

## Archeosophical Music and Melurgy

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**ABSTRACT:** Starting from 1975, Tommaso Palamidessi, founder of the “Archeosofica” School, devoted an important part of his work to the aesthetic and metaphysical dimension of the arts. He wrote on Sophianic theology, iconography, singing, and melurgy. In this article, we present the sources of the Archeosophical theory of music in the texts of Palamidessi, followed by some musicological and technical elements characteristic of the “Archeosophical melurgy.”

**KEYWORDS:** Archeosophy, Archeosophical Melurgy, Melurgy, Tommaso Palamidessi, Esotericism and Music.

### *Introduction*

A significant part of the teachings of Tommaso Palamidessi (1915–1983) is devoted to the aesthetic experience and its role as a driving force in the individual ascetic and transmuting work. For the founder of the Archeosofica School, art is a precious tool for the ascetic who masters the “aesthetic science for the self-overcoming of oneself and the perfect imitation of the Christ” (Palamidessi 2015 [1971], I, 5).

For this reason, numerous titles devoted to painting, music, poetry, and dance were already present in the original editorial program of Archeosofica, dating back to 1968 (Cresti 2020). It is however from 1975 on that Palamidessi

devoted himself intensively to the drafting of his texts dedicated to the arts, with *L'icòna, i colori e l'ascesi artistica* (Palamidessi 1986), *Canto e arte del cantare santificante* (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975a]), and lastly *Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica* (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c]), all posthumously published.

Also of this period are the musical compositions of Palamidessi, among which the *Melodia in Re*. It is worth noting that the Archeosophical music developed by Palamidessi is not a purely theoretical construction, since in 1999 the Coro Santa Cecilia di Firenze was founded by Alessandro Benassai with the intention of developing the canons of Archeosophical music. It is still active today, together with the Accademia Musicale Archeosofica, which in 2021 had around a hundred active members, including students, teachers, and musicians.

In this article, after a presentation of the primary texts and sources, we will analyze some musicological and technical elements characteristic of the “melurgia archeosofica,” i.e., the Archeosophical melurgy.

### *The First Musical References in the Works of Palamidessi*

In Europe, the dialogue between music and esotericism had its symbolic beginning in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Godwin 1995, 49), when it received a strong impulse through the works of Antoine Fabre d'Olivet (1767–1825), Charles Fourier (1772–1837), and Józef Maria Hoëné-Wroński (1776–1853). These were quickly followed up by Alexandre Saint-Yves d'Alveydre (1842–1909), with his influential work and notable musical expertise, and Paul-François-Gaspard Lacuria (1808–1890), in whom Palamidessi recognized “a vast theological, musical, esoteric and Christic preparation of a high level” (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 45).

The early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a flourishing of the aesthetic and artistic dimension in esotericism, with the widespread action of Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), the Theosophical references of Vassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), and the musical experiments of George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff (1866–1949) and Thomas de Hartmann (1885–1956) (Petsche 2015). A sign of the ever-growing interest that music acquired in the European esoteric circles of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be seen in the special edition of *Le Voile d'Isis* magazine (April

1928) entitled “La Musique dans ses rapports avec l’ésotérisme,” which collected a sizeable number of articles with the purpose of presenting an overall picture of the subject (*Le Voile d’Isis* 1928).

At the same time, on a less esoteric level but just as important for our investigation, the Vatican Commission directed by Dom Joseph Pothier, O.S.B. (1835–1923), a Benedictine from the Abbey of Solesmes, worked unceasingly for all the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to recover and promote the Gregorian chant. The result of this work was a series of publications that went from the *Kyriale* of 1905 to the *Antiphonale Romanum* of 1912, then continued under the auspices of the Abbey of Solesmes up to the present day (Combe 2003).

While clearly distancing itself from the Gregorian chant in the inspirational spirit and sound effects, nevertheless the Archeosophical music shares with it many technical elements, such as the absence of chromatic alterations, and the use of free rhythm and the ecclesiastical modes. Palamidessi himself often quoted Dom Gregorio María Suñol, O.S.B. (1879–1946), a disciple of Pothier and the author of a well-known manual on the Gregorian chant (Suñol 1905).

