in the Amphictyony in Larnaca on 7 May 1945, indicating his activity as a member of the Zenon Lodge.¹¹
- The text of his speech on the feast of Greek Freemasonry on 24 March 1945.¹²
- A certificate dated 1 August 1946, certifying that Solon Michaelides was a regular member of Platoon No. 6 of the Rose Croix Chapter.¹³ The dating of these credentials coincides with Michaelides's scholarship from the British Council for the academic year 1946–1947. It is possible that he requested this certificate in order to introduce himself to the Masonic Lodges of Great Britain.

Professional Activities

Throughout his career, Michaelides actively promoted the dissemination of Greek art and folk music, both in Greece and internationally. Most of his compositions are characterized by the use of Greek folkloric music, and in his musicological studies he tried to enhance the visibility of Greek folk music in the works of Greek composers. Additionally, through his participation in committees of international competitions and his collaboration with various institutions he gained the reputation of a man who strived for the promotion of his beloved art. Most importantly, his musicological work on Greece and Cyprus became a standard reference for the research of non-Greeks. Among his most influential writings was the article "Folk Songs in

5 Galatea Balta, "Σόλων Μιχαηλίδης" [Solon Michaelides] (unpublished document printed for an even in honor of Michaelides, Thessaloniki, 1980, University of Cyprus Library ML410.N646B34 1980), 13.

6 Certificate, 22 February 1952, no. 424 (3), Michaelides Archive.

7 "Limassol Musician Honoured," *Cyprus Mail*, 16 March 1936.

8 Elena Lamari Papadopoulou, *Σόλων Μιχαηλίδης: Η Ζωή και το Έργο του* (Nicosia: Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture, 1994), 38.

9 Solon Michaelides, autograph and sketches of *Ύμνος Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας*, 1962, no. 799, Michaelides Archive.

10 Regulations of the "Grand Lodge of Greece", 19 July 1946, no. 708 (2), Michaelides Archive.

11 Transcript of "Προσφώνησις" [public address], no. 708 (3), Michaelides Archive.

12 Transcript of "Προσφώνησις" [public address], no. 708 (3), Michaelides Archive.

13 Certificate from the Grand Lodge of Greece, 1 August 1946, no. 709, Michaelides Archive.

Cyprus," included in *The Island of Cyprus: An Illustrated Guide and Handbook*.¹⁴ This particular article proved indispensable to such scholars of Greek music as John Lorde Campbell and Samuel Baud-Bovy, as indicated by their letters to Michaelides.¹⁵

Michaelides's musicological output is impressive both for its volume and variety, and at least two of his publications have received considerable recognition: *The Music of Ancient Greece: an Encyclopaedia* (1978), and *Αρμονία της Σύγχρονης Μουσικής* (1945)¹⁶. In addition to his scholarly publications, his musical writings appeared in various non-academic periodical outlets. His series of five articles under the general title "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς," published in the column of "Τέχνη και Ζωή" in the newspaper *Πρωινή* is of special interest.¹⁷ Originally delivered as a series of five lectures for the Concert Association of the Limassol Conservatory, they were published serially from 4–9 December 1936. The content of the articles may be summarized as follows:

1. 1st (4 December 1936): general information about the five lectures for the Concert Association of the Limassol Conservatory.¹⁸
2. 2nd (5 December 1936): music in ancient India and ancient Persia.¹⁹
3. 3rd (6 December 1936): music in Ancient China.²⁰
4. 4th (8 December 1936): music in ancient Japan, Korea, and Arabia; the music of Jews.²¹
5. 5th (9 December 1936): the music of Jews (continuation from the previous article); ancient Egyptian music.²²

At the time, ethnomusicology was not the specialized discipline it is today. In the cases of Greece and Cyprus, very little had been written about their musical traditions, and the information was available provided only elementary understanding. Therefore, we should regard the articles comprising Michaelides's "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς" as a valuable initial attempt to treat the traditional musics of Greece and Cyprus according to academic standards.

Michaelides served as a member of various committees and juries in Greece and abroad, activities about which his archive contains considerable information. His participation in three committees in particular appears to have had a direct impact on the evolution of art music in Greece. The documents outlining his participation are outlined below:

1. A letter from Anthi Koutli (24 November in 1973) indicates Michaelides's participation in the committee responsible for appraising various choral groups and other musical

14 Solon Michaelides, "Folk Songs in Cyprus," in *The Island of Cyprus: An Illustrated Guide and Handbook* (Nicosia: Mangoian Bros. 1947), 35.

15 Correspondence of Samuel Baud-Bovy to Solon Michaelides, 11 November 1948, no. 479 (4), Michaelides Archive; Correspondence of John Lorde Campbell to Solon Michaelides, 2 April 1948, no. 481, Michaelides Archive.

