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# Encountering Greek American Soundscapes

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## Encountering Greek American Soundscapes

**Anthony Shay**

For this chapter I will look at Greek American music making through the eyes of a non-Greek, my younger self, who enjoyed and sought out this musical tradition for over fifty years, primarily as a folk dance enthusiast. For the international recreational dancer of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, Greek music has rich melodic lines and many different rhythmic patterns (5/8; 7/8; 9/8, etc.) that attracted many individuals of Anglo American background like me to learn these dances, especially in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s when recreational and performance folk dance constituted a major leisure-time activity for hundreds of thousands of mainstream Americans who had no ethnic roots, but longed for the warmth and conviviality to be found in Greek dance events. (Shay 2008) Another attraction for the dancer, especially in certain Greek American events like church-sponsored festivals and in the *taverna*, the Greek equivalent of a night club, is that conviviality rules and as such the music and dance is accompanied by delicious food, drink, engaging light-hearted conversation, compelling music, and appealing dances—a far cry from the bland American popular music and food with which I grew up. (See Shay 2002)

When searching for where Greek Americans and, to a lesser extent non-Greeks, encounter Greek music in America, one must look first into the contexts in which Greeks listened to music, sang, played musical instruments, and danced in the home country, and then to look at patterns of Greek immigration into the United States. These two factors determine the types of music one can encounter in the several different contexts in the new country, who is playing or singing each of the

musical genres and the attitudes that people have toward them, and, finally, who is forming the audience in each context. Much of this changed over time, and yet, some musical and dance practices remained the same and many individuals derive comfort from the familiar performance genres and locales.

When people leave their homes for an unknown and an unfamiliar destination, for many of the immigrant populations, especially in the beginning of their arrival to the new land, there exists a great need to surround themselves with the familiar, and this was true for the Greeks who came to America, a place that could turn hostile to early immigrants. (See Shay 2006, 94-95) This is especially true for the many genres of music and dance because of their potential for nostalgic connections with the homeland, and which can bring fond memories of the life in the old country, because they are generally associated with happy occasions that broke up the ceaseless toil that characterized Greek village life, and, thus, music and dance can bring comfort and solace in a new environment in special way tied to warm memories. For later generations, music and dance provided, and continues to provide a means of constructing their identity as Greek Americans, and that continues even today in the context of formal folk dance contexts, as I will describe later.

### **Music in Greece**

There exists in Greece three basic types of music: church music of Byzantine origin, two large types of folk music: mainland and island, and urban music, which was largely developed by the sophisticated Greek population of Athens, Piraeus, Izmir (Smyrna) and Istanbul. Two strains of immigrants brought this music both to

Greece after the population exchanges between Greece and Turkey in 1922-23, while some musicians from those locations bypassed Greece, where work was scarce, and came directly to the United States.

### **Greek Church Music**

Most Greeks and Greek Americans hear Byzantine ecclesiastical music for masses, and for special ceremonies like marriages throughout their lives. This musical genre is exclusively vocal. Unlike the Latin church, Greek Orthodox musical practice never included instrumental music. This is true both in Greece and in America where I first heard this enchanting music echoing in the large Saint Sophia cathedral in central Los Angeles in the early 1950s while attending a mass with my friend Efstathios Gourgouris. That music is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it certainly is an important part of the Greek American soundscape, as it is in Greece.

### **Greek Folk Music**

As I have noted elsewhere (2006), immigration patterns for many ethnic and national groups determines which musical genres are brought to the New World. Typically, most Greek immigrants in the beginning of the heaviest period of Greek immigration were men, sometimes 90 – 95% of Greek immigrants. (Hecker and Fenton 1978; Jones 1990) Many of them came to make enough money to buy land and then return home to Greece to marry and raise a family. Frequently, individual immigrants, or, later families, would arrive from different villages. This meant that most of the music that was regionally or locally specific would no longer be performed in the New World because the individuals would have no one to dance with, to sing with, or find instrumentalists who knew the regional or local repertoire

with which they were familiar. A sufficient number of Cretans and Cypriots came to certain urban locations in America and Canada and were exceptions to the above statement in that they continued to practice dances from those two locations in some cities in the New World where they founded lodges and clubs.