Even if Palamidessi actively devoted himself to melurgy and the writing of texts of Archeosophical music only after May 1974, already in his texts on yoga the use of music is envisaged as an adjuvant to meditation. For example, in *La potenza erotica di Kundalini yoga* we read:

The pronunciation of the OM must be broken down into three phonetic moments: A – U – M, precisely: an open A which blends, merges with U and fades, according to a do-mi-sol program, into a nasal M ending with a mouth tight (Palamidessi 1949, 41).

A virtually identical meditation process is suggested in *Elementi della Tradizione Kabbalistica*, a writing of some thirty years later, where the Tibetan Aum is replaced by the Hebraic Amen:

During the meditation you can visualize the three Hebraic letters Alef, Mem, and Nun as living fire. Hebraic being the language of Christ and of the prophets. Sung or recited mentally the Amen is intoned on the musical notes Do-Mi-Sol (Palamidessi n.d. [1982], 70).

Starting from 1968, Palamidessi’s idea of the use of music for ascetic and theurgic purposes was already structured in a way that was coherent with the future developments and texts of the years 1974–75. In 1968, Booklet no. 29 appeared in the Archeosofica editorial program. It should have had as title //

*canto, la poesia, la melurgia, la danza e la catarsi*, but it was never published during Palamidessi's lifetime. It was edited posthumously into five separate texts: *Canto e l'arte del cantare santificante* (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975a]); *Elementi di grammatica musicale archeosofica*, in two volumes (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b]); *Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica* (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c]); and *Poesia e metrica o arte del poetare per il lavoro ascetico* (Palamidessi 1975b).

In April and May of the same year 1968, the first direct references to music and singing as ascetic and theurgic means, which might be useful for the awakening of the force centers, appeared in two articles in the magazine *La tribuna illustrata* (Palamidessi 1968a, 1968b). Particularly relevant is the first article of the “Piccolo dizionario delle Scienze Ermetiche” in *La tribuna illustrata* of 21 April 1968:

The mystics make use of music because certain notes and modes of the diatonic scale operate on the body and on the consciousness of the religious persons, and bring them closer to God. Singing, from the point of view of the occult science, would act on the thyroid and on the nervous system. The psychic and spiritual activity would therefore be stimulated by music. In particular, certain musical themes in Fa major would produce a sense of peace, of joy, and contemplation. Melodies in Do major would awaken the purity and energy to a high religious level. The Eastern Church has a long tradition about how music may help for catharsis or purification (Palamidessi 1968a, 35).

In these two articles, published twenty days apart from each other, we already find all the technical, ascetic, and metaphysical themes of Archeosophical music, which will be developed from 1975 on. Here, we meet references to the natural diatonic scale, that is, without chromatic alterations, and to the use of modes defined as “liturgical and theurgical;” to the action of music on the thyroid and the nervous system; to the use of singing to “awaken each of the seven human occult centers;” to music as an instrument held in high regard by the “greatest Masters of antiquity;” and to the Eastern Church as a repository of a long musical tradition for catharsis.

The spiritual dimension of music appears in the writings of Palamidessi as early as 1970. It is already well-defined when in the conclusion to Booklet 18 of Archeosophy, entitled *Esperienza Misterica del Santo Graal*, he refers to choral singing and to a musical asceticism capable of facilitating the ascension of the consciousness up to the Grail.

What should we say of music? When does it correspond to pictorial themes? We mean the music and the choral singing developed according to established liturgical and theurgic modes, which are very close to the archaic Byzantine harmony. The purified Ego can rise from one cosmic plane to the next until God, provided that the musical themes have been composed with the wisdom of the musical ascetics. Therefore, the notes and the colors must be bound skillfully together with the most suitable traditional symbols so as to facilitate the soft release of the consciousness, purified in Christ and coherent with the archetype of the Temple, in order for the physical body to climb unto the Grail with the glorious body of the Resurrection in the state of perennial Wakefulness, and to re-enter with the same softness and lucidity in the same physical body (Palamidessi 1970, 45).

Before 1968, we are not aware of musical references as articulate as the previous ones in the writings of Palamidessi, and it is difficult to reconstruct the phases of his thought. However, in our opinion it is relevant to report a spiritual experience narrated by Palamidessi himself in *Canto e arte del cantare santificante*, which must refer to the years immediately prior to 1960, when he was a regular visitor of the Franciscan monastery of La Verna, waiting to become a tertiary of the same Franciscan Order (Lullo 2020).

