

***Musical tradition and change on the island of
Crete***

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the Ph. D in Ethnomusicology

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To My Mother, Mary

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Abstract

This thesis examines the changes in the traditional music of Crete that have transpired in the twentieth century, particularly since the 1950's.

Chapter One reviews the ethnomusicological, and to a lesser extent the anthropological, literature on the music of the island; it also presents a history of Cretan music over the centuries, with special reference to the impact of the long Turkish occupation. In addition, it describes what Cretan music is consisted of and also focuses on the *mantinades*, the musical instruments associated with the Cretan tradition and dance. Chapter Two discusses the particular difficulties encountered by the researcher in conducting fieldwork in Crete. It highlights issues such as ethnomusicology “at home”, pre-fieldwork and fieldwork period. Chapter Three deals with the nature and structure of musical *glendia* events which are of central importance in the musical life of the island. It also considers the ethnographer's practice of learning to perform Cretan dances as a research technique in ethnomusicology. Chapter Four surveys the music profession in Crete, and the networks of Cretan musicians. Chapter Five examines the complexities of how Cretans understand the concept of “tradition” with respect to current music performance in Crete and the new genres that have emerged. Chapter Six provides the conclusions to the research.

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Manolis Alexakis, another musician with whom I interacted considerably during my long stays in Crete, is a close friend of my cousin’s. A highly extrovert person, he was always ready to assist me. It was to his *lyra* performances that I attended more than those of any other performer in Crete and he always reserved a front table for me to sit at.

The performer Loudovikos of Anoyia, introduced me to the poetic and the uniquely “romantic” side of Cretan life. His extensive stories on diverse subjects underscored how the present and the past interconnect.

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My appreciation also to Vangelis Vardakis, a violin player coming from eastern Crete, who is the most ardent promoter of the “traditional” music of Crete devoted to the belief that “if we [Cretans] do not safeguard our tradition, no-one will care about it. Let’s do our best to keep it us untouched as possible”.

Zacharis Spyridakis (leader of the *Palaina Seferia* ensemble), Iakovos Paterakis (*lyra* player) and Dimitris Apostolakis (leader of the *Chainides* ensemble), three of the

most well-known *lyra* players not only in Crete but elsewhere in Greece, gave me valuable information on how the music system works in contemporary society and how progressive they consider themselves to be in the Cretan music pantheon.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Research Objectives

This thesis aims to show the changes in the Cretan music scene over the last fifty years and highlight the rapid transformations, as far as the music is concerned, in the last two decades. My purpose is to depict how Cretan music is in a state of perpetual metamorphosis, what music genres have recently emerged, and how contemporary Cretans produce discourses about music they take to be their own.

It is a fact that Crete carries one of the most active and vibrant traditions found in Europe today. This is because it has its own unique “character” in every aspect of life, including music. Besides, most Greeks are aware of Crete’s special music idiom. The evidence that local music still plays an important role in the daily life of the Cretans is associated with their strong cultural identity. This is why, in most of their cultural events, Cretans get entertained almost exclusively with Cretan music.

But what is Cretan music and how is it “shaped” today? Is it still performed as it used to be in the past? Are there any crucial changes that have altered its character? Most Cretan performers try to produce new sounds based on the tradition of Crete. What is called “tradition” in Crete and how do Cretans perceive it? How do they understand it or use the word tradition? To what extent has music kept its authenticity in the name of tradition, and what are the parameters that have alienated its “purity” at some point? In addition, is Cretan music what most Greeks simply understand as “the artifact of Crete”, or is it something not as superficial as that? What are the complexities that make it “good” or “bad” for the locals and how is Cretan music understood by the outsiders? Does contemporary music market direct the norms on specific Cretan music genres within the broader context of a so-called postmodern culture? Finally, towards which direction is Cretan music led? Is it moving away from the tradition or is it deeply

grounded in the originalities of the ancestors and goes back and forth inside the borderlines of the practice of traditional forms?

Crete was home to the most ancient civilization in Europe, and one of the oldest in the world, that of the Minoans. Ever since that time Crete has been at a crossroads where many different great civilizations have met, frequently clashed, and invariably exchanged influences. I will focus on different cultural and musical events, in order to illustrate the diversity of the styles and their progression over the years. Thus, after giving an overview of the Cretan music scene, my aim is to show that there are various genres represented by different kinds of artists, who in fact personify the transformation of contemporary Cretan music.

The writings of prominent scholars have been very helpful for me to understand the course of development in the music of Crete. However, key questions, concerning “change” and the modern music genres of Crete were not yet clearly answered. In fact, most of the bibliographical resources were focused on tradition and traditional songs and music as well as on other cultural aspects.

The function of Cretan music as far as the lyrics, the melodies, the instruments, the transcriptions, the dances, the history and other anthropological and musicological issues are concerned, have been thoroughly analyzed by various scholars. Hence, someone could have an overview of the cultural and musical profile of Crete. How about popular music styles though, such as the *skyladika* (dog songs)? The terms *skyladika*, *skylokritika* (Cretan dog songs), as well as the *entecho* (Cretan art music), for example, were often heard in discussions regarding Cretan music; terms that are not only widespread in Crete but elsewhere in Greece. The word tradition was missing from these invented music styles, but again tradition was the backbone for building these styles, a contradiction that makes someone think: Songs based on the tradition, songs which try to provide a new profile taken from older music forms. Something novel was floating in the air, something peculiar, nevertheless extremely interesting. There were music genres that the elders were making fun of or refused to discuss about, considering that “this is not Cretan music”, whereas younger people were enjoying and were having a good time when listening to them. One could often listen: That’s the spirit of Crete! What was really going on? What is in truth the spirit of modern Crete? Purity, tradition and authenticity or

novelties, amalgamations and freshness towards a new musical reality? An answer to that could possibly be a combination of all of them.

No one has researched these kinds of topics academically, so that he/she gives information about present-day in Crete. The lack of literature reviews on the specific topics regarding Crete made it harder to understand the concept of current issues. That is the reason of my insisting references to the past in order to familiarize the person who reads of how Cretan music used to be, where it was performed and by whom, its relationship with other musical genres and how various groups of urban society used to think about it. It is important for the reader to have a clear idea of how Cretan music is constructed in general. Unless one has a deep understanding of an entire music system he/she will appreciate the past/present contradiction.

Kevin Dawe's dissertation *Performance and Entrepreneurialism. The work of Professional Musicians in Crete*, (1994) gives an account of male musicians' activities in different parts of Crete and of how masculinity is unequivocally linked to music. The overriding notion of how manhood has come to symbolize the cultural identity of the island brought me to realize things that I was neither aware of nor had understood while visiting Crete as a young visitor. Nettl describes in detail his experience as an outsider trying to comprehend the whole concept of music. "It may be that I will never understand his music the way his countrymen do, and that the best I can expect is to be able to point out some interesting things they hadn't noticed" (Nettl 1983: 263).

Dawe's article "The engendered *lyra*: music, poetry and manhood in Crete" (1996) shows instances of musical performance that oppose the monolithic principles of manliness. He recounts that the male dominated field had been invaded by a female presence, a semi-professional *lyra* player called Aspasia Papadaki,¹ respected and unique

¹ Aspasia Papadaki: Born in 1932, in the village of Plaka, prefecture of Chania, Aspasia Papadaki is the last child of a family of four. She comes from a family with a strong presence in Cretan music: popular singers, viola, *lyra* and lute players. Aspasia is the first woman to play the *lyra* in the history of Cretan music. At the age of fourteen she made up her mind to devote herself to playing the *lyra*. She made her own instrument and in less than three months could already play several tunes. But her mother – her father had died – wanted to stop her from playing the *lyra* at all costs: "Only men play the *lyra*. It isn't suitable for a young girl to play the *lyra*," she would say. Seeing that Aspasia was not going to give up, the mother suggested exchanging the *lyra* with the violin. Aspasia was quick to learn the violin and went on playing it until 1959. In 1960, together with her brother Pavlos, she settled in Chania. Wanting to participate in a radio program they were told that they could only join in if she played the *lyra*, and not the violin. She grasped this opportunity and from then on she abandoned the violin for the *lyra*, which she continues to play always with her brother accompanying her on the lute. The song *Parakseno Pouli* "A strange bird" was her first recording in 1962 (a 45 rpm record). She has performed a great many dances, weddings and feasts, as well

in many ways. After her, several other female *lyra* players and singers appeared, such as Frideriki Bikaki, Tasoula, Soula Daskalomarkaki *et al.* It was Michael Herzfeld, who first fully demonstrated how definite social actions assign masculinity in Crete in his book, *The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan mountain village* (1985). Dawe goes further musically, presenting the meanings of being a musician and a man in Crete. He also explains the extent to which society's gender ideology affects its musical thinking and analyses how music reflects or influences inter-gender relations.

Dawe further emphasizes in "Bandleaders in Crete: musicians and entrepreneurs in a Greek island economy" (1998) how significant music is in a male dominated field, as well as the importance of music when identified with the bandleader's name. The author claims that musicians in Crete are "keepers of a tradition in a rapidly changing music industry" and explains how the transformation processes are made and how far they go. He also divides the professional musicians into three subcategories: "the musician as entrepreneur" or the "holding elite", "the 'club' musician" and "the recording specialist", by demonstrating the role that each category holds in the final outcome of Cretan music either recorded or played live. This statement does not entirely comply with my theory of the musician, taking into consideration my belief that all Cretan musicians are entrepreneurs (1990s) in the sense suggested by Dawe. He maintains that the musician "entrepreneur" is one who undertakes an enterprise with the chance of profit or loss and aligns himself with high risk impromptu performances of masculinity where reputations can be made or lost (Dawe 1998: 30).

In his article "Minotaurs or musonauts? 'World Music' and Cretan Music" (1999) Kevin Dawe makes use of the expression "Greek world music" and also uses terms such as "folk-rock" and "art-music". He highlights how Greek music has been in transition especially since the 1980s when older styles of music, which had "oriental" roots, were revived and popularized.

Dawe's recent study, "Roots Music in the Global Village: Cretan Ways of Dealing with the World at Large" exposes the impact and development of the local music industry, along with other observable events that have changed the contexts in which Cretan music is performed and understood. He refers to the "globalization" of Cretan culture and

as abroad. (Liner notes from the CD *Radio Broadcasts: Rare & Original Recordings 1960-70 from the Collection of the East Crete Radio Station*, Aerakis – The Cretan Music Workshop, December 1996).

comments on the development of a locally- based music industry which has become a unifying force in the construction and maintenance of a pan-Cretan musical identity (Dawe 2000: 53). Even villages famous for their musical prowess, such as Anoyia, in central Crete, have, despite their “local” idioms and the peculiarity of their lifestyle, attempted to enter the urban world by stepping through the threshold of modernity, and dealing with the world at large.

All cultural aspects that can be characterized as “deep dives” in a “shallow” world could not but affect musical instruments. Instruments do not only reveal our association with the wider world but also give us the means to draw different worlds together in a unique and vital way (Dawe 2005: 59). Dawe raises the question of whether or not instrument makers shape their creations in their own image and likeness in his article entitled “Symbolic and social transformation in the lute cultures of Crete: Music, technology and the body in a Mediterranean Society” (2005).

Equally enlightening is Kevin Dawe’s book *Music and Musicians in Crete: Performance and Ethnography in a Mediterranean Island Society* (2007), especially the chapter entitled “Themes in the analysis of *lyra* music improvisations: Observations on learning and teaching to perform”. This may well be the only academic account of “learning” and “teaching to perform” Cretan music, and is very helpful for those who use the experience of performance as a biographical datum for learning about a culture.

In his book *The Poetics of Manhood*, Michael Herzfeld throws light on the Greek field. The development of manhood in a pastoral mountain village shows how idealized manhood is understood in musical performance, through verbal and non-verbal skills as well as social actions in Crete, where the musicscape is an almost exclusively male domain. Herzfeld’s philosophy of how the “local” relates to the global is critical of a conception of Crete’s music industry, which has become part of local, national and international socio-economic systems that come together and also emanates from Crete’s capital city, Heraklio.

Maria Hnaraki’s book *Cretan Music: Unravelling Ariadne’s Thread* (2007) explores Cretan music and dance phenomena as ways that construct identity. In addition she investigates notions of belonging by trying to define what Cretan traditional music is. She recorded music events, interviewed musicians and locals, videotaped music

performances of various contexts, recorded concerts and conversations, collected brochures, newspapers and other articles, took field notes and photos (2007: 37) as part of her fieldwork. Her focus on dance events and her involvement in various performances as a participant observer, made me realise that there was at least one more scholar who was moving in parallel with my initial idea on Cretan music.

Eleni Kallimopoulou's book on *Paradosiaka: Music, Meaning and Identity in Modern Greece* (2009) demonstrates the concept of Greek traditional music and songs. She gives an interesting account of the Greek music landscape from the 1970s until the 2000s. Her chapter on Ross Daly, a talented musician who has spent most of his time in Crete, gives an interesting account on his musical philosophy and practice, with reference to contemporaneous *paradosiaka* (traditional) developments (Kallimopoulou 2009: 60).

Michalis Kafkalas in his book «Κρητολόγιο 1», (*Kritologio 1*), (1997) among different aspects of Cretans' social life, he includes many articles on the Cretan language and its use on the structure of the *mantinada* (distich of fifteen syllable iambic meter). A separate chapter is also dedicated to Cretan music and dance. Kafkalas also gives useful information on the construction of the *mantinada* and its poetic use in Crete. He also emphasises on the role of the Cretan traditional dance schools and how dance forms have been altered, focusing on the decade 1987-1997.

Venla Sykari in "Dialogues in Rhyme: The Performative Contexts of Cretan *Mantinades*" in *Oral Tradition* (2009), explains why *mantinades* in Crete still provide a good opportunity to observe how a communicative, versatile oral poetic language works. Her work shows how, in addition to being a vehicle for communicative creativity, the poetic model is also remarkable vehicle for self-expression and artistic creativity in the composition of poems. This side of the poetic tradition serves a bridge when entering modern society.

Theocharis Detorakis in his book *Ιστορία της Κρήτης* (History of Crete), (1990), attains a descriptive approach of the Cretan history from the ancient years until the famous "Battle of Crete" (*Μάχη της Κρήτης*) during the Second World War (1941). His broad historical account includes information about music and its importance in Cretan society, helpful for the overview of the past.

Contested Identities: Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece, edited by Peter Loizos and Euthymios Papataxiarchis (1991), focuses further on how different aspects of social life in Greece mirror a general stereotypical cosmos of Greek culture and on how gender roles are limited and clearly defined within this society.

Chris Williams's chapter entitled as "The Cretan Muslims and the Music of Crete" in Dimitrios Tziouvas edited book *Greece and the Balkans: Identity, Perceptions and Cultural Encounters since the Enlightenment* (2003), shows the interactions between Cretans and Turks in the early 1900s. The *tabachaniotika* genre, a mix of Cretan and Turkish musical components, was spread throughout Crete. Chris Williams gives an interesting account on the *tabachaniotika* and the performers who gave light on them. One can detect the first musical innovations which took place in Crete and the tendency of the Cretans to adopt an "oriental" character in their music. After examining the developments of Cretan music, the author claims that "these developments underpin the subsequent history of Cretan music, which is one of change and innovation" (2003: 216).

Daphne Tragaki's book on the revival of the Greek genre *rebetiko* entitled as *Rebetiko Worlds*, focuses on the contemporary *rebetiko* revival. Tragaki gives information about the culture, social status and historical eras of *rebetiko* song in the first part of her book whereas in the second part she describes how *rebetiko* is "othered" today. Issues of how the concept of revival is connected to the "world music" movement and the recent interest in promoting "ethnic" music making are thoroughly discussed in her writings. Another issue that is negotiated in her book is the kind of approach which may be called "ethnomusicology at home" adopting the already well established term "anthropology at home", which are topics of discussion on my thesis as well.

Generalizing from this brief review of the literature, I am able to discern the dimensions of my own research parameters. They are based on ethnographic methods and techniques, including participant observation, learning to perform, filming and audio recordings. As such, I will mention a number of books written on these subjects, chief among which is *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty nine issues and concepts* (Nettl 1983). These twenty seven essays (with a prelude and a postlude) are concerned with the comparative study of musical systems, by addressing various aspects of musical study of

music in culture or as culture, fieldwork, and some of the broad tendencies in the history of ethnomusicology. Each reflects a broadly-based view of the field.

John Baily's article "Learning to Perform as a Research Technique in Ethnomusicology" (1995), employs Mantle Hood's term "bi-musicality" to highlight the performers' actions when they are fluent in two musical cultures, the second acquired after childhood. Hence, the expression "learning to perform" identifies the importance, personally and socially, for the fieldworker to follow the learning process as a crucial field technique in ethnomusicology. As for my own field observations, "learning to perform" was the medium through which I attempted to participate and understand one important aspect of culture: dance.

Shadows In The Field, edited by Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (1997) identifies a number of interesting new perspectives for fieldwork in ethnomusicology, such as the problems of the ethnographer while being in the field. Also, *Film as Ethnography* edited by Peter Ian Crawford and David Turton (1992), conveys how ethnographic images depicted out of visual and textual authority can be used in anthropological research. It also deals with politics and the ethics of ethnographic film-making. Ethnomusicologists should be aware of this, as filming and film making can be a valuable manner of documentation during one's fieldwork.

Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World edited by Vered Amit is a book that provides diverse case studies on contemporary fieldwork from across North America and Europe. He writes about the challenges of fieldwork at "home" and "away". Fieldwork "at home" is one of the key points of discussion and very interesting for my case study as being a "home" researcher.

With respect to politics, *Critique of Exotica: Music, politics and culture industry* by John Hutnyk (2000) discusses current cultural trends in "politics", not only in theory but also experienced in much of the media and by practitioners themselves. Starting with appropriation matters, hybridity and its critique, authenticity and post-authenticity, diversity and difference, Hutnyk builds his arguments on the "visibility" of some favoured "marginal" groups and their iconic presence, which is turned to market opportunism in the arena of the cultural studies marketplace. This book definitely applies to "beyond the mainstream" music in Crete, where purity interacts with such "marginal"

components. Mitchell claims that the engagement leads to the establishment of new genres where politics can easily be seen, using Feld's words, "senses of commodified otherness, blurred boundaries between exotic and familiar, the local and global in transnational popular culture" (Mitchell 1996: 54). Mitchell's book includes a wide range of information based on the making and marketing of "world music", together with case studies from geographical zones such as the Czech Republic, Italy, Australia, and New Zealand. His collection is an articulate elucidation of the basic methods of cultural studies. It is an ideological analysis of written materials gathered by critical examination of how these materials have become established in discursive narrations and configurations; and this, in combination with his review of the utilization and the boundaries of cultural imperialism.

Keith Negus's *Popular Music in Theory: An Introduction* (2001) also very motivating, highlights the dichotomies of intellectual discussions on musical production and consumption on the one hand, and stresses how cultural identity, cultural position, historical change and political issues impinge on production, distribution and consumption on the other. *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures* (2002) by the same author inspects the complementary strategies of major companies such as Sony and Universal in managing different genres, artists and staff, and evaluates many legends of corporate culture. Negus is also involved with such matters as why certain performers achieve international promotion while others do not and how some artist's repertoires are packaged as "world music".

World Music: A very short introduction (2002) by Philip V. Bohlman is an academic history that explores the wide range of encounters between cultures throughout the world from ancient times to the present, that have provoked sociological, anthropological and musicological interest, as a result of the fusions that have created "world music". By emphasizing aspects of power, colonisation, race, class and gender identity, Bohlman demonstrates that cultural studies of "world music", also called "world beat", "New Age", "ethnopol" or "hybrid music", construct new boundaries of discussion for ethnomusicologists, transcending out-dated debates on "nationalism", "authenticity", "tradition", "exoticism", "culture", "otherness", "appropriation", "identity", "urban", "rural" etc.

Arising from this literature, come many issues that explore the “selling-out” of difference as the logic of multiplicity. In other words, discovering hybridity in a world of authenticities that emerge out of “tradition” and live in parallel with it. Hybrids tend to be understood as trends that challenge notions of “tradition”. What is the motivation behind the creation of the so-called “hybrids”? Innovation, provocation, alteration, authentication or is it an attempt to rationalize the disclosure of different identities through musical experience? Playing music is like playing with words... many listen to these words but there are various interpretations given to them.

1.2. Programme of field research

I began this research upon completing my Master’s degree in Music in 2002. I found it a considerable challenge to develop the subject matter of the dissertation that I submitted for my MMus at Goldsmiths. My topic was about Crete and its music and it was the first time I had become academically involved with Cretan culture. Having entered the field I was keen to extend my knowledge and to re-think my idea about the music of Crete. Cretan music is, after all, part of a culture that is truly alive and Cretans are proud of their musical tradition, which has evolved over many centuries.

I remained in London for six months in order to read the relevant literature but I was not entirely certain of what I was looking for. There were many books on tradition, change, globalization and world music, but none was related to Crete, other than the articles of Kevin Dawe and Michael Herzfeld’s book. Then I decided that I could achieve little unless I actually undertook field-research. Briefly put, I spent much time both in Crete and Athens in order to appreciate fully the Cretan musical performances in both places. Since Athens is Greece’s cultural metropolis, there were many festivals and exhibitions devoted to Cretan culture. In time I realized that what I sought was on the island itself. Therefore, I spent three summers in Crete (2004 - 2006) where I conducted crucial fieldwork.

1.3. The plan of ensuing chapters

Through visiting and revisiting Crete from childhood to adulthood, I came to understand the complexities of Cretan social behaviour. My decision to enter the discipline of ethnomusicology was an appealing prospect because I needed to reconsider and redefine my view first as a person acculturated to a specific culture, and secondly as an ethnographer and scholar. Hence, “home” would be my point of origin and “home” would be the end point of an endless journey through the “self”. This would definitely be the most risky but nevertheless the most objective way to confront Cretans as “others”; through the spectrum of an aborted subjectivity, although in ethnographic fieldwork it is possible to dispatch subjective bias and influences.

Although Cretan music was primarily influenced by contacts with eastern and west European cultures from the thirteenth century onwards, a new wave of musical tendencies of occidental origin gained a foothold on the island. In order for the reader to appreciate the diversity of social change that Crete has undergone over the centuries, I felt it important to present an overview of Cretan music from ancient times to the present. Attention will be paid as to how variations in culture, language and economy, together with religious interactions constantly formed and re-formed the Cretan way of life. Overall, it is possible to detect a generally rapid change from the “traditional”, including “traditional” Cretan music. Moreover, “tradition” is understood in various contexts; and given different interpretations. The elements that comprise “tradition” in Cretan music are poetry, or lyrics, written in fifteen syllable rhyming couplets (the *mantinades*), the instrumentation, (with *lyra* and *lagouto* in the lead) and dance.

The performers, either singers or instrumentalists, intuitively obey unwritten laws of behaviour. The outcome is a *glendi* (pl. *glendia*), a festive occasion. Michael Herzfeld refers to the *glendiot*, the audience that contributes to the structure of such a social experience (Herzfeld 1985: xvi). The *glendia* include weddings, baptisms, and festivals on the one hand or there are *glendia* organized by the cultural authorities of a town or a village on the other. There are slight but telling differences in the overall mood as the *glendi* unfolds. It is for this reason that I chose to attend and observe such events in the

first place, it “felt” as if they were imbued with the “traditional”. Moreover, such *glendia* would of course be full of music, songs and dance.

Later in this chapter it is important for me to examine the history of Crete from ancient times (Minoan Civilization 2000 B.C.-1200 B.C.) until present days. Beginning with antiquity with its endless incursions of different tribes, I wish to draw attention to the multiplicity of encounters that were experienced by the Cretans. For this reason, each aspect of *glendi* will be examined separately at first, in order to trace the origin and the current use of the triad: poetry-music-dance, and to see how their interaction has marked the development of a *glendi*. If any element can be identified as innovated, to what degree can we say “tradition” is flexible towards the new?

“Most ethnomusicological discussions of the transmission of tradition attempt to document and interpret the manner in which music is communicated over time within a particular setting.” (Barz and Cooley 1997: 189). It was this particular setting between Crete and Athens that I attempted to capture at the very beginning of my fieldwork. I hoped that by working on the dipoles: Crete-Athens, local-global, I would understand how tradition was transmitted in both centres. Cretan organizations and festivals of Cretan music in my Athenian “home” would be a convenient and ample introduction to my exploration of Cretan music, since many performers play on the mainland and on the island throughout the year.

“Ethnomusicology at home” is the focus of one part of Chapter Two which describes and represents fieldwork observations and ethnographic reflections drawn from the diversity and plurality of approaches that characterize present-day ethnomusicological practice. Additionally, I explain how experiencing the field as a female researcher created problems of access in a male domain. When it was possible, however, gender interactions between “self” and “others” opened a door to the world of men. My research techniques and methods among the Cretans were defined by the ethnographer’s imperative, a longing and need to understand all aspects of their music culture. It is most likely in the ethnographer’s effort to fulfil this directive that his or her gender has its most noticeable confrontation on the final representation, although that confrontation often goes unacknowledged.

It occurs to me now that even if I had tried to overcome gender boundaries, Cretan views on sex and related taboos would inevitably become an issue for me in my role as a female ethnographer. Many features of my fieldwork experience depended directly on the suppleness of the different roles I was able to perform or on the flexibility of avoidance when things came to sex in order to overcome a situation that would put me in a difficult position as a female and would also obstruct my entry to a network of musicians as an ethnographer. There was a constant balance that had to be kept for maintaining myself in the music-gender game and it lasted from the minute I began my field research until I left the field. These concepts have to do with the ethnographer's identity as well as with the informers' behaviour both of which will be analyzed below.

Chapter Three discusses the ethnography of musical performance in Crete. What is a *glendi* and what is its typical structure? Its nature is fundamental to the true understanding of how Cretans enjoy themselves - a kaleidoscope through which one can trace social behaviours within a cultural sphere. At the *glendia* there is there is a plethora of matching identities that truly create a magical and inimitable atmosphere. Into this atmosphere the ethnographer must delve deeper and deeper in order to understand the meanings implicit in each act. One finds an array of professional and amateur performers who mysteriously interrelate so as to determine the outcome of a *glendi*. Contextually transmitted codes of behaviour introduced the contemporary world bridge that closed the gap between inherited "tradition" and growing "modernization". It also emphasized the discord between the two.

It is my intention to present a detailed description of aspects of a Cretan *glendi* and to make a comparative analysis of what had happened in the past in order to reveal how the *glendi* has in fact become a living operation of presenting the "new" along with "representing" and reviving of the "old". In other words, to show to what extent a *glendi* is anchored in old cultural schemes and what the new impacts are.

Chapter Three is also based on my personal experience of learning to perform Cretan dances. Since "learning to perform" is a very important part of research methodology, I decided not only to be a participant observer in various *glendia*, but also be a student in one of the most respected dance schools of Ierapatra. My teacher Nikos, an experienced and skilled dancer, cleared the picture for me as far as the dance is

concerned in Crete. He made me understand that dance is still one of the most important aspects of contemporary Cretan culture.

Chapter Four deals with issues concerning music as a profession in Crete, and the status of musicians. There are signs of change. The local musical styles have become urbanized, following western music tendencies. But family ties tend to build up a music network in which almost every musician acts. At this point we may ask the question: “Is it the musician who makes the music or the music the musician?” This responds to my reflection on what is more valuable for the Cretans: the music that has been carried over the years to contemporary times or the musicians who try to safeguard “cultural authenticity” and preserve it as untouched as possible? Also of importance is the new professionalism of the musicians, a development that has radically altered their attitude towards music-making. This professionalism had affected the *lyra* players, chief among the figures in the musical culture of Crete together with the factors that were operative for the altered status of music are surely verifications of “change”.

In the following chapter I deal with the concept of “tradition” and its meanings for the Cretans, as well as with “neo-traditional” trends. The various interpretations of the word “tradition” disclose how it is conceived by contemporary Cretans and how it is negotiated through music. It is helpful to divide Cretan music into various categories, according to the activities of the performers and the audiences. “Entertainers” and “traditional” musicians are those who believe in tradition as an ideology that embodies the Cretan identity. “Progressive” Cretan musicians move away from folklore with music that is ennobled and shaped for a specific type of audience, the cultivated and “artistic-minded”. The Cretan “dog music” genre, the so-called *skyladiko*, constitutes the third category. It may be the most questionable, but of interest for those who are unfamiliar with Greek culture. Its protesting, libellous character on the one hand, and its massive popularity on the other, makes this genre distinct and unique.

Chapter Six summarises my findings. Even while writing “food for thought” transpired, obliging me to rethink about what I had done so far. Two coincidences, described as part of an ethnographical depiction could not possibly be left unmentioned, even at the last moment. Final thoughts on the ongoing processes of change in Crete are intertwined with “reflexive non-objectivistic” notions. All together I came to understand

that this thesis is merely the beginning of an endless journey in the depths of Crete and its culture.

1.4. Historical overview of Cretan music

1.4.1. History and Music of Crete

G. I. Chatzidakis wrote: “Among all the nations, Cretans felt the need of shedding their large-hearted emotions through rhythm and melody. Their songs and their dances mirror something of their ego. Within this ego, all of its aspirations are mustered. Each verse and each movement is a piece taken from the Cretan soul... That is why Cretan poetry, music and dancing illustrate the physiognomy of the Cretan nation’s character” (Papagrigrakis 1964: 239).

Below, I will demonstrate how poetry, dance and music are interconnected with the history of the island and the cultural encounters that shaped the physiognomy of the Cretan nation’s character. It is important for someone to be aware of how these three forms of Cretan culture were developed through time. The history of Crete begins with the Minoan² civilization (2000-1100 B.C.). During this period Crete’s economy flourished and its trade was unquestionably the most powerful of the eastern Mediterranean.

Cretans were also engaged with the land. Numerous agricultural rituals, which have been revealed by archaeologists, relate to the worship of nature and minor deities, not uncommon, in ancient cultures.³

Unlike other areas in the ancient world, in Crete women did not live under the shade of male domination. On the contrary, females in Minoan Crete participated in every social activity equally with men. This did not amount to a matriarchal society in Crete,

² Minos is the central figure of Cretan civilization. He was the King of Knossos, and son of Zeus and of Europe. Arthur Evans (1851-1941), once Curator of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, went to Crete in 1894 and began excavating The Palace of Minos at Knossos (1921 -1936). Evans gave the name of King Minos to an archaeological period calling it “Minoan”, as well as to the civilization that emerged. Today archaeologists generally believe that the name “Minos” is most likely an epithet given to a king, in the same way that “Pharaoh” is given to the Egyptian rulers (Detorakis 1990: 17, 36).

³ One of the most famous icons of agricultural worship is depicted in the “Vessel of the Harvesters” in which harvesters carry tools on their shoulders and chant a hymn, to accompaniment by a musician and an oracle that shakes the rattle. The singers portrayed in the middle of this minstrelsy have been characterized as the “most ancient quartet of the European civilization” (Detorakis 1990: 41).

but the parity of the sexes certainly reveals an interesting conception of life. This is all the more surprising when we take into account that in the following generations females were constrained by the absolute dominance of males.

According to archaeological findings, Minoan people seemed to have loved dancing. Evidence for this is in murals and in other forms of artistic expression. It reaffirms the Cretans' reputation of being excellent dancers in antiquity (Detorakis 1990: 42). A clear description of Cretan dance is given by Homer in *The Iliad* (S 590-606) where what he says is consistent not only with the wall paintings and drawings of symposia and festivals, but also with contemporary Cretan dances. Dance has been acknowledged as a cultural expression from antiquity to the present day.

The Minoan Empire passed with the eruption of the Santorini's volcano, around 1400 B.C (Detorakis 1990: 49). Crete was no longer the centre of trade in the Mediterranean. After southern Greece's conquest by the Romans (146 B.C.), Crete inevitably became the focus of Roman politics in the eastern Mediterranean. The conquest and occupation of Crete gave the Romans the opportunity to control the sea ways, constrain pirates and protect sea trade. With Cretans subjugation to the Romans, it was no longer a political or military force. Nevertheless, owing its preservation of the Greek language, it did not lose its unique identity.

During the Byzantine period, which is divided into three eras, the earliest signs of cultural appropriation can be detected. The first dates from Byzantine occupation to Arab domination (330-824), the second includes the era of Arabic hegemony (824-961) and the third lasted until the Venetian occupation (*Venetokratia*, 961-1204) (Detorakis 1990: 128). The last two decades of the *Venetokratia* are the most important for the flourishing of the arts, including music. The magnificent epic poem *Erotokritos*⁴ (**figure 1**) written by

⁴ *Erotokritos* is considered to be a masterpiece of the Greek literature. It is an epic poem of 10,000 verses, divided into five parts. The title has been taken from *Erotokritos*, the main character in this poem, "tortured" by love. Initially, the setting of the poem appears to be in ancient Athens. The plot revolves around the love of *Erotokritos*, son of *Pezostratos*, adviser to the King, and *Aretousa*, daughter of the fictional King *Iraklis*, a love that is used by the poet as a central point in order to praise friendship, bravery and the love of the homeland.

Precisely when the poem was written is unknown. The Cretan dialect that it is written on is considered to have been shaped in this form after the second half of the 16th century. The plot is based on the medieval French novel *Paris at Vienne* which was translated into different languages. An Italian translation of that novel is regarded as *Kornaros's* exemplar for the writing of *Erotokritos*. The poem also includes passages that imitate Ariosto's "Raging Duch", something that places the writing after 1550, while other passages refer to imitations of "Erophili" written by the *Hortatzi* around 1600 (CrecianNet 2003).

Vitsentzos Kornaros⁵ at the beginning of the 17th century, was set to music and continues to be sung all over Crete.

The language of the poem is a dialect from eastern Crete. It is considered to be highly developed and sufficiently accomplished to express perfectly many ideas and emotions. The fifteen syllable iambic meter and the closing rhyme make this poem an enduring work of art, singing at contemporary traditional festivities is based on the unfolding of rhymes taken from “Erotokritos” and other extemporaneous verses or songs.

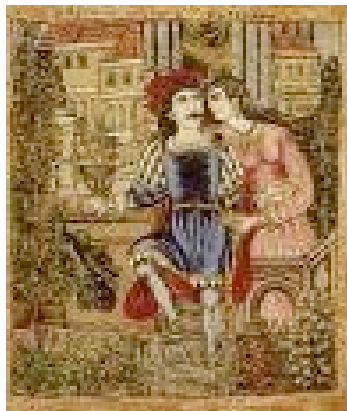


Figure 1. Erotokritos and his beloved Aretousa

Returning to the history of Crete, the Turkish conquest (1669-1898) held back the florescence of the Cretan renaissance. The population of Crete was much reduced during the upheavals of the long lasting Cretan War (1645-1669), with the massive movement of people from the urban centres, and the forced conversions to Islam that continued during the Turkish occupation.⁶

Cretans revolted between 1821 and 1830 in a rebellion that could not be quelled by Turks, who sought assistance from Egypt. After many years of bloody conflict, the rebellion of Crete ended inconclusively and the Protocol of 22 January 1830 left Crete

⁵ Vitsentzos Kornaros (1553 – 1613 or 1614) was born in the province of Sitia in Crete and is considered to be one of the island’s most illustrious poets. Kostis Palamas, the acclaimed Greek poet wrote that Vitsentzos Kornaros is “the greatest of the Greek nation and an immortal poet” (Detorakis 1990: 244).

⁶ There were two types of forced conversions to Islam during the Turkish domination, the singular and the collective ones. In the first case people less religious than others were ready to convert, in order to safeguard their estate and their privileges. Mixed marriages were formally forbidden.

The collective type of forced conversion was more wide spread. A sightseer called Tournefort gives the information that more than 60,000 Cretans were Islamized by 1669. Consequently, there was created a population, with Cretan origins, language and customs, but Muslims as far as their religion was regarded. These people were called Muslim Cretans (Detorakis 1990: 288-289).

out of the borders of the new Greek state. It was completely adrift under the absolute jurisdiction of the Sultan.

The Great Cretan Revolution of 1866-1869 was the consequence of the Cretans' longing for freedom and unification with Greece. However, it ended ingloriously. Nevertheless they never lost hope in one day of being part of Greece. As a result, Cretans continued to fight for their liberty.

On the 1 December 1913, the union of the island with Greece became official, and the Greek flag was raised on the fortress of Firka in the city of Chania. Moreover, the absorption of refugees in the wake of the Asia Minor disaster (1922) significantly amplified the local population. Thousands of refugees, mainly from Smyrna, migrated to Crete, most of them settling in Heraklio. In January 1923 the Treaty of Lausanne which legitimized the exchange of populations, also obliged Crete's Turkish population (33,000) to leave the island. Their place was taken by the Greeks of Anatolia.

This exchange affected a "historical catharsis" of Crete's population. In the following centuries the island was homogeneous in terms of its national and religious identity. Most of its inhabitants were now Greeks and Orthodox Christians, aside from some minorities in Heraklio and Chania where Jews and Armenians resided (Detorakis 1990: 466, 467). Henceforth, Crete followed the political and social destiny of which it was now an inseparable part.

1.5 Cretan Music – Folk Music

One of the special characteristics of the national identity and physiognomy of Crete is its traditional (*paradosiaki*) music, which has both important links with the past and at the same time has shown itself susceptible to development.