In Greek villages prior to World War II, when roads were few and poor, many communities lived in extreme isolation. "Before extensive road-building programs after World War II, treacherous, mountainous terrain on the mainland separated regions and often nearby villages. Unpredictable seas isolated Greece's fourteen hundred islands." (Cowan 2000, 2007). This isolation resulted in the creation of more than 80 specific regional music and dance styles throughout the islands and mainland of Greece, the number provided by Alkis Raftis, the President of the Dora Stratou Greek Folk Dances Theatre. (1998, 296). In these regions local musicians, either Greeks or Roma played for the *panigyria*, the local festivals, weddings, or for market days. They played a variety of local instruments, the most popular and widespread are described by Alkis Raftis (1987) and Cowan (2000). <sup>1</sup> (See Cowan 2000 for the musical varieties, and Petrides (1975a and c) and Holden and Vouras (1965) for the many types of regional folk dances of the Greek mainland and islands with instructions for how to perform them)

The multitude of music and dance styles found in these 80 regions, was, for the most part, with the exceptions noted above, not brought to the United States and Canada because the individuals who performed them were often single individuals or families who were often the only persons from that specific region. Instead, once they reached the United States, they learned the four or five dances that the majority

of Greek Americans performed: the syrto, the kalamatiano, the tsamiko, and the hasapiko, the so-called panhellenic dances. **2** Most regional, locally specific, music and dance forms remained in Greece. **3** Many Greeks, both those who immigrated to cities within Greece or abroad, tried to return to the natal villages of their families, especially on the village's patron saint's day, to bathe and breathe in the familiar dances and music of their ancestors. Alkis Raftis notes, "Emigrant villagers will travel for hours or even days to attend their village feast, expatriates from Canada, Australia, the United States and other far-flung corners of the globe delight in bringing their families to this event" (1987, 40). Music and dance, and their ties to the natal village continue to hold deep meaning for Greeks.

The salience of dance, and its deep meaning that resonates in Greek rural life, is underscored by Cowan's description: "dancing at festive events remains a highly structured social practice, whose rules vary from one locality to another. In addition to striving for an exuberant high (*kefi*), which comes from copious wine and conviviality, people 'perform' gender, class, political, and regional identities, negotiate power relations, and express solidarity or rivalry, with kin, neighbors, and friends" (2000, 1017). Cowan's magisterial study of dancing events in Northern Greece amply demonstrates her way of describing the many ways in which dancing is entwined in Greek life and constitutes a vehicle for identity construction.

If these dances and musical traditions were specific to a small area, this meant that the traditional instruments associated with these regional styles—a wide variety of bagpipes, double-reed *zournas*, *lyra*, and other string instruments, and percussion instruments usually crafted by local instrument makers-- generally

remained behind as well. The musicians of these traditions generally did not immigrate. In Greece, there were local amateur musicians who, according to ethnomusicologist Sotirios Chianis “held a high social position within their respective villages” (1982, 27). He also mentions local professional musicians, also described by Raftis, who study with older local professional musicians to attain that status. Raftis points that even professional musicians had to maintain a second trade like blacksmith to keep alive. Raftis differs from Chianis in his assessment of the social status of local music and notes that village parents, in general, did not want their sons to become musicians, especially since they were considered on a par with the lowest social figures in rural life: the Roma (gypsy) professional musicians. 4 He observes: “Parents often actively dissuade or even violently prevent their son from learning an instrument, even when there are other musicians in the family. To play an instrument for one’s own amusement is a waste of time, to play for money at feasts and ceremonies is considered the work of inferiors” (1987, 63). 5