But for those who more than others intuit and perceive spiritually the presence of God in the All, the singing, the religious singing heard in the night on the heights near the monastery produce the wonderful and sublime sensation of leaving oneself and entering into a whirl of colors and harmonies. So it happened to me years ago on the mount of La Verna, in hearing from afar among the gusts of wind the singing of the Franciscans at Matins (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975a], 1).

This experience must surely have been striking, and it cannot be excluded that it was the basis of the growing attention paid by Palamidessi to music. Even if we do not know exactly the origin of the first interest of Palamidessi for music, we do know in a precise way what was the catalyzing event that took him to drafting the *Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica*. It is Palamidessi himself who makes reference to it in *Le basi dell'Astrologia Iniziatica personale* when dealing with how to ascetically exploit the planetary returns of Saturn, Jupiter and Mercury.

The preparation, although it was cursory [...], yielded surprising results: impetuous and scorching came the Wind Bearer of Light, Love, Hope with Sophia, the created Wisdom. On May 14 and 22 of the same year 1974 in Rome, the two Sophian apparitions and revelations were fixed, as far as it was permitted to communicate to others, in two summaries in verse. From those moments, the inspirations and insights followed one another relentlessly and gave the energy to write some important works: *Le basi della*

*teologia sofianica; Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica; L'ascesi artistica, i colori e la pittura* (Palamidessi 1975a, 44).

The Sophianic experiences of 1974 are accurately described by Palamidessi in two poems entitled *La Vergine Sofia* and *Crocifissi in quattro*, which with *La Donna del Trimundio* constitute an important part of the book *Le basi della teologia sofianica* (Corradetti 2022). They served as the catalyzing effect leading Palamidessi to finalize his writings about arts dealing with music and iconography.

### *Reference Texts for the Archeosophical Music*

Between 1974 and 1975, Palamidessi produced the principal technical and doctrinal corpus of Archeosophical music, which however would only be published posthumously in private editions at the beginning of the 2000s. These texts, which constitute the fundamental bibliography for anyone who wants to approach Archeosophical music, are *Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica* (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c]), *Canto e arte del cantare santificante* (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975a]), and *Elementi di grammatica musicale archeosofica* in 2 volumes (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b]).

*Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica* is the most interesting text from the point of view of its ascetic solutions and doctrinal depth. In this text, Palamidessi discusses the spiritual and metaphysical importance of music, introducing the “musical Archeosophical tradition.” It also defines the concept of “melurgy,” and presents the cosmic octave in its relationships with the human octave and the “Mystery of the Eighth Day.” Moreover, in the same text Palamidessi offers the musical and chromatic correspondences for the awakening of the force centers, and classifies the melurgic and psychosomatic effects of the eight Archeosophical musical modes, together with some particularly important chords needed for musical harmony.

While in *Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica* the esoteric and spiritual bases of Archeosophical music are set out, in the other two writings Palamidessi introduces its practical and technical features. *Canto e arte del cantare santificante* is a manual presenting practical exercises of vocalization and breathing to improve the voice, and correct flaws and defects of pronunciation so

as to obtain a perfect phonation. In the two volumes of *Elementi di grammatica musicale archeosofica*, the author analyzes the technical bases of the Archeosophical composition. He presents the “eight Archeosophical modes” together with indications on the instrumental execution of the Archeosophical pieces. Finally, the text ends with a classification of an extensive number of classical pieces with respect to their psychic effects.

Along with these theoretical-practical texts, it is necessary to consider as part of the musical production of Palamidessi the compositions: an orchestral one entitled *Nella casa del Padre*, which has been lost, and *Melodia in Re*, composed in the first authentic mode.

### *Technical Elements*

The technical elements of Archeosophical music are presented by Palamidessi mostly in *Elementi di grammatica musicale archeosofica*. Few but important points distinguish them significantly from the classical and modern religious music and draw them closer to the Gregorian chant, although more from a technical than a stylistic point of view. The text of reference for Palamidessi is here *Método completo de canto gregoriano* by Dom Suñol (Suñol 1905). Palamidessi emphasizes five main technical elements.