16 Solon Michaelides, *The Music of Ancient Greece: an Encyclopedia* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978); Solon Michaelides, *Αρμονία της Σύγχρονης Μουσικής* [Harmony of Modern Music] 2 vols. (Limassol: publ. by author, 1945).

17 Solon Michaelides, "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς," *Πρωινή*, 4–9 December 1936.

18 Solon Michaelides, "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς," *Πρωινή*, 4 December 1936.

19 Solon Michaelides, "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς," *Πρωινή*, 5 December 1936.

20 Solon Michaelides, "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς," *Πρωινή*, 6 December 1936.

21 Solon Michaelides, "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς," *Πρωινή*, 8 December 1936.

22 Solon Michaelides, "Η Μουσική εις τους Αρχαίους Λαούς," *Πρωινή*, 9 December 1936.

organizations in Greece.²³ Given his musical training and rather extensive experience as conductor of choirs and orchestras, it is no surprise that Michaelides would have been a member of such a committee. In a later letter from Koutli (31 December 1973), we learn that Michaelides received 3,600 drachmas for his services.²⁴

2. A letter from Dimitris Stathoulopoulos (15 December 1973) names Michaelides as the chair of the “*Ἐπιλογή Μουσικῶν Συνθέσεων προς Ἐκδοση*.”²⁵ A note by Michaelides describes the committee’s methodology and the selection process.²⁶ In a later letter, Michaelides refers to the various problems that the group was faced with in fulfilling its mandate.²⁷ The archive also includes the minutes of the committee’s sessions, some of which contain tabulations of the chosen compositions. While we know that at least nineteen meetings took place, the minutes of the second, third, ninth, tenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth meetings are missing. Still, the available documents reveal much about the committee’s procedures:
 - 2.1. First meeting, 11 January 1974: establishes the methodology that the committee would follow.²⁸
 - 2.2. Fourth meeting, 22 January 1974: provides tables of the following categories of composers: (1) living Greek composers, (2) deceased Greek composers, (3) Greek composers of the diaspora, and (4) Nikolaos Chalikiopoulos Mantzaros, who was treated as a special case.²⁹
 - 2.3. Fifth meeting, 25 January 1974: addresses information collected about composers in the categories mentioned above.³⁰
 - 2.4. Sixth meeting, 30 January 1974: passes on information about: (1) deceased Greek composers whose works were approved for publication, (2) deceased Greek composers about whom little information was available, (3) works by living Greek composers whose works the committee had approved for publication, (4) information about publications of compositions by Manolis Kalomoiris, Nikos Skalkottas, and Giannis Christou.³¹
 - 2.5. Seventh meeting, 6 February 1974: discussion of decisions in relation to the structure of the book in preparation.³²
 - 2.6. Eighth meeting, 8 February 1974: provides tables with information about living Greek composers who published their compositions abroad.³³

23 Correspondence from Anthi Koutli to Solon Michaelides, 24 November 1973; “Πρακτικά Συμβουλίου–Εισηγήσεις Κ.Ο.Θ – Μουσικής Ακαδημίας κ.λ.π.” [Council Proceedings–Suggestions of the Thessaloniki State Orchestra–Music Academy, etc.] no. 634 (1), Michaelides Archive.

24 Correspondence from Anthi Koutli to Solon Michaelides, 31 December 1973; “Πρακτικά Συμβουλίου–Εισηγήσεις Κ.Ο.Θ – Μουσικής Ακαδημίας κ.λ.π.” [Council Proceedings–Suggestions of the Thessaloniki State Orchestra–Music Academy, etc.] no. 634 (1), Michaelides Archive.

25 Correspondence from Dimitris Stathoulopoulos to Solon Michaelides, 15 December 1973, no. 768 (11), Michaelides Archive.

26 Solon Michaelides, “Γεν. Ἐκθέσεις” [General Report] no. 768 (12), Michaelides Archive.

27 Correspondence from Solon Michaelides to General Director of Cultural Affairs, Conservatory of Thessaloniki, 19 March 1974, no. 768, Michaelides Archive.

28 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 1, 11 January 1974, no. 768 (5), Michaelides Archive.

29 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 4, 22 January 1974, no. 768 (6), Michaelides Archive.

30 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 5, 25 January 1974, no. 768 (7), Michaelides Archive.

31 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 6, 30 January 1974, no. 768 (8), Michaelides Archive.

32 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 7, 6 February 1974, no. 768 (9), Michaelides Archive.