As has been noted, many urban people in Greece can still dance because dance is taught in the schools. (Blau et al, 2002, 83) In addition, as Kevin Dawe reminds us, people often return to past styles of music and dance. This often originates in attempts to recapture a golden age that never existed, in a village that they would never think of living in again. “Interest in regional music seems to have been given renewed profile as the legacy of a conscious and serious exploration of roots by younger musicians and scholars in Greece during the 1980s” (2007, 177). Dawe thinks that such a music revival might have originated “as a consequence of neo-nationalism, nostalgia, novelty-seeking and exoticism” (ibid). This time period

coincides with the founding of the Greek Orthodox Youth Folk Dance Festival organization in the United States in the mid-1970s. Music and dance can serve as a vehicle for identity construction, and the current popularity in regional folk music, both in Greece and in North America, point in that direction for both Greeks, and non-Greeks who are fascinated with the rich music and dance traditions of Greece. Dawe makes one final point that gives hope: “the younger generation in Greece—many of whom are now growing up in a cosmopolitan urban-based culture—are much more accepting of the cultural affinities that connect the Balkan nations and are rather tired of the politicking that divides the region” (ibid). In addition, one must note that modern classical and jazz musicians often turn to folk music for inspiration for their new compositions.

### **Urban Music in Greece**

Unlike specific local and regional rural music, many practitioners of urban musical styles appeared in large cities with large Greek populations. Accounts vary, as do terminologies, that track the development of urban music in Greece and the Greeks that lived in the Aegean coastal cities of the Ottoman Empire, that has consequences for the soundscapes encountered in American and Canadian cities. Gail Horst-Warhaft notes, “We may argue about origins and precise chronology, but we can broadly agree that the rebetika were popular with a fairly large audience of Greeks, most of whom were urban and not wealthy, from the early decades of the twentieth century until the early 1960s. . .” (2003, 172). She also notes that, like regional folk music of Greece, rebetika music experienced a revival in the 1970s, and became popular with a new audience, including many tourists and interested foreigners.

(ibid) We must keep this in mind because music revivals contribute to the preservation and development of music traditions like rebetika (sometimes rembetika, both are correct).

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, there were two types of nightclubs in Athens, and other Greek urban centers in the Ottoman Empire, especially Izmir (Smyrna) and Istanbul: the *café chantant* and the *café aman*. The former, modeled on the French *café*, featured music that was clearly largely western, attracted western-facing intellectuals. The *café chantant* need not detain us in our discussion of traditional Greek music.

The *café aman*, however, became a phenomenon that appeared not only in Greece, but early in the United States among Greek immigrants. Sotirios Chianis notes that, “As early as 1910 the *café-aman* and its strong traditions sprang up in numerous large urban areas such as New York City, Boston, San Francisco, Baltimore, and Chicago . . . Mirroring the *café-aman* tradition in Greece, musicians in America would perform the *Smyrneika* (Smyrnan) tradition. . . (1982, 3). That tradition was named for the frequent refrain “aman” (which can be roughly translated is “woe is me” found in the vocal type the *amanethes*, a highly melismatic type of formalized musical lament. The typical instruments of the *café-aman*, according to Gail Holst-Warhaft, a leading authority on Greek rebetika, were “the violin, santouri, cello, cymbalum and ‘ud and women singers seem to have been at least as popular as men” (1998, 115, see also the pictures and descriptions of the instruments in Holst 2006). This latter observation is pertinent because Greek instrumental music is very gendered, played almost exclusively by male musicians,

both in rural and urban contexts. **6** I have observed in the early 1950s in the tavernas that a woman vocalist might play the tambourine, or, finger cymbals for dancing the tsiftetelli. **7**

As a direct result of the catastrophic population exchange in which a million and a half Greeks were exchanged for the Muslim population that had lived in Greece throughout 1922-23, musical style known as *Smyrneika* (from Smyrna/Izmir) was brought to Greece by professional musicians who quickly established night clubs known as rebetika. This was the music of the down-and-outers and socially disenfranchised: “Originating in the tavernas and coffeehouses frequented by sailors, peddlers, the jobless, and petty criminals, *rebetika* lyrics lament frustrated loves, idealize bravado, and reject bourgeois values. . . (Raftis 1998, 298). **8** This was the haunt of the *manges* (tough guys) who displayed their hypermasculine bravado in music and dance to confront an uncaring world in which poverty and misery was the lot of the victims of the population exchange and plunged Greece into an economic downturn that was exacerbated by the Great Depression. (See Shay 2002)