*Use of the natural diatonic scale without alterations:* in accordance with the Gregorian chant, Palamidessi does deal with chromatic alterations in his writings. However, he considers optimal, for his own spiritual aims and for tuning in with the “subtle psychic centers,” only the natural diatonic scale without chromatic alterations. Such a choice is combined with the strict use of the eight musical modes, which in fact are used without alterations. More specifically, Palamidessi insists on the use of the natural diatonic scale with the just intonation (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], I, 30), with the following ratios between the musical notes:

1	9/8	5/4	4/3	3/2	5/3	15/8	2
Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol	La	Si	Do

*Tuning of the La at 440 Hz:* though maintaining unchanged the relative ratios, the frequency of the notes can vary significantly depending on the tuning. It is therefore extremely important to fix unequivocally their vibratory frequency, so as to ensure the reproducibility of the desired acoustic effect. In fact, different tunings produce different aesthetic impressions, and therefore different artistic and psychic effects. The reference for the identification of a specific tuning became in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the “central La,” which underwent several variations during the course of the centuries. Renowned are the Baroque tuning at 414Hz, and that of the first compositions of Georg Friedrich Händel (1685–1759) at 422.5Hz, in contrast to a tuning fork of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) resonant at 455.4Hz. Palamidessi mentions the organ of Trinity Church in Cambridge, with a central La at 395Hz (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], II, 23). As late as the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was still possible to encounter diverse tunings, of which the most influential were the French at 435Hz, and what was accepted and became ISO standard in 1955, at 440Hz. In *Elementi di grammatica musicale archeosofica* Palamidessi consecrates a chapter to the tuning used for the religious-ascetic music experiments, specifying that it had to be La at 440Hz.

*Use of the eight Archeosophical musical modes:* for the formulation of Archeosophical music, Palamidessi embraced the use of the eight liturgical modes, which had been the base of musical composition from the 9<sup>th</sup> until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the ecclesiastical modes consisting of a series of eight ascending diatonic scales arose from the practical necessity of supplying a guide for liturgical singing. Each of these gravitated around a fundamental sound called *ripercussio*, which is situated at an interval of fifth or sixth above the *finalis* in the “authentic” modes, or at an interval of third or fourth in those called “plagal.” Palamidessi utilizes the eight liturgical modes as the base of his eight Archeosophical modes, divided into four “authentic” modes and four “derivative” ones, which substitute the plagal (see Annex A). While maintaining the same formal definition in terms of tonic and dominant, the Archeosophical modes distinguish themselves from the liturgical traditions for the use of such notes. In the Archeosophical modes, the tonic and dominant are conceived as two fundamental centers of gravity of the melody, which represent the sense of repose and that of movement. However, the dominant is not seen as the “principle of melodic movement” but as “a diatonic note, on which the melody is placed in preference,” that is, what “the ancient Christian psalmody called the *tenor*”



(Palamidessi n.d. [post 1975b], I, 42). The choice of the Archeosophical mode, and therefore of the tonic and of the dominant of the composition, constitute for Palamidessi a crucial key for producing, through the musical-chromatic-psychic correspondences, the awakening and spiritual effect of the melody. Palamidessi is particularly explicit on this point, stating that,

We also note that to utilize the rapports of syntony among the musical notes and the psychic centres, the musical compositions must not leave the eight modes (four authentic and four derivative) dealt with in this booklet (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], II, 23).

The only surviving composition of Palamidessi is entitled *Melodia in Re* and is in the first authentic mode, thus with tonic Re and dominant in La.

*Use of free rhythm and chironomy:* Archeosophical music calls for “the faithful execution of the single groups of notes without using the fixed rhythmic sequences.” To achieve this aim, the interpreters “must know to perfection the composition of the single rhythmic groups, the exact syllabic accentuation, and the division, so as to bind the execution with fluidity and logical continuity, avoiding any rigid cadence and rhythm” (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], II, 9). Being without a rigid rhythm, the Archeosophical music guarantees a faithful reproduction through the use of the “chironomic line,” which consists of a graphic sign above the notes that evidences in natural mode the *arsis* and the *thesis* of the musical phrasing (see an example in Annex B).

This visible expression of the rhythm is called “rule given by the hand,” or chironomy. It has been in use since the time of Christ, because it is spontaneous and natural. The chironomy reproduces and indicates the raising and the lowering of the melodic line, and prescribes the rhythm and the dynamic nuances unequivocally. It must prove to be simultaneously rhythmic, melodic, and agogic. More exactly, it must ideally signify six factors of musical expression (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], II, 7).