The partition of the island into four prefectures, the agricultural and farming activities of the Cretan population, in addition to socio-economic conditions of life contributed to a cultural diversity throughout the island. The agricultural as well as the pastoral and the insular way of life for example, functioned differently in the way people confronted music. A great variety of instrumental and vocal musical repertoires served the

needs of those who used them. Some of the songs are localized while others are spread throughout the island.

One of the best known genres of songs in western Crete are the so-called *rizitika* (**figure 2**), (“rebel songs”)⁷, which took their name from the villages in the area of Rizes (“Roots”), in the foothills of the Lephka Ori (“White Mountains”). The songs are divided in two categories: *tavla* songs (“table songs”) and the *strata* songs (“road songs”), as their name implies. *Tavla* songs are always sung at the tables of a large gathering of people who are celebrating a special event such as a baptism, an engagement, a wedding, a name day, the arrival of a beloved person, and so on. They are performed unaccompanied by instruments. Male vocalists are divided into two groups. The most able singer begins with the first verse of the song of his choice while the reminder in his group accompanies him. The same verse is repeated in similar manner by the second group of singers, and they all sing antiphonically until the end of the song.



Figure 2. CD covers with *Rizitika* songs

Strata songs, sung by people walking along a road, are accompanied by instruments. As with the table songs, a verse is repeated twice or three times, the duration of these songs may continue for more than an hour. It is believed that this particular manner of performance is based on old practices, when people, without modern means of

⁷ *Rizitika*: We know neither the origin of the *rizitika* songs nor the date when these songs were imported to western Crete. It has been claimed that internal clues place these pieces not only in Byzantine times, but also during Venetian, Ottoman, and more recent areas. The last period of writing *rizitika* songs was, during the German occupation (1941 – 1944). Since then, the old *rizitika* songs have been recycled. Other pieces in the *rizitiko* style have been published in newspapers and have been included in collections of eponymous Cretan popular poets. A small number of *rizitika* actually passed to popular singers and have re-emerged as genuine popular songs. Most of these songs are established only through the *lyra* players, who for some decades have “adopted” the *rizitiko* style and have made new arrangements of the songs. Most connoisseurs have tried to adjust them according to the rules of the Cretan *glendia*, which however, differ considerably from the prototypes of entertainment of the *rizitika* masters (<http://www.grecian.net/music/rizitika.htm>.)

transportation walked long distances over many days. In order to pass the time as pleasantly as possible, they would sing the *strata* songs (Papagrigorakis 1964: 238-243). As for the melodies of these songs, they are monophonic and set in a traditional mode called *tropikos*.

1.6. *Mantinades*

Another song style that has spread throughout Crete are the *rimes* (rhymes): poems with numerous rhyming couplets in iambic fifteen syllable metrical lines. Their content can be taken from tradition, and can also be religious, historical, erotic or descriptive – they touch on every aspect of social life. The rhymed couplets of Cretan folk poetry are called *mantinades* (singular *mantinada*), a term that comes from the French *matin* (morning), because the couplets were originally love poems which a beloved one would be serenaded by in the early hours of the morning. Over time, these rhymes became the backbone of the vocal music tradition. The poem *Erotokritos* is an exemplar of this species owing to its use of the rhyme and multi-verses. Many poets have attempted to imitate it, even to the present.

Most *mantinades* belong to oral tradition.⁸ The couplets are called *kondylies* in eastern Crete, from the Greek *kondylion*, meaning “knuckle” or “joint”, and used to indicate the joined stalk of a reed or cane; in particular, it referred to the cane pick used to pluck the strings of the accompanying guitar or lute. By extension, it came to mean a short stroke, and then a short melodic phrase (Tsouchlarakis 2000: 33). *Mantinades* cover a broad range of topics, but the majority are about love and are expressed in highly personal terms, rich in comparisons that are drawn from the beauty of the Cretan

⁸ *Mantinades* form an oral poetic tradition where an idea, a short story is ideally encapsulated in a poetic picture, which is drawn with quick, referential strokes in the frames of the tightly rule-governed traditional metrical model. The language closely resembles natural language, but the poetic pictures, metaphors, and the metrical mold make it clearly differ from everyday speech. Dialectal Cretan forms are extensively used at all the levels of language. The model is structurally extremely versatile and the ideas that are expressed are limitless: many of the poems are romantic, erotic or emotional, but *mantinades* can as well comment on or negotiate a situation proverbially, they can greet, tease, or satirize a person, they can state a general philosophical idea, or they can express personal views on life. Besides the communicative, argumentative dimensions of the poetic language, the community highly values poetic virtues and individual inventiveness (Sykari 2009: 93).

landscape. Others celebrate specific events and personalities, patriotism, Crete itself; moreover, others sing about births, marriages, baptisms, death and the entire spectrum of life (figure 3).⁹

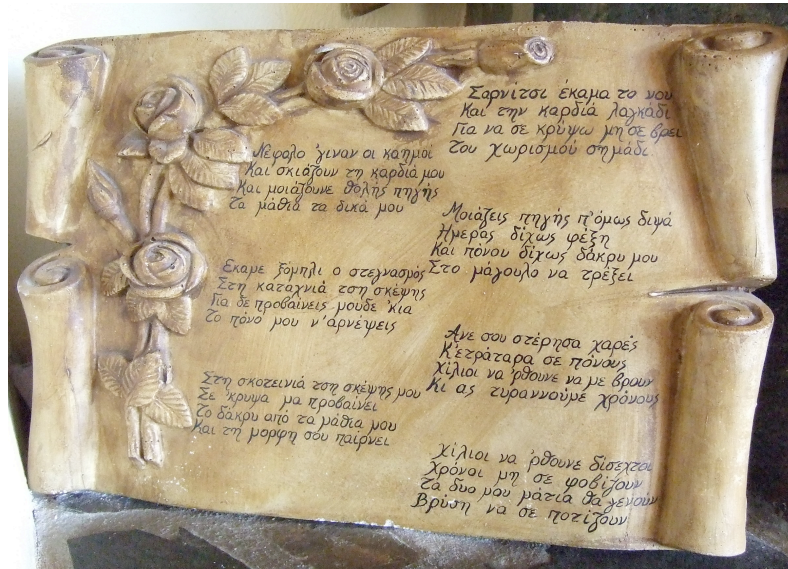


Figure 3. Copper plate with *mantinades* of love, placed in a tavern in Rethymno

Τρεις χρόνους σε παρακαλώ κουράγιο να μου δώσεις,
 Εσύ αφού με πλήγωσες πρέπει και να με σώσεις
 For three years I'm begging you to give me a bit of courage
 You are the one who damaged me, you are the one to save me

Πέταξε κι έλα στη φωλιά. πουλί μου που' χεις φήσει
 Δώσε κουράγιο μιας καρδιάς αφού για σε θα σβήσει
 Fly but please come back to the nest you left my bird,
 Give courage to my heart that keeps fading away

Έχασα την αγάπη μου κι έχω καημό και πόνο
 Και σαν το ξύλο στη φωτιά ο κακομοίρης λιώνω
 I who have lost my great love do I have lust and yearning,
 Now like the wood which is on fire the miserable one burning

⁹ For more information on the literature of *mantinades*, see Kafkalas 1992; 1996; 1998, Beaton 1980.

During the Turkish occupation of Crete (1669-1898) populations were removed from the urban centres and the numerous forced conversions continued. Consequences of the population exchange were evident in many aspects of life. “Cretan” urban life all disappeared as the cities became the abode of the Turks. From the mix of Islam with Cretans, a social group of Muslim Cretans emerged. This explains the existence of Alevi *mantinades* before 1920. Ross Daly states that in recent times:

Cretan music seems to have been used in the *tekedes*¹⁰ of the Dervishes and it is evident that Crete was full of them. Except for the *Mevlevi*, who were in Crete, the other orders used the local music idiom. *Mevlevi* (“Whirling Dervishes”) were the only ones who had a certain idiom that was transferred everywhere they used to go and that it the reason why we can still find in the 19th century Muslim *mantinades*. (Interview with Ross Daly: June 2002).

Mantinades are also sung in other parts of Greece, especially in the islands.¹¹ In Crete though, where they retain their popularity, they are still considered to be one of the expressive means. This is widely known not only by those who live in the island but also to the rest of the Greeks. Cretan *mantinades* without doubt underline the identity of the islanders. The basic carrier of *mantinades* is the *lyra* player, who is at the same time a singer. Their poets are the so-called *rimadoroi*¹² or *mantinadologoi*,¹³ who write to appeal to the tastes of their audiences. Early *rimadoroi* were uneducated country people who created impromptu *mantinades* at a feast, matching their verses to the occasion.

Mantinadologoi (sing. *mantinadologos*) is the characterization for the contemporary people who have the skill to compose fifteen syllable poems. They invent their own *mantinades*, and most take out copyrights on their works nowadays. The poetry is either

¹⁰ *Tekes* (pl. *tekedes*, probably from Trk. *Tekke*, a dervish lodge): also a small shop where hashish was smoked and *rebetika* songs were sung (*Glossary of Greek terms*, <http://research.umbc.magrini>).

¹¹ Similar local models of short, contextually extemporized poems have been common in most societies, but just how they function as communication and self-expression is less comprehensively known and researched. Today, most of these traditional, short poetic languages have already disappeared (Sykari 2009: 89).

¹² *Rimadoroi* (singular. *rimadoros*): those who compose original rhymed couplets. In earlier times they were numerous and visible at social gatherings where they would say or sing their own verses. They were very talented at constructing the lines of the poem for it was quite difficult to respond immediately to someone else’s rhyme. For this reason they were highly respected by their compatriots.

¹³ *Mantinadologoi* (singular, *mantinadologos*) is a complex word composed of *mantinada* and *logos* (word).

published in books or sold to famous Cretan performers, mainly *lyra* players. The slight difference between the *rimadoros* and the *mantinadologos* is that the former is able to create a *mantinada* and express it orally, in lines appropriate to the particular occasion, in front of an audience. The latter however, has the time to think and write down his *mantinada* on paper and can therefore keep the rights of his composition. In some cases *mantinadologoi* make their living out of this.¹⁴

Mantinades are sung to a variety of tunes. These strains are original, simple, and narrow in ambitus and easy to remember. In these melodies diverse poetic lines can be adjusted. Therefore, the division of the songs in different genres does not depend on the verse but relies on the melodic line, which can be embellished with different ornamentations each time. Wedding songs, for example, belong to this category because of the melody on the one hand, and because of the content of the lyrics on the other, which describe the rituals and customs of the wedding. While the lyrics can change for each wedding, the melody remains the same. A similar situation applies to other song categories, (Figure 4), such as love songs, satirical songs, lullabies, laments, etc.



Figure 4. Wall painting in the yard of a house in Anoyia: the verses (*mantinades*) refer to the history of Anoyia village. Each *mantinada* is signed by its creator.

¹⁴ Today the skill to compose a poem extempore in the situation is becoming rare. This skill is appreciated, but it never was the only or the most important standard for successful performance: what counts is the skill to create *meaningful* poems and to have *good timing* in a performance (Sykari 2009: 93).

A part of the history of music in Crete belongs to the musical heritage brought by the refugees from Asia Minor in 1922, who brought with them their own Anatolian café music, aptly labelled “Smyrna style”. From about 1900 to 1930 it was performed in venues called *Café Aman* (Petropoulos 1968: 14) where the *Amane*¹⁵ songs, with their Anatolian motifs, were sung. The *Amane* songs, which constitute a special category in the Cretan repertory, express deeply felt emotions and feelings that are almost beyond verbal articulation.

The new music that was first heard in mainland Greece after the exchange of populations and the ensuing migrations did not leave Greek urban centres untouched, especially Athens. The *rebetiko*¹⁶ song which basically flourished in Piraeus led to the re-creation of similar songs in the Cretan style. Examples can be found in the discography of the immigrants to America during the 1920s. Their arrangement with respect to both melody and lyrics, demonstrates that these Cretan versions were not merely repetitions of the *rebetiko* fashion at that time, but these songs were actually an important part of the Cretan tradition from the beginning of the twentieth century.

Eventually, *tabachaniotika*¹⁷ songs sung by George Tzimakis¹⁸ as well as by other important musicians such as Andreas Rodinos, Stelios Phoustalierakis and Charilaos Piperakis, who were also influenced by the *rebetika* wave, made their appearance in early 1930s. These Cretan urban songs combine Greek and Turkish components. However,

¹⁵ *Amane*: a popular musical genre that originated in Ionia and was famous in Smyrna. It includes an instrumental introduction, lines sung with long embellishments on the word *aman*, and fast instrumental refrain.

¹⁶ *Rebetika* songs (singular *rebetiko*): In the classic blues-tango manner, *rebetika* came into existence in poor immigrant districts. Some migrants were job-seekers from the countryside, but a considerable number were former members of the large Greek communities in Constantinople (Istanbul) and Smyrna (Izmir). Over a million Greeks, expelled from Turkey in 1922 and 1923, produced the most dramatic single wave of immigration. From within this group sprang the *manges*, or *rebetes*, a subculture of small-time crooks and delinquents who frequented a world of bars, *tekes* (hashish dens) and brothels, wore the distinctive black fedora jacket with the left arm only in its sleeve, ready to be whipped into a padded shield in case of a knife fight. The *manges* were the first performers, and subjects, of *rebetika* songs (Sweeney 1991: 106).

¹⁷ *Tabachaniotika*: Cretan urban musical repertory, part of the wider family of vocal music, such as the *rebetika* and the music of *Café-aman* that merge Greek and Turkish elements. This species represents an outcome of Greek-Turkish cultural syncretism in Crete during the period of Ottoman domination. According to musicians from Chania, the *tabachaniotika* probably arose in Crete in the towns of Chania and Rethymnon around the middle of the 19th century. At that time it was the characteristic musical repertory of the so-called *Turkokritikoi*, Muslim Cretans which developed after the immigration of Smyrna’s refugees in 1922, as did the more widespread *rebetika*. They were popular until 1950 (Repertoires and Identities of a musician from Crete-Magrini: Musical identities of Kostas Papadakis in Tulia Magrini’s website address, <http://research.umbc.edu/eol.3.magrini/tabachan.htm>).

¹⁸ Tzimakis George: Born in the town of Rethymno 1913. He became one of the best known *lyra* players in Crete. He was one of the first who recorded 78 rpm records.

Chris Williams in his paper “The Cretan Muslims and the Music of Crete” claims that there is no strong evidence to suggest that there was any significant strand of folk music, current among the generality of Muslim and Christian Cretans that was “oriental” in the way that the *tabachaniotika* songs are. Furthermore, he states:

I am unaware of any evidence at all for the existence of a fully fledged repertoire of this kind, whereas what evidence we do have, such as the early recordings and the testimony of the Giritli,¹⁹ points in precisely the opposite direction. Perhaps even more important than the scale-type is the fact that the *tabachaniotika* have no dance function, but are simply songs for listening, a distinction that remains important to practicing Cretan musicians (Williams in Tziouvas 2003: 214).

It is important to stress that there was never a local *rebetiko* tradition on the island. Nonetheless, the production of *mantinada* in the *rebetiko* style Cretan songs proved to be a significant innovation of that period along with other musical innovations made by the performers themselves.²⁰ And while the adoption of foreign elements in Cretans’ local tradition was indisputable, the *mantinada* continued to be a cultural emblem that underscored the Cretan – Muslim musical idiom. From a musicological point of view one can detect melodic innovations, but as far as the linguistic idiom of the songs which provided the local identity of the Cretans is concerned, there are not many changes (**Figure 5**). Chris Williams states on that:

The movement of people and ideas between Greece and Turkey was followed by a radical development in the music of Crete. As far as I know there was never a local *Rebetika* tradition on the island. What did happen, in the early 1930s, was this systematic orientalizing of Cretan music by a group of enterprising Rethymniots. It is worth stressing that these were Cretans, not post-1922 immigrants or their descendants. In the songs of Phoustalierakis and in the

¹⁹ When using the word *Giritli* (literally Cretan) the author refers to the Cretan *lyra* players.

²⁰ It must be remembered that the melodic innovations introduced by Phoustalierakis and others did not affect song forms only, but also the dance music; the present day prevalence of the *syrtos*, with its (by comparison with the more motivic melodic structures it has supplanted) extended melodic development and adoption of the “new” kind of melody, is a direct result of what happened in the 1930s. In short, Cretan music has to some extent survived by renewing itself (Williams in Tziouvas 2003: 216).

enormously influential *lyra*-style of Rodinos/Piperakis there is a radical adoption of oriental modes and instrumental techniques (Williams in Tziovas 2003: 216).



Figure 5. CD cover: *Tabachaniotika*, Original performances (Phoustalieris, Baxevanis, Skordalos, Tzimakis, Manias)

At the beginning of 1930s, we encounter the first gramophone recordings of what was marketed as Cretan music. Prior to this were the *rebetika* songs of the well-known Cretan *lyra* player, Charilaos Piperakis²¹ (1892 – 1981) who in 1926 made recordings in the United States of America while the performers of the diaspora maintained Cretan-style verse, the *mantinada* ceased from being an extempore impulsive expression. Instead of improvised verse produced by *glendiots*, it would be performed by a single artist in a recording studio. From its origins as a vocal expressive medium, the *mantinada* is crystallized on vinyl without a margin for changing the lyrics. As such, attention was focused on the performer himself. Rhymes impregnated with deep meanings about many

²¹ Charilaos Piperakis or Charilaos: Charilaos was born in Ksyrosteri, in the province of Apokoronas, Chania, around 1892. He immigrated to North America while he was a student. He took his first *lyra* lessons from Mathioudis, a famous *lyra* player in his time. In the USA he collaborated with various Greek emigrants and, in a short time, he established himself as a skilful *lyra* player. He also met Andreas Rodinos and Yiannis Bernidakis or Baxevanis. Rumors say that Charilaos was enchanted by the talents of the latter two artists and on one occasion they organized a joint performance at the port of Rethymno which lasted for two days and nights. His return to the USA marked the beginning of a very productive career in the recording industry and by the end of the 1950s he had made numerous albums. His life-time portfolio includes a total of 40 songs (78 and 45 rpm records) which had a strong impact on the Cretans of North America. Charilaos formed his own group in the USA and toured the States where he performed not only Cretan and island songs, but also Slavic and Arabic melodies. Charilaos was very popular in the States, both as an individual and as an artist. He died in the USA, where he lived most of his life, in 1981 (liner notes from the CD *Protomastores 1920-55*, “The Masters 1920-55” Original Recordings, Aerakis-Cretan Musical Workshop).

aspects of life, along with new expressive musical directions emerged. Performers began to make Cretan music widely known taking it step by step beyond the borders of the island.

Western art music began to rise in popularity after 1960. It was clear that Cretan music was disdained in the urban areas, being identified with village culture. This was when the first *lyra* players arrived in Heraklio. When invited to urban festivities, apart from performing traditional music, they had to be sensitive to urban proclivities and perform foreign music and dances, the so-called “European music”, which included Latin American as well as the European song and dances. *Lyra* accompaniments to tango, waltz, samba, rumba and cha-cha were the first signs of modernization by mimicking European trends, despite the older generation’s opposition to this kind of music. Yiannis Xylouris, a distinguished *lagouto* player and younger brother of the acclaimed Nikos Xylouris,²² observes the following:

Since he was 15 years old, Nikos was already a star in Heraklio and he took me to play with him a few years later. We used to travel to villages, even the most remote ones, where no bus could take us, and we would walk in order to reach them. Everyone knew us. In early times they did not listen to Cretan songs because waltz, rumba and mambo were in fashion. We were forced to play this music to make our living. If one could not play them they did not ask him to play in the festivals or on any other occasion (Zioziou 2006: 26)

²² Nikos Xylouris, born in the village of Anoyia in 1936, was a member of one of the most powerful Cretan families, with musical affinities inherited, on his mother’s side, from his grandfather Antonis Skoulas, a famous *lyra* player in this time. Nikos was 9 years old when he first played the *lyra* in public on the occasion of gymnastic contests at his school. He deeply impressed his audience by his skill and his voice. At the age of 16 he moved to Heraklion and with the help of friends and relatives his fame soon spread throughout the island. His first recording (a 78 rpm disc) dates from 1958, when he was 22 years of age. In 1969 he moved to Athens and made his first appearance in the Cretan club *Kritiko Konaki*. His performance was very successful. He collaborated with important composers such as Yiannis Markopoulos, led to the production of such works as *Chroniko*, *Rizitika*, *Ithagenia*, and others. In 1972 with Stavros Xarchakos, he produced a pioneer work *Dionysis kalokeri mas*. Next came *Syllogi*, which was followed by his collaboration with the famous actors Kostas Kazakos and Tzeni Karezi in the theatrical work by Iakovos Kambanellis, *To megalo mas tsirko* (“Our big circus”). His performances in the night clubs of Plaka in Athens are still remembered as are the magnificent concerts he gave all over Greece as well as in other countries between 1968 and 1978. He died on February 1980, aged 44 (Aerakis et. Al. 1996:17-20).

The increasing number of the villagers who moved to big cities such as Heraklio and Chania had a profound effect on the urban environment. The dream of social elevation was identified with having a house in town. Within a few years many apartment blocks were built at the edge of the urban centres. However, the “new bourgeoisie” had been raised on local music heard in their villages. Traditional Cretan music was something tangible that enabled them to retain a Cretan identity. Indeed, in the coffee shops one could now hear the sound of the *lyra* and the *lagouto* much more than in the past.

1.7. Musical instruments associated with the Cretan tradition

The most popular instruments that are played in Crete today are the *lyra* (a fretless three string bowed lute) and the *lagouto* (also *laouto*; a large, long-necked plucked lute with a pear-shaped body). Because of Crete’s size (it is considered the biggest island of Greece), one can detect the use of different instruments depending on which area of the island one is. The third most popular instrument is the violin. The use of it covers basically eastern and western Crete, whereas the *lyra* is used mainly in central part of Crete. Instruments such as the mandolin and the *chabiolia* (short or long pipes), as well as the *daoulaki* (double-membrane drum), are also played in various parts of the island (**Figure 8**). One should not forget to mention the use of the guitar in most performances of contemporary Crete.



Figure 8. Instruments used in Crete (*lyra*, *lagouto*, violin, *chabiolia*)

The numerous genres that have been recognized as carriers of Cretan music have been closely connected with the instruments, while on the other hand the instruments themselves mirror something of the past. There is a long-standing debate about Crete's most popular instrument: the *lyra*. One can detect different types of *lyra* throughout the island the last few decades. Why has it been changed? How should it be used, when and where should it be played? As the Cretan *lyra* is a symbol of the island's musical tradition, it deserves independent discussion. By using the term "symbol" to refer to the particular instrument, I mean that the Cretan *lyra* is connected to the cultural identity of Crete. Thus, it is used as a symbol of identity. Hnaraki asserts that the *lyra* was chosen as the heir and symbol of uncontaminated musical folklore in contrast to the violin which was imported to Crete from Italy during Venetian domination, and was viewed as a foreign instrument unrelated to the Cretan musical tradition (see Hnaraki 2007, Magrini 2002). Hnaraki also explains how the *lyra* as a symbol reconnects present reality to a remote past:

To remodel the Cretan culture, people chose a musical symbol to reconnect present reality to a remote past. According to ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl, that is a unique, particular role of music in associating a society's present with its past. The insistence with which the stereotype of the *lyra* player was and still is presented in documents about Crete reveals that what is evoked by this image is considered necessary to disseminate a new sense of history. Since then, the *lyra* has become the musical symbol of Cretan ethnic identity and the *lyra* player a hero (Hnaraki 2007: 44).

There is a story about a *lyra* player and his circle at the crossroads which connects myth with tradition. By way of introduction, it is important to stress how important it was for a *lyra* player to reach excellence. Virtuosity was directly related to dance itself, another feature that continues to be important in Cretan culture. A skilled *lyra* player is considered as such only if people who listen to his playing can also dance to it.

Whoever wants to learn to play the *lyra* must go to a remote crossroads around midnight and carve a circle in the ground with his knife. He then sits

in the circle and plays. Within a few minutes the fairies come and walk around him. They are not as innocent as they appear to be; on the contrary, they want to succumb the *lyra* player. Since they must remain outside of the circle they try in every way to pull the player out of it. The fairies speak very sweet words and sing superbly while he tries to stay calm and continue playing.

“You don’t know how to play it” they insist “Why are you wasting your time?”

“That’s how I learned it; that’s how I play it”, he answers “Why do you care?”

“Well...if you like, we can teach you how to play it so that the stones dance while you play”. And they beg him to come out of the circle.

The player refuses to listen to them, but they ask him to give them his *lyra*. The *lyra* player gives them his *lyra* but he is careful not to put his hand or any other part of his body out of the circle because they either cut it off or he goes mad. A fairy then takes the *lyra* and, skilfully, she plays it for a time. The fairy returns it and says: “Don’t you believe that we want you to learn the *lyra*?” But he doesn’t hear a thing and continues playing it inartistically. At the end, when the cock crows, they ask him quickly to give them a part of his body in order to teach him. He pokes his little finger out of the circle and gives it to them. They sever it immediately but they are sincere after all. They teach him how to play and they disappear at the first light of the day.²³

This is why, when a skilful *lyra* player is praised, he replies: “What do you think? I was taught the *lyra* at the crossroads!”

According to this story, many aspiring *lyra* performers were taught the art of *lyra* playing, a fact that reaffirms the widespread belief of people in deities as teachers and as patrons of the arts. Sometimes reductions of the tale have the beautiful fairies replaced by horrible demons who take charge of educating *lyra* players. They start by dancing around

²³ <http://www.stigmes.gr/gr/grpages/articles/stavrodromi.html>

him and by talking to him. But he must not speak to them since they will render him dumb and he will fall silent. The demons, however, seem to be very pleased with the *lyra* player because he accompanies their dance and they are obliged to do him a favour. For this reason, the leader of the demons takes the *lyra* out of the *lyra* player's hands, tunes it and leaves. From that moment the instrumentalist becomes a master of *lyra* playing.

For me this story describes in detail the delicate balance between the personal and the individual dimension of a performer in the out-personal and continuing dimension of the tradition he expresses. The demons symbolise this component of tradition, which is unavoidably the inspiration of the musician. However, the same musician lives in the time margins of his own life and in the boundaries of his personal subsistence. If the musician goes out of the circle of his personal existence - whatever this includes - then he will stop existing because the demons will engulf him.

This story is of great importance for me, because it shows the need of the performer to take as much as he can from the tradition, by trying to work by himself using his own personal style inside his circle. By copying the past, what will certainly happen is his disappearance by the demons. Such an act denies the personal style and our individual obligation to renew and renovate the tradition in order to keep it alive (Interview with Ross Daly, July 2006).

In the tradition of Crete, as well as in many other traditions of the world, myth and social reality are functionally interrelated.²⁴ Myth confirms, supports and maintains

²⁴ Once upon a time, as recounted by reporter and writer Nikos Psilakis in *Welcome Crete* and in *Kritiki Mithologia* (Cretan Mythology), Cretan worshipped Hyakinth, a god who is born and dies every year, like the Cretan Zeus. Apollo, the deity of music and harmony, plays his lyre and enchants immortals and mortals alike. Hyakinth often listens to his friend playing, just as he watches him holding his wonderful bow and aiming it. When he takes this instrument in his hands, a magical, divine music is heard. Graceful Hyakinth plays in the forest and throws the discus as far as he can to be better than his teacher, Apollo. At that moment, a strange whirling sound is heard in the air. The discus does not go far. The strong wind lifts it up and makes it hit a stone, sending it back. Hyakinth is hit and falls dead to the ground.

As Apollo watches the blood flow from Hyakinth's head, an idea suddenly comes to him. He cannot resurrect Hyakinth, but he can transport his breathtaking beauty somewhere else: The blood of the handsome young man is transformed into a flower, the hyacinth. Apollo inscribes the capital letter Y of the Greek alphabet, on the inner part of the flower, next to the stamen, the first letter of the Greek word for Hyakinth. Each time we see that flower, we recall the name of the most handsome young man ever born on Earth. The hyacinth sprouts, blooms, dries, but always leaves bulbs on the Earth that can re-sprout the year after. On its petals we see the god's mourning in the shape of letters: A and I! We never forget Hyakinth. We remember his death by organizing great celebrations each year that last for several days (Hnaraki 2007: 68).

the social state of affairs. According to Malinowski, it provides an account of origins – of the world, of people and of their conventions (Barnard and Spencer 1996: 386). In the case of Crete, myth is directly attached to music but not only to music. Levi-Strauss claims that it shares superficial syntactic and contrapuntal similarities with language but is essentially non-linguistic in form and effect (Barnard and Spencer 1996: 387-388). Linguistic accumulation builds the myth according to the musical prototypes of this culture and music becomes the sung myth, a myth that could not possibly be supported without music. Here is an example of this “myth become song” that reflects Cretan culture. It is based on a myth but what makes it “Cretan” is the language used, meaning the Cretan poetic idiom, the iambic fifteen syllable verse together with the musical idiom.

Κύκλο με μαυρομάνικο μαχαίρι θα χαράξω
Κι ένα σταυρό καταμεσίς χάμαι στη γης θα γράψω.
Να κάτω πάνω στο σταυρό να μη ξαναταράξω
Και ξαργουτού τη λύρα μου ανάποδα να πιάσω
Να' ρθουν οι βελζεβούληδες, χίλιοι καλικάτζάροι
Κι ο κάθε εις να πολεμά τη λύρα μου να πάρει
Να με ρωτού, να μη μιλώ μηδ' άχνα να μη βγάνω
Να λένε, να μου τάσσουνε τον κουζουλό να κάμω
Στην υστεργιά ένας κουτσός, γέρου διαόλου κάρτσα
Θα μπαϊλτίσει να γροικά τση λύρας μου τα φάλτσα
Κι ωσάν το όφυ θα χυθεί τη λύρα να μ' αρπάξει
Σ' ένα χαράκι θ' ανεβεί αντικριστά να κάτσει
Ν' αρχίσει ο γέρο δαίμονας απόσιγα να παίζει
Να βγάνει η λύρα κοντυλιές ωσάν το πετιμέζι
Να ξεσταθούν τ' αερικά και το διαολομάνι
Να στέσου μέγα πατιρντί και γλέντι μάνι-μάνι
Και γω θα κάθομαι άπραγος μα και τρουλαφχιασμένος
Να δω και ν' αφουγκράζομαι πώς παίζει ο ξορκισμένος
Να κλέφτω τα τσακίσματα τη γλύκα του σκοπού ντου
Του δοξαριού το γύρισμα, το σείσμα του χεριού ντου

Να μάθω χίλια μυστικά ώστε να ξημερώσει
Να φύγουν τα δαιμονικά και ο τόπος να μερώσει.

I will carve a circle with a black-handled knife
And sit on the cross so as not to be scared again
I will straight away hold my lyra upside down immediately
And all the demons and thousands of goblins will come
Each of them will try to take my lyra away
They'll ask me, I won't answer, and I won't breath a word
They'll talk and they'll make promises while I play the fool
Later on an old crippled one who's as sharp as a needle
Will be fed up with the false notes of my *lyra*
And he will pounce upon me to grab it
He will climb a rock and sit opposite me
Start playing the *lyra* slowly-slowly
And his *kondylies* [mantinades] will be like molasses
All the pixies and the demons will draw closer
And there will be a big commotion and fun
I'm sitting down doing nothing
To see and listen how the dead play
To steal the ornamentations and the sweetness of his melody
The turns of his bow and the shake of his hands
I want to learn a thousand secrets before the sun sets
Until the demons go away and everything is calm again
(*Stigmes*, vol. 76, 2004: 70-72)²⁵

The *lyra* belongs to the category of the bowed instruments, which was named by the Arab researchers of the Middle Ages as *kamantza roum*. We also see it in Turkey and also in Bulgaria. The word *roum* (corruption of the word Rome) is used by the Arabs, the Persians and the rest of the Asian world. The use of this word was referring to the

²⁵ This text is from the Cretan magazine, *Stigmes*. The myth is considered to be one of the most widespread in Crete.

Byzantine and Western era. It first made its appearance in Crete during the seventeenth century, and the art of *lyra* playing became a common practice in the eighteenth century (see Anoyiannakis 1991).

Shaped like a half-pear, and having a bow taken from the violin, the *lyra* has three-strings (sometimes it has more than three strings). It is held upright and played by stopping the strings by using the fingernails. To begin with there were two types of *lyra*: 1) the *lyraki* (small *lyra*) which has a sharp sound and 2) the *vondolyra* with a deep and hollow sound (**Figures 9-10**).



Figure 9. Different types of *lyra* exhibited at Ross Daly's museum in Choudetsi, a small village a few miles away from Heraklio.



Figure 10. Papalexakis’s music store in Rethymno (Top left: One of the oldest *lyras* in Rethymno), (Top right: A carved eagle at the back of a new *lyra*), (Bottom left: Paper pattern of a *lyraki*), (Bottom right: Instrument maker trying a brand new *lyra*)

Earlier, it was not unusual to have bells, *gerakokoudouna*²⁶ placed along the bow in order to enhance the rhythm, but this is less common today. The growing popularity of the violin in the mid-war period (1940s) resulted in the appearance of a new type of *lyra*, the *viololyra*, commonly used in central Crete at that time. A conventional *lyra* of today combines the *lyraki* and the *vrondolyra*. Old constructions had a hole in the middle of the

²⁶ *Gerakokoudouna* (Gr.: γερακοκούδουνα): Bells placed on the feat of hunting falcons in Byzantine times.

head for the *lyra* player to place his cigarette.²⁷ This was especially deemed necessary because the celebrations (mainly engagements and weddings) lasted for days. Such apertures are not to be seen today.

One of the interesting aspects of the *lyra* has to do with the fingering technique of the left hand. In contrast to the violin and other instruments which belong to this category, the strings are not pressed by the fingertips of the left hand; rather they are merely touched lightly from the side by the back of the nails. It is a fact that the principal instruments in use throughout Crete are the *lyra* and the violin in accompaniment with the *lagouto* (a big lute closely related to the Arabic *oud* with four courses of double strings made of steel, and movable frets made of nylon filament. “According to Papadakis, the violin seems to have been the main musical instrument in the province of Chania in the nineteenth century, while until the second half of the twentieth century in Western Crete, the *lyra* was played mainly in the province of Rethymno”).²⁸ Even today, the use of the violin in western Crete as well as in far eastern regions is principle in contrast to other areas of Crete. However, the *lyra* is still considered as the “soul” of Crete, and that is the reason why most Cretan performers play it in order to emphasise their Cretan identity. Because of the fact that the violin is regarded as a European oriented instrument, whereas the *lyra* has somehow been established as purely Cretan, it is most common nowadays to meet people who play the *lyra* rather than the violin.²⁹

²⁷ While being in Crete for my fieldwork I heard old people talking about the *lyra*. The eighty seven year old Manolis Mastrandonakis from Rethymno, reassured me that some old types of *lyra* used to have a hole in the middle of its head, in order for the musicians to place their cigarette. However, I called two of the most known traditional *lyra*-makers in Rethymnon to assure that this type of *lyra* existed. Both Giorgis Papalexakis and Manolis Stagakis confirmed that they have heard of this *lyra* but they have never seen such an instrument because it must be very old. Nonetheless Papalexakis’s words were the following: “This *lyra* may have existed before 1900s. I have seen many *lyras* in my life, but not such as the one you mention. I have heard somewhere that some of them had a hole for the cigarette, but I never gave emphasis to such a comment because I have never seen one myself. However, such a *lyra* may exist, because the old shapes could definitely justify a hole in this part of the instrument” (Phone interview with Papalexakis, October 2010).

²⁸ <http://www.umbc.edu/eol/3/magrini/lyra.htm>

²⁹ In the far western as well as the far eastern regions of Crete one would more often than not encounter the violin rather than the *lyra*. Indeed, in western Crete, a heated debated has arisen in recent decades concerning which instrument of the two is more authentic vehicle for Cretan music. Unfortunately this discrepancy is the result of a now obsolete ban imposed on violin-players by the state radio in the 1950s at the instigation of a researcher name Simonas Karas. Karas himself was under the sway of extreme nationalist ideologies and regarded the violin as a European imposition which simply supplanted the “native” *lyra* in certain regions. In fact neither instrument is truly indigenous to Crete (the oldest recorded presence of the *lyra* dates to 10th century Thrace, in Crete it seems that it appeared in the early 18th century), and previous to Karas intervention, it had never occurred to *lyra*-players and violin-players to look upon one another with animosity (Ross Daly: <http://www.crete-kreta.com/cretan-music-ross-daly/>).

A new and innovative type of *lyra*, has been designed by Ross Daly, who has increased the number of the *lyra*'s strings by adding eighteen sympathetic ones to the pre-existing three. In this way, the *lyra* sounds like the Indian *sarangi* or the Bulgarian *gudulka*, which also has sympathetic strings. His innovations can be partly attributed to his particular interest in other musical traditions. A virtuoso of Eastern musical instruments, he plays the Cretan *lyra*, Afghan *rabab*, *kemence*, *lagouto*, Ottoman *tanbur*, *saz*, Indian *sarangi* and *oud* among other instruments (see Kallimopoulou 2009: 59). Because of his passion of exploring the techniques of various instruments of different cultures, his new type of Cretan *lyra* was something innovative for the Cretans. This is the first time that the *lyra* has been paired with instruments of another, very different musical background, by using *sarangi*'s³⁰ techniques for example. Moreover, Daly has been attracted to the *politiki lyra* with its three large tuning pegs at the top of the neck, as compared with the small pegs of the Cretan *lyra*. Ross Daly's conviction is that it would be ideal for the Cretan *lyra* to borrow some of the characteristics of other *lyra*-types from Northern Greece, in order for it to be more comfortable to hold it. As such, the pegs would function as a support so that the musician can have his left-hand fingers free for playing (assuming he is right-handed), and gain more flexibility. This means that the technical potentials provided by the instrument are greater, and the most surprising of all is that this new type *lyra* (**Figure 11**) has been adopted and sold to many *lyra* players.