This development of the café aman and the rebetika was extremely important because it was this musical tradition, in a more congenial environment in the United States that became established in North America in the taverna, and dominated popular (*laika*) music among generations of Greek Americans. In their new environment in the shantytowns of Athens these displaced musicians from the former Ottoman Empire quickly established themselves. “The musicians among the refugees did not move into a musical vacuum, but they brought with them a level of

professional skill unusual on the mainland. . . there was a revival of oriental, or what would retrospectively be designated, ‘Smyrna-style’ music” (Holst-Warhaft 1998, 115). Such revivals occurred throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (For a detailed account of dancing in the rebetika see Cowan 1990; Holst-Warhaft 1998; Petrides 1975b; Shay 2016)

In the 1930s in Piraeus, the seaport of Athens, a new style of rebetika music began with lyrics that celebrated the underworld, hashish, and hard-hearted, betraying women, this latter topic also a major feature of tango, jazz and blues, and flamenco lyrics, other genres of music and dance that developed in similar environments. As Joseph Graziosi notes, “During the 1930s, under the influence of the composer and performer Markos Vamvakaris, the bouzouki came out of the prisons and hashish dens and became the accepted instrument of the *taverna*-style nightclub” (1982, 20). The style of singing was raspier, and became increasingly less oriental. As time passed, “Composers increasingly replaced Turkish modes, known in Greece as *dhromi* (roads), with the diatonic major and minor scales of European popular music . . . [the oriental] became a conventionalized ‘orientalism’ . . . (Cowan 2000, 1020). This was the music that I first encountered in the mid 1950s before the fame of *Zorba the Greek* and *Never on Sunday* popularized rebetika music for both Greeks, and for the first time in larger numbers, non Greeks.

The bouzouki, a mandolin-like relative of the *baghlama*, a stringed instrument popular in the café-aman, was largely electrified by the time I encountered it in the early 1950s in the Greek Village on Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles, and it provided the distinct sounds that became for the world the

quintessential Greek sounds heard in *Never on Sunday* (1960. Music by Manos Hatzidakis) and *Zorba, the Greek* (1964. music by Mikis Theodorakis), which became the driving force for many middle class Greeks as well as many foreigners to emulate the machismo, the perceived unsuppressed joy of life and freedom that the characters in these films represented for many middle class people. As Jane Cowan observes: “These characters’ penchant for abandoning themselves to song and dance signals their otherness, for films portray Greeks as an emotional people who have retained a spontaneity and naturalness that people in more industrialized societies have lost” (2000, 1007). One must not underestimate this film music, and the many songs and dances in that style, in the history of rebetika and taverna. Even in mid 2015, when I revisited Athens, in the midst of the economic crisis that struck Greece, the nightclubs and tavernas that provided the venue in which people could pursue the Zorba image were still flourishing.

In discussing Greek music in any context, there has been an unfortunate scholarly avoidance by some scholars to come to grips with the Turkish/Ottoman origins of music or dance. Instead they attempt to search for Ancient Greek or Byzantine elements. While there may well be Byzantine elements in Greek folk and urban music, most observers, especially non-Greeks, find the music is characterized by what Holst-Warhaft (following Nikos Kazantzakis) terms, “oriental bowels” (1998, 113). Ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl also notes that while Greek music may have ancient Greek elements, “Greek folk music seems to show the influences of centuries of Turkish and Muslim occupation” (1990, 100). And Jane Cowan adds, “. . . classifying Greek music as a branch of Near and Middle Eastern music makes

common sense” (2000, 1008). This is especially true of the music of the *café-aman*, which utilizes the Turkish *maqam* system of modes and tonal intervals that feature microtones. Greek *café-aman* musicians had a common repertoire with Turkish, Armenian, and Jewish musicians in Smyrna (Izmir) and Istanbul, and several of the records they recorded had both Turkish and Greek versions. (Horst-Warhaft 2003, 172). Holst-Warhaft notes that the early music that preceded the *rebetika* the more oriental features “. . . seems gradually to have died out” (1998, 113).