*Use of the leading note:* the seventh degree of the scale, or “leading note,” was often avoided in the Gregorian chant due to the imperfection value attributed to it. Palamidessi, even though not totally rejecting the use of such a degree of the scale, dedicates to it a whole chapter, suggesting what compositional artifices may be necessary to obviate its use (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], I, 43). The absence of the leading note was a way “to silence all the disordered human passions, and express all the sentiments of those who want to enter into the temple of the Great Architect of the Universe and prostrate themselves in adoration” (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 61).

### *The Spiritual Dimension of Music*

An important element to understand Archeosophical music is the part played by the spiritual dimension in the whole work of Palamidessi. For him, music is not only a useful instrument to predispose the soul for a religious emotion but a complete ascetic path, capable of introducing into a divine experience.

Based on our observations and experiments, hearing a musical piece is not only a sensorial or acoustic phenomenon. It is not only an aesthetic and ethical experimentation, because in the humans, equipped with ears, there is a psychosomatic and psycho-spiritual and then spiritual-divine process. It can become, following a particular methodology, the setting off to the relative unification with the uncaused Cause of the Created. It is a unification in a harmonic synthesis of the different aspects of the human personality (physical, emotive, mental, spiritual), both conscious or unconscious. It uses the numerous psychological techniques of liberation, guided and helped by the One who can do everything because He is the uncreated foundation of the creation of the Cosmos and of humans (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 13).

The concept of a psychic and spiritual action of music, capable of elevating “the purified Ego [...] from plane to cosmic plane up until God” is already found in the first Archeosophical writings of Palamidessi (Palamidessi 1970, 45). To make explicit such an ascetic function of music it is nevertheless necessary that the notes and colors are “skillfully linked together” according to an esoteric science capable of catalyzing the sanctifying action of the music: the Archeosophical melurgy.

### *Archeosophical Melurgy*

Besides the grammatical and compositional technical indications of Archeosophical music, Palamidessi provides an ample treatise on the norms and correspondences necessary to regulate the action of music on the inner nature of men and women. It is in this sense that Palamidessi claims that melurgy is both “art and science,” and operates for the harmony of the microcosm with the macrocosm, and at the same time with the Christ.

The melurgy is the action of the music on the soul as anthro-po-phonc natural diatonic scale: vibratory action, which from physical is transformed in the soul itself into musical consciousness, seeking a syntony with the Creator Verb, the Christ. The melurgy is also art and science of the melody, but fundamentally considered inside the law of the microcosmic and macrocosmic correspondences (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 29).

For Palamidessi, through the wise use of the correspondences between colors, sounds, virtues, and force centers, by applying the grammatical compositional rules of sacred music, it is possible to compose musical pieces that are not merely arbitrary or subjective, but have a precise effect on the psyche of those who perform them and, secondarily, also of those who listen to them. Already in the first musical experiments of Palamidessi, we can see in his music a lever for the awakening of the psychic centers with a powerful action on those who perform it.

A striking example is the article in the *Tribuna Illustrata* of 13 May 1968, which constitutes the first known document in which Palamidessi expresses in a synthetic but complete way the action of music for spiritual purposes, that is, for liturgical, theurgical, and ascetic purposes with the aim of awakening the consciousness.

*The Magic of Singing*

The highest Masters of antiquity, from Plato [ca. 427–47 BCE] to Boethius [477–524], from Pythagoras [ca. 570–495 BCE] to Martianus Capella [360–428], have taken into high consideration singing and also how to sing. And liturgy and theurgy have as their purpose to evoke the entities, the creative and plasmating spiritual forces. Also the vocalization, the type of melody performed on a single vowel (often O-A), has its importance for the purposes of awakening each of the seven occult centers, especially if the singing is carried out through the five vowels arranged in a sequence. A, E, I, O, U can only be sung according to a certain order to create the harmony of the body and the soul. Clement of Alexandria [ca. 150–215], Diodorus of Sicily [ca. 90–30 BCE], Origen [185–253], Saint Irenaeus [130–202], and the Gnostics speak of the Grand Priest who in Israel pronounced the name of God in certain circumstances in the most absolute secrecy. The vocalization for singing was meant to enter into a relationship with the divinity (Palamidessi 1968b, 32).

Even though Palamidessi refers to his experience when listening to the singing of the Franciscans of La Verna (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975a], 1) the entire Archeosophical musical corpus seems to imply a melurgic action in those who perform the musical pieces more than in those who listen to them. The texts are conceived to enable anyone to compose and then perform instrumentally and vocally their musical pieces, while there are no explicit indications on how to improve the quality of listening, nor specific ascetic exercises. This has a precise sense in the economy of the Archeosophical thought on music, because for Palamidessi “to sing is to pray” (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 65).