³⁰ *Sarangi*: It is a bowed, short-necked string instrument of India. It plays an important role in India's Hindustani classical music tradition. Of all Indian instruments, it is said to most resemble the sound of the human voice-able to imitate vocal ornaments such as *gamakas* (shakes) and *meend* (sliding movements). It is also said to be the hardest Indian instrument to master (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarangi>).

Figure 11. Ross Daly playing the *lyra* with sympathetic strings, devised by the instrument maker Nikos Bras (by permission of Ross Daly).

The *lyra* with sympathetic strings appeals to performers of a particular stylistic persuasion; its use is discussed below, in the context of alternative musical styles and their performers. For the moment this account will view the instrument's changes as historical and informative phenomena, with regard to use the use of the instruments.

Many efforts have been made to reconstruct the *lyra*. A typical example is the manufacture of the *viololyra* or *lyraviola* (**figure 12**) on the island of Crete.



Figure 12. *Viololyra* exhibited at the museum of Choudetsi

Vangelis Vardakis, a skilled violinist from the eastern part of Crete, states that these *lyras* existed in a period when the violin was popular. In the past the violin and the *lyra* were wedded and called “violins with sympathetic strings”. This type of violin was chiefly found in Chania. As the years went by, the standard modern violin prevailed at the two ends of the island, whereas in the middle part the *lyra* continued to hold place of honour. Kostis Papadakis, one of the most well known violin players, stated that

The *lyra* was brought by the Karamanlides and Lazi Muslims in 1723. Up to that time, the music of Crete was played with violins. Cretans did not accept the *lyra* for 100 years because it was considered a Muslim instrument. The first Christian that played the *lyra* was Thodoromanolis from Epanochori. Simon Karas, director

of the Public Greek Radio, along with a group of others, tried to destroy the musical heritage of Crete by prohibiting violin music from all broadcasting, a prohibition that has not been repealed even today! (Matalliotaki and Konstas 2003: 38).

It is significant that the violin is heard less and less throughout the island and is rarely played in public concerts owing to its replacement by the *lyra*. At the same time, I detected during my field research in Crete, instances, where the violin is identified as a “local” instrument. Two examples will suffice here. The first was in the village of Anoyia near Rethymno in Central Crete. A festival in August 2004 included dancing groups from all over Crete with each prefecture (Lasithi, Heraklio, Rethymno and Chania) providing representative musicians. In the case of Chania there was a violin player, Antonis Martsakis, who led other musicians and dancers. The presence of the violin confirmed the local origin of the ensemble. Everyone knew the people who were on stage.

On another occasion, when the Olympic flame passed through the town of Ierapetra (2004), traditional dances were performed to the accompaniment of the violin, even though the *lyra* is normally played in today’s festivities in that region. Again, the violin was once the core instrument that emphasized the “local” character of that region. The *lagouto* or *laouto*, an eight string lute, started being played as an accompanying instrument for the *lyra* or the violin after 1920. It replaced the *boulgari*³¹ (**figure 13**).

The *boulgari* was extremely widespread in the urban centres of Crete (Rethymno, Chania and Heraklio) during the inter-War period (1920-1940). It was used for the performance of the *tabachaniotika* songs, the urban heartache songs of Crete in where local music is combined with the Smyrna-style melodies and the *rebetiko*. It should also be mentioned that the *boulgari*, as well as the mandolin, had accompanied the *lyra* in Rethymno until the 1930s when the *lagouto* began to be employed with greater frequency (*Kontylios* Vol 1:50).

³¹ The *boulgari* arrived in Greece and Crete from Asia Minor in 1915 with the Greek refugees. It resembles the better-known *bouzouki*. In 1920, a new string instrument, the *lagouto*, began to compete with the *boulgari*. The most famous *boulgari* player was Stelios Phoustalierakis, commonly known as Phoustalieris (1911-1992), (liner notes from the CD cover *Protomastores*).



Figure 13. The *boulgari*

Furthermore, Ross Daly remarks:

The first account of the appearance of the *lyra* in Crete seems to be at the beginning of the 18th century. The Cretans had no *lagouto* until then. The *lagouto* appears at the beginning of the 20th century. In the past we also had the *boulgari*, but we have to take into account that the older instruments of Crete were wind. The *sfyrochamilo* or *thiaboli* or *chabioli* as well as the *askobandoura* (**figure 14**) are some of the names given to regular pipes, which are usually played by the shepherds. Percussion instruments, such as the small *daouli* (tabor) that still exist in Sitia and the *askobandoura*, which is a bag-pipe, were also in use (Interview with Ross Daly: June 2002).



Figure 14. This picture is taken in a *kafeneio* (coffee shop) in the village of Anoyia. Evangelos Tzanakis, an instrument maker, tries the sound of his bag-pipe (*askobandoura*). He promotes his instruments (handmade reed pipes and bag-pipes) in the most famous music village of Crete just before a great festivity, which is organised by the cultural authorities of Anoyia (July 2004).

The presence of the *lagouto* (**figure 15**) in contemporary Cretan ensembles is indispensable for an acceptable performance of any kind. Its current use differs from past practice. Now it is used to accompany, whereas it was once a solo instrument. Ross Daly believes that he bears some responsibility for this:

After the end of the 70s, the performers used the European music system and I have to admit that it is my fault in a way. A *lagouto* player in Chania asked me once to write down for him all the chords that someone could play on the *lagouto* (major, minor, seventh chords, etc.). Since I was aware of the Western music notation system, I made a little book for him including all the chords one could imagine. Since then the book was spread throughout the island and one could realize how effective this has been, for other *lagouto* players as well. Kostas Moudakis, who was my teacher, used microtones in the *lyra* and this is why he did not like to play with *lagouto* players even if they were experts... because he was playing by using microtones and the *lagouto* actually has a tempered tuning and tempered intervals (Interview with Ross Daly: August 2003).



Figure 15. The *lagouto*

However, the *lyra-lagouto* duo (**figure 16**) is the most popular in Crete. The Greek word for two instruments playing together is *zygia*. Michalis Tzouganakis attempts to emphasise the techniques of the *lagouto* in solo performances by relegating the *lyra* to a secondary role in his performances. For example, Tzouganakis still uses the *lyra*, but not as the leading instrument. The *lyra-lagouto* duo changed into *lagouto-lyra* and the *lagouto* has the leading part. This innovation and its inventor have gained popularity from this practice (see below).

This information is given in order to start showing the standardised use of instruments and how it gradually changes. In the following chapters I will analyse the impact these changes have in contemporary Cretan music.



Figure 16. A big bazaar takes place in Chania every summer. In many stands local products are sold. Here is a stand of selling local drinks, but everyone’s eyes stare at the two musicians who play Cretan music. The *lyra-lagouto* duet gives emphasis to the local identity (August 2007). This picture shows how music events are arenas where identity is produced and negotiated.

One more instrument that should be mentioned is the mandolin which used to be played as a melody instrument in combination with the *lyra* or alone. In the past men, played the mandolin when they sang *kantades*³² for their loved ones, and women also played it to perform traditional melodies. It was the only instrument that made no gender discrimination: both women and men equally enjoined to play it. By contrast, the *lyra*, the *lagouto* and the violin, almost exclusively were played by men.

Loudovikos ton Anoyion,³³ a Cretan artist who has elevated the mandolin to be a recognized instrument to accompany vocalists (**figure 17**):

I consider the mandolin to be the most appropriate instrument to accompany singing. Someone can both play the instrument and sing the melody at the same

³² *Kantada* (Gr. Καντάδα): Folk song of Venetian origin, (Cantada).

³³ “My real name is Giorgos Dramoundanis. I took my artistic pseudonym *Loudovikos ton Anoyion* from my mother and my brother. As you know people in Anoyia, where I come from, have a strong sense of humor and they are great teasers. My mother’s name is *Louloudia* and my brother’s name is *Nikos*. My compatriots used to call my brother with the nick-name *Loudonikos* (*Nikos*, son of *Loudoudia*). When Manos Chatzidakis (one of the most famous composers of Greece) met me, he wanted to give me a pseudonym which would also be followed by my place of origin. That’s how he decided calling me *Loudovikos of Anoyia* (*Loudovikos ton Anoyion*).

time. You either sing the upper melodic line of the mandolin. You can also control the volume of your playing. This is what I do... when I want to play with sensitivity I either do so without a plectrum or I use a piece of cardboard, which I sometimes lick so that the sound comes out shrill. I regard the Cretan mandolin as the instrument for singing while the *lyra* is for dancing. The *lyra* is made for “wild” performances and ecstatic dances... I cannot consider it to be an instrument for singing. Once its status was higher than that of the *lagouto*. It is offensive for it to have been reduced to a percussion instrument. The mandolin was played instead of the *lagouto* in the past, but it kept its soloist character. It was not used only to play the bass. The *lyra* and the mandolin were instruments that combined extremely well (Interview with Loudovikos of Anoyia: January 2004).



Figure 17. Loudovikos ton Anoyion playing his mandolin, at his house in Athens. This is not a “traditional” mandolin. It is a contemporary type of this instrument. As a “modern story-teller” he narrates a story about love with the accompaniment of his mandolin (Athens, January 2004).

My intention in this section was to describe the instruments that prevail throughout Crete. This is how the musical scene of the island is normally depicted. Knowledge of the instrumental dimension of performance throughout Crete clarifies the role of the instruments and their players in the different styles of Cretan contemporary music.

1.8. Dance

Cretan dance is a manner of expression, and a highly structured activity indissolubly connected with the tradition of the island. “Dance functions as a symbol, a way of constructing identity; in other words, dance is a socially constructed movement system and, in that sense, dance performance is a way to construct identity” (Hnaraki 2007: 82). Music, song and dance, exist equally as media of social articulation. The special communicative role of dance deserves recognition in the face of a rapid developing “tradition”, since it is the most conservative component of folk art, especially with regard to the addition of new steps and movements. Unlike instrumental music and singing, dance less easily absorbs new features and new dances rarely enter the repertory. The reason for this is that to create a new dance demands team work, whereas singing and music are individually formatted (see Loutzaki 1985).

The folk dancer belongs to a local community in a specific geographic area of the island, which has an understanding of the concept of dance. Hence, the dancer’s cultural background is founded on the carriers of tradition in the community. On hearing Cretan melodies and rhythms, a knowledgeable dancer instinctively employs the corresponding steps, following and respecting the dancing “rules”. These include: when the dancer should improvise, in which position, etc. Age, gender and social status play an important role in dancing procedure. Differentiation in body movement is determined by the skill, technique, will, emotion and attitude of the dancer, who creates images of meaning that are connected with the past. For most Cretans, dance is an essential part of life (see Lykesas 1993). It is associated with ecstasy as well as ritual, even though the meanings heard today bear little resemblance to those of the past. There is a variety of dances throughout Crete, and they vary according to each village or region. Today one can notice the slight variations of the steps in different prefectures. Reference will be made in most of them, although only few are actually danced by non-professional dancers in contemporary *glendia*, and are spread over all regions today.

The *Pentozali*³⁴, traditionally a male dance (**figure 18**), is fast and always accompanied by *mantinades*. Its name originally comes from the words *pente zala* which mean five steps. The dance may be done either on one spot or moving clockwise; it represents revolution, heroism and hope. Unlike the other Cretan war dances the *Pentozali* has a rebellious character, as shown by its dynamic style. It is accompanied by a *lyra* or violin in combination with the *lagouto* or the mandolin (sometimes with bagpipes, especially in northern Crete). Over time, the *Pentozali* was also performed by women, who today dance it at festivals.

For the *Siganos*³⁵ (slow walking dance) the dancers, in a circle, hold each others' shoulders. During the Turkish occupation it became a team dance, symbolizing friendship among the members of the Cretan community or a chain of unity and freedom (**figure 19**).

³⁴ *Pentozali*: Perhaps the best known and most venerable dance of Crete. It is said that during the Turkish domination, Crete and Greece having need of allies, was in collaboration with Russia. Ioannis Vlachos, or Daskalogiannis, who was head of the rebellion of 1770 decided to invent a new war dance. Daskalogiannis sent a letter to the violinist Stefano Triantafillaki asking him to write a *pyrrichio* ("war dance") a special composition for the *pempto zalo* ("fifth revolt"). Indirectly, he implied that the fifth revolt against the Turks was almost ready to start and because of the fact that he talked about dance, he used the word *zalo* which means step. According to the ancient melody that was already known in Crete, he composed music for this new war dance. According to Daskalogiannis' request the melody should have twelve musical turns, because the leaders of the rebellion were twelve in number, and ten steps because the rebellion began in October 1769 (October is the tenth month). The dance was performed only by men, who held each others shoulders in order to symbolize the union, the support and the trust they had among them. They named the dance *pentozali* because it was the fifth attempt against Turkish power. Ultimately, the rising against the Turks was actually repressed since Russian aid never arrived. Daskalogiannis and many of the generals died but *pentozali* lived on until today and it is the most famous dance of Crete (Tsouchlarakis 2000: "Cretan Dances: Myth, History, and Tradition").

³⁵ *Siganos*: This dance is comprised of six or eight steps and it gradually spirals, because of the number of people doing it. It is often said that it depicts the departure of Theseus from the Labyrinth. There is not much information about its origin. It is said, however, that during the Ottoman period, the privileged ones used to call the Cretans at their places and put a slippery substance on the floor so that the women and the girls dancing would fall and their skirts would rise. To avoid this, the Cretans asked the instrumentalists, usually Christians, to compose melodies for a walking dance so that the women would not lose their balance and fall (www.grecian.net/music/dances.htm).



Figure 18. Men from Heraklion dancing *Pentozali* in the main square of the village of Anoyia (Anoyia Dance Festival, July 2005).



Figure 19. Old photo with male and female dancers performing the *Siganos*

The *Syrtos*³⁶ is a cyclical dance. It is also known as *Chaniotikos Syrτος*, which origins lie in ancient Greece. It is performed by dancers holding each others' hands. Despite its utter simplicity, it is of great importance and exudes mystery. It is believed that simple cyclical dances were favoured in Minoan Crete as inseparable components of religious rituals. An object or a person is encircled in order to praise, thank, beg or liberate it from the evil spirits (Tsouchlarakis 2000: 79). The *Syrτος* grew popularity in the 1920s. Its expressive manner of performance differs from one place to another. In the western part of the island the *Syrτος* is stately and it has more lyrical impetus as we move eastwards. *Syrτος* is always danced at social occasions by both men and women (**figure 20**).



Figure 20. One of the famous dancing schools in Heraklio, performing the *Syrτος* (Anoyia Dance Festival, July 2005)

³⁶ According to an old custom, Cretans were singing while resting in between the battles (March 1453), encouraging their compatriots to be brave and even sacrifice themselves for their country (see Romania A. 1965). As said by Kostas Papadakis or *Naftis* who preserved the testimonies of older musicians, as Nikolaos Katsoulis or *Koufianos* (1877-1947), Marianantrikos (1858-1938), and others, the warriors from Megalonisos combined the ancient pyrrhic Cretan music with the *mantinades* and the Byzantine Chant. The outcome of these combinations was the composition of two novel melodies. Those who survived brought these melodies in Crete. According to oral tradition these melodies were spread in the province of Kissamos (Chania) and they were used in local musical tradition (as single melodies, not for dancing) until mid 18th century. When the famous violinist from Kissamos, Stefanos Triantafyllakis or *Kioros*, was invited to play for a wedding, after the request of some chieftains for dancing, he played these two prestigious melodies with his violin. Today these melodies are called *protos chaniotikos* (first *chaniotikos*) and *defteros chaniotikos* (second *chaniotikos*), (see Papadakis 1989).

The *Sousta* is based on an ancient pyrrhic dance (Tsouchlarakis 2000: 53, see also Aetoudakis 1982) that represented the adventure of battle. Once women began taking part in it, the dance was transformed into one of courtship. It is now performed in a bouncing motion on the balls of the feet, with very small and light steps, almost as if dancing on tiptoe. Both men and women dance with their hands on hips, although the man may instead have his hands outstretched to the side, snapping his fingers to the rhythm. The dance dialogue between two dancers often ends up in a rivalry of fancy improvisations. This is very much appreciated by the audience, and preferred to the synchronized movements of modern dancing groups, where everything is stylized in accordance with premeditated choreographic movements. *Mantinades* are essential for the performance of the *Sousta* dance. One of them says:

*Όμορφη από 'ναι η κοπελιά όντε χορεύγει σούστα
Κι όλα τα μάθια ράσσουνε στην όμορφή τση φούστα
How stunning this girl is when she dances the sousta
And all the eyes stop on her beautiful skirt
(Tsouchlarakis 2000: 56)*

Another one says:

*Σεβντά 'χει η σούστα και χτυπά όποιο τηνε χορέψει
Και του 'ρχεται του κοπελιού την κοπελιά να κλέψει
The sousta's passion strikes whoever dances it
And makes the man want to steal the woman (Tsouchlarakis 2000: 56)*

The *Maleviziotis* or *Kastinos Pidichtos*³⁷ is characterized by individuality and the progressiveness of the moves. Its structure permits the lead dancer to develop improvisation as the basis for the dancing performance. The leader must show creative dancing skills and his virtuosity by following the music's brisk rhythm and spirit. Many

³⁷ The *Maleviziotis* or *Kastrinos Pidichtos*: This dance was named *Maleviziotis* because of its appearance in the province of Malevizi in Heraklion. Later it was called *Kastrinos Pidichtos*, because it was danced in the old quarter of Heraklio, the so called *Kastro* (*castele*, ie within the castle), (see Tsouchlarakis 2000).

women often lead the *Malevizioti* dance, elegantly and appropriate deference towards the men. This is considered to be one of the most difficult but also liveliest dances in Crete, by most amateur dancers, and that is the reason why it is performed mainly by young people who are strong and fast (**figure 21**). The relevant *mantinada* says:

Δα παίζομε και καστρινό και το μαλεβιζιώτη
Απού τονε χορεύουνε, οσοί' χουνε τη νιότη
We will play the *kastrino* and the *malevizioti*
in order for the young people to perform it
(Tsouchlarakis 2000: 61).



Figure 21. The Dancing School of Dimitris Kaparakis in Ierapetra, performing the *Malevizioti* in the Dance Festival of Anoyia (July 2005)

There are other dances which are not as well known: the *priniotis*, *trizalis*, *apanomeritis*, *koutsampadianos*, *zervodeksos*, *ksenobasaris*, *lazotis*, *mikro mikraki*, *stiakos* or *yierapetritikos chamezanos*, *prinianos* etc. These are mostly favoured by elderly people, or by professional dancers who, interested in reviving old customs, and want to advertise their dancing schools as “traditional” (see Tsouchlarakis 2000, Chatzidakis 1958).

As in many societies throughout the world, dance, among other cultural expressions, is one of the strongest aspects of tradition in Crete. In addition to poetry and music one can observe a powerful triad of expressing identity. Moreover, the distinct dialect, with a variety of local elements mostly regarding pronunciation and vocabulary, the unique food and the warm hospitality, all give a sense of the Cretan tradition. In summary, the musical instruments (especially the *lyra-lagouto* duet), the fifteen syllable iambic verses (*mantinades*) as well as dance, are inseparable constituents of the unique character of the island, regarding musical expression. A brief introduction on the musical aspects of Crete was just completed in this part of the thesis. My aim was to give an overview of what Cretan music is and what are its links with the past historically and musically, for the better understanding of deeper concepts regarding music, tradition and the culture of Crete.

CHAPTER TWO

The conduct of fieldwork in Crete

2.1. Ethnomusicology at Home

In this chapter I will start with a brief account of one of the most important anthropological as well as ethnomusicological methodological tools: fieldwork. First I will underline the importance of fieldwork since it is considered by far, one of the dominant practices in ethnomusicology; secondly, I will stress the new trends in ethnomusicology: the practice of doing fieldwork “at home”; and thirdly I will narrate my own fieldwork experience.

Ethnomusicology has undergone severe shifts in orientation in its short history as a discipline. In the United States, where the field has received the most institutional support, ethnomusicology was not established as a recognized subject in any university before the 1950s. Since then the field has developed and changed rapidly, to some extent following contemporary trends in related disciplines - especially anthropology - and to some extent evolving along its own idiosyncratic lines (Manuel 1995).³⁸

Ethnomusicology as it emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was practiced by pioneers such as Bela Bartok, Zoltan Kodaly, Carl Stumpf, Alexander J. Ellis, Jaap Kunst and others who tended to focus on non-European music of an oral tradition (McClean 2006). The discipline has been affected by scholars applying a variety of anthropological approaches to their disciplines, following the initiatives of scholars such as Lomax, Merriam and Blacking. “Ethnomusicology moves between the disciplines of musicology and anthropology depending on the individual ethnomusicologist, but also draws from other disciplines and fields” (Barz and Cooley 1997:10).

Fieldwork is now regarded as the ethnomusicologists’ indispensable tool (Nettl 1983: 6). In Barz and Cooley’s (1997) privileging of ontology (being there) over epistemology (knowing that).³⁹ The following pages describe my own transformation

³⁸ <http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/trans1/manuel.htm>.

³⁹ In this review of the role of methods in relation to theory in ethnomusicology, the field emerges as the place where data are collected to test theories...We believe in fieldwork. Fieldwork for what? Not

while “being there”. No matter how strong my theoretical background was, or I thought to be, it is fieldwork experience which actually teaches one how to become an ethnomusicologist; this was certainly true in my case. Being there was much more productive for me, because I became part of the culture under investigation. In addition, I learnt from my mistakes, something that made me strong enough to confront new challenges in the field. Fieldwork led to greater insights and understandings of the culture I chose to explore, rather than my academic background. Besides, fieldwork has been described as “knowing people making music”, an experiential, dialogic, participatory way of knowing and “being-in-the-world” according to Jeff Todd Titon (Barz and Cooley 1997: 15).

In more recent years the field of ethnomusicology has expanded to embrace musical styles from all parts of the world and ethnomusicology “at home” has become an important part of the discipline. “Home” is understood as the place where one is born, has been raised, has had the benefit of accommodation, and has also been taught certain codes of communication. Hence, home is primarily connected to the family; kinship relations that provide security and certainty and, ideally warmth and affection. Intimacy develops with the people one lives with, in spite of their differences, and is the fundamental reason for acknowledging that “place” as the domain to which one belongs. It is the sense of obligation combined with the feeling of belonging that automatically makes us view a place as “home”. A microcosm is mirrored in the social and cultural environment in which we are raised and function. Hence, the geographic location of our house, in addition to the social and cultural extensions, determines our notion of “home”.

It might also be admitted that the designation “home” could also be given to the place to which we are attached and very closely connected, even though we are not its natives. Perhaps the natural beauty, the environment, the temperament of the people or other cultural aspects has made us wish to revisit a place or perhaps even settle there. In

apparently as a place to test and work out theory, an experimental place in other words, but a place to become an ethnomusicologist, an experiential place. This aspect implies the belief that the experience of fieldwork, whatever its methods or even in the absence of methods, constitutes the sine qua non of the state of being an ethnomusicologist. In this credo we have the privileging of ontology (being there) over epistemology (knowing that), and the beginning of a potentially fruitful turn away from fieldwork methods toward fieldwork experience. According to this credo, sometime during or after fieldwork, one becomes an ethnomusicologist. In effect, the self is transformed and reconfigured in the act of understanding one’s own or another culture (Bartz and Cooley 1997: 105).

this circumstance we as outsiders, may not relate fully to many aspects of the way of life. In any event, to adjust to a new place we must adopt the behavioural conventions of its existing society, or else we would be at the fringe. Yet, no matter how much we are able to integrate into a foreign society and no matter how much we like a place it will never in reality be our “home”.

In Greece, when we refer to a place very familiar to us or to people we like a lot, we often use the expression “it’s my second home”. It feels like home but is it actually like it? I disagree with Maria Hnarakis’s statements which describes “field” as “home”.

When I say “field”, I do not mean Greece, Crete or the village of Anoyia alone. The field is something I always carry with me; therefore, it may be everywhere that I, as a body, can also be (corporeal fieldwork). At the same time, it may also travel to whatever I, as a mind, spirit, and soul, can travel to as well. In this sense, the “field” exists for me in both time and space, in either time or space, but also out of time and space. The “field” has the same notion that “home” has for me; thus “my field” is also “my home”.

I would describe the “field” as a “temporary home”, where one tries to understand the inner relations and the codes of communication (musical, social, cultural codes etc.) among the members of the society under investigation. Besides, the ethnomusicologist is always in a constant battle of understanding. What is to understand when one is “home”? He/she knows...because some things are taken for granted. The “field” should be seen as a new world in which the scholar must always have his or her eyes open. Nothing should be taken as a priori even if the fieldwork takes place in our home. Hence, I would comment on Hnarakis’s words that “my home” can be “my field” but “my field” can never actually be “my home”.

The researching ethnomusicologist, who employs anthropological research methods, in most cases is not an insider of the culture under investigation. I assert that because it is not easy to overcome the starting points of the term “ethnomusicology” and the definitions given to it. Despite the fact that progress has been made in this field, especially in the last two decades, many ethnomusicologists still support the idea that ethnomusicology is the concern with music “outside one’s own society” (Nettl 1964: 11),

or “ethnomusicology is concerned with the music of other people’s” (Wachsmann 1969). Early in the field was Merriam’s report on fieldwork in which he observed that “ethnomusicological fieldwork automatically implied research outside of Europe or America, though there have been exceptions to this general rule” (Merriam 1964:7). As a result, these continents would be the fields for Asian or African scholars who would also have European or American training since ethnomusicology has its roots in both these continents. “Ethnomusicology... (is)... the study of non-Western music and, to an extent... folk music...” (Nettl 1961: 2). But what is there to prevent a researcher to study the indigenous of one’s own culture? Does the definition of ethnomusicology depend at any given point on who is studying what? So, who would prevent a scholar from researching in depth his own culture? Hood’s well-known definition in the *Harvard Dictionary* spoke of ethnomusicology as “an approach” (1969), and others have followed with variations on the same general concept, including Seeger (1970), Liszt (1971), Chase (1972), and Merriam (1973).

In addition, I would maintain that my “approach”, among others, towards a new ethnomusicological trend, is called “ethnomusicology at home”. There are many younger scholars whose topic of research took place at “home”. Maria Hnaraki, for example, has extensively researched the music of Crete, her birthplace (2007); “Paradosiaka: Music, Meaning and Identity in Modern Greece” is the title of Eleni Kallimopoulou’s book (2009), is also about Greece. Stephen Cottrell’s book “Professional Music-Making in London: Ethnography and Experience” (2004) is another example of “being at home”, as is Daphne Tragaki’s book “Rebetiko worlds”, which describes the rival of Rebetiko in her hometown Thessaloniki (2007). Thus “being at home” is another “approach” to understanding, and fieldwork at “home” is the tool through which we can make this understanding deeper and perhaps analyze it in less time than we might have needed in any other case.

I live in Greece yet I am not fully informed about the music of my neighbours, the Turks or the Bulgarians. I can only become aware of their music if I were to spend time listening to it. Moreover, I could not appreciate it in academic terms unless I learned about their cultural identity. While I am aware of their “otherness” in multiple dimensions I also recognize the “otherness” of my Greek neighbours. No matter how big a country is

one cannot live simultaneously in two or more different places. I am not familiar with the culture of the Ionian Islands or with that of Northern Greece simply because I have never lived in either place. Undoubtedly, I will be able to recognize parallel modes of behaviour because we all share Greek culture. But it is the small differences between two places that are well worth the trouble of investigating, even by native scholars.

I must admit at the same time, that as a result of the multiplication of urban centres, I do not even feel close to my Athenian neighbour. My next door neighbour could possibly be an ethnomusicological case study for me simply because of our separate identities. This would require me, as an outsider, to enter his/her world should I wish objectively to make investigations – just as I would in any part of the globe. Naturally, I would have the advantages of speaking the same language as my subject, but even in one's own country idioms can differ to the degree that one could categorize his own people as "others" who speak a dialect that requires decoding. In these ways, "ethnomusicology at home" faces challenges quite similar to those who practice the field of ethnomusicology in some "exotic" area abroad. Pertinent here is Nettl's statement about non-native scholars: "it may be that I will never understand his music the way his countrymen do, and that the best I can expect is to be able to point out some interesting things they hadn't noticed" (Nettl 1983: 263). Taking this one step further, I believe that one could equally point out certain remarkable things, not only about a foreign culture but also about one's "home culture". In this case, not only could we be expected to point out "interesting things" but we may use as a base what we already know and then cautiously open ourselves to new perspectives. Thus, one would have a better understanding of the culture under examination, not merely superficial impressions. There is indeed therefore, "ethnomusicology at home" - seeing one's own culture from the perspective of a stranger (see Jackson 1987).

In the case of my own research for this thesis, I would characterize my fieldwork as "fieldwork at home" yet not at "home". I am an Athenian with roots in Crete (Crete is mother's birthplace) and, as a result, have spent considerable time on the island. My knowledge of the culture of Crete is not extensive. Understandably there is not only a "general" all-embracing outline in Crete, but there are obvious differentiations in the attitudes of various groups.

As Kirsten Hastrup asserts, in fieldwork you will always “see” yourself while studying others, just as anthropological discourse is a discourse with two objects, “selves” and “others”, materializing simultaneously. Furthermore, she poses the question of what happens if the dialogue is no longer cross-cultural but parallel-cultural? (Hastrup 1987: 104). Her answer is that fieldwork of this kind is likely to reflect the situation of a one-way mirror.⁴⁰

Ethnomusicology at “home”, is not “poorer” than ethnomusicology elsewhere, especially when one is involved in the reflexive aspect of ethnomusicological discourse. No one should disregard the advantages of a “home” context including knowing one’s informants, sharing their language and both being more at ease with the other. Doing fieldwork at “home” does not delimit the language barriers and the scholar can have a better understanding of the cultural context. The native fieldworker is able to gather information more easily because of the fact that he/she normally has better contacts than a non-native researcher.

As far as the disadvantages are concerned, one must guard against being too close to the informants, either as a friend or storyteller. It is also important to ensure that the informant does not disregard material that he/she knows the fieldworker has heard before. It would appear that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. One could easily conclude from this that ethnomusicology at “home” is easier than plunging oneself into an unknown culture.

In Crete ethnomusicologists are regarded primarily as journalists who write about Cretan music, especially by people who are not involved with music. There were many cases during my fieldwork, where I was confronted as a journalist. Travelling throughout Crete and holding a camera or a recorder made people think I was a journalist coming to write an article or show parts of their life on television. It is very important for them to communicate their ideas through someone who is a publishing authority. Therefore, their remarks will most often be orally delivered but written and, most importantly, be read by scholars for example. For those who are celebrities and thus, used to being interviewed, their familiarity with all kinds of reporters is readily evident, although there is always the

⁴⁰ “I would suggest that under such conditions your fieldwork is likely to reflect the situation of the one-way mirror; *you* will see only yourself and you will identify ‘them’ with your own image (of past and present conditions); *they*, on the other hand, will see through to ‘you’, and talk to you as if you were a real person in their world, absolutely distinct from themselves” (Jackson 1987: 104).

danger of distorting the discussion. The interviewer is sometimes manipulated by the informant, who often avoids a question or stresses exactly what he/she wants to expound on. Falsely believing you are one of them, the local celebrities are keen on expressing passionately their ideas. Hence, they express passionately their ideas on the subject. What they say may be irrelevant to the subject the ethnomusicologist is interested in and this is exactly the moment when the native ethnomusicologist's job becomes more difficult, a situation I have found myself in on a number of occasions.

I still remember a meeting with Psarandonis (one of the most famous and well-known Cretan musicians) in Athens some years ago (2005). After having met him in Crete quite a few times he felt comfortable enough to ask me out for a coffee when he visited Athens. I told him that I had not finished with the interviews, so it would be a good opportunity for me to bring my recorder and interview him once again. He agreed and so it happened. While being in the cafeteria we started talking about Cretan music's origins and ancient Greece. It was impossible to stop him talking about ancient Greek music, about Zeus and to what extent the Greek government disrespects contemporary musicians. Suddenly, our conversation had a political turn, something I personally, would have preferred to avoid. He insisted on recording this information and that I should give a political slant to my writings. "It is very important for the people to know the truth about all the authoritarians who don't give a shit about culture and real music. I am furious and I'm crazy! I would like to go to the ministry of culture holding a bomb and blow out their brains, because they don't respect our heritage. We are descendants of Zeus and nobody cares..." Psarandonis was so disappointed and displeased; he was so angry and irritated that it was almost impossible for me to bring to an end this topic.

On another occasion, we arranged with Loudovikos of Anoyia to go to his house in Kamariotis, a small village in Rethymno. Again, it was extremely difficult to avoid talking about his plans for his new record. All he cared about was the sound of his new CD and whether I as a musician, would like it or not. So, most of our conversation was about his new album and the orchestration of the songs, something that I was not particularly interested in at that time. He manipulated the conversation to the directions he wanted, and I could not change subject because of his great enthusiasm.

Another example demonstrates how the situation could get entirely out of my control. I had arranged to meet a member of a well-known Cretan musical family in Athens. He was somewhat diffident, quite introverted and shy. Nevertheless, I persuaded him to receive me for an interview at his house. When I asked him his opinion on Cretan music his answer was somewhat terse. I asked him the same question using different words but again his response was totally epigrammatic and without depth. Before long he began informing me that he follows Chinese philosophy. He talked extensively about yin and yang, and that all he cared about was how to become a better man, and also to what extent we are surrounded by evil forces. When I made an effort to change the subject he tried to connect everything to his beliefs and to his way of approaching life and music through Chinese philosophy. I found it extremely hard to follow him and left his place disappointed, without any essential material for my study.

I consider myself to be a “middle case” ethnographer; positioned between an outsider and an inside fieldworker since I am dealing with various genres of Cretan music. It is valuable for the ethnographer to know about Cretan history. Since both of us- me and the person I interview- are Greek, this creates both advantages and disadvantages. As an ethnographer with Greek origins, I have an awareness of Greek history, which of course includes Crete. Thus, at this level, I am more or less familiar with historical facts of importance that apply to the history of Greece.

On the other hand, some people who are interviewed, when speaking about Cretan history, either name or make judgments about others and their behaviour, as well as their effect on the history of the island. It is hard for a non native ethnographer to be aware of such details, so I often find myself sitting still and not knowing how to respond in order not to offend the informant. It might be that the informant’s national pride might be hurt since I, the “journalist”, am ignorant of that particular aspect of the island’s history. Or I might be considered as a complete stranger and therefore not be trusted. Ideally undertaking fieldwork in a parallel culture involves a sense in which the ethnographer will always be both stranger and friend (Jackson 1987:104). Ethnographers may pretend only to know about the island’s history. This could lead to a situation where one would be passive and defensive. One might then receive information that he may never be able to cross-check. Hence, this information would be of no use.

The aforementioned examples highlight the awkward position I found myself in, even though I was at “home”; a friend among strangers and vice versa. I was unable to control the interviews because of the very strong personalities of my informants, who were persistent in their opinions. This could undoubtedly occur also in another culture. The prism through which one confronts such complexities may differ from ethnographer to ethnographer, as may be the way he/she deals with it. Later in this chapter, I will narrate various stories taken from my field research at “home” reinforcing the point that there are not many dissimilarities but many similarities from being a non-native researcher. Apparently one always comes across a range of facts and incidents that are unique and special. It is my opinion that this is the magic of conducting fieldwork no matter if the area one chooses is home or not.

2.2. Ethnography

2.2.1. Pre-fieldwork period in Athens

Back home at your desk you will continue to be engaged laboriously with the people you study, through imagination, recollection and reconstruction. It is easy to forget that writing is as much a part of fieldwork as any choice passage of travelling or startling encounter. (Michael Carrithers in *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology* 2002: 231).

Back at my desk again writing about my experiences, about my initial plans and how things evolved while doing fieldwork. I am thinking and rethinking which are the most important issues for me to analyze, trying to present things as objectively as possible through the most personal and individual practice: experience.

Timothy Rice gives an interesting definition about experience claiming that “musical experience is the history of the individual’s encounter with the world of musical symbols in which he finds himself” (Rice 1994: 6). He also captures his experience of Bulgarian music within an exclusively dialogic style that reflects the framework of his own learning experience. On the other hand Cottrell, who has engaged with professional music-making in London, has tried to balance his own experiences with those of others, allowing them, whenever possible, to be the channels through which data and observations become transmitted (Cottrell 2004: 27). Although I agree with Rice’s definition on experience, I chose not to write my ethnography in a very personal style, full of dialogues that mirror the state of affairs I experienced. For me experience is not only what I saw or heard, but also “learning” as a medium of deeper understanding. Thus, I cannot only define my musical experience as my history within a world of musical symbols in which I found myself. I became a musical symbol for myself through dance, in order to understand and conceptualise the act of dance, otherwise I could tell my own history under completely different terms as a researcher and a participant observer. The process of “learning” creates new meanings to experience.