In Athens and other large Greek cities, where people from all different parts of Greece, largely immigrants from the countryside, congregate several types of music are generally available for them. Alkis Raftis notes that, “In general, Greeks distinguish between *bouzouki tavernas* with *rebetiko* music, *clarinet tavernas* with traditional music from the mainland, and *violin tavernas* with music from the islands and the coasts” (1998, 299).

It is the *rebetika/laika* music that later dominated the Greek American *taverna*, while the clarinet and *santouri* ensemble could be heard in family, church-related events that I experienced in Los Angeles. As Holst-Warhaft points out: “. . . the characteristic instrumentation, rhythms and vocal quality of the *rebetika* have remained intrinsic to Greek popular music for approximately seventy years, and the revival of older style *rebetika* that began in in the 1970s is still going on” (1998, 125) The sounds and rhythms of Greek music can still be heard in the New Age music of Greek composer and musician Yanni (Yannis Chrisomallis) in huge blockbuster concerts with a full symphony orchestra in historical sites the world over, including his award-winning concert appearance at the Acropolis.

## **An Eager Young American Encounters Greek Music**

Fifty years after my first encounters with Greek music, I can still remember the excitement of the music. I heard two types of urban music in Los Angeles, and the context of the playing largely determined the types of dances that one saw. The first context was the public dances that were a feature of the family- and church-oriented events such as picnics. Among the earliest memories I have, is listening to the amazing virtuoso playing of Sotirios (Sam) Chianis on the santouri (a trapezoid shaped hammered dulcimer, probably Persian, via the Ottoman Empire, in origin, although the Greek version is much larger), and the distinctive oriental sound of the clarinet, as well as other instruments like the lauto (a kind of lute), and the violin. They played frequently for Greek social events. In this family-oriented context, one could see and dance the *syrtó*, the *tsamiko*, the *hasapiko*, and the *kalamatiano*, all group dances that are performed in semi circles with a leader. These were the dances that were suited to events, often called panagyri, that celebrated patron saints' days. These large events were held out-of-doors, often in a park, with large numbers of people participating in the dancing.

When one describes the instruments that one can hear in any of these contexts, I name a range of instruments that might be found. This does not mean that every group of musicians played the same instruments, but rather sometimes new members with new instruments would join an orchestra providing a range of sounds.

The other context in which I encountered Greek music was in the taverna, a nightclub on Hollywood Boulevard, the Greek Village was my first experience. Here

one encountered a very different crowd: except for a belly dancer and vocalist, all of the clientele were men and here the bouzouki (sometimes) electrified string instrument, often a clarinet, and other string instruments, the female vocalist played the tambourine (*defi*) and here the dances were the *zeibekiko*, a solo men's dance, the slow (*vari*) *hasapiko*, two or more men holding shoulders, and sometimes a *tsiftetelli* (a kind of belly dance performed by both men and women). Jane Cowan, in her study of dancing in Northern Greece, has vividly described the dangers attached to performing the *tsiftetelli* in the wrong context, especially for women. (1990) These dances were not considered suitable for public family social events, and instead of the sunshine of the outdoor events, these took place in the dimly lighted dance floors of the early tavernas.

Because of the many tavernas I have danced in for over fifty years all over the United States—Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, Washington, DC--, they all looked alike in many ways, or at least blur in my memory. The Greek Village did not have much décor, it was dimly lighted, whereas other later tavernas that I experienced decked the stage and walls and wooden arbors with plastic grape vines, glittery band stands, paintings of scenes from Greece, colorful table cloths, either in red and white checks or Greek key designs, and brighter lighting as befitted a space welcoming families and women patrons. They all, simple or fancy, had a stage or playing area for the orchestra, a dancing space, and tables and chairs for the patrons. In these later incarnations, it was not unusual for the waiters to dance.