At the center of the musical reflections of Palamidessi lies the key of the chromatic-musical-psychic correspondences, which are presented in his *Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica*. As is well-known, the correspondences between colors and musical notes were first established by Isaac Newton (1643–1727) in his *Opticks* (Newton 1704). In his treatise, Newton divides the chromatic spectrum into seven frequencies, in correspondence with the seven musical notes: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet (Newton 1704). To these musical correspondences Palamidessi added the spiritual ones of Lacuria (Lacuria 1899 [1844], 196). Palamidessi embraced them, lauding their “esoteric and christic” preparation. In the *Trattato di musica e melurgia archeosofica* we encounter a simplified version of the scheme of correspondences of Lacuria (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 45).

1	2	3	4	5–6	7
LIFE	LIBERTY	HARMONY	SANCTITY	WISDOM	JUSTICE
RED	ORANGE	YELLOW	GREEN	AZURE-INDIGO	VIOLET
Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol-La	Si

In Palamidessi’ scheme, references to the Three Persons of the Trinity, i. e., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which in Lacuria corresponded to the notes Do, Mi, and Sol respectively, are missing. Probably Palamidessi omitted such correspondences on purpose, to avoid interpretations contrary to his often stated doctrine of the “uncreated divine energies” or “divine lights.” They belong to the uncreated order of the emanations and do not participate in the uncreated divine essence, which refers only to the Persons of the Trinity.

To the correspondences of Lacuria, Palamidessi adds the correspondences “of the highest importance” between the notes, colors, and psychic centers of the inner Human Being (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 49).

PSYCHIC CENTER	COLOR	MUSICAL NOTE
1 <sup>st</sup> Basal Psychic Center	Red	Do
2 <sup>nd</sup> Genital Psychic Center	Orange	Re
3 <sup>rd</sup> Omphalic Psychic Center	Yellow	Mi
4 <sup>th</sup> Cardiac Psychic Center	Green	Fa
5 <sup>th</sup> Throat Psychic Center	Blue	Sol
6 <sup>th</sup> Frontal Psychic Center	Indigo	La
7 <sup>th</sup> Coronal Psychic Center	Violet	Si

These correspondences are fundamental for awakening the seven psychic centers which live latent in humans (Corradetti and Lullo 2020). When a note is played, it “determines a resonance” with these force centers. The awakening can thus be achieved through the use of appropriate melodies, which according to the Archeosophical principles are most suitable for each case. In the end, musical action can be integrated with pictorial action, through the use of colors corresponding to each note and center (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 49).

Within this context, the use of Archeosophical modes and artistic and compositional capacity is fundamental. For Palamidessi, the correspondences cannot be utilized in a mechanical form detached from a process of artistic elaboration. The key of the correspondences should be utilized for the choice of the most appropriate Archeosophical mode, with tonic or dominant notes, which can be the beginning of an artistic process.

Although there is a psychological correspondence to the psycho-acoustic influence of the notes, nevertheless the notes, dominant and tonic, of the respective psychic center, have to be listened to as inserted in a chord and a melody (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 54).

For this purpose, the symbolic meanings of the seven musical notes are widened, and applied to their use of tonic and dominant in Archeosophical modes. A set of psychic, somatic, intellective, moral, and mystic correspondences should guide the composer in the choice of the most appropriate musical mode, and in the correct utilization of the centers of gravity of the melody.

DO: expression of heat and force. Factor of vitality. Activates the blood circulation and stimulates the functionality of the digestive tracts. Heals from rheumatism. Of use against bronchitis, sexual impotence, and paralysis. Stimulates the skin. Stimulates the active devotion, the true giving of oneself, and therefore the sacrifice.

TONIC OR DOMINANT IN RE: To dominate pride, ambition.

TONIC OR DOMINANT IN FA: Total regeneration of the consciousness, charity, and hope. If humans are not born anew, they cannot see the Kingdom of Heavens. Exhortation to follow the healthy Christian doctrine. Musicality that helps the neophytes (small plants) to gain their victory over the passions. Wisdom. Courtesy. Tolerance. Sympathy.

TONIC OR DOMINANT IN LA: Love for Sapience.