Above all, the most interesting aspect of experiencing fieldwork procedure as an ethnographer is that, despite careful preparation before collecting data, the

ethnomusicologist often finds oneself in unprecedented situations. These situations are genuinely dissimilar one from the other; they are unique in every way and totally unexpected. Whether they arise from interviews, performances, recordings, filming or learning, their singularity acts as catalyst for the avoidance of possible future mistakes. Therefore, in support of received wisdom the general estimation that the course of ethnography cannot be pre-determined (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983: 28), I will begin by describing my plan for how to “do” ethnomusicology at “home”. Next I will show how, at times, one’s original research plans are changed by force of circumstance.

Although I lived and worked in Athens, I decided to travel for extended periods of time to Crete in order to absorb the island’s culture and see for myself how music is understood and performed in situ. Because a number of events and concerts take place in Athens my intention from the very beginning was to observe and investigate the dynamics of Cretan culture both in the capital on the island, something that never occurred in my case, at the end. My initial thought was that being in both places would save time because I could work in parallel both in Crete and Athens, and comparison of the two could yield interesting data. I would also have had, in the pre-fieldwork stage, an overview of the contemporary Cretan musical events before actually going to Crete.

One of my main concerns was the impact of globalization in Crete’s culture sphere and particularly in music. In other words, I wanted to understand the degree to which Cretans would be affected by the accelerating encroachment of a homogenized, westernized consumer culture, and how they struggle – or do not – to safeguard their traditions.

As capital and metropolis for many cultural fusions, Athens seems to be a hotspot for many young performers, especially in winter, in order to be known to a wider audience and, to one profoundly less conservative. I presumed that by listening to these performers in Athens I would be afforded an excellent opportunity to see how the performances differed from their place of origin. I could do this because I had attended performances in Crete in the past. A comparative approach towards what I had already heard and what I was about to hear would, I believed, be a good starting point for my ethnographic journey. My aim in this comparative approach was to get the “feel” of whether Cretan music undergoes a metamorphosis when it is performed away from its

original context. What was the correlation between the performer and the audience in each case?

Attending several performances in Athens, a succession of problems arose. My first visit was to Giorgos Zervakis's club. Zervakis is a young, well known *lyra* player and singer who has released quite a lot of CDs and mostly young people listen to him, although many Cretans question the quality of his music. Despite the fact that he is one of the most controversial *lyra* players I often heard comments such as "I don't like Zervakis cause he is not authentic", "I doubt if Zervakis has any musical depth", "All Zervakis cares about is money. He is a showman, and that is why young people like him so much. He has made a fortune out of his performances", "Zervakis has sung all these funny *mantinades*. He does not respect Cretan tradition etc". On the other hand, when I was out with young people their opinion varied in contrast to the elders who doubted Zervakis strongly. "I like him very much because he makes me having a good time at his performances", "Zervakis is one of the best young performers in Crete", "Zervakis has moved Cretan music towards new directions and his verses appeal to most young people", "I cannot compare Zervakis with the Great Masters of Cretan music, and I am not sure if I like his style, but his music definitely does not annoy me". All the aforementioned viewpoints prove how questionable Zervakis is.⁴¹

To come back to my choice of Zervakis's club, I would like to say that was incidental because many other Cretan musicians performed in Athens during the same period. But I felt that Zervakis would be one of the most important musicians for me to interview. Owing to his virtuosic performing style which, together with the "trashy" (according to some), lyrics set to "Cretan" melodies, dazzles the younger generation, I considered him to be a unique case to deal with. There was, however, a clear contradiction here: On the one hand there was a *lyra* player with a distinctive character playing "traditional" melodies with performing skill, but applying inappropriate lyrics that were not favoured by senior audiences, and on the other, the serving of whisky rather than the traditional *raki*. Moreover, keyboards were added to his ensemble. I was surprised when I heard him being accompanied by the keyboards. A consummate

⁴¹ All the quotes written above are taken from Cretan people in different parts of the island. I do not name them because their viewpoints were expressed spontaneously in different occasions, when I did not have my recorder around.

performer for the young, but characterized as “crap” and of doggedly low quality in the estimations of older people, was, without a doubt, a most compelling encapsulation of the present musical scene in Crete. As an enigma for the ethnomusicologist, I deemed Zervakis to be an appropriate starting point for my understanding of these contradictions. Hence my decision was to go to his club with some of my Cretan friends who had already booked a table for themselves and some others.

I drove my friends – who live in Crete and rarely visit Athens - to the *Kritiko Konaki*. Whereas there are innumerable places for dancing in the city, my friends preferred to be entertained by the music of their place of origin. They were young (in their twenties and thirties—a proof of the target group of Zervakis’s fans), full of energy, and, one would expect, full of curiosity about musical events in Athens. Why would they be so keen on listening to a performer who, since Zervakis only visits Athens for short periods of time, they could easily hear at home? I was, therefore, very eager to make my first visit as an ethnomusicologist to this Athenian-Cretan club.

Although my friends could have gone to the club with the others of their peer group, I wanted to take them because, as an unaccompanied young woman at a big Athenian club, I would be a target for the single males. This arrangement made me feel less vulnerable, and I could now peacefully observe what was happening inside the club. I remember myself sitting at a table with twenty others and the club being fully packed. Everyone was dancing, drinking whisky or vodka and singing. The only thing I could do was sit at the corner of the table and scribble down some notes. The minute others on the table saw that I was taking notes they wanted to know why. Questions were raised immediately: “What are you doing? Why are you taking notes? What sort of notes are they? Why did you write that verse down? What is so important about it? Why are you interested in this performer? Do you fancy him? Why would someone be so interested in Zervakis’ music?” I tried to explain but they were unsympathetic. “Keep your notes in your memory not on paper! We are here to have a good time. Join us and forget about your notes!” I had no choice but to enjoy the evening without a written record. But in the future, I would not venture out with people who did not appreciate the kind of work I was doing. Henceforth, I was obliged to visit the clubs by myself.

My next visit was to a club where a highly skilled and well-known singer and mandolin player performed. His stage name is Loudovikos ton Anoyion (real name: Giorgos Dramoudanis) and his music is close to a ballad style, and more romantic when compared with Zervakis. Loudovikos plays in a very small, dark club, *To baraki tou Vassili* (“Vassilis’ bar”), with a capacity of no more than a hundred people. Alone, and carrying my audio equipment, I asked for permission to use my mini disk to record the concert. My request was denied. Also present that evening was the editor of one of the most popular Greek music magazines, *Difono*. He had made a contract with a record company to record the concert and put it on sale for the next month’s volume. The editor was the only one who had the exclusive rights to this particular performance. Thus, the only remaining thing for me to do was to overcome the disappointment and observe the performers as well as the audience.

My third attempt was at another large and extravagant club where Giorgos Zervakis also played. It was a very cold Thursday night and I know well that Athenians do not set off early for an evening’s entertainment. Hence, the club would not be full and I could easily withstand the predatory attention of the males. I booked a table for myself and brought my audio and video equipment in order to record this event since I had failed twice before. I explained to the security guard who I was, what I wanted to do, and requested permission to use my “tools of trade”. This time I was allowed to proceed unimpeded. When I arrived I saw that I was right. The club was not crowded so I could sit in the balcony and have a gallery view of the proceedings. Suddenly dazzling light shone on me. I could barely see because it was so strong. Then I noticed that the *lyra* player staring at me and calling out to the waiter. He whispered something in the waiter’s ear. The latter came upstairs and asked me to stop recording and put my camera to one side. The performer felt uncomfortable about what I was doing.

I learned later that Zervakis asked about me, but when he learned who I was, he said that it was not right for an unaccompanied female researcher to record his work. I presumed that he disapproved of me because it was an affront to his masculinity. It was unacceptable for him that a woman could be enthusiastic about male activities such as playing the *lyra*. I could not understand this reaction, but it was clear that he did not want contact with me, not even his being an informant for my research. A friend of mine, who

called me a few days later, confirmed this attitude. The two happened to know each other and while talking over the phone they mentioned my name. My friend told him about my study, explained that part of my work was interviewing different people who I thought would be of importance for my PhD, one of them being him. His response to that comment was: “How could I possibly help her? What could I say to her? I have nothing to say; she can make her own judgments when I play and that’s it!” It was at that moment that I realized one of the key informants for my study would not be available so I decided to have no further dealings with him.

In the end, however, I did not give up. Because of his extensive influence on young people and the off-putting reactions of the elderly were so contradictory, I was obliged to uncover the reasons. Finally I introduced myself to him directly after visiting him repeatedly at the club and he was actually gentle and kind. I even managed to arrange a meeting with him in Athens, since he would be extremely busy in Crete. Broken rendezvous became habitual. When he finally sent me a text message that he would be off to Crete where he would be travelling continually, I understood that he would not make time for me.

Negotiating access and data collection are not, then, distinct phases of the research process. They overlap significantly. Much can be learned from the problems involved in making contact with people as well as from how they respond to the researcher’s approaches (Hammersley and Atkinson 1991: 56).

Since my first attempts to record or meet people in Athens for my research ended in failure, I came to the decision that I had to be merely a “complete observer” (Hammersley and Atkinson 1991: 93) of Athenian-Cretan events before setting off a trip to Crete.

The problem of accessing crucial data looms large in ethnography and this was fully confirmed by my attempt to approach performers. In my opinion, the ethnographer should be prepared for incidents such as the aforementioned, where one cannot gain access as easily as one thought. I agree with Malinowski’s argument that “preconceived ideas are pernicious in any scientific work, but foreshadowed problems are the main

endowment of a scientific thinker, and these problems are first revealed to the observer by his theoretical studies” (Hammersley and Atkinson 1991: 29).

It is important to remember that ethnomusicologists, are not only thinkers, but are also observers and participants in the scene that they are studying. As a result, they also have to face practical issues as well as theoretical ones. No matter how much theory one amasses concerning the difficulties in the field, the ethnographer should always be in a state of readiness in every situation. Ethnographic principles regarding theory are incarnated and materialized in the field, where personal experience constantly develops new theories about the framework of one’s study. Objective theoretical issues on the one hand can be used to draw the line of a study as long as someone is in the field, but subjective implements among individuals on the other, always differentiate the theorized models.

2.3. Journeys to Crete-Actual fieldwork period

2.3.1 Ethical dilemmas in the field

The research design was not particularly clear in my mind by the time I arrived in Crete. Because of the “foreshadowed problems” as Malinowski calls them (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983: 28-29), which manifested themselves in Athens, I ought to have designed a research outline which would help me divide my time in small-periods that would be effective and efficient for my research. On the contrary, I arrived in Crete inexperienced on the one hand but with the self-assurance that came along with having an ethnomusicological academic background on the other. I would also have the certainty that if something went wrong I would at least be at “home”.

Nevertheless, I embarked upon the actual fieldwork thinking of the advantages to be gained from developing theory through systematic data collection, following Strauss and Glaser (see Hammersley and Atkinson 1983: 29). Before proceeding with the data collection I first needed to identify promising sites. I found it difficult to concentrate and to be focused on such a broad topic in such a big island.

With my arrival in Crete (June 2003), and especially at my mother's birthplace, Ierapetra, where we have our own house and an abundance of relatives, I felt as if I were at "home". My aunts' home-made food, the long conversations and debates with my cousins who are all around my age, the plentiful supply of *raki*, the teasing among friends, the unique Cretan dialect which I largely learned to understand in childhood; all of these embodied the concept of the Cretan family, Cretan hospitality and the Cretan love of being surrounded by family and good friends. It was a familiar world but now I had to observe it from another point of view.

I have three very close aunts in Ierapetra (Malvina, Katina and Lela), all of whom are married and all live in the same apartment block. I can still remember Malvina's comments the day I arrived: "Welcome my dear! Have you eaten anything? If not, I can make something very quickly!" My answer was in the negative. I wanted to say politely that my visit this time was not about holidaying but about my ethnomusicological objectives. While attempting to explain my aims and what ethnomusicology was, I could already detect displeasure in her face. "You have already spent more than a year abroad" she said insistently. Haven't you had enough? Why are you doing this to yourself? Journalism is not the best thing for a woman at your age. You will be interviewing male performers who think only about sex! I would advise you to leave these silly things and search for a man to marry! Every girl at your age is married, not to mention that she has kids. You are already considered an old maid. Would you like to remain alone on the top shelf forever? I simply don't approve of your ideas!"

She was obviously irritated because of the fact that I was living a life that did not accord with her cultural background. Therefore, I was immediately regarded as "other" in her microcosm. The fact that I cooked my own food was even more annoying because I broke the family chain by doing something that they were not used to and at the same time breaking the rules of Cretan hospitality. I was characterized as "sexist" when I asked why men did not cook or why they never helped with the housework. "You must be mad!" they replied. "In Athens things are different. People act differently from us. Everything there is highly polluted while here we try to safeguard our purity, our customs and our tradition as far as we can. Men are men and women have to respect them".

At this point, I would like to emphasise on my position as an ethnographer coming from an urban environment, into a small-town Cretan society (Srinivas, Shah and Ramaswamy;1979, Probyn;1993). My relocation as an individual whose reactions had to overcome the boundaries of kinship displaced me from my family. All of a sudden my relatives became “strangers” and I could feel my otherness among them when adopting the role of the collector of information.

As Dennison Nash argues, one way to understand ethnographic research is to consider how the ethnographer adapts to the stranger role. As a stranger, he is cut loose from his former significant others. He has a strong sense of increased possibilities, and is overwhelmed by perceptual chaos (Agar 1980: 50). Despite the fact that the perceptual chaos did not apply to me in terms of dealing with a “culture shock”, the confusion of my dual identity was obvious and the question was: Did I adapt to the role of the stranger or did I cling to the idea of not being an outsider?

I was faced with a dilemma. Should I keep my distance from my relatives in Crete, or “go native” in the sense of being fully part of my Cretan family? However, to interpret Cretan culture as an “outsider” could only be achieved by being at one and the same time, part of and distant from the community (Mascarenhas-Keys 1987). And that is exactly what I did. I took advantage of some of my relatives’ knowledge of music and also acquired information about performers with whom they were acquainted. The performers’ co-ordinates could easily be gathered by attending their outdoor performances with my relatives. As such, I was introduced to the musicians as someone interested in their music. On the other hand I had the advantage of “detached involvement” (Agar 1980: 50) which safely deflected me from the role of the “Cretan”. Hence, I was directly identified as a scholar of Cretan origin, which was quite helpful because I was at some point closer to them than any scholar of other origin.

As I mentioned above, it was not easy for me to create a research plan for my fieldwork while I was in Athens. Owing to the broad spectrum of Cretan music and the unfortunate incidents in Athens, which were discouraging, I was convinced that the best place for fieldwork was Crete. Of principal importance was the fact that throughout Crete, there is a variety of performers who play different musics, yet most are characterized as “Cretan”. Who were these performers? What kind of music did they play

and what was the audience's perception of these diverse styles of music? These three basic questions were fundamental for me at the beginning of my research in Crete. I had to commence activities by attending *glentia* or other festivities that take place on the island.

Numerous posters depicting the performers, the time and location of their concerts, were posted in every single corner of the island (**figure 22**). There was no need to buy a magazine or newspaper to be informed about musical events. From the moment I arrived in Heraklio until the moment I reached Ierapetra all I saw on the highway were several pictures of a range of performers, mostly *lyra* players. From Heraklio, it takes one and a half hours to drive to Ierapetra. En route, one is informed of every important musical event that is taking place in the eastern part of the island. All drivers and passengers interested in music will be fully informed by visual evidence about who is playing and where. This is the standard medium for promoting the festivities that are held on the island.



Figure 22. Stelios Bikakis's performance, posted on the National Road of Rethymno

Another issue that was impressing was radio broadcasting. Most of the radio stations played Cretan music and one could follow various *mantinada* competitions. The feeling one gets upon arriving on the island is a strong local identity, especially

underpinned by the local radio stations. Music, therefore, is a palpable part of the Cretan identity and landscape; it is also a witness to the fact that Cretans self-consciously keep their traditions alive.

What does the word tradition, as applied to music, mean to contemporary Cretans? To what extent is it linked with living performers? Questions such as these were ever-present during my fieldwork.

2.4. Invading the field

Before commencing actual ethnographic research the ethnographer should focus on the areas to be examined. In the case of contemporary Cretan music, my plan was to start from the town of Ierapetra (eastern Crete) and then travel to other prefectures in order to be present at the musical events that take place throughout the island. It is for this reason that I chose to visit Crete during the summer months and I actually started on July 2003. The constant flow of musicians all over Crete and their various performances in each prefecture saved me time. In that they regularly moved from place to place, I tried to attend as many outdoor performances as I could while staying at Ierapetra. Initially I wanted to observe how the performers act on stage, what kind of music they play and what the reactions of the audience were. Fortunately, I always carried a camcorder and a mini disk machine. Since these were crowded summer concerts, the musicians were well aware that for the tourists in the audience, they could not prevent people from using recording equipment. Another advantage of summer fieldwork was the plethora of weddings and baptisms that took place. As far as music is concerned, the most interesting of all performances were the *glendi* that took place afterwards.

My involvement with Cretan music at an academic level began while I was still a postgraduate student in the Department of Music at Goldsmiths. Three very famous musicians whom I knew already live in different prefectures in Crete; both have their own unique performing style. These two performers and one other whom I very much wanted to meet, “belong” to different genres of what is currently called “Cretan” music. One of these performers is Manolis Alexakis (**figure 23**), a *lyra* player who lives in

Ierapetra; another is Ross Daly, a virtuoso player of several stringed instruments (bowed and plucked eg. *dutar*, *rabab*, *sarangi*, Cretan *lyra* and others) who has dedicated himself to Cretan *lyra* playing techniques. He lives permanently in a village outside Heraklion called Choudetsi. The third is Loudovikos ton Anoyion, the mandolin player from Rethymno.

Alexakis, is a close family friend; in fact he is one of the best friends of my cousin Spyros in Ierapetra. Through him I managed to enter the world of Cretan music. My cousin, Spyros, who is a fan of Alexakis's and owns a number of his discs, considers him to be one of the most respected and talented performers in Crete. "The quality of his *mantinades* along with the skill of his playing techniques make him a star. You never get bored when he plays and I regard him as one of the best young performers in Crete."



Figure 23. Manolis Alexakis

Alexakis was one of the very few *lyra* players that I knew before starting my research. I had attended many of his performances, and on one occasion he kept staring at our table and repeatedly raised his glass to salute us. He noticed that I was sitting at the table of my cousin who is a friend of his. "Strange," my cousin murmured, "he doesn't usually act like this". His wife Theano, smiled mischievously at him and she said, "Spyro, we have a young good-looking woman in our company. Why do you think he is acting like this?" Spyros surprised replied, "Do you think so? Well... perhaps...I haven't heard him playing so well before...who knows...?" After a while Alexakis took a break

and approached our table. “Won’t you introduce me to this beautiful lady?” My cousins, who had their suspicions confirmed by this, introduced us. They told him that I was their cousin, I lived in Athens and I was a musician. “Well,” he said, “you are a musician, so you must appreciate Cretan music... Let me then see your dancing skills!” Everyone laughed jokingly and they could see that he was flirting with me. Soon I realized that the earlier exhibition of his performing dexterity was his way of courting.

Since that occasion I had the opportunity to meet him frequently. On his regular visits to my cousin’s apartment, we have had long conversations about music and its development in recent times. We soon became friends. Although I did not succumb to his insistent flirtations, my distant yet friendly behaviour brought us to the point where he could tell me many details not only connected with music, but also more personal issues that had to do with his life.

Having a friend in the field proved to be very useful. I was also able to learn much about the activity of various performers throughout Crete: names that I had never heard before; criticisms about the professionalism and innovations of many *lyra* players; “secrets” about the background and the personalities of particular musicians; criticism of performers’ interactions in the local market. All of this information stood me in good stead.

The one inconvenience of having an informant as a friend was that I could not bring my recording equipment wherever we went out together. When we met for lunch or coffee it was inappropriate for me to take out my mini disk to update my records. However, he twice acceded to my request for a proper interview with him, using all necessary recording machines. The first interview took place at my home in Crete, the second in a bar in Athens.

The ambience of the two interviews with Alexakis was altogether different. The first was at my home, an ideal place to undertake a relaxed interview for me. The second took place a few months later, was entirely the opposite. The bar was noisy, it stank with alcohol, and we were frequently interrupted by his friends (he had chosen this place for the interview because he wanted to discuss his new album with colleagues). That he was willing to help was obvious by his proposal to move into the office of the owner, who

was one of his friends. There we could talk more freely, but again we did not manage to discuss matters in detail because of the numerous interruptions.

Not unaccustomed to interviewing people in unbecoming locations, I began by examining Alexakis's facial expressions as he talked, his body language, his perception of Cretan music, and the level of his openness when it came to innovative musical pursuits, such as playing the *lyra* in a jazzy manner. Since I had not a prepared questionnaire, our conversation was guided by the spontaneous questions that crossed my mind while talking.

During my stay in Ierapetra, I tried to make contact with other performers. First and foremost my aim was to be known to the musicians' circle regardless of whether I wished to interview them or not. My presence as a researcher was well known to many of them by now. Holding a camcorder, asking questions all the time and being all over the place during the performances made many musicians wonder who I was. Because of my family ties many of them did not hesitate to ask my cousins whom they knew about me. I, myself, did not hesitate to go and introduce myself to the musicians and explain what I was doing. They were eager to give me their details and I managed to collect an adequate list of phone numbers in my notebook.

Meanwhile I read numerous magazines, books and newspapers in order to discover when and where performances were being held. I bought as many CDs as I could afford and in my free time I listened to the radio stations that played Cretan music. My life resembled a jigsaw puzzle in which I had to place missing pieces. I still lacked many pieces so I decided to leave Ierapetra to meet new people and performers in other parts of the island.

I met Ross Daly on one occasion when he was in Athens and he provided me with valuable information about Cretan music. When in Crete (during the summer of 2003) I learned that he had a museum of traditional instruments from different parts of the world in the village of Choudetsi, Heraklio. The museum is funded by the municipality of Heraklio (**figure 24**).



Figure 24. Ross Daly playing an innovative instrument, the *tarhu*, in Choudetsi

Ross Daly leads the *Labyrinth* ensemble. He invites musicians from all over the world to participate in workshops for those interested in “foreign” musics and cultural blending. This “museum” is therefore, a kind of world music haunt from which concerts and live performances emerge in the aftermath of the workshops. These and other performances are normally organized during the summer in order for participants and enthusiasts can combine this work with their holidays. While the general atmosphere is multicultural, the aroma of Cretan culture prevails.

Owing to my earlier meeting with Ross Daly, it was easy for me to contact him again and to return to his museum in order to observe events that were related to my interests. At the same time I took the opportunity to meet various Cretan performers who were involved with other styles of music. These were the progressively-minded musicians who enjoyed playing Cretan music in a non-traditional manner. Those taught by “foreigners”, or who had participated in cross-cultural events, were willing to absorb new musical perspectives. The Cretan performers would inform me about the horizons of contemporary Cretan music, the limitations or unconstrained directions that Cretan music was moving towards the musical landscape in Crete, or even about their personal aspirations.

Loudovikos ton Anoyion (**figure 25**) was a performer that I really wanted to meet. His lyrical style of singing and mandolin playing, in addition to his lyrics in Cretan

idiomatic dialect, expressed a pronounced Cretan cultural background. He was fully in the gaze of the public everywhere in Crete when I began my research. I had already read many articles about him and had seen him on various TV shows.



Figure 25. Loudovikos ton Anoyion sitting in the main square of Anoyia, *Meidani*

Loudovikos comes from the village of Anoyia,⁴² which is the home of many musicians: members of the Xylouris family come from Anoyia, as well as Vassilis Skoulas (*lyra* player), Aristidis Cheretis (*lyra* player), Nikiforos Aerakis (*lyra* player), Manolis Pasparakis or Stravos (1911-1987, *lyra* player) and others. I was keen to discover how music is experienced in a region that still holds so strong a musical identity. I expected that Loudovikos of Anoyia would know a great deal about the cultural history

⁴² *Anoyia*: Anoyia is a large village in the prefecture of Rethymno with approximately 2500 permanent residents. It is built at height of 700 meters on Mount Ida (or Psiloritis). According to tradition, Anoyia was the headquarters of the rebels during the Turkish occupation domination. It also served as the kernel of resistance against the German occupation during World War II. It was that the German commander General Fon Craipe was led and imprisoned by the rebels who had abducted him, before sending him to Africa. Because of this the Germans killed all of the men in the village (1944) and desecrated all the buildings except the Church of St John the Baptist with its invaluable wall paintings. The village of Anoyia was totally rebuilt after the war by its inhabitants, who occupy themselves with cattle-raising, weaving and handiwork. Anoyians are famous for maintaining their traditions alive as well as for their unique dialect. They are also famous for their musical tradition. It is no coincidence that some of the best musicians in Crete come from the village of Anoyia.

This village, moreover, is the starting point for the climbing and it also has access to the *Ideo Andro*, a famous cave in the Nida mountain range, on Psiloritis Mountain. Mythology claims that Zeus was born there.

of this part of Crete, and that he would also be a valuable informant about the directions of the Greek music industry.

Every summer the *Yakinthia* festival is organized by Loudovikos ton Anoyion. He is its director and it takes place in a wooded area of the Mount Nida during the first days of July. Alongside the rituals in honour of Crete's "Saint of Love", Yakinthos, (**figure 26**) Loudovikos also invites musicians to perform their music in a small theatre built on his own initiative. I was unaware of the exact content of these ceremonies, so I had to find out myself what they were about.

On the 2 July 2003 I decided to visit the church of Saint Yakinthos, located a few kilometres outside the village of Anoyia. Owing to the many turns in the road, I became dizzy and had to leave my car a long way from the church. Continuing by foot, I crossed a dirt road covered in animal excrement. To make matters worse, I had to walk through clouds of flies, which made me feel extremely uncomfortable, especially because I was wearing sandals, a long skirt (which I had to hold up for fear of making of dirty), and carry all my equipment. Eventually I reached the stone church. To my left was a small stone theatre where the music would be performed.



Figure 26. The church of Saint Yakinthos on Mount Nida

Although it was already ten o' clock in the evening, vespers had not yet begun. Having no food or water made me very nervous, so I decided to sit quietly on a stone and

write down some notes when I saw Loudovikos staring at me. Many compatriots, followers and friends came to congratulate him for organizing the *Yakinthia* that year, which was dedicated to women. Having taken note of everything around me, I followed Loudovikos to a floodlit rock where the statue of a woman had been erected. He gazed at me and there we spoke. He was very friendly, welcomed me to the festival, and explained matters concerning the *Yakinthia*. He also invited me to other village cultural activities. Concerning the statue, he said emphatically: “This statue depicts Aretousa, the woman who lives waiting patiently for her other half”. After that, he recited two *mantinades* and left.

Returning from the rocks I could see the musicians tuning their instruments while waiting for the service to finish. Two brothers with their sister (Giorgis, Lambis and Niki), children of the famous *lyra* player Psaradonis, brother of Nikos Xylouris, were there together with other musicians who were making preparations to start. I decided to have a chat with the youngest sibling, Niki (the singer), the only girl in the ensemble. But when I approached her she was reluctant to speak. Indeed, she seemed to be sick of waiting for the concert to begin and, without removing the cigarette from her mouth, she advised me to talk to a young man, a *lyra* player, whom I had never met. “I have no information about this person; what will I ask him?” I wondered. I found out later that his name was Stelios Petrakis, and we had a walk in the forest.

As it turned out, it was he who started questions of me: who I am, what do I do, at which university do I study and so on. His knowledge was extensive, but he displayed a somewhat judgmental attitude. I found his opinions very interesting so I asked politely if I could record him. He agreed to my using the mini disk to interview him. I was totally unprepared for this interview with its very spontaneous questions. After ten minutes I realized I had not switched on the microphone. This was a fatal mistake, and a lesson to check my equipment before using it.

Actually, I felt that I was being interviewed; questions about many matters were very persistent. Not that I did not have an opinion on what was being asked, but his manner of address resembled a verbal interrogation about my life and work. As we were talking, people gathered in the theatre for the beginning of the performance. Stelios had to leave me and I needed to find a good position to document the performance.

Loudovikos sat by me and at the end of the performance he said he expected us to meet again soon.

Thus I had, in my terms, “invaded” the field. It resulted in three case studies of acclaimed musicians who had all the connections I needed for my future research on the music of Crete. I came to realize that all Cretan artists move round a music network that provides them with the opportunity to experience their music in different contexts. By travelling throughout Crete, they have the opportunity to “challenge” different audiences with their skills. Therefore, my observations at the very outset were related to the various contexts in which the music is played. Different individuals, dissimilar backgrounds, diverse musical styles, varied performances as well as assorted audiences: I ought to start from the very beginning in order to understand the Cretan music scene. What were the tools I needed in order to get out of this labyrinth?

2.5. On Interviews and Audio -Visual Documentation

It is a commonplace of ethnography that the discipline employs a range of data, such as field notes either from observation or (possibly) from participation, interview transcripts, newspaper cuttings, personal documents, visual and audio records, and a mass of biographical data. Here, I propose to demonstrate the ways of exploration in the field through interviews and audio-visual recordings.

From my basic knowledge of the structure of social relationships among Cretans, I realized that I needed to interview both performers and non-performers. Both of these kinds of informants would help me classify and organize an individuals’ construction of reality and thus, aid my understanding of the directions in which Cretan music was moving (Brandl 1994). For the interviews I used a mini disk machine which was highly appropriate because of its small size and light weight.

It was also very important for me to employ a device where sound recordings were of a high quality. Having a machine that isolated the sounds and focused on the voice of the informant was of enormous help. When the ethnographer needs to review the interviews, it is crucial to have “clear” conversations and to be able to differentiate the

tones of voice that may reveal subtle cultural innuendos. However, “ethnographers must interrogate and explore not just the information being obtained but also the social dynamics that lead to certain individuals becoming central in their study and others not” (Davies 1999: 79).

The one disadvantage of such devices is that they use an external microphone for better sound recording and this requires some fore-thought, because if one forgets to switch the microphone on, not a single word of the interview will be recorded. This happened to me on a few occasions at the beginning of my field research. The most frequent occasions were when I had to interview some prominent person, which made me extremely nervous, or when the circumstances placed me under considerable pressure. In time I got into the habit of looking at my recording devices while interviewing people so that if something went wrong I could remedy it immediately.

In addition it is necessary to carry blank recordable discs when access to record shops is impossible. This happened to me once when, in a village, I developed a reputation so that many people wanted to fully inform me about some matter with their verbally articulated ideas and opinions. As a result, I found myself running out of discs.

The interviews were mainly recorded in audio rather than video. Celebrities, who were used to the media, wanted to feel calm and relaxed when giving me their interview. They were even more at peace when they realized that the interview was not going to be published formally (in a magazine or a newspaper), (however, they did not mind being filmed when playing or singing). As for simple people, unfamiliar with cameras and recording equipment, they were very reluctant to talk in front of the camera or the recording device. Consequently, I found that the best and easiest way to gather information in a face to face conversation was to use my mini disc.

With respect to the techniques of interviewing I tried to be as natural as possible. “Being natural is the best protection” (Fetterman 1989: 56) against avoiding possible mistakes. Being oneself in the field is surely a way of persuading the informant about the seriousness of one’s work. Although Fetterman has argued that “silence is also a valuable interview strategy” (Fetterman 1989: 57), I myself also realised that he was right. In this way the informant is free to be spontaneous and the interviewer can gather as much information as possible. If the ethnographer is convinced of general evaluations

concerning aspects of music, he should not be silent but rather critical in order to stir personal reactions from the informants.

I found that “group conversation” proved to be the most interesting way of interviewing people. In this way several individuals, interviewed at the same time, interact with one another as well as with the ethnographer (Davies 1999: 95). When I visited coffee shops in villages where everybody knew each other, I became the “new element” of the day in their world. Not only did they have a female invading the world of men but also the presence of a “journalist” was quite unusual. Since I was the attraction they all secretly tried to decode the reason for my visit. Normally, the boldest in the coffee shop asked the pertinent question. If I answered loudly the rest would begin asking questions one after the other and in this way we would end up talking about music. If the group were happy about me using a mini disk, I could capture highly humorous, interesting and exciting conversations.

Aside from the video, I always kept a “still” camera with me in order to capture occasional frames to document the event. I am now convinced that a photograph indeed brings back many memories from the field; memories that could only be described in thousands of words. It is doubtful whether still photography or film can be records of “objective reality”. Since ethnographic knowledge can be communicated by both of these means, I thought I would make more advantageous use of filming as an “instrument” that transmits the context of an event, other than writing about it. Despite the fact that ethnomusicology and still photography can be regarded as processes of knowledge, both can also be parts of a communication process. However, “communication covers, here, both communication as a representation *of* reality and communication as *part* of reality”, as Peter Ian Crawford claims (Crawford and Turton 1992: 69). Still photography delimits the borders of conceptualizing the full context of an image whereas filming gives a different perspective of the space of the image together with the sound. K. Hastrup gives the reasons why visual anthropologists have been relatively unenthusiastic about still photography. She maintains that:

Film occupies an intermediary position between the photograph and the written text in terms of ‘flexibility’. The photograph not only limits the spectator to one

‘central perspective’ but is fixed in itself. With film, ‘the pictures move, but the spectator remains fixed’. Writing is the most flexible of the three modes because ‘both the content and the reader are movable... the reader herself may stop, return and flick through the pages, creating her own images as she goes along’ (Crawford and Turton 1992: 4).

Since film is intermediary, it is clearly more expedient for the ethnographer to make use of this particular means of documentation. Taking this position vis-à-vis film does not imply that still pictures are useless for the ethnographer. After all, before the “movie camera” still photographic cameras were the only means of visual documentation for the researcher. Still photos, moreover, are helpful in terms of their testimony to the presence of the ethnographer at the occasion depicted. Furthermore, they provide supportive documentation to the ethnographer’s textual argument in that they co-relate with the text.

At the outset I used an 8mm camera (SLR). It was large and cumbersome to carry while travelling around Crete; furthermore the quality of the image was not as good as I expected. Even though I used the camera extensively, for financial reasons I did not buy a new one. Finally, I managed to obtain a mini DV camera, small, with tiny tapes, and very good image quality. Best of all, I could carry it anywhere without effort.

Using the camera and the mini disc for reporting and for re-engaging with the reports afterwards, I was able to gather “the sound of several voices”: a rich collage, replete with images and sounds, was generated for me to decipher.

2.6. *Fieldnotes*

Fieldnotes are part of the process that informs both interpretation and representation, understanding and analysis of experience – *in* and *out* of the field...Notes written in the field affect perception, memory, and interpretation and are a part of an individual’s way of knowing (what do we know about musical performance?) and process (how do we know it?) (Barz and Cooley 1997: 45).

It goes without saying that taking notes is a process of reporting what has been observed and experienced by an “outsider” in the field. Note-taking is also an internal course of action through which the “self” writes about the “other” or portrays to what extent the “self” becomes part of the “other”. According to Barz, “if performing their participation, their fieldnotes – the products of observation and reflection, participation and interpretation, voices and sounds in the field - are also an integral aspect of social performance” (Barz and Cooley 1997: 47- 48).

While the “emic perspective” is at the heart of the ethnographer’s surveillance, the “etic” perspective should also be taken into consideration for a more thorough ethnomusicological analysis. Pike’s theoretical stance emphasized emic over etic approaches through the examination of semantic fields and indigenous classifications. “The practitioners sought to apply Pike’s distinction both as a method of ethnographic research and as an aid to the theoretical understanding of the relation between specific and universal aspects of culture” (Barnard and Spencer 1996: 180-181).

Important matters for reflection that I attempted to reveal and encode through fieldnotes arose after every single interview. Questioning and evaluation, together with participant observation in various events, were the bases for exposing the natives’ views of reality. “Learning to perform”, as a research technique, helped me to take fieldnotes by placing the data in an etic aspect. There are two types of fieldnotes which apply to emic-etic perspectives: First, those derived from my observations in the field, since “time seems to become the enemy of fieldnotes” (Barz and Cooley 1997: 57) and secondly, the reflexive quality of my writings following an event or after an interview.

The transformation of experience into discourse leads to dialogue between one’s knowing and reflection on that knowing. Having passed beyond the phase of writing fieldnotes, the explosion of writing about fieldwork by using fieldnotes as data is now textualized at a metaphorical level. Reading every section of my writings comes with new meanings and personal reflections. Phenomenological descriptions are identified as superficial in contrast with deeper connotations that emerge after the representation of the experience. In other words, a simple notebook which is full of addresses, telephone numbers, masses of information arranged minimally in chronological order and also

contains the entire description of different moments of the “self” is transformed into a powerful medium through which the ethnographic discourse is based.

2.7. Gender in the Field Experience

Τα μάτια σου δε μοιάζουνε με μάτια τ' άλλου κόσμου

Τα κοίταξα μια φορά κι επήρανε το φως μου

Your eyes do not look like the eyes of the others

I gave a look at them once and I lost my sight

Τα μάτια σου σκοτώνουνε μα δεν τα πιάνει νόμος

Ήταν και θα' ναι μια ζωή νόμιμος δολοφόνος

Your eyes can kill but there is no law against them

They were and they will always be like a legal killer

These *mantinades* are among the many that were referred in my discussions with various males. In this section I would like to convey the idea that gender plays a very important role in the “configuration” of the ethnographer’s experience. Furthermore, I would like to affirm that reflexive ethnography should not be detached from understanding gender roles and gender identities within a society, including the ethnographer’s own sex (Panini; 1991, McNay; 1999).