The Greek Village, the Athenian Gardens, and, less-well-known to the general population, the Intersection, which catered to lovers of Greek folk and taverna dancing (as well as Balkan and Israeli dancing) were places that I frequented over many years. The Greek Village was my earliest hangout, and I probably should not have been there since I was very much under age in my late teens, but fortunately I never requested a drink. I was there for the music and the dancing, which was often performed by Greek sailors who made their way up to Hollywood from the docks of San Pedro. It was located on Hollywood Boulevard, provided a relatively comfortable space, and in the mid and late 1950s, it was strictly a male hangout that provided the recent Greek immigrants the comfort of soulful music and the Greek language; the only females that I recall were the vocalist who sat on the stage with the orchestra, sang and played the tambourine (*defi*). The other female, most often not a Greek, was the belly dancer. I was often friends with these women, like Jamila Salimpour, whom I knew from my student days at Los Angeles City College. Unlike the rebetika and tavernas of Greece, these belly dancers danced Egyptian-style cabaret belly dance rather than the tsifteteli. The *bouzoukia*, the bouzouki-dominated orchestra, featured male singers as well as female vocalists.

The Athenian Gardens, which came later, after the fame of the *Never on Sunday* and *Zorba the Greek*, which popularized Greek dancing and music, flourished into the 1990s, the last that I know of it. The bouzouki orchestra catered to the middle-class Greek American and non-Greek audiences, now, in contrast to the Greek Village, including many women, with many renditions of the *syrtaki*, the dance made famous by the Zorba film. The syrtaki morphed from other slow Greek dance

forms and “. . .the music speeds up so that the rebetika rhythm of hasapiko becomes a hasposerviko [hasapiko in the Serbian, (fast), style] and the syrtaki is born” (Holst-Warhaft 1998 111), and the Athenian Gardens very much catered to those men who wanted to act out their inner-Zorba. Food and conviviality were very much an attraction to the Athenian Garden. **9**

A final source of listening was the large number of phonograph recordings of Greek music that I acquired or were given to me as gifts. Beginning in my late teens as a recreational folk dance enthusiast, I heard Greek music on records several times a week. Some of these I purchased at the folk dance shops that sold Greek folk dance and song records. I was especially grateful for a wonderful retrospective of early café-aman and rebetika singer Rosa Eskenazi that my friend, dance scholar, and tsifteteli dancer extraordinaire Stavros Stavrou Karayanni gave to me as a gift. I still treasure and frequently listen to the soulful songs of Stelios Kazantzides that I have collected over the years. Finally, during my career as a choreographer I prepared several Greek folk and urban dances for the companies that I directed, the Aman Folk Ensemble and the Avaz International Dance Theatre that remain precious memories.

## **Notes**

1. There is an excellent small museum of traditional musical instruments of Greece located in the Plaka district of Athens.
2. Raftis vigorously refutes the notion of panhellenic dances: “. . . [T]here is the conviction that there exist panhellenic dances. . . Nowadays, however, there is no excuse for perpetuating this misconception of the so-called “panhellenic” dances for

these are simply the dances of 'Old Greece' [the first regions that formed the independent Kingdom of Greece after its liberation from the Ottoman Empire] which have been transplanted by civil servants and government officials into those regions liberated later" (1987, 37). School officials introduced them into the school curriculum in order to foster a national, as opposed to local, identity. This practice continues. These were the dances that the Greeks in America danced almost exclusively until the late 1970s, and in social settings they continue to be popular.