TONIC OR DOMINANT IN SOL: Truth and wisdom. Initiation to the truth of the eternal life. Chastity, fidelity, loyalty, spiritual elevation. Transmutation of the consciousness. Divine truth. Immortality. Mission to initiate humans to the truth of the

eternal life. Meeting with the Holy Spirit. Religious thought, emotional feelings for the celestial things.

TONIC AND DOMINANT IN MI: Triumph of the Revelation and of the divine love. Syntony with the Verb, the Christ, the spiritual Sun. Lets one discover the Light of the Humans. The Science of God. Love and Wisdom of God, food and drink of the regenerated. Intellective power. Easy intellectual development.

TONIC OR DOMINANT IN SI: Passion and death so as to imitate the Redeemer. Stripping away of the human nature and re-dressing with that of God. Personal sacrifice in order to save the others so that it leads them to the Father through the Son. Aspiration to the martyrdom for the Christian faith and the call for this sacrifice. Mystic marriage with Christ through his metaphysical Church. Initiatic effort so as to transmute one's own nature while we are on this earth. Very elevated religious feelings (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 54–5).

### *Cosmogonic and Metaphysical Features of Archeosophical Music*

In the economy of the musical thought of Palamidessi, the cosmogonic aspect of music plays a crucial role. Music, as the preferred expression of the Creator Verb, is at the origin of the world's creation. For this, all the parts of the spiritual, psychic, and material creation rest on the “laws of the Octave or Musical Scales” (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 45).

The music is intimately linked to the creation of the world, in whatever way it has happened, because the foundation of the creation is the motion, and so is the sound. The Absolute has created the universe, that is, the material world, the mental world, the spiritual world, in short, that which exists, through the time, the space, and the causality. Between the Absolute and the Universe the time, the space, and the causality are interposed, which constitute the essence itself of the metaphysical sound (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 21).

Using a terminology reminiscent in many points of the doctrine of Gurdjieff, mediated by Pyotr Demianovich Ouspenskii (1878–1947), Palamidessi identifies a “ray of the Creation” as a projection of life having its center in the Absolute, which is the basis of the “law of the Cosmic Octave.” The “Great Cosmic Octave,” activated by the Verb, is the ray of the creation that emanates from the mind of the Absolute, and to which the initiate has to tune in (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 35).

More specifically, Palamidessi distinguishes between three typologies of octaves belonging to three distinct orders of existence: the human octave, also

called “psychic musical octave,” from which it follows that the human soul “is a number in movement,” an “Aeolian harp which sings under the breath of the Spirit of God;” the “Great Cosmic Octave,” which gave origin to the creation and is activated by the Verb; and, lastly, the “Divine Octave,” related to the inner life of God (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 41).

The human person in her interiority is a musical octave that, in its capacity of resonating with the Cosmic Octave tuned to the Divine Octave, can participate in the inner life of God (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 41).

For Palamidessi, when they are on their way to the psychic musical octave, humans are as discontinuous as the musical spectrum made of tones and semitones, where the semitones represent deviations that divert from the chosen path. Palamidessi specifies that semitones can be either “of perdition” or “salvific.” In the same way, the musical octaves can be either “descendants” or “ascendants.” In the latter case, the scale is called the “Ladder of Paradise,” and identifies a path allowing human souls to ascend to the Creator. There is an obvious, if implicit, reference to Church Father John Climacus (579–649).

Humans have in themselves the salvific or perdition semitones. It is worthwhile to reflect on the question of the natural semitones MI-FA and SI-DO because the aspirant Archeosopher must create a melody agreeable to the Creator. The awareness of the discontinuity and of the deviation of the forces is a providential phenomenon, whose purpose is keeping the individuals vigilant over themselves so as to overcome the temptations of taking deviant paths, which may be fascinating but make us into cacophonies (disagreeable sounds combined in simultaneity or succession), which in turn make us into outcasts in the presence of God (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975c], 41).

### *Conclusions*

Although reference texts on Archeosophical music are few and have been published in a partially incomplete posthumous form, they are nevertheless sufficient to provide clear guidelines which, while taking up some traditional canons of the Gregorian chant, transcend them at a technical level, and enliven them at a symbolic and melurgical level. The result is a type of music that is both traditional and experimental at the same time. It reinterprets traditional canons in an original way and therefore, in its sonic results, is difficult to assimilate into previous musical traditions.