After some years of trying to understand how music operates in Crete, I came to the conclusion that I needed to be flexible in terms of participating in various male activities. It was not, after all, meaningless to evaluate complexes of assorted but similar male behaviours when confronting a female. Erotic poses and flirtation between the two sexes prevail in Crete. Masculinity is identified not only by appearance (black shirt, black laced boots and moustache in many cases especially in Northern Crete), but also in the manner of approaching a female through expressive vocal media such as the *mantinades*. Moreover, one’s being a musician “authorizes” someone to “play” with women more easily. Dancing, however, can be the most effective way of impressing the opposite sex. As an ethnographer in a man’s world, women can without doubt become victims to the

way manliness is understood in Cretan society, especially among the network of musicians.

I will recall some experiences that placed me in a very difficult position over whether or not to continue associating with these people, even though I recognized their importance in the Cretan music scene. Nevertheless, certain male approaches of a discrete nature were the key for me to persist in conducting my research.

In August 2003, the revival of a traditional Cretan wedding was organized by the mayor of Kritsa village in Lasithi. I was without a car, so my cousin drove me to Kritsa and found somewhere for me to stay for a couple of days. The village was small and the apartment where I was staying was above a shop selling local artefacts and handmade embroideries (it was owned by an old lady). When I explained to the lady that I wanted to record the wedding she subjected me to an intense visual inspection. This was a quite normal reaction when villagers encounter a young female stranger. She next asked, “Are you married?” When I replied in the negative she advised me to go to the village well and drink some water. “You seem so nice and educated, we will be proud if you marry someone from our village. The story goes that if you drink water from the well in the main square you will marry a man from here”. Paying no attention to what she was saying, I continued my walk around the village. When I returned the old lady’s shop was full of men! They all had heard that a new lady had arrived and wanted to see who I was. Each was ready to be of assistance and welcomed me to the village. Very surprised but equally gentle with them, I was able to obtain valuable help from them on the day of the wedding.

By coincidence my admirers were friends of the groom and of the musicians. Since I could not be in two places at the same time on the wedding day, I chose, to record the events at the bride’s house. Helpfully, the young men described every detail of what had taken place at the groom’s. At one point, the groom and his relatives came to pick the bride up, accompanied by a typical Cretan band. A chorus consisting of men singing wedding songs wound their way to the church. No women were allowed to be with them. They stood behind the band, the singers, and the bridal couple. “We will make an exception and not forbid this young lady to join us and record what she wants,” one of them said. The others agreed and en route to the church they plied me with numerous

shots of *raki*. Each of them had a small ewer full of *raki* tied to his belt and this held some shots to treat the guests. In turn they all offered me more than one shot of *raki* and they all drank with me in order to impress me. Of course I was obliged to drink what was offered otherwise I would have offended them. Naturally I was completely drunk by the time we reached the church.

Another “traditional” aspect of a Cretan wedding is the firing of guns after the ceremony. The men, armed gather outside the church and shoot with their guns into the air as a mark of joyful celebration. Folklore has it that they shoot to frighten off evil spirits. Understandably this is an exclusively male activity. At this particular wedding however, I was lucky enough to be invited to the male domain of gun-shooting and to experience the world of masculinity. I was even asked to hold a gun and shoot like the others. I accepted before realizing that their intention was to sit behind me and hold me at the moment of detonation.

On the following day, before my departure, two of the group brought water from the well, a gesture that implied their desire to honour a woman by proposing marriage in conformity with the tale. This was my first encounter with the typical Cretan men who were not professional musicians. Their behaviour made me realize how possessive the musicians were, and especially those whom I chose as key informants for my study. It was clear that the male performers, as protagonists at a *glendi*, fix female gazes on them making the “hunt” a much easier sport.

Once I interviewed a *lyra* player whose opinion about women was quite sexist. Later on I found out that most performers think in this way.

When we play there are many women around. The *lyra* player has a kind of authority over his audience and especially females. It doesn't matter if you are good looking. Women want to see a musician who has great performing skills. That makes them feel that they can be with someone who is important because of his virtuosity. Therefore, he immediately becomes more attractive to them and they start the women's wiles. Some of them try to show their dancing skills, some others look at you persistently; others are dressed very provocatively, while the most daring of all give their numbers or ask you directly to go out with them. That happens in almost every *glendi*... We are men! Do you think that any man

would just look on while they “attack” him? We are not Saints, we are humans and women are aware of that. Hence, they try to tempt us in every way. What if you are married? You just can’t resist.

On the other hand I would say that we are sick and tired of women chasing after us. They have now become a very easy “hunt” and in a way the roles have been reversed. We are the “hunters” and we are supposed to be more active in the game of the sexes, otherwise the magic is lost (Interview with S. P. August 2005).

I could see that my exploration of the world of men as another aspect of ethnomusicological research into Cretan music was a new experience for them. Unprecedentedly, they were no longer protagonists of a musical event but the entourage of a female scholar interested in their work. The idea of seeing themselves as central characters in a story (as they understood ethnography), written by a woman, was altogether novel for them. The approach of a female academic was not something they were used to. It may even have scared them, but it was also alluring. Since “attack is the best form of defence”, I became conscious of their male-oriented attitudes in terms of their being more assertive towards me. Accordingly, I had to deal with various circumstances.

Having once been a professional musician, I ought to have been equipped with the necessary skills for learning to play the *lyra*, but body movement was more interesting for me at this time. I was fortunate to have met some outstanding musicians who offered to teach me the *lyra*. In the end some were unable to do so because of my tight timetable while others only wanted to do so in order to spend more time with me. On one occasion I asked an experienced *lyra* player, whose performing style was quite unique, what he thought or imagined when he sang about nature, even though he played in an urban environment. At first, his answer was disarming; later it became alarming:

Oh, I just close my eyes and imagine that I am sitting on the Mount *Psiloritis*, and I talk to the flying birds. When you are close to nature, far from the city, you can draw images that follow you everywhere. You can only imitate the sound of the birds and the animals with your *lyra* if you have become part of the natural

world. At all events, I would be glad to show you how this is if you would climb with me up the mountain. That is how one can really learn to play the *lyra* (Interview with A.X. April 2004).

I was flattered by such an offer, and I benignly accepted to try out the *lyra* before hearing the rest:

I am glad you accepted my offer. It is the only way to understand how myth is connected with the contemporary world. If you come with me maybe we can have *Diakia*. I smiled without knowing what the word *Diakia* meant. When I asked him, he replied: *Diakia* are the children of *Dias* (Zeus) (Interview with A. X. April 2004).

I remained speechless for a while and I realized how difficult it would be to learn the *lyra* having private lessons, especially on a mountain! I also recognized how complicated it would be for me to interact with this person. Objectivity faded away the moment he expressed his sexual fantasies by seeing me as someone who could satisfy his desires. Although he had given me valuable information about the musicians in Crete, I could no longer continue my ethnographic aspirations with him.

Similar situations and misunderstandings occurred with other musicians as well. Another *lyra* player tried to flirt me but I made it clear that I was not interested. “Whatever can not come undone can only be cut. I can no longer help you with your thesis,” he stated, and I never saw him again.

Terrified by the men’s reaction to my refusal, I used the excuse that I will soon be married, as well as other lies that were harmless to both sides. However, the trick with the engagement ring was not always so effective. Sometimes, they tried to flirt with me.

On one occasion I was a guest at the home of a performer. We eventually became friends and made long trips around the areas of Heraklio and Rethymno. I attended many of his performances even in Athens, and we talked a lot - on and off the record. I was even invited to express critiques on his new album. We discussed a lot and I felt comfortable with him. The small room had two beds where each of us slept. I could feel he was nervous before sleeping and he asked me if I wanted to hear a fairytale. I replied

positively and his reaction was: “How could I possibly tell you a fairytale from such a distance? I should narrate it much closer to you”. This irritated so much that I raised my voice: “I can sleep very well without a fairytale,” I told him off and turned my back to him. The next day he was very obviously annoyed and said that he had no intention of coming over me. In fact, he declared: How dare you to get the wrong idea about me? I felt ashamed because I may have misjudged his intentions but after that my attitude was one of distance.

There were some good moments, nonetheless, in this sexual labyrinth. I will never forget being so deeply engaged with the field when a young man texted me a *mantinada* to express his feelings. It went like this:

Χρώμα αυγής και άρωμα του γιασεμιού που ανθίζει

Έχει η μορφή σου κι έρωτα όλον με πλημμυρίζει

The smell of flouring jasmine and the colour of the dawn

Both of them have your looks and flood me all with love

CHAPTER THREE

Structure of the *glendi* and various aspects of the *glendi* concept

3.1. *General Issues on the Glendi: What is a Glendi?*

The word *glendi* is commonly used by Cretans when they describe a social gathering accompanied by traditional food, drink, music, singing and dancing. Its meaning connotes the raising of the high spirits when a community gathers together in an open area, especially during the summer. The word *glendi* is basically used in Crete whereas in other areas of Greece the word *paniyiri* is often used instead. However, it is important to use Cretan terms in order to explain or define a course of action. An open *glendi* may be held in school yards, the main square of a village, large taverns, in the grounds of the main village church or in picturesque glades. During winter the *glendia* are held indoors: in a spacious tavern, or in the large rooms of private house. The high spirits and warm atmosphere of a night club could also be characterized as a *glendi*, although the music played may not be live. The word *glendi* is synonymous with the phrase “to have a good time”. As Cretans are people who grasp every opportunity to have a good time many *glendia* take place throughout the year, consequently, there exists a vast variety of performers who lead them. The Greek language does not have a word for the participants in a *glendi*, so I will borrow Michael Herzfeld’s term *glendiot*⁴³ (Herzfeld 1988: xvi), which he defines as an auditor who contributes to the structure these social experiences according to his definition.

⁴³ The word *glendiot* was invented by Michael Herzfeld. Contemporary Greek ethnomusicologists make use of this term when writing in English. In Greek it is *glendistis* (γλεντιστής).

3.2. Structure of a Cretan Glendi

3.2.1 Different types of Glendi

The sequence of events at a typical Cretan *glendi* is as follows.

Arriving at these events, one finds the space full of tables and chairs placed next to one another. People dress in smart and very fashionable clothes, particularly the women, who are accompanied by a male friend or husband. Parents also bring their children. Most of the men wear black shirts-not only at *glendia* but also in every day life as a symbol of masculinity.⁴⁴ A relevant *mantinada* says:

Μαύρο πουκάμισο φορεί σ' αρέσει δε σ' αρέσει

Μα μερακλής ο άνθρωπος τι άλλο να φορέσει

He is wearing a black shirt, whether you like it or not

But if the man is a *meraklis* (connoisseur) what else would he wear?

Maria Hnaraki has also an interesting account of Cretan men when analysing stereotypes as part of the everyday life in Crete.

“Cretan men are often depicted as dressed in black, with moustaches, looking wild, as shepherds or animal thieves, and carrying knives and guns. It is not surprising, therefore, that the people of Anoya are particularly thrilled by the fact I always visit the village dressed in black. In villages such as Anoya, many people, mostly men, still wear their traditional outfits. As a symbol of Cretan male identity, Cretans also favour moustaches. They often use their guns to mark celebrations. Above all, Cretans are enthusiastic and merry people, who partake in a joyful life (Hnaraki 2007: 65).

Tables are not reserved so people usually sit where they like, ideally near to the dance floor. The menu basically consists of traditional starters often followed by pork

⁴⁴ Men often wear black shirts in Crete. It is considered to be part of their traditional costume, worn in celebrations, dance events and elsewhere. “Men wear black shirts in order to show that they still mourn after the Turkish occupation. Another reason of wearing black shirts is because in the highlands most of the people are peasants. Therefore, for practical reasons only, those who spend a lot of time in the mountains are dressed in black, in order to keep clean their white shirts” (Interview with Giorgos Sbokos, July 2004).

steaks and baked potatoes or rice boiled in goat's meat stock (*gamopelapho*), the last also common at weddings. Cretans cannot imagine a *glendi* without meat.⁴⁵ The food is accompanied by the traditional drink of Crete, *raki*,⁴⁶ also called *tsikoudhia* or by wine and beers.

A musical ensemble, invited by the people who organize the *glendi*, is always present. There are four types of open *glendia* that occur in Crete:

- 1) *The spontaneous glendi*: Because most Cretan musicians are self-taught (even today), they are used to practicing in coffee houses or playing with their friends. Drinking of *raki* accompanied by the singing of *mantinades* is a good starting point for a spontaneous *glendi* to begin as the performers participate in turn. Occasionally, someone invites friends to his place, asking them to bring their instruments. After multiple doses of *raki*, good food and a plethora of jokes they begin to play. Depending on the mood, a friendly gathering such as this could result into a *glendi*.
- 2) *The communal glendi*, which is most familiar during the summer, is organized by the cultural authority of a village or town (**figure 27**). Michelle Duffy characterizes it as a “community music festival” and defines it as a regular celebration which is organized by members of the community, and has clear and strong community support. “The

⁴⁵ “Most Greeks, even pastoralists [see especially Campbell 1964: 140] regard meat as a luxury. Even on Crete itself, the one dietary deficiency of the rural population has generally been in animal foods” (Allbaugh 1953: 18). Yet this was clearly never the case. Men recall how even the most terrible famine never meant a lack of mutton meat. Stories of the German Occupation, and even of the final years of Turkish rule, relate that among the various foods consumed by villagers, meat alone never became completely unavailable. The harsh terrain around a *glendi* did not favor the growing of grains or olives, thus, bread and oil might occasionally disappear altogether; but there always were animals for slaughter – if not from one's own flocks, then through raiding the lowlanders or sneaking a few animals from the flocks sequestered by the invaders.

Glendiots, therefore, do not regard meat as a rare treat as elsewhere in Greece. This is not to say that they despise it. On the contrary, they take pride in the austerity and hard pastoral life that its consumption, especially when accompanied by other foods, symbolizes for them. “It is this ennobling association with hardship, so unlike the more common Greek view of meat as simply a luxury item, that makes it manly” (Herzfeld 1988: 131).

⁴⁶ *Raki* or *Tsikoudhia* is a very strong alcoholic drink, usually consumed by men: an affirmation of manliness.

“Wine is no longer drunk in the coffeehouses. There, the commonest alcoholic drink is *tsikoudhia* – a grappa whose ferocity matches the all-male context. It is tested by throwing a small quantity on the fire beneath the still. If it explodes it is kept; if not, it is poured over anise to make ouzo, a far weaker drink” (Herzfeld 1988: 127).

community music festival, then, can be seen as a means of promoting a community identity, or at least how that community would like others to see it. There is a sense of the local at various levels: through performances, the audience and how the festival is organized” (Duffy 2000: 51). At these *glendia* the authorities make decisions about who among the acknowledged *lyra* players will be invited to perform. The more accomplished a performer is, the more money they pay him. Hence, the community’s aim is to collect as much money as possible from the *glendiots*, who pay for their food and drink. Only *raki* is served for free. Such *glendia* occur in open areas where everybody is welcome.

- 3) *The private glendia* usually include engagement and wedding parties as well as baptismal celebrations. Such *glendia* are held at venues chosen by the families, and have limited space for the *glendiots* by contemporary Cretan standards. In the past marriage celebrations lasted many days and all members of the local community were invited. Nowadays weddings follow Western European prototypes: church service followed by wedding party with Cretan music. These are often held in large taverns. As expected the ensemble commissioned to lead the *glendi* is chosen by the host families.
- 4) *The clubbers’ glendi*. At these, young people gather in clubbing venues to listen to contemporary Cretan and Greek music played by a DJ. At these there is no live music and the accretion of high spirits differs from that the three aforementioned types of *glendi*. Specifically, the young people do not go out in order to eat. The night clubs they attend are called *Ellinadika* (clubs that play Greek music). This kind of *glendi* appeals to the young Cretans who listen to music characterized by heavy rhythms (also oriental pieces as well) and when spirits are at their zenith the DJ plays Cretan popular songs for everyone to dance to.

The various *glendia* that transpire throughout Crete are similar, in terms of the progression of high spirits and the sequence of the *mantinades* that are performed. The

lyra player and his ensemble (mostly followed by a *lagouto* and guitar player) are located on a bandstand where they can be seen by the audience. The *glendi* starts with *mandinades* of love and often there is a progressive build-up as the dancers come to the dance floor to perform both the slow and fast dances of Crete. The *glendi* then comes to an end in the early morning hours.



Figure 27. *Glendiots* dancing in Kalamfka village

3.3. Different Aspects on the Glendi Concept

3.3.1 A Wedding in Kritsa Village

Following is an analytical account of a wedding *glendi* that took place in the village of Kritsa in Eastern Crete on August 2004. This particular wedding bore special significance because the village authorities supported the marriage of a young couple who lacked the financial resources for a wedding reception. The mayor close to revive the old-style customs of a “traditional” Cretan wedding by organizing this celebration during summer, when the event would attract tourists and thus carry economic importance. This is when I first realized that reviving “tradition” can be a business. Furthermore, I saw how contradictory this event would be in terms of the fusion of “old” and “new”. Yesterday’s notions recast in today’s pragmatism connect with Christina Nile’s essay on the revival of

the Latvian *kokle* zither (Slobin 1993: 38), Daphne Tragaki's thesis on the revival of *rebetiko* in the city of Thessaloniki (Tragaki 2007), and the findings of other scholars who have researched "revivals of tradition" (Russel and Atkinson 2004).

This wedding in Kritsa helped me to understand how a culture tries to live in terms of the continuation of tradition, by creating an "authentic" reproduction of the past. This wedding is the only one I described in my fieldnotes. Even though I have attended many Cretan wedding *glendia*, the sense of reviving the "old" was tempting enough for me to encapsulate as much data as possible and then make comparison with the current situation.

Furthermore, I wish to detail this particular wedding because parts of it share features with most of the open *glendia* that transpire all over Crete, with, of course, some differences among the *glendiots* and in the progression of the *glendi*. Slight variations at such *glendia* can be observed in the image and persona of the *lyra* player and violin player, who lead the *glendi* as well as the temperament of the *glendiots*.

The *glendi* began when everyone had left church accompanied by two *lyra* players and three *lagouto* players. The men, dressed in traditional costume, danced a slow *Chanioti* in the courtyard of the church. The guests then moved towards the area where the actual *glendi* was to take place: the village schoolyard. Meanwhile the musicians played and sang such as the following, on the way to the school.

Χρυσός αϊτός είν' ο γαμπρός κι η νύφη περιστέρα

Κι οσάν τον πολυέλαιο είναι η συμπεθέρα

The groom is like the golden eagle and the bride like the dove

And the mother-in-law is like the chandelier⁴⁷

Γείτονες και γειτόνισσες εβγάτε στα μπαλκόνια

Πείτε τους καλορίζικα κι ευτυχισμένα χρόνια

All men and women, neighbours go onto to your balconies

⁴⁷ The chandeliers are among the most expensive fixtures in a Greek church: large and stately they evoke the essence of wealth and luxuriance. For this reason the mother in law is likened to it: on the one hand she is very precious but there is also a negative interpretation. If the heavy chandelier were to fall on her she could be killed. The simile here may be that the bride ought to be careful with her mother-in-law and respect her otherwise she will be in trouble.

And wish them good luck and happy years

Ως τρέχει τ' αυτοκίνητο μαζί με το σωφέρι

Έτσα να τρέχουν τα καλά στη νύφη μας το χέρι

As the car speeds along with its chauffeur

We wish all the good things to run through our bride's hand

Τ' αντρόγυνο που έγινε κακοβολιά μην έχει

Η ευτυχία κι η χαρά σαν το νερό να τρέχει

We wish the wedded be free from all wickedness

And all the joy and happiness to flow like water

Όλο τον κόσμο γύρεψα περβόλι και περβόλι

Να βρω μια βίτσα λεμονιάς σαν του γαμπρού το μπόι

I searched in every garden throughout the globe

To find a rod of lemon wood equal to the groom's stature

Γίνε στον κάμπο λεμονιά κι εγώ στα όρη χιόνι

Να χύνω να ποτίζονται οι δροσεροί σου κλώνοι

You be a lemon tree in the lowland and I'll be snow on the mountains

So that I can water your sweet branches

Νύφη μου πλούσα να γενείς και πλούσα να γεράσεις

Και στο νοικοκεράτο σου δούλους και δούλες να 'χεις

My bride I hope you'll be rich and die rich

And your house be full of bondsmen and servants

Όσα έχει ο Μάης λούλουδα και ο Γενάρης χιόνια

Να ζήσουν νύφη και γαμπρός ευτυχισμένα χρόνια

As many flowers as has May and as snowy as in January

We hope the bride and the groom live in happiness

Μέλισσα να' ναι η μοίρα σας καλό το ριζικό σας
Ετσα να τρέχει το καλό στο σπίτι το δικό σας
We hope your fortune be like the bee, and have a good fortune
Like this we hope the good things to run in your home

Ως είν' ο πολυέλαιος στολίδι τσ' εκκλησίας
Ετσα' ναι κι ο Μιχάλης μας στολίδι τσ' επαρχίας
As the chandelier adorns the church
So is our Michael, the adornment of the village

Νιόπαντροι καλορίζικα να' ναι τα στέφανά σας
Και να' ρθει ο ίδιος ο Θεός απόψε στη χαρά σας
Newly-weds we wish your wedding wreaths to be lucky
And hope God to join your joy tonight

Ευχόμαστε στσι νιόπαντρους που ο κόσμος καμαρώνει
Οι μέρες του σαν' ναι χρυσές κι αμέτρητοι οι κλώνοι
We wish to the newly-weds whom people take pride in
That their days to be made of gold and they have many children

Cretans invent *mantinades* for every occasion in their live (Anastasakis; 2001, Apostolakis; 1996). Hence it was not surprising to hear verses such as these at the *glendi* after the marriage. The following were sung on the way to the school:

Ο γάμος ετελείωσε και στο σχολειό να μπείτε
Να' ρθείτε να χορέψετε και να μας ευχηθείτε
Πέρδικα πετροπέρδικα τίναζε τα φτερά σου
Και στην απάνω γειτονιά να πάνε τα προικιά σου
Στο κέντρο απόψε ο κρητικός ο γάμος τελειώνει
Όλο φαϊ και για ποτό βαδίζει το τιμόνι

Ἡρθεν ἡ ὥρα φίλοι μου νὰ φάμε καὶ νὰ πιούμε
Καὶ τὶς καντάδες τὶς παλιές νὰ ζαναθυμηθούμε

The marriage is over and you're on your way to the school
Come to dance and wish us the best
Oh partridge *petro* (stone) - partridge⁴⁸ shake your wings
And your dowries will be taken to the upper⁴⁹ vicinity
The Cretan wedding will end at the recreation centre
Which is full of food and has plenty of drinks
Now is the time my friends for us to eat and drink
And remember the old serenades

It is very clear that the English translation of the *mantinada* does not convey the exact meaning of the Greek lyrics nor can a translation duplicate the rhyme and the meter, both of which identify the poems of Cretan origin. However, one can grasp the underlying meaning of these songs and the comparisons made are familiar ingredients of folk poetry. No one could argue against the fact that the notional subject-matter of the *mantinada* is taken from every day life and has much ingenuity and inventiveness. What the singer actually tries to express is a poem that should be simple and direct in order to be understood by all who listen to it. Furthermore, what makes it unique is the use of words from the Cretan dialect; without the latter the poem would not be called a *mantinada* but a common Greek *disticho* (couplet).

In the past, *mantinades* had a call and response framework. When groups of men or women gathered together, perhaps in a coffee shop, to joke about or tease someone, this would be expressed in an extemporaneous *mantinada*. In a discussion with the violin

⁴⁸ Petra (πέτρα) means stone in Greek. Petro-partridge is the partridge that runs on a stony soil. Because of the proud way this bird walks, beautiful women are often compared to it.

⁴⁹ In early times men would marry women from their village, whose homes were not far from them. Villagers in Crete usually divide their village into two large neighborhoods: the upper and the southern, in order to locate where someone belongs. In this case, the groom's house was in the upper vicinity, whereas the bride's was in the southern. Thus the bride's dowry would be removed from her house to her new home in the upper area.

player Vangelis Vardakis,⁵⁰ I learned how entire *glendia* were based on improvised *mantinades*.

In the old days there were people who were conscientious of what dance, music and a *mantinada* were. The connoisseurs [*meraklides*]... these people really had something to say. I still remember, especially in the area of Lasithi, many *glendia* that were performed without the older *mantinades*. Everything was based on call and response. Even the fights and the misunderstandings among the villagers...

I'll tell you a story about my uncle who used to be the General Manager of the National Bank of Greece in Crete. He used to travel quite often to Sitia and there he met his friends who were mostly violinists. There was a time that he didn't visit them for quite a while and one of them called him to ask why he hadn't appeared. My uncle joked by saying that he hadn't visited because there was a rumour spreading that he was very flirty with women. He joked with a *mantinada* that I did not memorize. But I still remember his friend's immediate response:

*Εβγάλανέ σου τα' όνομα μα έχεις καμωμένα
Γιάντα δε μου το βγάλανε κουμπάρε μου κι εμένα;
You fell into disrepute and you have fouled your nest
Why my best man⁵¹ didn't they say a word about me?*

Calls and responses over a century old have been saved orally. Men used to tease the girls and the cleverest ones answered immediately. I was lucky to meet one called Kallio. She didn't let a man tease her. She was beautiful, a good dancer and an ace as far as the *mantinades* are concerned. While dancing the *agaliastos* (embracing) dance it was the women who would mostly sing various *mantinades*. If you go to northern Crete things are different. In southern Crete women were

⁵⁰ Vangelis Vardakis comes from Ierapetra. He is a mechanical engineer and he is one of the most well known violin players of eastern Crete. He has devoted his life collecting music and information about the tradition of the violin in eastern Crete and as he claims he "tries to continue the long musical tradition of eastern Crete".

⁵¹ In Crete men usually refer to each other by using the word *koumpare* (best man) or *sintekne* (compatriot). These terms are common among good friends.

actively involved in social life. Let us not forget that our tradition has been safeguarded essentially by women (Interview with Vangelis Vardakis, July 2004).

Things have changed through, and weddings, even when they attempt to revive the past, no longer use call and response *mantinades*. Nevertheless, all kinds of *glendi* are based on the singing of *mantinades*. The singer who can perform most of the old *mantinades*, as well as newly-composed ones that are poetically well constructed, is regarded as a skilled performer even if his playing technique is imperfect. Any performer therefore, who has memorized as many songs and *mantinades* as are needed to play through the night until early in the morning is considered to be accomplished and with the potential to lead a *glendi*. It is for this reason that every *glendi* held outdoors is unique. Its progression always depends on varying sequences of *mantinades*, which find the audience unprepared for what is to ensue.

Notable is the fact that the sequence of *mantinades* is separated into different sections. In this way it is easier for the singer to remember the *mantinades* that relate to the same theme. Most subject matters are derived from the vastness of every day life, such as nature or the human and physical environment in general. Many sing *mantinades* about the moon, others about the sun, the sea, the mountains, or love. I have never yet heard performers sing a single *mantinada* about, say, the moon, and then follow this with one on a different theme.

Tullia Magrini describes the Cretan *mantinada* as an improvised distich that occasionally utilizes stereotypes. She maintains that it “may provide a singer with a means of exerting his creativity: by elaborating verses connected to the preceding *rizitiko* song or *mantinada*, commenting on a word, expanding one of its concepts, or elaborating a reply to the situation presented in the previous verses” (Magrini 2000: 435). Below is a pattern of *mantinades* taken from the wedding:

Εχασα την αγάπη μου κι εσύ ρωτάς φεγγάρι
Γιάντα τις νύχτες δε μπορεί ο ύπνος να με πάρει
I lost my love and **Moon** you ask
Why I cannot sleep at night

Φεγγάρι ζόμπλι τ' ουρανού άστρο λαμπρό της πλάσης
Το πιο ερωτικό σου φως ρίξε να τη σκεπάσεις
Oh, **Moon** frill of the sky and the most beautiful of all the stars
Give your most erotic light and run to cover her
Πες μου φεγγάρι ανε τη δεις σ' άλλη αγκαλιά να μπαίνει
Αναστενάζει, κλαίει πολύ ή νιώθει ευτυχισμένη?
You tell me **Moon**, if you see her with someone else
Does she sigh, does she cry or is she happy?
Έλα απ' τον κήπο του Θεού μια ανθοδέσμη κόψε
Φεγγάρι σε παρακαλώ να τση την πας απόψε
Come and cut a bouquet from the garden of God
You **Moon** and please give it to her tonight
Βγήκε ηλιοβασίλεμα λένε ομορφιά του κόσμου
Όσοι δεν αντικρίσανε τα δυο σου μάτια φως μου
They say that the sunrise is the beauty of the world
Those who haven't seen your two beautiful **eyes**

And then the subject-matter changes to the eyes of his beloved:

Είναι στα μάτια σου βραδιές που οι πόθοι μου αρμενίζουν
Και πνίζαν τις ελπίδες μου και πίσω δεν γυρίζουν
My desires navigate some nights in your **eyes**
And they drowned my hopes and they can't come back
Ποτέ δεν θέλω να τα δω τα μάτια σου κλαμμένα
Γιατ' είναι η παρηγοριά και η χαρά μου εμένα
I never want to see your **eyes** crying
Because they are my comfort and my joy
Σαράντα λάμπες ξεπερνά των ομμαθιών σου η λάμψη
Τσιγάρο με το βλέμμα σου μπορεί κανείς ν' ανάψει
The brightness of your **eyes** outshines forty lamps
One can light a cigarette with your **glance**

*Κάθε σου βήμα μαχαιριά κάθε σου βλέμμα σφαίρα
Μ'ένα ψυχρό εκτελεστή πώς να τα βγάλω πέρα?
Every step of yours is like a knife and every **glance** is like a bullet
How can I make it with a serial killer?
Τα μάθια τση τα όμορφα παντού το φως σκορπούνε
Και μ'ένα βλέμμα τση μπορεί άνθρωποι να ξεβγούνε
Her beautiful **eyes** disperse the light everywhere
And even only with one **glance** people can be killed*

Having completed a sequence of *mantinades*, the instrumentalists begin improvising on the melody. This continues for some minutes until, the next series, consisting of verses on the agony of love (**figure 28**):

*Άδικα πόνεσα για σε δεν άξιζε η καρδιά σου
Ήταν κι εκείνη ψεύτικη όπως και τα φιλιά σου
Unfortunately, I am hurt by you and you are not worth it
Your heart was as false as your kisses
Στον κόσμο υποκρίνομαι πως είμ' ευτυχισμένος
Μα μ'έκανε η αγάπη σου να ζω δυστυχισμένος
I pretend to the world that I am happy
But your love made me live in sadness
Ένα λεπτό χρειάστηκε φως μου να σ' αποκτήσω
Και μίαν ολόκληρη ζωή να σε ξελησμονήσω
It took a minute to make you mine
And a whole life to get over you
Άλλοι πεθαίνουν μια φορά μα εγώ αργοπεθαίνω
Καθημερινός αφού' μπλεξα τα πάθη μου να σέρνω
Some people die once but I am dying slowly
Every day since I became involved with you
Κάμε τον πόνο μου χαρά μ'ένα γλυκό σου βλέμμα
Δώσε κουράγιο στην καρδιά αφού πονεί για σένα*

Make my pain joy with your sweet glance
Give courage to my heart that hurts for you



Figure 28. The *lyra* player Nikos Zoidakis leading a *glendi*

Each of these rhymed couplets has been memorized by the singers who are, at the same time, the band leaders (the *lyra* or violin players) at the performance. Even those instrumentalists, who choose not to sing because of their poor voices, know all the words. Spyros Parakatselakis for example, a respected *lyra* player and ensemble leader, rarely sings at his performances. “Using a microphone for singing has never appealed to me. If I sing I might take the shine out of my *lyra*. It is something “I’m not used to do”. The main singer of the band was the *lagouto* player, Andreas Chatzispayos, and they have been very successful.

Despite the major position that the *mantinades* hold at a *glendi*, I was confused when Spyros Parakatselakis said:

It is proper for the *mantinades* to be sung and accompanied at a specific time at a *glendi*. The Cretan repertoire has many songs exclusively for listening to. These can be sung at the beginning of a *glendi*. Later on, if you want people to dance,

you can play a variety of *syrta* as well as the *malevizioti* dance. Midway you can play a *ballo*, a *sousta*, and at around 2.00 or 3.00 o' clock in the morning you can introduce a Peloponnesian dance. You should put everything in order. Not just play whatever. (Interview with Spyros Parakatselakis, August 2005).

But all I heard at Cretan *glendia* were *mantinades*. What did Parakatselakis mean in advising that “*mantinades* should be sung and played only at a certain time”? Eventually I realized that the word *mantinades* as understood by performers was always associated with dance. Not the fast dances, such as the *malevizioti*, *sousta* or *pentozali* (accompanied with rhymed couples), but with the easier and the slower dance named *siganos* (slow) or what Cretans call *kondylies*. It is therefore, the slow rhythmic patterns and the melodic lines with instrumental embellishment that give emphasis to the lyrics of the *mantinades*. It is for this reason that many performers' consider a “good” *mantinada* to be an effective part of a “successful” performance. Or, to put it another way, a “good” *glendi* (a *glendi* of high quality) is the outcome of a sequence of high quality *mantinades* that display the virtuosity and talent of the musicians.

This is not to say that younger performers, who greatly influence the youth, do not lead *glendia* properly. But because of the modern orientation of their music, including their renditions of *mantinades*, the authenticity of their performances, as far as music is concerned, is sometimes questioned. It is obvious that the young *glendiots* have a good time and many dance, but the older ones do not. They seem to be critical about the “purity” of their tradition. Another point worth mentioning is that the first thing one learns to do when attempting to perform in a *glendi* is the playing of *kondylies*. The simple and poetically well structured *disticha*, also called *kondylies* (rhymed couplets) which are learned by heart by the singer, definitely elevate the music standards of a *glendi*. But a Cretan *glendi* is not solely characterized by *kondylies* and *mantinades* (meaning the musical patterns associated with the *siganos* dance). There is also the age-old repertory delivered by older musicians who spent their lives playing Cretan music.

The *lyra* player, Thanasis Skordalos (1920-1998), for example, approached Cretan music in an innovative way, and for this reason he held the title of “Great Master”. “There is no *glendi* nowadays without his compositions, because his music still speaks to the connoisseurs' hearts. They express themselves both in dance or song” (Aerakis, 2000:

20). Andreas Rodinos (1912-1934) from Rethymno introduced new techniques for playing the *lyra*. He has made novel arrangements of local melodic patterns.⁵² The sound of Leonidas Klados' *lyra* in 1925, an untouchable part of the tradition, was paradigmatic for the musical education of the younger performers. Nikos Xylouris's unforgettable songs, together with the compositions of numerous other musicians, are still performed at every *glendi* throughout Crete.

Let's be honest. You cannot be considered as a high-quality performer without singing the songs of these Cretan masters at a *glendi*. Their pieces are diachronic and still lift up the audience.. A *glendi* cannot take place without their compositions. It's not possible to play at a *glendi* until morning just by performing the new hits (Interview with S. Parakatselakis, August 2005).

3.4. "Respect" as a component of a *glendi*

What are the ingredients of a "successful" *glendi*? Spyros Parakatselakis's opinion is representative:

There are many things which a "good" *glendi* consists of. It depends on how you approach your audience or it is a matter of what *mantinades* you are going to sing. Furthermore, the kind of music you are going to play and how you will perform it. It is also the visual look of the performers that plays an important role.

⁵² Andreas Rodinos is considered as one of the best *lyra* players of Crete despite the fact that he has not made many recordings (just a few recordings of *syrta* and *pentozalia*) because of his early death. However, he had a great impact in a number of *lyra* players and performers throughout Crete. He did not compose something of his own, but he made covers and performed the melodic patterns and the songs of his birthplace (Rethymnon) uniquely. These local melodic patterns are called "The *Syrta* of Rodinos" (Ta *Syrta* tou Rodinou). He managed to combine various melodic patterns of different songs in a very innovative way and the inimitable way of his playing made them distinctive in Crete. It is said that no one has managed to overcome his way of playing throughout the island. (<http://www.musicheaven.gr>).

For example the way you are dressed... not with a glossy shirt or trimmed clothes, the way you sit, how you hold the *lyra* and so on (Interview with S. Parakatselakis, August 2005).

It is true that how one appreciates “tradition” is an important factor in determining the respect the musician commands. The outlook as well as the body language one uses on stage is important for the prestige of the performer or the group. Vasilis Skoulas gives an interesting account on the performer’s respect of tradition.

Things are quite simple...If one is a *meraklis* and if he has a plethoric character then he is considered as a good performer who respects tradition. Being modest, respectful, with quality and all these stuff... then you are good. And for all these, you will be judged by the audience. Nobody cares if you are a skilful performer. Being skilful can be learned. If you have chosen to play an instrument you’ll learn how to play it even if you are not so talented. What really matters is the heart-beat, to have your own experiences and present them. The only truth is to be yourself! Be real! That is what matters first and then your general culture (Interview with Vasilis Skoulas, Anoyia 2010).