3. Athan Karras, who taught Greek dances, recalled how he had been "thrown out of the church by the priest" for attempting to teach other than the so-called panhellenic dances. (personal interview April 27, 2000). This situation changed in the years following the founding of the Greek Orthodox Youth Folk Dance Festival (FDF), in which young people in different age cohorts prepare costumes and dances to win prizes. As language skills declined among succeeding generations of young Greek Americans, preparing staged folk dances, offering prizes to the best group became a vehicle for the Greek Orthodox Church to keep young people close to the Church and encouraged marriages among the young people in the older categories. Each year the various groups choose a different area of Greece to represent, which meant that the choreographer and those preparing the costumes needed to find information, since neither they nor their families came from these regions. Caterina Pizantias observes, "When we Greeks go 'out' into the 'multicultural' we take with us dances from places in Greece we know little about . . ." (1996, 41). These groups frequently turn to the Dora Stratou Greek Folk Dances Theatre for help in their research (Alkis Raftis, personal interview. February 21, 2000) While most Greek

Americans enjoy the festivals, not all individuals were enthusiastic. Sociologist Caterina Pizanias observes: “What mattered was the performance event, the daughters staying in the fold. . . All that was needed were mechanical execution of steps and spectacular costumes. All they [Greek Canadians] could see was the most spectacular tourist summer show in Athens was Dora Stratou’s, and the most spectacular amateur dance troupe at the Heritage Festival was ours—the most Stratou-like one” (1996, 17). (See also Bloland 1994; Shay 2006, 91-105) When dance becomes competition, it frequently departs, often rapidly, from the original forms in seeking spectacular elements with which to impress the judges and the audience, as Pizanias notes.

4. For a detailed description and analysis of the Roma musicians, and their social status in Greece see Blau, Keil, and Keil, and Feld. 2002. They note that the Roma “had no strategy for removing the stigma from their ‘ethnicity’” (2002, 144). They sum up, “. . . Roma are different, somewhat less than Greek as citizens and somewhat more than Greek as musicians” (2002, 95). (See also Papakostas 2008)

5. One can encounter a similar situation in Iran. Unless a member of a musical family, it is not unknown for a parent to disown a child for becoming a *motreb* (public entertainer) and several Iranians have related to me experiences of parents destroying musical instruments to prevent them from playing. (See Shay 2014, 23)

6. For the gendered aspect of Greek music and dance see Cowan 2000; Horst-Warhaft 1998 and 2003; Shand 1998; Shay 2016.

7. In Greece, the highly popular *tsifteteli* is problematic. Shand notes, “Despite its overwhelming popularity, tsifte-teli is problematic for many Greeks, along lines of

identity, gender and the body” (1998, 127). The dance is considered as Turkish, its movements provocative, and many of the contexts for performances can be considered transgressive as Cowan (1990) vividly describes. (See also Karayanni 2004) It is also associated with the Roma, who are sometimes professional belly dancers, which adds to how it is evaluated. Blau et al note that the Roma consider the dance their own: “In Jumaya [Greek Macedonia] Roma call the tsiftetelli dance ‘our bread,’ ‘ours,’ or ‘our dance,’ expressing their love for it” (2002, 292, n. 14). The Roma in Turkey constitute the primary professional dancers of the *çiftetelli* (tsifteteli). The Roma of South Serbia, Kosovo and the Republic of Macedonia also perform the tsifteteli, which is called *čoček*. (See Silverman 2007) I would, however, question the notion of Blau et al that, “. . .all these so-called belly dances have their origins in the fertility rites of the primitive peoples of the Eastern Aegean” (ibid). Dance scholars have long abandoned the idea that ancient origins can be found for any dance genre—they are unknowable. That having been said, there existed professional dancers, usually of slave origins, in ancient Greece and Rome who performed erotic dances with articulations of the shoulders, torso, and hips, however they were not connected to fertility, but sex. (See Shay 2014)

8. See Holst 2006 for several samples of the lyrics, which she has provided in Greek and English in her highly authoritative account of the origins of the rebetika.

9. I double checked my memories with Mady Taylor and a dancer and dance scholar and teacher of Greek folk dances, and her memories of the Greek Village and the Athenian Gardens coincided with mine.

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