A clear example of the Archeosophical musical style can be found in the *Melodia in Re* by Palamidessi himself. Unfortunately, it is with sadness that we must acknowledge the loss of the orchestral composition of Palamidessi, *Nella casa del Padre*. We have multiple and independent accounts that it existed, but it was not found either in the Benassai nor in the Riva archives.

Nevertheless, the fact that under the guidance of Alessandro Benassai, composer and conductor of the Coro Santa Cecilia di Firenze, the Accademia Musicale Archeosofica has managed to give continuity to its courses and hold numerous national and international events for more than twenty years, is a significant sign of the original content of the “Archeosophical melurgy” created by Palamidessi that we have shortly presented in this article.

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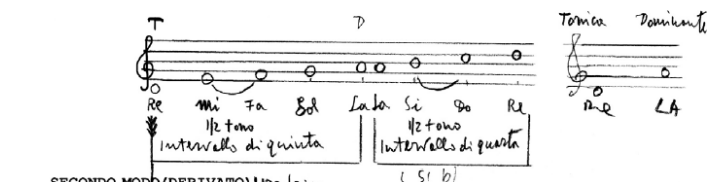
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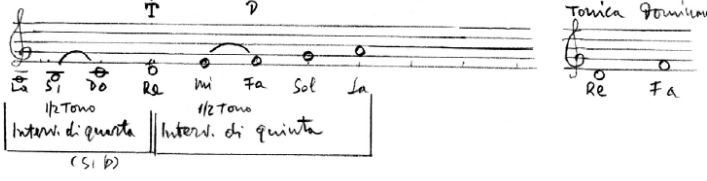
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ANNEX A

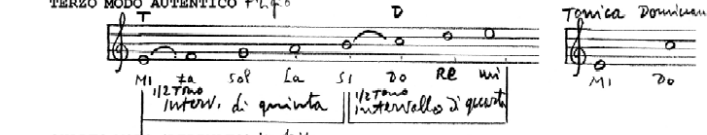
PRIMO MODO AUTENTICO *Dorian*



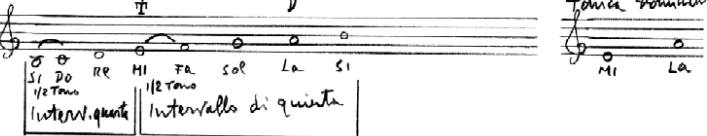
SECONDO MODO (DERIVATO) *Dorian*



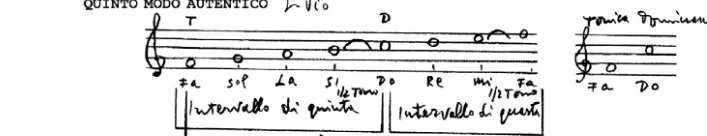
TERZO MODO AUTENTICO *Frigio*



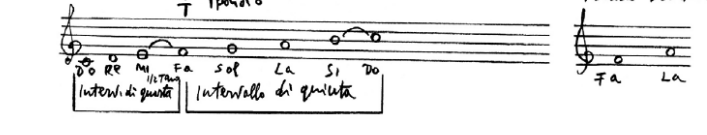
QUARTO MODO (DERIVATO) *Frigio*



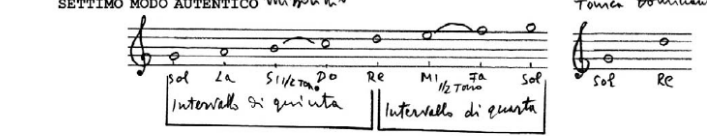
QUINTO MODO AUTENTICO *Lidio*



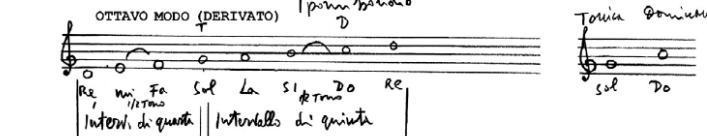
SESTO MODO (DERIVATO) *Lidio*



SETTIMO MODO AUTENTICO *Misolidio*



OTTAVO MODO (DERIVATO) *Misolidio*



Notes on Palamidessi's eight Archeosophical modes (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], I, 38-9).

ANNEX B



Example of chironomic line realized by Palamidessi (Palamidessi n.d. [post-1975b], II, 23).