How one respects the audience varies, according to each performer’s personal evaluation from one *glendi* to another. If “respect” is part of a good *glendi* then respect to what and for whom? The most frequent response of performers, since they overuse this word, was primarily “respect for our tradition” and also, “respect to the people who listen to us”. But what do the words “respect” or “offend”, in relation to tradition, mean to different individuals? Which values do they follow in order to lead a *glendi* and thus be revered?

“Respect” for some of the musicians is the way someone promotes himself as a performer. That of course includes the way he is dressed: jeans and T-shirts worn by the youngest, normal trousers and shirts for the more conservative, pantaloons and neckerchiefs for the “intellectuals”. These are typical sartorial codes that express each one’s personal style. This in turn is related to the kind of music one plays, which is a separate subject for discussion.

Another aspect of “respect” on stage is the body language of the performer. One may contend that holding the *lyra* in a normal position on one’s knees while playing at a *glendi* is the best way to express oneself. Another may exaggerate by holding the *lyra* behind his neck when playing fast. For many musicians this is one factor in increasing disrespect for “tradition”. For others this is precisely “respect” for the audience. They argue that over-exaggeration in performances immediately arouses the interest and joy of the *glendiots*. As a result, high spirits and the positivity are transferred to the audience and the atmosphere is transformed into a flourishing party.

One part of the performer’s body language is the way he looks at his listeners, especially the females. I have reports where people actually reprovved the performers accused of flirting with women while playing at a *glendi*. One of the most acclaimed Cretan *lagouto* players reported to me an interesting incident that happened to him during a *glendi*:

I used to play with the *lyra* player Giorgos Papadakis. At one *glendi* there was a young lady in the audience who was looking at me. Actually she was trying to get my attention by staring insistently to demonstrate that she liked me. I felt sorry for her, telling myself: “She is staring at me relentlessly just to provoke me. I’ll look back at her because I pity her. I don’t want to make her feel unhappy.” Anyway, Papadakis realized that I was looking at her and after the *glendi* finished he admonished me and explained that he did not approve of my actions. “Nick, when we play together I do not want you to have such a manner. I don’t want you to behave in this way. We should be serious and respect ourselves and the audience.” I appreciated what he had to say and I have kept it in mind with every *lyra* player I collaborate with. I had my lesson and I believe that all the performers should act like this (Interview with Nikos Stratakis, September 2005).

He elaborated his argument in the following way:

Such incidents may happen if the *lyra* player is “open” with his audience. If you go to a Papadakis *glendi*, for example, you will see some serious people in the audience. You will never see anyone put a bottle of whisky in his mouth, simply because he respects him. He has never given his audience the right to act in the

aforementioned way. You will never see a young lady wearing extravagant clothes or see people come to blows with others. You will never see such things at a Papadakis or Alephantinos *glendi* today simply because they do not allow it (Interview with N. Stratakis, September 2005).

The account of another well-known *lyra* player, on the other hand, is quite the opposite of what was conveyed by the *lagouto* player and is indeed a question of how the performer handles incidents such as the one I am about to describe. The issue of performer reaction compelled me to go and speak directly to this particular musician after his performance because I was present at the *glendi* where when that incident took place. The episode in question was not seen by many because the dance floor was crowded with *glendiots* who paid scant attention to what was happening on the stage. A young lady who wore a mini skirt pretended that she needed to use the toilet. I noticed her because of the length of her skirt and her excessive make up. On the way back she stopped beside the *lyra* player and gave him her underwear. Surprised, he put it under his chair discreetly and continued playing. When I spoke to him a few days later about this he explained it was not the first time such a thing had happened to him.

Once, when we played, the stage and the dance floor were not on the same level as the tables. The stage was higher. At the second table in front of me I saw a lady staring at me. Her one leg was on the table while the other was on the stage. To my surprise she was not wearing any underwear. The guitarist played first, then the *lagouto* player and I followed. My heart was throbbing that night and I had my eyes closed when playing. When I opened my eyes you can imagine what I saw... She noticed that I saw her and she smiled at me. I also smiled at her and continued playing. Then I asked my *lagouto* player to take a look underneath the table. He was shocked!!! The plectrum fell from his hands and one could hear some wrong notes. I asked him to find the plectrum and continue playing. "I have another one," he replied and we continued, pretending nothing had happened (Interview with N. K., August 2005).

From his description, not only that lady dressed obscenely but she also assumed a highly provocative attitude towards the performers. Unfortunately, things like that happen

quite often. I can recall a *lyra* player's reaction when singing a very sad Xylouris' song. The mystical atmosphere which that particular song evoked was entirely inappropriate for the behaviour of a young couple, who could not stop kissing directly in front of the *lyra* player. Clearly irritated by their activity he paused and kindly asked them to leave the *glendi*.

Other *lyra* players do not permit chatter while they perform. Even if he is considered to be the “craziest” of all performers in Crete (because of his unconstrained attitude while playing), one can see his annoyance when he hears a mobile phone ringing or people speaking loudly during his performances.⁵³ The verse writer Maria Tsatsaki recalled that when as a youngster she attended one of Psarandonis's performances she was talking to her friend paying no attention to the *lyra* player. They did not even see the disapproval on his face. Eventually he stopped the performance and, pointing his finger at her, said: “Hey you, will you shut up?” Embarrassed by the remark, she left the *glendi* and never saw him again though she still believes he is one of the best players.

So, what are the ingredients of a successful *glendi*? The data presented so far refer to the performer's accomplishments on stage and his response to the *glendiot*s' acts. Something that has not been taken into consideration is that everybody in Crete drinks alcohol. Indeed Parakatselakis considers as insignificant the tipping of a bottle of alcohol into a performer's mouth at a *glendi*. It goes without saying that at most *glendia* an abundance of alcohol and *raki* is served (**figure 29**). Despite the fact that *raki*, or *tsikoudia*, is the traditional drink, many *glendiot*s order whisky. It has also become something of a new trend for *lyra* players to drink whisky while performing. When spirits are very high the male *glendiot*s often ascend the stage and put the whisky in the performer's mouth. I have also been present when the *lyra* player became inebriated and poured a bottle of whisky into a male *glendiot*'s open mouth. There are also some *mantinades* that refer to the consumption of whisky during a *glendi*:

Θέλω το Chivas άφθονο στσι φλέβες μου να ρέει

Κι ένα τσιγάρο Marlboro για πάρτη σου να καίει

⁵³ Psarandonis is famous for his performance attitude while playing, especially in small areas or bars. He believes that the silence of the audience is part of the respect that is shown to the performer. That is the reason why he prefers the audience to be silent while he performs (Interview with Psarandonis . July 2005).

I want plenty of Chivas running in my veins
And a Marlboro cigarette for you to light

*Ο χωρισμός είναι σκληρός και παίρνει μόνο πόνο
Στους χωρισμένους συνιστώ Chivas να πίνουν μόνο
Braking up is tough, and also painful
All I recommend for the separated is drinking Chivas.*

*Θέλω το Chivas άφθονο στσι φλέβες μου να ρέει
Κι ένα Kochiba siglo V για πάρτη τση να καίει
I want plenty of Chivas running in my veins
And a Kochiba siglo V to light for her*

(These *mantinades* were first sung by George Zervakis in his album “*Stin Entatiki*”, “In the intensive care room”).



Figure 29. *Glendiot* holding a bottle of alcohol, serving the musicians

3.5. *The Bakshishi*⁵⁴

*Μα πρέπει του του λυρατζή μια χαχαλιά παράδες,
Και μια κρασιά με το μεζέ να λέει μαντινάδες
The lyra player worthy to be given plenty of money,
And drink wine with his snacks so that he sings mantinades*

A further ingredient of a *glendi* is what Cretans call *bakshishi* (baksheesh). Making requests for favoured songs to be performed is a way that male *glendiots* assert their social standing. This gesture is accompanied by the offering of money, the *bakshishi*. Those who pay are usually the heads of a *parea* (company), (**figure 30**). There is an unwritten rule in Crete which directs that he who has asked for (and purchased) a certain song is the one who will lead the dance, at least for the first few minutes. The other *parees* (companies) as well as other dancers participate once they are satisfied that those who have requested the song are amenable. Otherwise it is improper for others to move on to the dance floor. If someone who has made a request gets to dance first, there may be a problem. Since Cretan masculinity is exhibited at a *glendi* (and elsewhere) anger is the normal reaction to such an irregularity. Hence, if the head of one *parea* requests a song, but another male-led *parea* goes to the dance floor first, a verbal dispute is the least that can happen. I have attended *glendia* where, such an incident was to transpire; the verbal altercation would lead to a fight that could end aggressively, because of the explosive tempers of Cretan men. Once someone offers the *bakshishi* it should be respected and order must be kept. Quite often the role of the *lyra* player in such incidents is catalytic to the solution of such controversies. He might announce at the beginning of the song the name of the person who requested it, or inform the *glendiots* which song is to be performed by playing an instrumental introduction. Either way, the performer gives himself time to make sure who asked for the particular song, and if no misunderstanding occurs, he provides the space for the payer to proceed first, to the dance floor.

⁵⁴ The *bakshishi*: Etymology: Persian “present” or “gift”.



Figure 30. Man requesting a song to the *lyra* player Nikos Zoidakis

The *bakshishi* is a “tip” normally proffered by men, and *lyra* players try to give their best in order to amass as much money as possible in order to share it with the other musicians. I noticed that men usually stand in front of the *lyra* player when giving the *bakshishi*, apparently quite normal in Cretan society, but I had no idea that females could not invade such formalities. Proof for this came in the form of malicious remarks about a woman offering money to a *lyra* player. Turning my head to the stage, I observed a middle aged woman wearing a mini skirt, a see-through top and high boots (in the middle of summer), who seemed to know the *lyra* player. At first she gave him a golden *kompoloi*⁵⁵ as a gift. Thereafter, each of her requests was followed by generous amounts of money. This was tremendously provocative to the males present. Instead of the usual fifty euro, she gave up to five hundred euro. One could detect the nervous reactions of

⁵⁵ *Kompoloi*: The Greek word for the, so-called “string of beats”. It is chiefly played by men in Crete and is a symbol of masculinity. When the elders were asked about the importance of playing with a *kompoloi*, they answered that it was their way of counting time or every grief of life. There is a related *mantinada* about this which goes:

Στάζουν αργά τα δάκρυα στα μάτια μου εμένα
 Σαν κομπολόι που μετρά τσι πόνους ένα ένα
 My tears are dripping slowly to my eyes
 Like the *kompoloi* which counts my grievances one by one

many of the *glendiots*. On the one hand, there were the men who could no longer assert their status as males, and on the other hand, the women who could not condone unacceptable defiance by a female. In a short time the *glendiots* learned that this lady was not from Crete. Moreover, she was the wife of a ship-owner and thus extremely rich.

How could a Cretan male demonstrate his ignominy for being derogated by a woman? How could a woman offer a great deal of money and also buy many bottles of whisky for the musicians? How was it possible for her to cross so irreverently the boundaries that divide male and female behaviour codes? How would the Cretan men deal with it? She was to be sure in the vortex of a social cyclone because no other woman seemed so provocative to men's eyes. Thus, it was in the men's hand to manage her. The offender was an unknown female who invaded a men's domain. Somehow they had to confront her. For a start all one could see were males approaching the stage who were patently not there for their usual *bakshishi* offering. Since attack is the best defence, men began by flirting with her. It would be imprudent of them to offend her by pointing out her error. After all she was not Cretan; she could be excused because of her ignorance.

Flirting with them was one way of approach. At the same time the men were able to show which of the two sexes dominated. The next step was to buy her something to drink. The men made it clear to her that the offering of the drinks or money was to show appreciation to someone who is admired. This could either be the musicians at a *glendi*, or a beloved compatriot or a member of the opposite sex. The respect of the other is, at various levels, highlighted by gestures such as these and it also articulates the power one wants to hold over another person. Here, power was a factor that encouraged the required close identification for the understanding of gender roles. What the men tried to demonstrate to her was power in terms of virility.

In Crete the powerful sex is the male. Men express their potency by ruling a *glendi* to a certain extent by requesting songs. In their introduction to *Sexual Meanings*, Ortner and Whitehead argue that gender is one prestige structure, and "in every known society, men and women compose two differentially valued terms of a value set, men being as *men* higher" (Barnard and Spencer 1996: 257). Therefore, the symbolic construct of their set of actions at a *glendi*, such as the *bakshishi*, actually reflects both the symbolic system of female subordination and the general roles of women in Cretan

culture. The lady's unprecedented giving of the *bakshishi*, that is the huge amount of money that the lady offered to the *lyra* player, not only degraded the role of men as controllers of a *glendi* but also debased them economically. That their economic strength could not match the lady's role reversal was simply unacceptable by the men.

The codes which determine the boundaries of social actions by participants at a *glendi* reinforce Alan Merriam's expression of "music as culture" (1977a: 202, 204) in terms of identifying certain central values in Cretan society, such as power, hierarchy or individualism, and of showing how these are reflected in musical conceptualization, behaviour and sound (Nettl 1983: 133). If we take into consideration that gender is a metaphor for types of action (Barnard and Spencer 1996: 257) then different kinds of acting can be translated and thus understood as ingredients of a cultural recipe that should be followed according to the rules. *Bakshishi* is an act thoroughly established by men and basically addressed to male performers, since there are very few female *lyra* players in Crete leading a *glendi*. Furthermore, the men's action also applies to the opposite sex since the offer of money is interpreted by the females as symbolic of male power.

Extending my argument, I would additionally contend that gender roles are part of a ritual process that has been delivered to contemporary Cretans along with the meanings conveyed in it. Breaking such an establishment, or, in other words, breaking part of the "tradition", such as the ritual of the *bakshishi*, by reversing the standard codes of communication between the members of the community, is the evidence that Cretans still try to uphold their cultural heritage to some extent. The observation of symbolic courses of action related to the past, in accordance with the constantly changing Cretan contemporary scene, underlines the fluidity of the alleged core of the stability of Cretan identity.

In the next section I will examine the codes of the "dancing" experience at a *glendi* and to what extent dance has been influenced by current phenomena.

3.6. *Dancing Aspects of a Glendi*

Τέτοιο χορό δεν είδα εγώ να σιέται ούλο το σπίτι
Είν' ο χορός που χόρευαν από παλιά στη Κρήτη
I have not seen such a dance rocking the entire house
It is the dance that was danced in Crete since the early days
Για δες τα Κρητικόπουλα πώς παίζουν πώς γλεντούνε
Στον πηδηχτό σαν πιάνονται σαν τα πουλιά πετούνε
Look at the young Cretans how they play and enjoy themselves
When they hold each other in the *pidichtos* dance they fly like birds
Χορεύετε λεβέντες μου κι εγώ θα σας κεράσω
Παλιό κρασί και τσικουδιά για να σας ξεκουράσω
Dance you fine men and I will buy you
Aged wine and *tsikoudia* in order to relax you
Άλλο χορό δεν χαίρομαι ωσάν το πεντοζάλη
Απου τονε χορεύουνε ούλοι μικροί μεγάλοι
I don't enjoy any other dance as much as the *pentozali*
Since everybody dances it, both young and old
Εσύ το χόμα δεν πατείς μικρή μου οντε χορεύεις
Και κάνεις νάζια του χορού και τσι καρδιές μαγεύεις
You my sweetheart do not step on the soil when you dance
And you charm men's hearts with your airs and graces
Οντε χορεύει ο Κρητικός δείχνει την αντρειγιά του
Τη λεβεντιά, το μπόι του και την παλικαριά του
When the Cretan man dances he shows his bravery
His manliness his stature and his prowess
Ούλος ο κόσμος στο χορό εσένα καμαρώνει
Γιατί το κάθε ζάλο σου και το θεριό μερώνει.
When you dance everybody takes pride in you
Because every one of your steps can tame any beast

The *mantinades* presented above are taken from a representative *glendi* (Spyros Parakatselakis in *Pachia Ammos*, August 2005). All contain material of immense cultural interest. The continuity of dance from the early days and its importance even until today is evident in the course of any *glendi*. Wine and *tsikoudia-raki* could never be excluded from a communal gathering. The consumption of drink is inseparable from the procession to dancing in most cases. Dance is undoubtedly linked with drinking and vice versa (figure 31).



Figure 31. Bottles and shot glasses for *raki* are sold everywhere in Crete

One of the *mantinades* cries:

Θεε μου και τσικουδόβρεχε το μήνα δέκα βράδια

Να γέμιζαν με τσικουδιά στέρνες μα και πηγάδια

My God, please rain some *tsikoudia* ten days per month

So that the cisterns and the wells will be filled up

It is customary for the *glendiots* not to proceed to the dance floor until they are quite drunk or to be more precise, a *glendi* becomes better and better when the high spirits start. This is why they are first served food and drink before entering the dance. At contemporary *glendia* Cretans are not only served wine and *raki* but also beer and, occasionally, whisky, even in open areas. Women tend to avoid strong spirits but enjoy other alcoholic beverages (mainly wine and beer).

At one of the *glendia* I attended in the village of Kalamaphka (several kilometres from Ierapetra), dancing was one of the most important features at that night. The *lyra* player who was about to lead the *glendi*, was called Nikos Zoidakis. He is a highly respected *lyra* player and his *mantinades* often have a funny content or subject matter. For this reason people are in a good mood and they dance a great deal throughout the night. By the time I arrived at the venue, a tavern located in an open area filled with plane-trees and with ample spring water, everyone was sitting, chatting, eating and drinking. I was astonished to see so many people filling the space. At the beginning children played on the dance floor while the instrumental ensemble played slow songs. The instruments consisted of two *lagouta*, a guitar and a *toubeleki* (oblong folk drum). The *lyra* player was not yet on stage. The children started dancing to the rhythms of famous Cretan songs and one noticed the parents admiring them. It was remarkable how children of different ages mirrored adult society. As a microcosm of Cretan identity, the children's social behaviour crowned the belief that "tradition" must be kept alive. The spontaneous performance by the children exhibited clearly the structure of the Cretan codes with respect to dance. Some of them showed real promise. Although not professionals, their body posture, how they changed their positions in order to give space to another child to express himself, and the way they improvised their solo dances was astonishing. The so-called *meraklides* (connoisseurs) were present at a very young age, performing the dances of their place of origin. When I asked the most talented among them how it felt to dance the local dances, he answered: "I love it! Crete is all about dancing. Don't you see?" pointing at the young dancers. This ten year old boy left me speechless; I stood there not knowing how to react. He strongly believed that Crete "is

about dancing” (and music of course) and he beckoned his little friends rushing to join them. The children, very much aware that the adults’ turn was about to begin, saw they had very little time to dance so quickly left the dance floor at the *lyra* players appearance. He requested the parents to move the children away so that the actual *glendi* could start (figure 32).



Figure 32. Children on the dance floor before the actual *glendi* begins

Adults and teenagers entered the dance floor once the children had gone. At almost every *glendi* in Crete, the *lyra* player starts with slow dances which then become progressively quicker. My description so far is very much that of most *glendia* in Crete so, for this reason, I will generalize about the dancing aspects even though I will draw information from this specific one where I was present. The role of the *lyra* player is very important because he is responsible to the audience. As the leader of the *glendi*, he is invited by the village authorities who are hosting festivities and must organize carefully the entertainment of the *glendiots*. Occasionally he speaks to the audience, sometimes he tells jokes, like any master of ceremonies he bolsters the good cheer of the *glendiots*.

As far as the dance is concerned, normally the members or friends of each family dance next to each, as this is considered to be more enjoyable. Not only do people dance,

but they also comment frequently on the dancing of others, or gossip, or poke fun at members of other groups whom they know well. Showing-off and leaving a good impression to others are also part of the event. The group of dancers that performs the best moves, and with the most fluency, will be admired and remembered by the audience. This creates an element of “competitiveness” secretly sustained by groups of people which is expressed through dance. The best dancer is the one who performs the most prominent figures and gyrations. He or she will be cheered by all.

It is usually the case that if one or both of the parents is an expert dancer, one of the offspring will also follow suit. Pertinent to the direct relationship that the *lyra* player maintains with the *glendiots* is the fact that he must be aware of everything happening on the dance floor. Appropriately he might invent his own *mantinades* that refer to specific dancers. One example is about a mother and a daughter who danced together, and so the *lyra* player sang:

Η νύχτα φέρνει την αυγή και η αυγή τη μέρα

Κι αφού 'ναι η μάνα μερακλού θα 'ναι κι θυγατέρα

The night brings the dawn and the dawn (brings) the day

And if the mother is *meraklou* [connoisseur in dancing] so is the daughter

In Cretan tradition dance is not only important in the course of contemporary *glendia* but it also held significance in times past. According to Vangelis Vardakis, a talented female dancer was considered to be a gifted young bride:

In most villages of Crete dance was very important. The elders used to say for example: “Our village is big. We have twenty young female dancers,” meaning that twenty young women were ready to get married. Dancing and cooking were among a woman’s accomplishments, and this was borne in mind by a man who wanted to make a marriage proposal. Women who are talented in dance are known as *meraklines* (connoisseurs). Whoever is married to a *meraklina* is considered to be one of the luckiest of men (Interview with Vardakis, July 2004).

The *meraklina* continues to be admired in contemporary Crete (**figure 33**). As such, many *mantinades* are sung to her.

*Η ομορφιά τσ' ανατολής του ήλιου η πρώτη αχτίνα
Σβήνουνε μες στα μάτια σου γυναίκα μερακλίνα
The beauty of the sun rise and the first sun ray
Are all lost in your eyes meraklina woman*

*Μια μερακλίνα κι όμορφη μ' έχει κουζουλαμένο
Κι έμπλεξα δίχως θέληση μαζί τση το καημένο
A meraklina and beautiful woman has driven me crazy
And I got involved with her without my will, I the poor guy*



Figure 33. A *meraklina* leading the dance

Most of *lyra* players sing *mantinades* to or about the *meraklines* (women) who dance well and also for the *meraklides* (men) who are equally skilled. Manolis Alexakis's interview on the website of the Cretan journal called *Stigmes* is notable. The *lyra* player says to his interviewer "I want my future wife to be a *meraklina*," and this is precisely the title of the interview (Matalliotaki 2001: 24). Since he himself is a *meraklis lyra* player he wants his wife also to be a *meraklina*. However, interaction between the *lyra* player and

the *glendiots* is not restricted to the expert dancers. The musician can address other *glendiots* in order to tease them or send them a message through the song. A characteristic example was when the *lyra* player addressed a man called Zouraris, who helped organize the *glendi*. When his daughter started dancing, the *lyra* player sang:

Καλή η πρωτοχορεύτρια, είναι σωστό καμάρι
Από μακριά τση φαίνεται ότι είναι του Ζουράρη
The leading dancer is a great pride
She looks like she is Zouraris's daughter from far away

Another time, when the *lyra* player realized that the members of the regional council were actually engaged public relations instead of dancing, he joked by singing:

Όλοι επιάσαν το χορό και το μικρό κοπέλι
Όμως απ' το συμβούλιο δεν τα θωρώ τα μέλη
Everybody's dancing even the small children
But I can't see the members of the council dancing

Aside from being a kind of bodily expression, dance is also a medium of flirtation. The phrase “you charm men's hearts with your airs and graces” implies that dancing is indeed a site of essential gender interaction, especially on the part of females. “A woman's being in the world involves her whole body rather than just her head” (Washabaugh 1998: 33) and since dancing is expressed bodily, it reveals an esoteric eroticism that is recognized as a sign of dalliance by males. Body language and slyness, along with good looks, is definitely the most stimulating reflection of femininity.

On the other hand, as far as the opposite sex is concerned, dance is also a means of showing bravery, manliness, stature and prowess. Masculinity is also declared through dance (**figures 34-35**). Despite the fact that most dances are cyclical and performed both by males and females it is not difficult for a stranger to detect the metaphors of body movement and to decode the intentions of the *glendiots*. Manolis Alexakis's phrase “let me see your dancing skills” was both interesting and challenging for me. It accorded with

the judgment of others that he was flirting. What is significant about dance and how is it linked to the flirtation game between the two sexes?

In due course I decided to attend dancing lessons. Not that I was bereft of rudimentary knowledge of the dance steps, but my intention was learn to dance. Being apprised about dance performance at a *glendi* would permit me to have a clearer understanding of my early orientation towards dance.



Figure 34. The leader of the dance making excessive movements



Figure 35. The leader of the dance showing his dancing abilities

3.7. “Learning to Dance” as a research technique

John Baily observes that “learning to perform” – an empirical methodology that gives particular insights into the nature of musical knowledge through the act of musical performance – demonstrates the value of participation in ethnographic field research:

Learning to perform should be a crucial part of research methodology because of the potential insights it provides into musical structure... only as a performer does one acquire a certain essential kind of knowledge about music (Baily 1995: 332).

Extending this argument, it can also be observed that “learning to dance” similarly provides access to types of embodied knowledge not easily understood by other means. Thus, there are always some parameters which should be taken into consideration in order to find the real meanings hidden behind any kind of performance, in addition to the aesthetic value that may provide to the audience. Thus, creativity through learning must be constrained by an understanding of what is already known and performed.

However, “direct observation” of dance events remains one of the principal objects of the study of dance. In Western Europe, and especially in Hungary, “participant observation and self-experience have become one of the governing principles in field research as the anthropological approach to dance research gained foothold in the 1970s” (Giurchescu and Torp 1991). The point here concerns participant observation as a research tool and the benefits of its practical use in the field (**figure 36**).



Figure 36. The ethnographer as participant observer

Just as instruments or voice are basic elements for producing sounds and organized under specific social and cultural circumstances to define a musical genre, so is the case for the body with respect to dance. The researcher should be aware of the utilization of the body as the primary principle of dancing.

Secondly, the ethnographer should have in mind the kind of dance he/she wants to explore. The classification and specification of dances is something that differs from one society to another. The concept of dance either as an art form or as an existing product of culture does not demonstrate in many societies the meaning that Western society gives to the word “dance”. Waterman gives an example of the Australian aborigines, from northeastern Arnhemland, where the term *bongol* is used for both music and dance:

Bongol includes music as well as dancing and at the same time it does not include the patterned steps and bodily movements performed in some of the sacred ceremonies or certain activities of the children’s age group that we would certainly characterize as dancing (Waterman 1962: 47).

From this point of view, the researcher should acknowledge the meaning of what is considered to be dance within society and what is not. Desiring to perform it, he/she should know its essential aspects, because dance can symbolize a variety of ideas and activities such as emotions, cultural values, personalities, social activities, animal imitations, religious convictions, and so on. Another feature of dance research is dance structure and the performance style, which includes the way the dancers regulate their bodies to express dance structure.

Every dance consists of a basic construction, which the performer is obliged to follow since dance is built on traditional forms and each tradition survives through it. The different interpretations are essentially based on the natural and physical abilities and the talents of the performer: the personal style used by each performer, the way he/she utilizes his/her body, the expressiveness which is liberated through his/her movements and emotions, and the way he/she creates new worlds and new experiences every time he/she dances, by translating the meaning of tradition through his/her body. Learning dance “language” turns out to be both interesting and at the same time complicated for the researcher.

My decision to learn Cretan dances involved all the aforementioned tasks of self-experience and I am of the same opinion as Merleau-Ponty who states:

It is through my body that I understand other people; just as it is through my body that I perceive ‘things’. The meaning of a gesture thus ‘understood’ is not behind it, it is intermingled with the structure of the world, outlined by the gesture, and which I take on my own account. It is arrayed all over the gesture itself (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 184).

A researcher, who became dancer, should be taught the art not only in the context of musical and dance performances as events. They should also look at their own traditions and recognize how much a part of them it really is, how difficult it is for them to move according to new experiences, how really deeply embedded the familiar concepts are. Experiencing the “other” is above all, an understanding of the limitations and possibilities of individual and social bodies. To understand though, through experience, does not always mean that we are able to communicate in terms of participation. “Total

participation, as advocated by Blacking, appears in most cases unrealistic, because it is generally unattainable” (Behague 1984: 9).

Since this is not achievable in most cases, and especially not so in dance, learning to perform as research operates as a strong tool in the field by allowing the scholar to answer questions that arise from his investigation and are, derived from self-experience. Performance then becomes a dictionary by which one interprets the meanings of the movements. Dictionaries, however, give very many meanings to a plethora of words that are impossible to remember unless one employs them in the context of language use. This implies that “bi-linguality” in the language of dance cannot be achieved by a researcher-performer who lives outside the performance contexts under study.

3.8. Performing Cretan Dances

Videotaping and imitating the steps of the Cretan dances was inadequate for my research. Owing to my great interest in dancing I had no difficulty in “copying” the steps since I had the opportunity to attend various *glendia*. My attendance at various dance events hitherto as an observer and not as an ethnomusicologist assisted my understanding of dance as practice and as a physical product. Learning to perform Cretan dances and also having an anthropological interest I would be helped in my study of dance as a cultural phenomenon that interrelates with other behavioural and conceptual processes.

The four areas of research in dance that Suzanne Youngerman suggests are: (1) the formal aspects of the dance structure – *what* is performed; (2) the behaviour involved in realizing the structure, or performance “style” – *how* the movement is accomplished; (3) the interaction of the social and cultural factors surrounding the dance before, during and after the performance – the *who*, *when*, *where*, and *why* of the dance event; and (4) the role of dance in the culture in its normative, aesthetic, and symbolic dimensions – the *meaning* of the dance (Nettl 1975: 117).

As a native researcher I was quite clear about the aspect of *what* was performed, the meaning of the names of the dances, and whether or not they were cyclical. Without difficulty I could recognize the musical style of what was being performed by the

musicians. I could tell simply by listening to the prefatory instrumental music, which dance it applied to because the vocabulary of these dances was empirically ingrained, from childhood in my Cretan identity. However, my lack of experience in doing the steps and controlling body posture, that is to say, *how* the movement is accomplished were aspects with which I was not familiar. To participate in a circular dance does not necessarily mean that one is aware of what he/she actually does. It is one thing to know the basic dance steps, but if one does not “feel” the music that accompanies the dance, one automatically has a false impression of the performance “style”, as well as difficulty in discerning the structure of the dance. In my case, I could distinguish the dances but I could not easily perform or “experience” them. “Experience” would only be superficial unless the notions of music and dance were interrelated. When I listened to a song I could say, for example, “this is a *maleviziotis* dance”. I was however unable to engage properly with it nor could I recognize who was dancing it in the appropriate way. This brings me to the questions of the *who*, *when*, *where* and *why* of the dance event. *Who* danced? *When* did the dancers change position and *when* did they stop dancing to let someone else lead the dance? *Where* did all of this happen and most importantly, *why*?

A serious consideration of the cultural authorities organizing village or town *glendia* was which dancing groups were to be invited to perform the “traditional” way of dancing. Men, women and children dressed in their traditional costumes, performed Cretan dances most effectively in order to impress the audience simultaneously, promoted the dance schools to which they “belonged” and at which they studied. Exaggerated movements and synchronized steps turned the dance experience into a ritual that I recognized but did not clearly understand. What was accomplished by these groups was dissimilar to what I had seen or experienced in the large performances of amateur dancers and *glendiots*. Therefore, I had to find out for myself what “the terms” were of the different music styles. Explaining this, John Blacking suggests, that “no musical style has ‘its own terms’: its terms are the terms of its society and culture, and of the bodies of the human beings who listen to it, and create and perform it” (Behague 1984: 8).

Very close to my aunts’ house was one of the most respected dancing schools in Ierapetra. The owners were twenty five year old Nikos Metaksakis and his wife Katerina. Though very young, both are experienced “traditional” dancers and had enjoyed an

excellent reputation in the area. I asked them in spite of my age (late twenties), if I could learn the Cretan dances. They were happy regardless of my age to teach me the steps of the most fashionable of them. “Dance does not have an age,” they used to say, and they convinced me that learning to perform Cretan dances was a medium of enlightened understanding of a part of their culture in depth.

My private lessons with Nikos comprised descriptive reports of the historical and political context in which dance was developed and is currently employed. When I first came to his dance school, he put some Cretan music on and asked me if I knew to which dance it belonged. To his surprise I knew. Then he played something else, and then another to test the degree of my familiarity with the different melodies and rhythms. The teaching of the steps was his work. Unfortunately, I could not distinguish all of the dances by ear, especially the quick ones. At various *glendia* I observed that the dances performed were repeated. The tunes were different each time but, a slow dance was usually followed by one that was quick. At the end of a fast dance the musicians would never play in quick dance tempo immediately after, in order to give the *glendiots* a rest. However, I had the impression that all of the quick dances were more or less the same. This confusion in my mind was the catalyst that took me to Nikos’s school. I could not, for example, distinguish a *Sousta* from a *Malevizioti*. Nikos was very helpful. In the very first lesson he made a list of the dances regularly performed throughout Crete.

There are a great number of dances in Crete. I can count twenty or more, but most of them are not danced these days. The most popular dances number five and these are the ones which will probably interest you. The others are performed either at dancing festivals or in remote villages, basically by the elders. There are fundamentally two categories of dances: those common throughout Crete and those that are obviously local. Again, no one dances the local ones during a *glendi*, you would do well first to learn those that are danced everywhere. They are the following: *Rethemniotiki Sousta*, *Siganos*, *Maleviziotis* (also called *Kastrinos pidichtos*), *Chaniotikos Syrtos* (the so-called *Chaniotis*) and the famous *Pentozalis*. The *Siganos* and the *Syrtos* are the slower dances among those (Metaksakis 2005).

Nikos distinguished the dances into two types: the pan-Cretan and the local. In each case, however, the origin of the dance is present at the start of its name. On the matter of origins Nikos informed me that even though every dance was born in a specific place on the island, the five most popular are so widely used that today they are recognized as “pan-Cretan”.⁵⁶

(I) Why are they not called “local” seeing, that they actually have a place-name at the front?

(N) All are local, and from place to place, each has its particular variation. The basic steps are common throughout Crete, and this is why they are called pan-Cretan. But if you want to know their origins, the *Sousta* was mainly danced in Rethymno, the *Maleviziotis* in Heraklion, the *Syrtos* and the *Pentozalis* in the area of Chania.

The first dance which I was taught was the *Siganos*. The word *Siganos* means “slow” and it is linked with the *mantinades*. *Lyra* players sing numerous *mantinades* about all aspects of Cretan life and many are famous. Evidence is the fact that when these *mantinades* are performed at a *glendi* the words the words can clearly be heard by the audience. Because the tempo is slow the *glendiotis* are able to concentrate on and “experience” every word that is sung. Occasionally the audience acclaims the leader of a *glendi* for his skill at singing the *mantinades* while playing a *Siganos*. The *Siganos* very much resembles another well known pan-Hellenic dance, the so-called *Chasaposerviko*. Both the *Chasaposerviko* and the *Siganos* were very easy for me to learn. The basic steps feature the legs (from behind) and then two kicks. The *Siganos* requires nothing more. Nevertheless, it was fruitful to know about the history of this dance. Nikos offered the following:

The *Siganos* is a slow dance as its name reveals. It is danced by both men and women at every *glendi*, whereas it used to be danced by women only in the past. It is said that during the Ottoman Empire, the Turks invited the Greek families to

⁵⁶ Nikos and I paused for verbal exchange during our lessons. Some of these dialogues are written down unedited, just as they happened. For convenience I will use the letter (I) for my questions and the letter (N) for Nikos’s answers.

various feasts in order to dance. But they would throw roasted chick-peas on the floor, so women lost their balance and fell. This happened either because Turks wanted to look under the women's skirts or because they wanted to humiliate them in this way.

Owing to the simplicity of this dance, we immediately moved on to learning the *Chaniotis*. It is said that the *Chaniotikos Syrtos* developed in the area of Kissamos in Chania. According to Nikos this dance was performed in order to encourage warriors during the war.

The *Chaniotikos* is a ritual dance which made, in different versions, its appearance at the time of the Fall of Constantinople (1453). It began spreading throughout Crete in 1920. It is not danced exactly the same way in the four prefectures of Crete. It is called *Syrtos* because the dancer must shuffle his/her feet on the dance floor. It is also called *Chaniotis* because it was first danced in Chania (Metaksakis 2005).

Nikos confirmed that the dancer should be quite humble precisely because this particular dance was danced by men. Men should be given the first place even now.

The *Syrtos* has twelve steps. Seven to the front and five to the back. It is danced cyclically and your hands must hold the other dancer's shoulders. You must have seen at various *glendia* the members of a family or a *parea* (company) dancing all together. This happened mostly in the past whereas today everyone gets up dance. But, if you see an entire family dancing you should not enter in their circle. The dancer at the front of the line has the right to improvise by altering the basic steps, but he must be in constant contact with the earth. He may not leap or exaggerate his body movements. You are a woman, so you must be careful when dancing the *Chaniotis*. In the past the first male dancer would call his lady to dance with him at the front. Her performance can be dynamic but she should also be very expressive. You, Iro should be careful of this. It is this that will provide you with the "feeling" of each dance: its expression (Metaksakis 2005).

Holding my hand, Nikos had me imitate his steps as he moved. To ensure that I had completely understood the steps and the “feeling” of the dance, he would have me dance alone as he continued to correct my expressiveness according to each dance. It was rather confusing at first but I got used to the steps and learned them quite easily.