- 2.7. Eleventh meeting, 5 March 1974: provides a table showing works of deceased Greek composers under consideration for publication.³⁴
- 2.8. Twelfth through the nineteenth meetings, March and April 1974: outlines preparation of a comprehensive table that includes all compositions proposed for publication.³⁵
3. A letter on 30 July 1973 from Linos Politis and Demetris Demetriadis, Chairman and Secretary General, respectively, of the “Μακεδονική Καλλιτεχνική Εταιρία ‘Τέχνη’” [Macedonian Arts Company, “Techne”] lists Michaelides, along with Foivos Anogeianakis and George Leotsakos, as member of a committee mandated to create a music dictionary titled “Λεξικό Μουσικών Όρων.”³⁶ Following internationally accepted practices, the particular committee established a specific methodology for the compilation and presentation of the material. According to a subsequent letter from Leotsakos and Anogeianakis (19 August 1973), the first meeting was devoted to the committee’s procedure for indexing and translating entries.³⁷ Numerous additional meetings were required to fulfill that task. The archive holds the minutes of these later meetings, which provide a valuable account of the committee’s approach as well as the various issues its members had to tackle. As it happens, the committee did not manage to complete its assignment. Leotsakos resigned, and in his resignation letter, written on 12 January 1978, informs us about the many problems that he and the other two members faced in their work.³⁸ Unfortunately, the information is insufficient to gain us a full understanding of what those difficulties were. Nevertheless, we do know that “Τέχνη” attempted to create music manuals in the Greek language.

The archive also contains a correspondence between Michaelides and William Stanley Gwynn Williams regarding the former’s *Η Προσευχή του Ταπεινού* [The Prayer of the Humble]. In these letters, we are informed that the score of the particular song had appeared in a British journal in 1952.³⁹ The best-known version of the song is for piano and voice, but there exists another score with different orchestration.⁴⁰ The song text was written by Zacharias Papantoniou, while a Mr. Harold Idris Bell provided valuable assistance in the translation of the lyrics in the publication of the song.⁴¹

33 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 8, 8 February 1974, no. 768 (13), Michaelides Archive.

34 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 11, 5 March 1974, no. 768 (14), Michaelides Archive.

35 “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 12, 8 March 1974, no. 768 (16), Michaelides Archive; “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 13, 15 March 1974, no. 768 (1), Michaelides Archive; “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 14, 19 March 1974, no. 768 (2), Michaelides Archive; “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 15, 26 March 1974, no. 768 (3), Michaelides Archive; “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 18, 19 April [1974], no. 768 (4), Michaelides Archive; “Πρακτικόν” [Minutes] of meeting no. 19, 23 April [1974], no. 768 (15), Michaelides Archive.

36 Correspondence of Demetris Demetriades and Linos Politis to Solon Michaelides, “Αλληλογραφία ΣΜ 2” [Correspondence SM 2], 30 July 1973, no. 385, Michaelides Archive.

37 Minutes entitled “Πρακτικόν από συζητήσεις που είχαν στη Θεσσαλονίκη κατά την πρόσφατη, εκεί, μετάβαση του Γ. Λεωτσάκου” [Minutes from discussions in Thessaloniki during the recent transition of G. Leotsakos there], no. 766 (3), Michaelides Archive.

38 Correspondence of George Leotsakos to the Board of Directors of the Macedonian Arts Company “Techne,” 12 January 1978, no. 767 (2), Michaelides Archive.

39 Correspondence of Gwynn Williams to Solon Michaelides, 28 July 1952, no. 671, and 30 July 1952, no. 671(1), Michaelides Archive.

40 Three manuscript scores of *Η Προσευχή του Ταπεινού*, nos 9, 29 and 29(1), Michaelides Archive.

41 Manuscript score of *Η Προσευχή του Ταπεινού*, no 29, Michaelides Archive; Correspondence of Gwynn Williams to Solon Michaelides, nos. 671 and 671(1), Michaelides Archive.

The organization of Solon Michaelides's archive is an ongoing process, and the complete appraisal of its contents still lies ahead. Because of constraints of time and space, the information presented here can only offer a sample of the materials uncovered during my work in the archive. Nevertheless, it can provide an idea of the extent of Solon Michaelides's contribution to the practice of music and musicology in the Hellenic world.

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Abstract

Solon Michaelides was a Cypriot composer, musicologist, and conductor with a considerable reputation in Cyprus, Greece, and abroad. Although several secondary sources deal with various aspects of his life and work, they often present contradictory information. Until recently, the absence of a catalogue for the Solon Michaelides Archive have rendered consulting the primary source material found in it difficult. In 2015, the author completed a catalogue for the archive, which was published in Nicosia in 2016 and presents invaluable information for research on Michaelides's life and works. The present article features selected examples of information from the archive, with particular focus laid on his interaction with other musicians, his engagement with Masonry, various non-academic essays of an ethnomusicological nature, and his participation in various important professional committees in Greece.

About the Author

Loizos Panayi is a PhD candidate at the Ionian University, where he is researching musical activity in Cyprus from 1935 to 1947 as presented in magazines and newspapers at the time. His published works mainly focus on modern Greek music, with a particular interest in the twentieth

century. His research interests also include music in Cyprus and the interaction between music, society and politics.