Next was the *Sousta*, Crete’s erotic dance. I came to realize this when I attended a *glendi* where a middle-aged family friend invited me to dance with him. I was somewhat confused because it was yet another fast dance for me. Observing the dancers, I could see them dancing in couples, something unique for Cretan dances. Men dance opposite to the woman who makes her own specific movements while dancing. When the family friend asked me to dance, I was not aware of the steps but he explained that they were very easy and so they were. This dance was so speedy that by the end of its performance everyone would, end up sweaty and exhausted. I finally decided to learn this dance properly with Nikos who claimed that it probably took its name from the Italian word *susta*, meaning “spring”. This dance spread in Crete during the Venetian Empire. The small steps for each foot (two each time before the dancer stamps his foot on the floor at the third step) make the body resemble a spring which goes up and down. Nikos advised me that I should learn the *Sousta’s* steps as well as possible because it was the basis of yet another dance. Once more, appropriate body control was of primary importance. In that the *Sousta* was so quick and its rhythm triple, the constant counting of one-two-three, one-two-three was completely confusing. When commencing this dance one should move precisely to the rhythm that the musicians are playing, otherwise it is very easy to lose the rhythm which, of course, is forbidden.

Yet my problem was how to distinguish the quick dances. The learning process of the quick dances had started but I was not in a position to discriminate between them just by listening to the music. The *Sousta* is a dance in 2/4 time even though divided into three. The *Maleviziotis*, (or *Pidichtos*), was another fast dance which I desperately wanted to learn. It sounds like a *Sousta* but it not exactly similar. Nikos spent two lessons teaching me how to do this dance. Its basis was the *Sousta* (again 2/4 time) but it was much more complicated because it has twelve steps, not three. It is performed in a circle by both men and women but, as I observed at various *glendia*, it is chiefly danced by women. I presume this is so because women are more flexible and speedier than men.

The steps were quite difficult to learn but it was relatively easy for me to follow others when I was part of the circle. I also noticed that this particular dance was mostly played after the *Chaniotikos Syrtos*. The circle of the *Syrtos* would suddenly brake with only a few dancers left on the dance floor. Nikos said:

This is a very vivid dance and I would say quite impressive because of its speed. The steps of the *Maleviziotis* are simple to begin with but become more complicated as the dance progresses. Because of its rapid movements and turns, you have to be resilient in order to perform it faultlessly. I do not suggest that you should become the leader of the dance, but please check to see who is a good dancer so that you imitate him/her. It is very important to be aware of who dances well in a circle and who does not. It is the “marriage” of the musicians and the dancers. If the dancer is skilled he has the ability to show his virtuosity by varying the basic steps, mincing his steps, and maintaining the rhythm by his hands or stamping his feet. Sometimes he/she detaches him/herself from the circle and dances in the middle, at which point the others must stop dancing and allow the leader to his/her solo. If you want to pull away from the others and dance solo you should not exaggerate but rather be moderate. Exaggeration in Cretan dances is never good. The Cretan dancer must be proud and make as few excesses possible. In the case of women, they must maintain their femininity and certainly not make extreme movements (Metaksakis 2005).

The entire attitude of the dancers, according to Nikos made me think again of “respect” as a means of communication between the dancers. When I was confident enough to dance in a circle I could observe everyone dancing as a team, then suddenly, someone had the main role. Nobody ever expressed any indignation towards the solo dancer. On the contrary, standing still and clapping their hands to the rhythm, was the *glendiots*’ way of admiring and cheering the solo dancer.

Another point made by Nikos had to do with the skilfulness of the *lyra* player. “When a dancer is skilled you are also able to appreciate the musical abilities of the *lyra* player. If he is an expert he’ll do his best for the solo dancer. Then you will realize how magical the world of music and dance is.” Nikos was right. I attended many *glendia* and when the leader dancer stopped the others in order to make his solo movements, I noticed

that in many instances there was a change in the playing technique of the musicians. The embellishments and the virtuosity of the *lyra* player was at its peak. If the *lyra* player accelerated his melodies, the solo dancer, accordingly, would show his/her virtuosity, raising the spirits of the audience. There was clear interaction between the musicians and the dancer and this was unique in every case. One could sense and appreciate what the Cretans meant by the word *meraklis*.

In due course I came at last to learn the most famous of all Cretan dances, the *Pentozali*, despite the fact that it is an exclusively male dance. Nikos, an expert on the history of each dance, explained *Pentozali's* symbolism:

Daskalogiannis, who was a chieftain in Crete hundreds of years ago invited the violin player, Kioros, to perform the Pyrrhic dance. So, he sent a letter writing that symbolically they were ready to instigate the fifth incitement against the Turks, with the fifth step of this dance. Consequently, Kioros composed the music for this new polemic dance. It had twelve melodies, because the leaders of the uprising were twelve. *Pentozali* (meaning the fifth step) is a fast dance for men which are performed by stamping strongly on the floor. It was danced in this way because it stirred the warriors. The movement is cyclical with each holding the other's shoulders, and is composed of ten steps. The number of the steps is in memory of those who took the decision to make a stand against the Turks in Sfakia on the 10 October 1769. The grasping of each other's shoulders symbolizes the unity, trust and cooperation among the fighters. It certainly has a rebellious and strong character. This dance is exemplified by the virtuosic turns of the leader. It is also very important for the dancers to be sensitive to timing because of the simultaneous stamping of the men on the floor (Metaksakis 2005).

In my opinion, the *Pentozali* is the most difficult of all dances to learn. Not only is it very quick, but also its difficulty lies in its complicated steps. Unsurprisingly, one does not frequently encounter it at *glendia* except when the audience requests it. On one occasion where I was present, the *lyra* player announced three times that he is about to play a *Pentozali*. So I knew what to expect. Since this dance was usually performed after a *Siganos*, I was prepared for it. Thereafter, I regularly connected the *Pentozali* with its

performance after a *Siganos* and the *Maleviziotis* after a *Syrtos*. I listened to many CDs of various performers without discerning the one dance from the other, so I came to the conclusion that there was no recipe for understanding these rhythms. It was a matter of experience. It took sometime, but eventually I was able to distinguish the one from the other. Finally, I came to see that the most popular dances at a *glendi* were the *Chaniotikos Syrtos*, the *Maleviziotis* and the *Siganos*.

Through systematic dancing with skilful performers I discovered the subtle movements that I could in no other way have noticed at a *glendi*. The fluctuations and rhythmic variations, as well as the swaying of the body, enabled me appreciate the “feeling” of each dance.

The core of the kinetic substance of a dance is constituted by the elements that characterize it and separate it from the others. The rhythmic structure, the steps, the holding, the gestures, the spatial arrangement of the members of the group, these together encapsulates the characteristics of a dance. My aim was to get to the core of the kinetics of Cretan dancing as deeply as possible. Of course, it goes without saying that each area or village has developed its unique dancing idiom - what we may characterize as “local colour.”⁵⁷ It is clear that the members of a community use as an exclusive medium of expression a standard repertoire of dances. They have all grown up listening to the same music played by the local musicians and more or less they all articulate common experiences. Thus, each and every one is based on a common understanding and interpretation of the basic core of dancing. This communal understanding has embodied the personal interpretations of each dancer in an aggregation which is accepted and is considered as exclusively his/her own. In other words, the personal interpretations of the members of a community have a “greatest common measure” and that is the “local colour”.

Another aspect of “traditional” dance is improvisation. The most able dancers have the local idiom as a starting point and they boldly extend it by being innovative without breaking the traditional rules. Their leaps are condoned by the others who, though they may not follow them, feel nonetheless that the “tradition” has not been compromised by such innovations. If a dancer were to transgress established bounds the

⁵⁷ Local color is a synonym for “local performing style”.

community will openly express disapproval. These imaginary lines actually entrench the kinetic space. All members are obliged to move around the axis of what has been established and each of them expresses his/her personality depending on how much they know and how good they are at doing it. In other words, how *meraklis* someone is, meaning to what extent they might be considered a “connoisseur” of dance. Only the one who has assimilated the local idiom in depth can improvise the dance, otherwise his movements will be false, locally non-specific, meaningless and inauthentic. Thus, his choreography will be detached from the cultural environment in which it is meant to be expressed.

Clearly I was not in a position to improvise at dancing. However, after a few lessons I could distinguish the good dancers from the ungifted simply by observing them. Because my teacher possessed a general knowledge of the dances in different parts of Crete, as well as their variations, he wanted me to be sensitive to the small changes in each area. He thought that this would help me acquire an overview of the dancing repertory throughout Crete and this in turn would be of benefit to my ethnomusicological research. For example, through the lessons I came to recognise the various versions of the *Syrtos* dance in Rethymno, Chania and Lasithi. This made me familiar with the number of steps required while dancing in a circle. Ultimately I came to the conclusion that Cretans from all over the island were trying to show their local identity at every *glendi* they attended. One who knows the steps and their variations could readily agree that a *Lasithiotiko glendi* for example (a *glendi* in Lasithi) was different from a *Chaniotiko glendi* (a *glendi* in Chania) just because of the variation of the steps, no matter where it took place.

Ted Petrides in his book *Greek Dances* (1993) has a detailed description of the most popular Cretan dances and he had used graphic notation for the steps. Since my ethnochoreological training does not include knowledge of any dance notation system, I will make use of his graphics as a reference for the steps of the Cretan dances (pp. 82-101). Specifically, my objective was to convey the importance of “learning to perform” as a research technique. Through participant observation and self-experience I came to understand the different aspects of dance from the “inside”. The rules about the when, how and why of dance in Crete became more apparent to me once I began dance lessons.

Now it was not just a matter of following the *glendiots*, but I clearly understood the “solemn” processes in the sequence of dances. I knew when to stop dancing to allow the virtuosos to improvise while standing still on the dance floor and clapping hands to express admiration for him/her. I also knew when to start dancing simply by listening to the *lyra* player. I recognized dance and music not as two different aspects of the same culture but as a chemical compound which only exists if both dancer and instrumentalist are from Crete. Dance cannot exist without music and Cretan music is played basically for dancing. Aspects of identity suddenly came to epitomize the importance of being a Cretan and thus, being a member of a living tradition. Yet if one comes from another background and learns to perform he/she automatically experiences music and dance as a body that he/she “tends to take as his/her own” (Baily 1995: 345). Paraphrasing Gunther’s words on music, “learning to perform someone else’s dance becomes part of a wider acculturative process of ‘transfer and retransfer’ of dance and dance theory from one socio-cultural environment to another” (Baily 1995: 345).

The whole learning process made me conclude that the Cretan heritage of dance may not be exactly as it is promoted by the media. The synchronized movements flaunted by the professionals have as much to do with advertising local dance schools as they do with talent, and secondly those dances established as “authentic” may not in fact warrant this reputation. I believe that there is a huge gap of what is taught in the dance schools and what is actually performed at *glendia*. There is also a significant difference between what is shown at dance festivals and what is in fact performed in Crete by ordinary people who simply want to pass a pleasant evening. For example, I saw on TV a dance festival which took place in the *Herodio* (one of the largest of the ancient theatres of Athens) some years ago. This festival had to do with the dance heritage of various parts of Greece, including Crete. Unique among the dances were those chosen to represent Crete: the *Maleviziotis*, the *Chaniotikos Syrtos* and the *Pentozali*. Watching them, I realized that they were merely synchronized choreographies performed with simple variations.

The same happens when professional dancers or amateurs from a certain dance school make a show of their work. Normally, in Crete the people responsible for organizing a *glendi* invite the dance teachers in the vicinity to the *glendi*, venue to

perform traditional dances. Their presentation of synchronized choreographies with extravagant movements and steps, have now become part of contemporary *glendia*, although the actual dances performed by the *glendtiots* are restricted to three or four.

Choreographies using complex steps, exaggerated movements, turns and excessive acrobatics, compose a “show”- derogatory, which is called Cretan “traditional” dance. Is it “traditional” or is it a manufacture of those who run the dance businesses in Crete? There is no doubt that what dance groups perform in public differs completely from what is performed at the *glendia*. Performances by particular dance schools can be part of a *glendi* in terms of presenting choreographies that promote the dance school. Correspondingly, members of the audience interested in dance may be attracted to the dance schools which allegedly promote the “tradition” of Crete. The entire event is meant, after all, to demonstrate what was performed many years ago, in spite of the fact that contemporary versions differ to a great extent.

To give an example of what I mean here, I will refer to my cousin’s wedding on July 2004 in Ierapetra. After the guests arrived in the tavern where the *glendi* took place, and just about when the happy couple sat to their table, there was a dance event for welcoming the newly-weds. The best of Nikos Metaksakis’s dance school performed some Cretan dances with extravagant figures and excessive movements. Their performance of Cretan dances was extremely different from what was performed later by the guests. One could detect the differences between the professionals and the amateurs not only in terms of performance but also in terms of the simplicity of the movements the audience used during the *glendi*. The guests seemed to be unable to perform dances of the past just because they were not aware of them in contrast to the professionals who knew exactly how to dance them and how to promote them. It is normal for the people who are part of the audience to be impressed by the deep knowledge of the dancers, and that is one of the reasons which lead them to enrol their children to dance schools. The continuity of the tradition should be learned by their children, and such events benefit the dance schools without doubt.

Dance is considered to be the only aspect of modern Cretan culture that can be restored to what it has been, as transmitted by the elders. Traditional costumes worn by the dancers to perform typical Cretan dances continue to be worn. Dances that have lost

their popularity, are “stored away” in the closets of tradition but can be brought out as products of the past that belong to Cretans cultural history. Admittedly, consummate dancers interested in dances well-buried in the past attempt to highlight the significance of what had been the tradition. I agree with Daphne Tragaki’s argument about the *rebetiko* revival, which was a stream that needed to recall those musical expressions that served the “proper” Greek musical morale. According to her, Greeks could “either invent new traditions or resurrect one from the past ‘buried’ in ‘our’ musical repository. This is where a music is revived, re-discovered and re-used for current cultural purposes” (Tragaki 2007: 125).

One can also detect that it is only dance that can be revived, re-discovered and re-used for current cultural purposes, not the instrumental and vocal music. While travelling through Crete I never came across musical revivals that were not organized by the cultural authorities as entire events. Old genres of music such as the *tabachaniotika*, for example, were performed as parts of a repertoire that included different songs from all over Crete. But this was hardly the revival of a particular genre simply because it was used as a medium to elevate an audience or engage the older folk in musical reminiscences. Again, it is hardly a “revival” when performers, rather than imitating the way these songs were sung in the past, but arranged the songs to make them “palatable” to contemporary society. Performances were not comprised exclusively of these kinds of songs but also included other genres, since contemporary Cretans greatly favour mixing old and new sounds.

Re-discovered and revived old styles of dancing (*mikro-mikraki*, *chamezanos*, *apanomeritis* and many others), however, continued to be performed at various *glendia* as products of the past, and are danced by people deeply involved in old kinds of dance. Connoisseur dancers who are very much interested in keeping their dance culture alive, interview old men and women who were once famous for their dancing skills. I have met a number of young people who like dancing very much and it is important for them to have a broad knowledge of the past. Manolis Saridakis, Eleni Chaniotaki and Giorgis Levendakis were three of the people I met (2007), whose interest in dance made them visit old men and women in the northern villages of Lasithi, in order to get an understanding of what was happening in the past. They collected information about how

people danced in the past and memorize bygone steps. Unfortunately, knowledge about these types of dance has not been transmitted to the younger generation. In other words, professional dancers engaged with old-fashioned dances perform them at *glendia* as products of a team work undertaken in order to promote their dance schools. It is a means of advertising to attract potential clients and to boost business. As a result, the revival of old dances has actually been a profitable way of connecting the past with the present.

3.9 Glendia – Performance in glendia – Learning to perform for glendia

In this chapter I analysed the basic issues that surround a Cretan *glendi*, its structure and its cultural role throughout the island. The use of examples taken from my ethnographic fieldwork (e.g. a wedding in Kritsa village), the *mantinades* and their thematic sequence, all aimed to give an impression of the *glendi* context. The respect of the audience towards the *lyra* player, the ethos of the *glendiots* and the dancers, even the *bakshishi* procedure verify a kind of “ritual-protocol” of each *glendi*.

Even the improvised and remarkable *mantinades* sung for dance authenticate its importance as a means of expression for the Cretans. Despite the circular chain formation of the dancers, the progressive step movements, the *figoures* (figures), (acrobatic embellishing steps), (see Hnaraki 2007: 106-107), the leader of the dance and the improvisations of the *meraklis* or the *meraklina*, I concur with Chris Williams who observes that “ With dancers and musicians both striving for expression within a closely defined form, a very interesting process takes place and its historical evolution can still be delineated in the present form of some older dances” (Hnaraki 2007: 107).⁵⁸

For my research I decided to learn how to dance, both as a participant observer and as a dance student. Through that process I came to understand the concept of dance and the process of learning to perform as an extra benefit gained in the course of research. “One understands the music from the ‘inside’, so to speak” (Baily 1995: 342). Learning to perform was a means of understanding Cretan culture. This is the kind of musical enculturation about which Rice (1994: 65) remarked (in the case of Bulgarian bag-

⁵⁸ Dr. Chris Williams had a personal communication with Maria Hnaraki on January 24, 2001 and there is no evidence for bibliographical reference.

piping). “I realised that the tradition was learned but not taught”. However, it was very tempting for me as an outsider to use my body as an instrument, which would be an expressive means of interaction with the rest of the dance group. It was important for me to understand dance through practice as a means of communicating tradition and expressing oneself. Despite the difficulties, I soon realised that learning to perform is achievable, but it is difficult to “make one’s own” that which was initially “alien”. Bilinguality in the language of dance cannot be achieved by a researcher/performer who lives outside the performance contexts under study. “Neither the self nor the Other is exclusively the object of understanding; rather interpretation seeks to expose the world or culture referenced by symbols and symbolic behaviours, a process necessarily finite, open-ended, and contestable” (Rice 1994: 7). All I tried to achieve was understanding “in hermeneutic terms as a dialectic of experience and interpretation” through a process by which “unwritten behaviour, speech, beliefs, oral tradition, and ritual come to be marked as a corpus, a potentially meaningful ensemble separated out from an immediate discursive or performative situation” (Clifford 1988: 34, 38).

Even when knowing the steps, acknowledging the dance etc. it is definitely not easy to know how to perform it, understand the ritual and also be aware of the terms that characterise every musical style of the particular tradition. Step variations, even for pan-Cretan dances, can be taken as evidence of local identity, and need to be understood in relation to their local contexts. However, dance is not only the steps and what matters is not only the dancer. There is a significant link between the musicians and the skilful dancers, a kind of inter-connection, and not two different aspects. As Hnaraki puts it “It is the music and the musicians, the song and the singer, everybody who dances or does not dance, the history of the whole place, its past, its culture and its traditions” (Hnaraki 2007: 104).

CHAPTER FOUR

The music profession in Crete and networks of Cretan musicians

4.1. *The musicians of Crete*

4.1.1 Music as a profession

Crete contains a rich multifarious, musical and dance culture. This has evolved from the musicians and the *mantinadologous* and *rimadorous* on the one hand, as well as the *meraklides* on the other. By using the word *meraklis* (connoisseur) here, I mean sensitive people who loved music, dance and singing and who played a leading part in the musical events of the past. I would dare to say that they actually had roles equal to the musicians, because without them the *parea* or a *glendi* would not exist. According to Hnaraki “*meraklis* is a man who demands the best and is knowledgeable in the rules of *glendi*, capable of experiencing and conveying true *kefi*”⁵⁹ (Hnaraki 2007: 165). Hence, by entering the *pareas* and showing their personal style *meraklides* actually built a joyful atmosphere for the rest of the *glendiots* as well as for the musicians themselves because they gave a motive for the performers to play better. There are many musicians who are not experts; however, they are placed among the members of a local society and fully accepted by their compatriots. That was before the 1920s when people gathered to sing and expose their sorrow and happiness, their *sevda* (desire for one’s beloved), the difficulties of life, their longings, their agonies and hopes. That was the musician’s role in accordance with the *meraklides*; to represent the image of society when other means of communication were more difficult than today. My interview with one of the old men in the village of Achlia, called Nikolaos Dermitzakis describes how things were in the past:

I am now 82 years old and I still remember my father singing in the *pareas* of our village. He had a natural talent for the improvisation of *mantinades*. After

⁵⁹ *Kefi*: High spirits; gaiety (Hnaraki 2007: 164).

having finished work, all men gathered in the *kafeneio* of the village. Sometimes my father took me with him to the *kafeneio*. We all expected the minute when one of the *meraklides* would say something funny or too serious in order to take a *mantinada* for an answer. And then men started laughing or they might give courage to one another by saying improvised *mantinades*. That was our entertainment. Simple things made us happy despite the difficulties of that time (Interview with Nikolaos Dermitzakis, July 2005).

During 1920 to 1960 local musicians and members of the *pareas* conducted a dual performative role at a *glendi* where the *parea* included professionals and connoisseurs who were enthusiastic about music, *mantinades* and dance. These people contributed to every musical event of the local society. While the musician commanded respect, he was not an avaricious professional whose only concern was to earn money. Hence, he had the full support of his compatriots.

Music from the 1920s to 1960s was not a money-earning profession. Musicians would play for little remuneration and were often paid in kind. They played because they loved music. In some cases they jeopardized their health because of the endless sleepless nights and long performances, for little material profit. In his notes for the CD *Protomastores 1920 – 1955* (Master Musicians 1920 – 1955) the *boulgari* player Phoustalieris is quoted as saying:

Musical groups from the town of Rethymno were very popular with the village people. Wedding receptions then lasted 5-6 days, particularly at Sphakia where *glendia* could go on for fifteen days! I remember that I spent long sleepless nights away from home playing the *boulgari*. I often turned pale, my fingers would swell and my nails would break. On many occasions I would fall asleep while playing. Then Antonis Kareklas [the *lyra* player] who was the strongest of us all – would stamp on my feet to wake me up... As for money, we did not make much. We hardly managed to scrape three to eight hundred drachmas for all of us at each wedding. It was like pocket money. A totally different thing from that which is the case nowadays. After each performance we usually returned to

Rethymno on a cart⁶⁰ (Liavas, *Protomastores, Stelios Phoustalierakis 1935-1955*, pp. 9-10).

If Phoustalierakis is to be believed, music was not a profitable profession. Nonetheless, excellent performers, such as Mavros in Chania, Kareklas in Rethymno and Charilaos in USA, started earning money day after day. The need for economic profits soon became a must. Both gramophone and radio broadcasts contributed to this new professional reality. Thus, the “famous” performer started being the leader of a *glendi*, and gradually the *meraklides* started being dependent on him. Songs came to play a central role in Cretan *lyra* music. According to Ross Daly, every performer had a repertory of lyrics or used his imagination to make songs during a *glendi*. He also had a repertoire of melodies, which he used to fit the new lyrics to in a more spontaneous way. Ross Daly observes that:

Unfortunately, it is the record industry’s fault that particular lyrics were identified with specific melodies. Because of their recordings on tape, we have the creation of songs. On the contrary, in the old days there were no songs, there were just melodies and lyrics, almost everywhere fifteen-syllable, and it was very easy for someone to attach a lyric to a melody. There are always some exceptions of course but Cretan music is one of the last genres of Greek music which still separates lyrics from music and the combination of the two is made spontaneously.

This is true of Asia Minor songs as well. The only concrete issue of these songs was the melody. Every musician had a repertoire of various figures, which he would transform according to the *maqam* and the rhythm he was playing. These were called *araname* from the Turkish *ara* (bridge) and the Persian *name* (melody). So, they were using melody-bridges... They also used to begin in a *maqam* and while playing in it, they threw a bridge across the songs by using these phrases as instrumental melodies, which consisted of a melodic core, that would change, so that it would fit every rhythm (4/4, 9/8, etc.). Everything was

⁶⁰ Because of the lack of transportation, musicians often traveled to their homes on a cart. Roads were not yet properly constructed and it took a long time for the musicians to return home.

much more improvised then. That was the tail-end of another epoch (**figure 37**), (Interview with Ross Daly, June 2002).



Figure 37. A *parea* of musicians of the past⁶¹

At the same time the local traditional idiom of each region was something that its carriers tried to maintain as unchangeable and unalterable as possible in order to support the local character of their region. Vasilis Skoulas says:

My grandfather and Xylouris's grandfather were brothers. Our great grand father played the *lyra* and his two brothers also. They were all acknowledged *lyra* players and I would say that they tried to play the regional style of their village (Anoyia) as they inherited it from their ancestors. I believe that music is in our genes. It is carried from generation to generation and we try to safeguard it as we received it from our parents and our grandparents. In fact we still try to expose the local character of Anoyia, maybe unscrupulously, because of all these images and all the memories we carry inside us. We also respect it and that is why we don't want to be far off what we were actually given (Interview with Vasilis Skoulas, August 2010).

The first wave of *lyra* players and performers after the 1960s was profoundly “regional” or local, whereas the following generations of *lyra* players, who played in the

⁶¹ www.megalakis.gr/Page.aspx?lang=gr&newID=123.

urban centres, had a broader repertoire. As Skoulas mentioned earlier, because of the fact that his ancestors were in Anoyia and they did not travel often outside their village it was natural not to play repertoires from other regions. The expansion and multiplicity of the repertoires came with the development of transportation and the travel that inevitably ensued.

The period 1960 to 1990 was particularly rich for Cretan music. Two of the most significant *lyra* players were Kostas Moudakis and Thanasis Skordalos (Papadakis 2002). Kostas Moudakis was born in a village of the region of Mylopotamos in the prefecture of Rethymno, in February 1926. He left his home for the first time in 1948 to join the army. Enlisted in the Armed Police Force, he was transferred to Chania where he met George and Stelios Koutsourelis; together they worked on a musical programme for the local Radio Station. A year later he went to Athens where he collaborated closely with Simon Karas (1951). In approximately the same period, the Cretan tavern *Chania* became his haunt for the next eighteen years. Towards the end of 1952, he began recording: first accompanying Stelios Koutsourelis on the *lyra* in the song *Arpaksá ke baildisa*, and later, in 1954, singing the song *Den thelo mesa stin kardia*⁶² (“I don’t want-more pain-inside my heart”) with the company of the Koutsourelis brothers. From then on there followed a long series of recordings that made Kostas Moudakis the most recorded *lyra* player of his time. His fame spread beyond Crete to Athens and to the Greeks of the diaspora; he made a series of tours to the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany, India and South Africa.⁶³ Kostas Moudakis passed away in January 1991.⁶⁴

⁶² Den thelo mesa stin kardia na valo ki allo pono (I don’t want any more pain in my hear
 Thelo I pligi pou m’anoikses afti na meinei mono I only want to have the wound you caused me
 Hthela na’mái aroma pou vaneis sta mallia sou I would like to be the aroma you put in your hair
 Se kathe sou anapnoi na mpaino stin kardia sou Each time you breath to enter your heart)

⁶³ Veteran musicians in Crete have honed their musical and business skills, reworking local notions of value and exchange into an effective and upgraded modus operandi. This has enabled them to maintain a niche in the local musical economy and use it to move into national and international networks. Some of the virtuosos are well traveled. They have played for Greek and other audiences in the United States, Canada and Australia for many years. They are plugged into a network that gains them work in a remote mountain village one week and then via a flight to Brisbane work in the Cretan diaspora the next. This does not happen all the time but occasionally it does for the better-known or well-connected members of the musical community (Dawe 2007: 12).

⁶⁴ Aerakis et al, Liner Notes from the CD cover *Protomastores* 1996: 33-35.

Thanasis Skordalos was born in 1921 in Spili, a well-known village in the prefecture of Rethymno, in 1920 (Aerakis 2000). His fame is inscribed in a well-known *mantinada*:

Στο Σπήλι εγεννήθηκε ο Δάσκαλος στη λύρα

Ο ζακουστός ο Σκορδαλός τεχνίτης και με πείρα

The Master of the *lyra* was born in Spili

The famous Skordalos who was a virtuoso and an expert

(Vavourakis 1992: 99)

At the age of nineteen Skordalos made his first appearance as an established *lyra* player at the carnival ball in the famous Cretan hall *Byzantio* in Athens. Accompanied on the *lagouto* by the famous Giannis Markogiannakis, he made his first recording in 1946, with the song *Mono ekeinos m'agapa* (“He is the only one who loves me”), a *Syrtos* from his native village. The flourishing of his career, both in live performances and in recordings covered the two decades from 1947 to 1967. Many of his songs are among the classics of recorded Cretan music: *Trephetai o pepkos sta vouna* (“The pine tree grows on the mountains”), *Na' cha tin chari ton poulion* (“I wish I had the grace of birds”), *Protos Syrtos* (“The first Syrtos”), *Oneira pleko mystika* (“I weave secret dreams”), *Tha to phonakso dynata* (“I will shout loudly”), etc. Like others, he dedicated a large part of his career to perform for the Greeks in the diaspora, in the United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa and Europe (Aerakis et al, 1996:37-39).

Thanasis Skordalos (**figure 38**) would play every song, whether from Chania or Sitia, as if it were from Rethymno; while other performers deployed an extensive repertoire, he would perform solely in the manner of his ancestors. This of course, was damaging because all of his melodies were executed in the same style. Local colours tend to fade and that was a visible step towards the creation of a pan-Cretan repertoire.



Figure 38. The bust of Thanasis Skordalos in Spili

Two basic issues contributed to the music's transformation from the first wave of Cretan musicians to the next; both arose from increasing wealth driven by industrial development.

Specifically, a flourishing record industry and the rise of radio broadcasts in Crete helped the great masters of music to create a pan-Cretan music idiom which appealed to Cretans all over the island. Since Rethymno is where most of the famed musicians originated, the pan-Cretan repertoire is closely linked to the musical idiom of that city. The pan-Cretan repertoire, characterised by a general and standardised range of songs, mostly taken from Rethymno, was performed by almost all musicians and was not as regional as in the past.⁶⁵ In a short time, it gradually developed as the only recognized

⁶⁵ I use the word “regional” in the same way Slobin does. He explains that “regional musics are less easy to define, since I am using the term *region* in an offbeat way. If *local* can be bounded by a village or valley, then *region*, intuitively, is a somewhat larger zone of contiguous territory [...]. In the United States, the Polish polka exists in a region of population pockets stretched across five thousand kilometers in widely separated urban areas. Within this regional music, there are traditional local styles: Chicago versus East Coast. The fact that the former began to dominate the latter shows a move from local to regional visibility” (Slobin 1993: 18). In the case of Crete, the larger zone of contiguous territory can be limited to the four prefectures (Lasithi, Heraklio, Rethymno, Chania). Thus, “regional” could be characterized by either the music of some nearby villages that belong to the same prefecture, or the music of a whole prefecture.

music of Crete, replacing the characteristic feature of each region's music and dance. Aside from musicians such as Giorgos Koutsourelis from the town of Kissamos in Chania, and Giannis Dermitzakis (Dermitzogiannis) from Sitia, who lived in the border-line years between the two epochs and tried to preserve local musical idioms as much as possible, the majority preferred to escape from the constricting barriers of regional styles.

Nikos Stratakis claims: "Irrespective of the boom of the music industry, committees representing the record companies of that period, made judgments about each performer's work". Stratakis explains how difficult it was for a performer of that time to enter the world of the music industry.

I suppose you know Thanasis Skordalos and Kostas Moudakis. There was a time when Moudakis wanted to record his first disc so he had to pass through a selection committee. In order for someone to record his music, the committee needed to be aware of who he was, what he wanted to sing, what he was about to play, what kind of verse he used, which instruments he would use, and so on. The committee was selected by *Panivar* Record Company in Athens.

At that time Moudakis would imitate the playing techniques of Skordalos. When he went to the committee they told him: "Mr. Moudakis, we already have a Skordalo in our company and we do not need another one". Moudakis left disappointed. However, he changed his playing style and he managed to record later.

This is something that should never have changed. It should still exist up today. It is true... When you turn the radio on you can more or less listen to the same things. You can not individualize what you hear. They all sound the same, and you ask yourself: What the hell am I listening to now? (Interview with N. Stratakis, August 2005).

Taking into account that local musicians are known by certain small-scale bounded audiences and only by them (see also Slobin 1993:17) it is evident that the generation of musicians whose aim was to be as widely recognized as possible to a wider audience focused on what could be defined as "regional" music, which includes traditional local styles, yet prioritizing that from Rethymno as the most prevalent of all.

Before the expansion of the recording industry in the 1960s, however, musicians were seldom interested in ownership of the pieces they recorded. But the next generation of musicians was more interested in the notion of copyright (1960-1990). Their aim was to consolidate their economic rights in the music industry, by forming the Anonymous Company of Copyrights called AEPI (*Anonymi Etairia Pnevmatikis Idioktisias*).

At the outset all musicians of that period began their careers as amateurs, but in time music-making steadily developed into a profession, and the musicians became professional or semi-professional. This transformation can be understood in the light of the period of penury that the musicians lived in. The memories of the post-war years were still fresh; many had left their villages and moved to urban centres within and beyond Crete. Music makers, therefore, welcomed the new situation: music became a business.

Progressively, the performers become “receptors” and not “transmitters” of ideas about musical aesthetics. The musicians exerted their power by controlling the progression of the *glendi*, and they monopolized the *glendi* by singing the *mantinades* themselves. In the shade of the “great” masters, “second-class” musicians appeared, essentially trying to imitate the more famous musicians. Even so, the latter were also recognized by the connoisseurs so that they could make their living as professionals. Inevitably, those performers who operated in more remote areas of the island found it more difficult to gain recognition for their work.

As the years passed, and especially after 1990, the older musicians either died or retired from active performance. As a consequence of the numerous music schools and conservatories for traditional music in urban centres, new musicians emerged. They, however, tended to be less immersed in the musical background of the district from which they come from, and generally adopted the pan-Cretan idiom that by then had become fashionable throughout Crete. What the newcomers tried to do was to adjust their personal music style into the mainstream or experiment with modern trends in order to impress a wider audience. Essentially, their aim was professional collaboration as performers as well as a successful business career in music.

4.2. Does the musician make the music or the music the musician?

The question of whether the hen produces the egg or vice versa can also be expressed in terms of music and musicians. Does the musician make the music or the music the musician? This conundrum has often crossed my mind with respect to the importance of the creative aspects of being a musician in Crete. What are the factors that determine the fame of a performer whose musical production appeals to a wide audience? In other words, what is more significant for the audience, the music itself or the one who performs it? Questions of this kind may sound naïve or unsophisticated, but all I could see in Crete were performers coming from a prefecture, a village or a family that had produced great music in the past. Networks of musicians from a certain area or others originating from distinguished musical families formed a mosaic of elite performers throughout Crete. Even women, in some instances, could be part of that mosaic if they were members of famous musical families. How are these networks formed today?

The movements of musicians within Cretan topographic space creates a folklore about them. This lore of the musician informs, and is informed by, a network of social (and especially socio-musical) relations that unite local to global in a particular way (Dawe 1994: 166).

The village of Anoyia in Rethymno, for example, is considered to be one of the most “traditional” places in Crete, not only in terms of its topography and dialect but also in terms of music. Memories of the past are still fresh and very much connected to current reality. Strong family ties have built an unbreakable chain which is very important for the continuity of tradition. Families such as the Xylouris, Skoulas, Stavrakakis, Vrentzos, Aerakis, Pasparakis, Cheretis and others bear a venerable social and cultural history. Members of these families, mainly musicians, are, when playing together, widely known as *Anoyiani Parea* (The group from Anoyia), (**figure 39**).



Figure 39. Giorgis Vrentzos, also known as “Katis” (mandolin) with other Anoyian musicians playing in the central square of Anoyia (July 2006)

The notion of *parea* (company, group) throughout Crete mirrors the need of the islanders to confine their musical interests within a small circle of musicians who are either relatives or friends. Notable is the fact that Cretans from one and the same place often call each other *koumpare* or *syntekne* which means “bestman-godfather of one’s child”. The respect and intimacy one has in order to make someone his best man is translated into benevolence towards any friend of a Cretan, especially if he is from the same place. Moreover, sharing the same home territory establishes a microcosm which is assembled by cultural characteristics that can easily be understood among “friends”. Since “context can be thought of as all those elements which go together to make up a whole” (Herndon and McLoed 1981:29), the *parea* in Crete can be seen as a typical context in which musicians relax and express themselves freely and spontaneously (Du Boulay 1974). A kind of jamming, similar to that of jazz musicians, is often struck up by members of a *parea*. It is an act that unites the members of a group in musical terms, because this set of performers is already bound in terms of its social and cultural context. Spontaneous singing and playing of instruments creates a “new” cultural context within one that already exists (that in their village). The musical artefact which they generate differs in form and content from one company to another, but the underlying ethos is the

same. This ethos, which is determined by the expressive media of each *parea* in Crete underlines the local character of the music. The reverse is also true, that is the music's *topos* can be determined by the ethos of the *parea*. Ultimately, the music, together with the environmental proximity of the performers, operate as communicating vessels which counterbalance the validity of the music as a cultural product and the legitimacy of the performer as being an authentic "product" of a certain musically-creative location. The relationship between the performer and the audience changes according to context. Vasilis Skoulas gives an interesting paradigm on the performer's locality and the impact on the actual performance:

The performer is a temporal entity judged by the audience which actually classifies him in different categories. I come from Anoyia. Whenever I play here, in the place where I was born, where I have all my memories and my first recalls I will do my best to satisfy the people listening to me. Whenever I go to Sitia, or Lasithi I will be accepted. Again, I'll do my best for the audience but it is true that I cannot reach the 100% of my skills. It doesn't matter how good you are when you perform in another place, not as familiar as your place of origin. I cannot compare myself to someone non-professional whose origins are from Lasithi for example. He may play five – six songs which show the history of his place in depth. It doesn't matter how many mistakes he makes or even if he is artless. His playing depends on his recollections of the past...This is our heritage and this is what we carry when performing an instrument or a dance (Interview with Vasilis Skoulas, August 2010).

Behague states that "[The] singer conceives cultural performances as separable portions of activity thought by the members of a social group to be encapsulations of their culture, which they could exhibit to visitors and to themselves" (Behague 1984: 4). A *parea* of performers, either professional or amateur, shares its musicality as well as the performers' musical skills with people who belong to other *parees* (pl. of *parea*). In Crete, music is not about social grouping because when a *parea* performs everyone plays a contributing role for the outcome of a performance. It appears that musicians do not rise from lower to higher social classes by belonging to a group of this kind. They are connoisseurs who

communicate their need for expression either musically (*lyra*, *lagouto*, mandolin etc.) or verbally (by singing *mantinades*). Bauman and Abrahams emphasize that “performance is unique unto itself within every culture” and “that just as speaking itself, as a cultural system (or as a part of cultural systems defined in other terms) will vary from speech community to speech community, so too will the nature and extent of the realm of performance and verbal art” (Behague 1984: 5). Similarly each *parea* communicates with each local audience in a different way from audiences outside its locality.

A *parea* of performers addresses not only the performers involved, but also those who listen to them, and the latter may be an audience consisting of one *parea* or more. Leaving aside the “outsiders” - what Behague describes as visitors - who may be present at a *glendi*, the locals condone the performing *parea* regardless of its skills. Familiar tones and tunings provide an arena for shared cultural codes that might not otherwise be understood by “strangers”. Moreover, cultural meanings can be given to this sharing of experiences, which can be translated into a network that is designated by time and space.

Time in this case can be thought of as the carrier of “tradition”, since it holds the sediment of the cultural authenticities that were born many years ago and are still transferred from one generation to the other. On the other hand, space is connected with “locality” and accordingly, synonymous with the cultural identity of the locals which is built through time. How then can a performer who has grown up in a village with such a strong musical identity avoid the codes which bind affinities, such as kinship, friendship or musicianship among compatriots?

If we take into account that “identity is the effect of performance, and not vice versa” (Bell 1999: 3) the interpretations given to a performing act apply to the concept of “belonging”. If a musical idiom is regarded as a “stylized repetition of acts” enacted in a place where the sense of “belonging” underlines the boundaries of “us” and “others”, it rarely overcomes the beaten track in its place of origin. Thus, the communal activity of the performers that may initially start in a *parea* is inevitably infused with socio-cultural norms.

As a corollary, the community usually tries to safeguard its belongings. The “belonging” in this case is the music as it has been handed down by former generations. Longing to be not just members but also parts of the productive process of music in

smaller societies, the performers try to regulate themselves and play according to what has already been conveyed to them. Their identity is proclaimed by their music and their music by their cultural identity. On the other hand, the audience that may listen to them as part of an already existing cultural system supports and acclaims every respectable attempt of the musicians, which accentuates their origins.

In returning to the original question of whether the music makes the musician or the musician the music, I incline towards the music's burden over the musicians. The importance given to music "as culture" reflects the performer's music "in culture". The morphed microcosm of the locals almost demands a repetition of old schemes through which "tradition" is filtered. If music is part of the tradition and the tradition part of the culture which is preserved under the umbrella of the local musicians who play and support it, subsequently the performers themselves have no choice but to play a music that is time-honoured. Accordingly, in Crete the music makes the musician who he is, and not vice versa. A performer is a respected "carrier" of the tradition, either because he keeps his family name alive or because he has a strong ethical commitment towards what has been delivered to him. He is somehow obliged to continue the cultural heritage that he already has in his hands. Therefore, he starts his musical carriage in *parees* as an amateur; he then plays at *glendia*, and if he wants to be a professional, he tries to gain a place in the music industry.

In order to become a well-known performer throughout Crete one must recognize the importance of continuing a musical legacy which from the aspect of the performer is limited in terms of innovative processes. The performer is "made" or "shaped" by his cultural experience of music. His background must be highlighted by his musical activity, whereas his musical action is at the same time directed by his background (Baily 1988: 117).

4.3. The style of individual musical performance

Musicianhip can be seen as a set of musical and social practices constructed in response to the need of particular societies, a means of getting the job done but also sensitive to the aesthetics of the community. "Musician" might therefore be

seen as a state of being based on regulated-improvisations, where individuals are alert to the demands of the particular social circumstances in which they find themselves (Dawe 2007: 13).

The manner in which each *lyra* player has chosen to perform his music determines the way his overall profile is perceived by the audience. No matter how simplistic this statement may sound, remains very important because different styles of Cretan music appear from time to time. Stephen Cottrell claims that “Self-conception and individual identity are rather separate ideas but they are not unrelated; indeed self-conception is to a significant degree derived from our engagement with our environment[...] As our self-image evolves we may seek to project ourselves differently to others, which may influence how they see us; similarly assertions by others may cause us to reflect on our view of ourselves, particularly if made repeatedly or coming from sources whose opinions we value” (Cottrell 2004: 33-34). This is true if we take into consideration the way the performers promote themselves not only in Crete but elsewhere. The image they create is to a great extent the one that is going to bring them fame and money. It is informative to search through a range of musical and social practices, as Kevin Dawe suggests, which establish not only the performer as an individual, but also consider the dialogic relationships between performers and audiences.

Every individual aspect of a performance is grounded in the performer’s aesthetics which, at the same time, is communicated to the audience. This may include the persona of the musician: the way he acts, his musical virtuosity, his interaction with his audience, the repartee, the musical textures, the vocal timbres (see Shepherd 1991, Theo van Leewen 1999) as well as the conversation with the audience. In each of these features, the individual as performer and the individual as listener are the two main poles that create the context of a performance.

Individuality, however, is the main criterion for attributing different styles of music as products of various performers. Therefore, the concept of individuality suggests numerous genres that may apply to several human beings. It is for this reason that many styles which have their roots in the Cretan tradition are characterized as “Cretan music”. It is true that the borderlines among these styles are quite hard to discern, especially if

one is not from Crete. Professional as well as non-professional musicians, however, establish the context in which performances take place. The context that I am focusing on is chiefly based on the profile of “self”. If, for example, a performer’s playing and singing is quite loud, the context of the performance is generally flashy and showy. I will refer to one of Michalis Tzouganakis (established *lagouto* player) performances in the pine park of Koutsouras. It was a warm night of August 2007 when I convinced my cousins to go to his performance. My cousin Spyros was circumspect because he knew that Tzouganakis did not belong to the “traditional” performers and he had his own unique performance style, although he was an expert in *lagouto*. When the performance started, the coloured flashy lights and the thick smoke made my cousin want to leave. “You two are crazy” said to his wife and me. “You convinced me to come here and see what? Who is this guy who wants to make such an impression? Smoke and flashy lights are not part of what we call “Cretan”! We will stay for a little while because you mentioned he is good. But if it continues like this we will soon leave... and I promise I’ll go home and listen to some Cretan music” implying that Michalis Tzouganakis did not play Cretan music. We soon left the performance having a loud conversation of what was a good performance or not. According to his opinion trying to make such an impression from the very beginning of one’s performance was unacceptable for the Cretan culture. There is indeed a great amount of Cretan people who support this opinion. According to them, Cretan music must be closer to what was performed twenty years ago for example. They maintain that innovations are good, as long as they do not insult the tradition. As a corollary, they reject these performers, whereas in other cases when the musicians are more low-profile, people as my cousin are not so negative in terms of being critical.

4.4. The professionalism of the lyra player

Traditional Cretan music functioned in various areas of the island to satisfy the needs of the Cretans for singing and dancing. With respect to music, the *meraklis* is someone who receives pleasure from singing, playing or dancing. His aim is to follow the tradition and be taught by it. In other words, the aspiration of a *meraklis* is not about money or to

become a professional musician. His aim is to learn the “right” way of performing from the older generation and this satisfies his passion for music, no matter how much he will get paid. There exist many *mantinades* that refer to the social status of the musician as a professional.

Του λυρατζή, του κυνηγού και του ψαρά το πιάτο

Δέκα φορές είν' αδειανό και μια φορά γεμάτο

The *lyra* player's plate and the plate of the hunter and the fisherman

Are ten times empty and full once only

Παρακαλώ σε λυρατζή δωσ' όρτσα στο δοξάρι

Να δώσει σάλτο ο χορευτής να φτάσει το δοκάρι

I request you *lyra* player to luff⁶⁶ your bow

And make the dancer jump up to the ceiling

Παίξε λυράκι μου γλυκά κι αβέρτα κέφι δίνεις

Κι από κει δα που κάθεσαι το γλέντι διευθύνεις

Play my little *lyra* sweet and raise the *glendiots*' spirits

From where you sit you are the leader of the *glendi*

Στου λυρατζή την κεφαλή κάθονται δυο νεράιδες

Η μια του λέει τον σκοπό κι η άλλη μαντινάδες

On the top of the *lyra* player's head there are two fairies sitting

The one sings him the melody and the other tells him *mantinades*

Μην αγαπήσεις λυρατζή γιατί χορδή σε κάνει

Σε κάθε ψύλλον πήδημα πετά σε κι άλλη βάνει

Don't fall in love with a *lyra* player because he'll treat you like a string

Every now and then he'll throw you away and tie on a new one

⁶⁶ Luff here means increase the tempo.

Οι κόρδες του λαούτου σου πουλιά 'ναι κελαηδούνε
Γιατρέουν τα τραγούδια σου τσ' αρρώστους που τ' ακούνε
The chords of your lute cheap like a bird
And your songs heal those who are sick

(These *mantinades* are taken from various *glendia* but they all refer to the music profession e.g. Zoidakis 2006, Pytharoulis 2005 and Parakatselakis 2007).

Most of the amateur performers were not highly skilled players but were well-known only to the villagers in their district or to neighbouring villages. The way in which *glendiots* were entertained and how they collaborated in the music making would differ from one area to another. Village *glendia* in the past used to take place in a *kafeneio* (coffee shop) or in the main square, without microphones (**figure 40**). The musical part of the *glendia* began with the appearance of the *lyra* or violin player who were surrounded by the dancers for the purpose of eye contact. In later years, the *lagouto* became the accompanying instrument throughout Crete, whereas beforehand, the basic instruments for *glendia* were the *lyra* with *gerakokoudouna* (hawk bells) on the bow, the mandolin, as well as the Lasithiotiko *daoulaki* (tabor from Lasithi). People gathered together in large *parees* to listen to traditional music. All of the villagers knew each other, and their purpose was to have a good time together: not to sell wine, whisky or food. This is the actual meaning of the word *parea*.



Figure 40. The *kafeneio* as a meeting place among males. In the left picture, we can see Giorgis Sbokos on the right, with his friends in a *kafeneio* of Anoyia. On the right picture, we see a

traditional *kafeneio* in the main square of Anoyia.

Normally the performers presented a music style that was representative of their place of origin. Not only did each region have its own music style but the villagers used to build their own music subculture within their village. It was something like a music network which revolved round a finite number of people. Thodoris Riginiotis claims:

We meet numerable musicians in the past who were not always experts, but they were harmonically placed among the members of the local society. They were pillars of the hard life of their compatriots; they were people who expressed the sorrow, the love, the sadness, the anxieties, the longings and the hopes of the small society they belonged. [...] The local musical tradition seems to grow inside the villages by the local musical creators and is transported orally from generation to generation (Riginiotis 2006).⁶⁷

The *Protomastores* (Great Masters) of old have now become part of the pantheon of Cretan musical history: Nikolaos Charchalis (1884-1974), Stratis Kalogeridis (1883-1960), Alekos Karavitis (1904), Giannis Dermitzakis or “Dermitzogiannis” (1907), Andreas Rodinos (1912-1934), Antonis Kareklas (1893), Giannis Mpernidakis or “Baksevanis” (1910-1972), Stelios Phoustalierakis or “Phoustalieris” (1911-1992), Manolis Pasparakis or “Stravos” (1911), Manolis Lagoudakis or “Lagos” (1910), Giorgis Saridakis or “Mavros” (1910), Charilaos Piperakis or “Charilaos” (1892-1981) and many others. Most of the recordings are from the 1930s. At the same time the road network which first united Eastern and Western Crete was under construction. When it was completed, Cretans were able to gain access to areas they were not able to go to before. Along with the construction of roads, one could observe a flourishing of audio recordings. This was before the explosion of tourism on the island. There was clear understanding of the different musical idioms that could be found in each area. This was before the creation of a pan-Cretan repertoire whose expansion was a consequence of the record market.

⁶⁷ http://fegari.blogspot.com/2006/12/blog-post_1322.html

One can observe a development in the playing technique of the *lyra* during the first half of the 20th century. Listening to the *Rethymniotika Pentozalia*⁶⁸ for example, and Antonis Kareklas' *Sousta*, one can detect the techniques of the “old” *lyra*: the unison of the melodies and the restricted melodic range. The function of the *gerakokoudouna* (bells hung on the bow of the *lyra*) were to enforce the rhythm for the instrument if there were no accompaniment instruments.

One of the most representative figures of the “School of Rethymno” was Andreas Rodinos,⁶⁹ who is considered by Cretans until today, as one of the most famous performers of Crete because the two albums that he recorded are to this day standards in Cretan repertoires. Songs like *Rethemniotikos Syrto*, *Kissamitikos Syrto* and *Rethemniotika Pentozalia* are still considered in Crete some of the best pieces ever since they are played in almost every *glendi*. Regrettably he died at the age of twenty two. Many *mantinades* were created for Rodinos. Two are given below:

Σήκω απ' τον τάφο Ροδινέ και πιάσε το δοζάρι

Απου στη λύρα ήσουνα της Κρήτης το καμάρι

Rodine, stand up from your grave and take your bow

Because you were Crete's pride in *lyra*

Μεγάλε Ανδρέα Ροδινέ, αθάνατος θα μείνεις

Στους Κρητικούς λυράρηδες μαθήματα θα δίνεις

Great Andrea Rodine, you will stay unforgettable

Because you will give lessons to the Cretan *lyra* players

(Vavourakis 1992: 98)

⁶⁸ Andreas Rodinos recorded two 78 rps LP records with the aid of G. Bernidakis who played the *lagouto*. Both albums were recorded at ODEN Record Company (1933). These albums concluded the “*Rethemniotiko Syrto*”, “*Apokoroniotiko Syrto*”, “*Kissamitiko Syrto*” kai the “*Rethemniotika Pentozalia*” (<http://www.grecian.net/music/artists/rodinos.htm>).

⁶⁹ Andreas Rodinos was born in Rethymno in 1912. He was a legend in his time. At the age of 18 he was already one of the best *lyra* players in Crete. He amazed the audiences of Crete with his partner Baksevanis. He died on 9 February 1934 of tuberculosis and was buried holding his two *lyras*. He is considered to have been one of the best performers ever in Crete.

The musical tradition of Sitia which is markedly different from other regions in Crete is represented by Giannis Dermitzakis or Dermitzogiannis. He also performed on the violin and the guitar, and he was an excellent *mantinadologos*. He used to play the famous *Stiakes Kondylies*, musical pieces with an extended melodic progression.

Giorgis Saridakis or “Mavros” (b.1910), Nikolaos Charchalis (1884-1974) and Kostas Papadakis or “Naphtis” (b.1920) were some of the most well known violin players and represent the tradition of the violin in Crete. This instrument, which had its own traditional repertory, was rarely featured on the radio, because of Simon Karas which will be explained later. Stratis Kalogeridis (1883-1960), another accomplished violin player had received a western musical education in the Paris Conservatoire. He was the only musician of his time who had studied the violin at this level. As a result, he was the first musician of his time who composed Cretan melodies and notated them. In spite of his western education, he has been placed among the Cretan performers’ pantheon. His *kondylies* are still useful for many young musicians.

The *lagouto* player, Giorgos Koutsourelis (1914-1994), was a distinguished *lagouto* player. The time had come when new instrumental schemes had come to replace earlier ones. The group of musicians were now never without the *lagouto* or a guitar as accompanying instruments. This had an impact on the melodies of the songs. Because both instruments are tuned in equal temperament, they function according to the principles of Western functional harmony. But the melodies of Crete are not the products of equal temperament. Musicians in earlier times used to play using microtones but with the change of aesthetic there came the need to synchronize their instruments to avoid their sounding out of tune. Having taken this step they were forced to play major or minor arpeggios and chords. The melodies used only a limited range of notes on a scale. Musical dance pieces such as the *sousta* for example, use only six notes. Ross Daly believes that this is his fault, to an extent:

After the end of the 70s, the performers use western chords and I have to admit that it is my fault in a way. A *lagouto* player in Chania asked me to write down for him all the chords that someone could play on the *lagouto* (major, minor, seventh chords, etc.). Because I was aware of western music notation system, I made a little book for him including all the chords you could imagine. Since then, the book was

spread throughout Crete and someone could realize how effective that was, for other *lagouto* players as well. Kostas Moudakis who was my teacher, used microtonals and that is why he did not like to play with *lagouto* players, even if they were experts... because he was playing by using microtonals and the structure of the *lagouto* was temperamental (Interview with Ross Daly, August 2003).

Kostas Moudakis visited India in 1975, and he was deeply influenced by Indian methods of learning music. He was impressed by the playing techniques of the Asian string instruments with bow and actually related the playing techniques of the *lyra* to those of other string instruments.⁷⁰ Most musicians in Crete learn to perform an instrument either by imitating already existing traditional forms or by hearing some melodies. Once they have reached some proficiency they perform in public. Since Moudakis had learned music by ear, without knowing the notes, he found it very constructive to teach by singing the rudiments of music (**figure 41**).



Figure 41.Kostas Moudakis

Zacharis Spyridakis, leader of the ensemble *Palaiina Seferia*, was also Moudakis's student says:

⁷⁰ <http://www.musicheaven.gr>

Moudakis was a teacher, an advisor and a father for me. If any of his students was talented, he would take them to various *parees*. I was one of them and I consider myself as one of the luckiest. He wanted to show us the directness of the *parea* and the importance of the interrelation between music and the *parea*. However, his main concern was the education of his students. If someone wanted to become just a musician he advised him to work hard and be educated. He used to say to us, “If you want to be a good musician and if you want your music to be important for other people you must first be educated.” (Interview with Zacharis Spyridakis, March 2003).

During the long discussions I had with Ross Daly, he affirmed Kostas Moudakis’s notion about materialism and how a musician should act. According to his ideas, whatever is undertaken simply for the sake of money has no deep meaning. Music is not an arrangement for those who want to listen to it without feeling it.

Music is not properly performed if it is played for a TV audience, for example. In many cases it is restricted to a studio and as such is suffocated because the performance is out of context. Music is about expressing one’s personal emotions. A traditional musician must show what he hides inside him, and if he wants to keep the tradition alive, music must be performed with passion, excitement, sentimentalism and artistry. It must not be seen as a profession. The musician should not think of how many records he will sell. His main concern should be what he is going to “offer” to the others from an artistic point of view, and to show how important the music itself is (Interview with Ross Daly, July 2006).

Despite his idealized perception of music, Moudakis, as well as other musicians in Crete, turned his attention to radio broadcasts in order to safeguard and promote Cretan music to a wider audience. With the help of Simon Karas who had a great influence on radio broadcasting in Athens, he passed through the control of the National Institute of Broadcasting called E.I.P. (*Ethniko Idrima Radiofonias*).⁷¹ Thereafter, he collaborated with Simon Karas and worked at promoting Cretan music to a pan-Hellenic audience.

⁷¹ E.I.P (National Institute of Broadcasting) was a government agency which was administered the national broadcasting and television programs from the end of the Second World War until 1987.

Simon Karas⁷² was a controversial musicologist. Anything deviating from what he construed as traditional Greek music, such as alterations of authentic melodies and hybrid musical styles, met with his disapproval. For Karas the traditional instrument of Crete was the *lyra*, not the violin: the latter was mainly played in the western and the eastern parts of the island. The manner of playing the violin and its tuning, as a result of Oriental influences over the years, obliged Karas to discourage Cretan violinists from playing on air. Later, he would prohibit the violin on the radio as an instrument for performing Cretan music. He regarded the *lyra* as the only appropriate instrument for broadcasting Cretan traditional music and despite the violin players' objections he continued to promote the *lyra*.

In a period when radio programmes were highly influential for endorsing traditional music, the *lyra* player's profession acquired some prominence. Violin players started losing ground whereas the *lyra* was progressively proclaimed as the "national" instrument of Crete. The identity of Cretan music became synonymous with the sound of the *lyra* and continues to be so even today. Since the *lyra* was heard mostly in central Crete, the regional styles of the *lyra's* repertoire expanded. As a corollary, not only was the *lyra* given the chief role in Cretan music, but also a new generation of *lyra* players was getting used to hearing Cretan music performed on radio. As for the repertoire, the pieces played in central Crete (Rethymno and Heraklio) gained wide popularity and gave birth to the pan-Cretan repertoire that nowadays is followed by most *lyra* players.

⁷² Simon Karas was a musicologist and theoretician in the field of Byzantine chant who, for over more than half a century (1930s-90s), studies the theoretical works of ancient Greek, Byzantine and so-called post-Byzantine writers, and decoded old musical manuscripts in several libraries. His research led him to the formulation of an original theory concerning especially the musical tradition and its oral interpretation. An area of prior concern to him was the structure and function of the eight *echoi* (modes), including the variety of microtonal intervals, the use of the various degrees, interval and other musical signs, and the actual performance.

Believing that church and folk music are integrally related, Karas developed a teaching method based on the complementarity of the two, while his work engaged also with the ethnographic documentation, transcription into Byzantine notation and taxonomization of folk musics. In this frame, he conducted extensive fieldwork in various regions of Greece and recorded a substantial number of traditional (mostly *dimotiko*) songs by musicians from the region usually in situ. Some of these recordings have been released as part of Karas's rigorously produced SDNM series from 1970s to the 1980s. The *Society for the Dissemination of National Music (Sylogos pros Diadosin tis Ellinikis Mousikis, SDNM)*, which he founded in 1929 and is still active today, became the centre of his research and teaching activities... As director of the Department of National Music in the State Radio for over 30 years (1930s-70s) his activity was aimed as the preservation and dissemination of Greek music. Especially noteworthy are the broadcasts of the aforementioned ethnographic folk recordings and the performances of the Radio Ensemble he conducted (Kallimopoulou 2009: 36-37).

Because the *lyra* became the main instrument of Crete, (the violin had already been confined from the map of Crete and the sound of *lyra* started expanding throughout the island) one should add that *lyra* players became very important figures in the continuation of tradition. But they were not well paid. For this reason most are engaged in other professions to raise an income. They were passionate and enthusiastic as far as music was concerned and this is probably why they chose to play music at various *glendia* without proper compensation. Other possible reasons for their altruistic decisions to perform could be the mission of spreading their local tradition to other areas of Crete and, accordingly, to other parts of Greece. By extension, the Cretan musical heritage could be transmitted abroad. Many Cretan performers, who migrated to America, Australia and elsewhere, did not do so to practice music as a profession. Some may indeed have turned out to be professional musicians owing to circumstances, but none of them would have presented himself as a professional *lyra*, *lagouto* or violin player in order to make a living. Most of them would claim that music was their life, but all would agree that they could not make a living out of it alone. Those who had decided to be involved with music professionally and eke out an income from it alone were relatively impoverished.

One may well ask if this is so why is the number of musicians in Crete so large? If the music profession is not well paid why are there so many performers playing all over the island today? What has happened that accounts for this altered situation, and which continues to this day? Visiting a record shop in Crete, one will realize that innumerable CDs of Cretan musicians are for sale. The record market in Crete seems to have its own rules. Unlike other traditional music in Greece, which is suffering an economic crisis, the situation in Crete is radically different in late 1980s early 1990s:

The Department of Commerce and Industry in Iraklion verified the presence of three record companies in the city: Cretaphon, Stelios Aerakis and Minos Matsis... These record companies figure largely in the Cretan musical landscape since their products disseminate throughout the whole of the island. The commercial recordings that they produce are purchased by Cretans and non-Cretans alike, although Cretans in Crete and Cretans abroad are the largest consumers of this music (Dawe 1998: 25, 27).

Crete's record business is thought by many to be the most powerful in Greece, not only so far as the productions are concerned but also in relation to sales, the variety of musical idioms and the diversity of styles. Michalis Aerakis, manager of the "Sistrion" record company says:

Fortunately, we have many romantic tourists who buy our music on CDs as well as through the internet. The good thing is that this music still holds a good place among other traditional genres. I would say that the rest of the traditional music of Greece has faded out, except the tradition of Epirus. Cretan music gives birth to new ensembles every day and there's been a very good job done on this. I personally believe that Crete has talented musicians and also people who give birth to novel music. That's because of how they live in Crete and that is the reason that this music is kept alive and is known all over Greece. The sales are half in Crete and half in Athens when a Cretan CD is released (*Patris Cretan Newspaper*).⁷³

Numerous artists, innumerable discs, a multiplicity of traditions and a strong "folk-pop" scene full of local colours are strongly promoted through media, press, radio broadcasts and finally through televised programmes. According to Michalis Aerakis Cretan music, appears to be increasing rapidly in popularity.

The Cretan productions started in the 80s. It is difficult to sell any other kind of Greek folk music in Crete, and that is the reason why so many Cretan performers sell. Despite increasing record piracy, no-one wants to buy a Cretan record from the wandering sellers, and that is why piracy is no great problem for us. Furthermore, the Cretan music business is getting better and better due to many skilled musicians on the one hand, and the crap musicians who notably "sell" with their clownish performances on the other. In spite of all this, we are satisfied with the upshot of the Cretan record market (Interview with Michalis Aerakis, August 2005).

Thus, the reason that there are now so many performers in Crete has been clearly articulated by Michalis Aerakis. It appears that in one way or other Cretan artists have found ways to earn their living and are able also to present themselves as professional

⁷³ <http://www.patris.gr/articles>

musicians. It would seem, then, that a musician can diversify his livelihood in a way that was not immediately apparent in the past. Someone from a family of well-known musicians finds it much easier to enter the Cretan musical scene and thereby become a professional musician on account of his background. But finding oneself among professionals and being one are two different things. One's professionalism can be proven only through hard work. Sometimes family connections do not suffice to persuade an audience of a performer's skills, although it helps.

Another feature in the life of a professional musician in Crete is mobility. The roads increased in number and have made travel easier. Today, musicians can without difficulty perform at different *glendia* all over Crete. Indeed, it is true to say that they can move from one end of the island to the other almost every day. Most *glendia* are no longer impromptu. Those for payment are usually settled by the leader of the ensemble and those who issue the invitation. Not to be forgotten are the gratuities (*bakshishi*) to be received by the performers.

The musicians are also often invited to give performances in different parts of Greece. Athens for example, is one of the most popular destinations for Cretan ensembles. Whether for a few days or for longer periods, Cretan performers have the opportunity to play to the Athenian audiences. Their performances are sometimes sold out months in advance and they make good money. In order to book a club for a certain period, the performers make the financial arrangements with the club owners so that everyone remains satisfied. Cretan performers moreover, do not only go to Athens. In the summer, many play on the Greek islands while others even play abroad. In both cases the musicians become carriers of a living tradition. Unless one is a full-time professional musician, it is difficult to arrange such trips. Charalambos Garganourakis, one of the most respected *lyra* players of today, describes his experiences while travelling in Crete, Athens, and abroad and he explains how difficult it was for a Cretan performer to play in a big ensemble in Athens and how passionate was the audience abroad:

Giannis Markopoulos, one of the most famous composers, asked me to play in Athens in 1973. At the beginning I refused because I didn't like Athens, but my brother persuaded me to go. I was not aware of the fact that when going there, I

would enter an entirely different world for an artist. When I first visited Athens I felt like being banished and I studied a lot in order to be part of the orchestra. That was something I was not used to. I was not aware of this kind of music and I didn't know how to read musical scores. I even went to the conservatory in order to learn the basics and respond to the needs of that ensemble. The atmosphere was completely different from what I was used in Crete, where the ensemble was consisted of a *lyra* and two *lagouta*, where I knew the repertoire. [...] I have travelled all over the world, and I have performed in thousands of *glendia*. When you visit Australia for example, which is twelve thousands miles away, you can meet Cretans, more authentic than in Crete and you feel touched and moved because of their behaviour. These people still keep the tradition and our music alive. Here (in Greece) things are getting worse and worse (Petraiki 1995: 38).

Tourism is a further motivation for becoming a professional musician. "The airport, international flights and package holidays gave rise to the island's tourist industry, which grew exponentially in the 1970s and 1980s. Consequently, Heraklio has become the place of 'hard sell', where the tourist shops (as elsewhere in the island) sell almost the same items and jostle for business during the summer season" (Dawe 1998: 27). Almost twenty years after the 1980s Heraklio is still a place of "hard sell". However, the market rules have recently changed, for various reasons. Primarily, tourism in Crete no longer flourishes as it once did. For a musician to rise to fame requires hard work. Moreover, access to the music industry is not easy. Consequently, musicians who have the good fortune to record their music are those that are promoted as "traditional". Secondly, when one visited Crete twenty years ago, one might take back home as a souvenir a tape or a recording of "traditional" Cretan music. Big names such as Moudakis, Skordalos, Xylouris, Rodinos and others, could sell thousands of discs at that time. But what of today? The number of performers is so vast and the range of musical styles is so wide that visitors wanting to buy "traditional" music from Crete are confused. Which of the old or new performers would be at the top of his list? Who actually performs "traditional" Cretan music? Who really reflects the Cretan identity? I will answer these questions by an example from my fieldwork.

I visited a record shop in Ierapetra, pretending to be a tourist. I explained to the woman in charge that I was very interested in Cretan music, but had no idea who the best performers were. Of all the CDs available I chose a “second class” musician, one without a good reputation. The cover of this CD was quite glamorous. The artist was pictured holding the *lyra* with an air of confidence. At the till the woman asked, “Are you sure you want to buy this CD?” Her apprehension made me ask why, and she replied as to someone who had taken a wrong decision. “Look, if you want I can burn this CD for you for only five euros.⁷⁴ It’s not worth paying all this money for a performer like him. If you are keen on Cretan music you can learn about it by buying anthologies by various performers. Whenever you see CD covers with titles such as *Cretan Dances* or *Traditional Cretan Music* or *The Best of Cretan Music* you should investigate it (**figure 42**). In them, you can find collections of pieces by the most famous performers. In this way, you can learn a lot about our music and the quality of the performances is guaranteed”.

“There is no doubt that the sentiments expressed through the recording industry are relevant and important to Cretans or that the recording industry is a popular vehicle for their expression” (Dawe 2007: 153). This is true and that is exactly the point of interest in the record shop I visited. According to that lady the CD I chose for being familiar with Cretan music was rubbish. Her sentiment and knowledge of Cretan music did not allow her to sell that CD to a Greek interested in Crete. It would be convenient for her to sell this kind of music to a tourist from abroad, but it was a matter of consciousness to sell it to a Greek. That is why she offered me a CD burn with only five euros instead of buying it and paying triple. According to her, an anthology of various respected Cretan performers would be a good opportunity for a Greek to have an overview of Cretan culture and a broader understanding of a pan-Cretan repertoire. Since there were so many options of buying these kinds of pan-Cretan repertoires there was absolutely no reason for her to “mislead” me in kinds of music that were not worth hearing. However, as Dawe observes, “the music industry has become a strong and unifying force in the construction and maintenance of a pan-Cretan identity” (Dawe 2007: 153).

⁷⁴ Most of the new CD releases in Crete cost fifteen euro or more. The “old time classic” CDs also have the same price. Therefore, if a CD is sold for five euros it is being discounted.

It is also a matter of debate whether tourism continues to be a driving force behind the success of professional musicians. Since compilations of the kind mentioned above have become the “hard sell” to tourists from the record shops, it is not important for a musician to “sell” himself. Therefore, new albums are not particularly popular for tourists, unless they are especially interested in genres less representative of the Cretan tradition. To be part of the music industry is essential for a performer’s reputation at the local level. There the support of the audiences is what establishes the artist. For this reason, tourism could have been seen as a crucial motive for professionalism in the past, but not for the present.

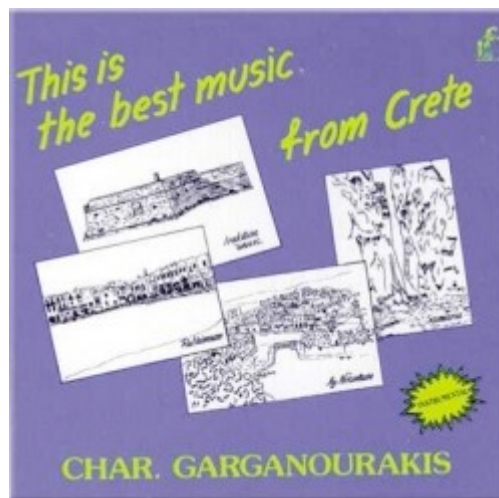


Figure 42. CD with well-known melodies and songs by the famous *lyra* player Charalambos Garganourakis

One final motive for becoming a professional musician is the music industry itself. “The music industry, tourism and weddings – the oldest and richest source of work for musicians – have given rise to musical professionalism” (Dawe 1998: 25). It is true if we take into account that weddings and *glendia* are not the only source of income for the musicians today. If we take into account Aerakis’s statements about the flourishing of the record business in Crete, then we can assume that many musicians strive to have an active role in the market. Entering the market and encouraging the commercialization of their music can result in a consumer process that may be very lucrative.

It is commonplace that production and consumption are interdependent. Without production of material or cultural goods, there can be no consumption. Without a demand for, and consumption of, the use-values embodied in these goods, there is no impetus for continuing production (Laing 1995: 242).

I would add to this that without consumer demands both the record companies and the performers themselves could not be part of the music industry. The word “industry” connotes “selling”. “Selling” is a synonym for “making money” and “making money” is the aspiration of most who are involved with the music market. So, why shouldn’t Cretan performers be professionals in terms of selling and making money? Irrespective of genre or style of music being promoted, it is important for musicians to make recordings in order to be part of the record market. What is remarkable is that most record and sell their live performances. Whether performing in night clubs or playing at *glendia*, most Cretan musicians have at least one record to their name called “Live” or “*Mantinades*”. As such not only do they not actually produce new musical material for the consumers, but they reproduce a past concert which may have been successful.

If consumers enjoy performances heard on CDs, they may in future attend a live performance. This can also work the other way round. If performers cultivate a core of admirers, audiences are likely to buy their CDs, especially of performances they attended and enjoyed. This, in fact, is how young performers operate in the record market. If performers can sell their live performances and amass enough money, their next step is to record new pieces for consumption by Cretan audiences. Nikos Stratakis observed:

Most *lyra* players nowadays start their career with the prospect of becoming celebrities. The performers who are not so inclined, may not drive a Mercedes for example, they may have a cheaper car. They may also not have sufficient money to spend in *koumparies*.⁷⁵ This kind of *lyra* player, for example, would possibly not be involved in public relations and he may not follow what others do, such as singing *mantinades* to his girlfriend in order to make sales (Interview with Nikos Stratakis, September 2005).

⁷⁵ *Koumparia* (pl. *Koumparies*) is the responsibility one takes to marry a couple or to baptize a child. The concept of the *koumparia* in Crete is taken very seriously because the best man or the godfather of a child automatically becomes part of the family. Family ties are of high importance in Crete.

Another point on recording live performances is made by the *lyra* player, Iakovos Paterakis:

If you make a new record it is not possible to render the atmosphere of a *glendi* unless you record the *glendi* and make a CD of it. I may enjoy some of my pieces which are not appropriate for a *glendi* simply because they do not suit the occasion. In the record business, moreover, you try to convey special meanings to the audience. You express yourself and your own style. Of course you express yourself while playing at a *glendi* as well, but you do not always like all of the pieces you play. For your own record you do (Interview with Iakovos Paterakis, August 2005).

An important contemporary name in Cretan is the established *lyra* player Antonis Xylouris, widely known as Psarandonis.⁷⁶ Originating from the Xylouris's family,⁷⁷ Psarandonis is considered to be one of the most "traditional" performers of Crete. His CDs are at the top of the Cretan charts. According to many performers' Psarandonis is commercially oriented but has a unique image. "He is one of the best and he promotes himself in the best way", Paterakis states. Notable is the fact that he has been given the epithet "The Son of Zeus" because of his tough image. With shaggy hair, bushy beard and deep and hoarse voice Psarandonis looks as if he has come from another age. At the same

⁷⁶ Psarandonis was born in the village of Anoyia. Brother of the famous singer and *lyra* player Nikos Xylouris, he learned to play the *lyra* at a very young age. He played for the first time at a wedding at the age of thirteen. He soon became well known and was invited to play in various places throughout Crete. He made his first recording in 1964 and has represented Greece in many international music festivals. He first took part in the International Festival of Cologne in 1982 on the TV channel WDR. In 1984 he played in Berlin for the festivities connected with the 750 years of the foundation of the city. He has also performed in France, Switzerland, Austria, Luxembourg, Sofia, Bucharest, Ukraine, Belgrade as well as in America, Canada and Australia. Recently he represented Greece at a festival entitled "The meeting of the Five Continents" which took place in Martigny, Switzerland in 1999. His performance was highly acclaimed and all Europe knows him as the Cretan "Jimi Hendrix".he bases himself on the musical tradition of Crete, but also moves forward by adding new elements to his personal style (Pieris, *Kritopolis* 2001:87).

⁷⁷ Most of the members of the Xylouris family have nicknames, such as Psaronikos, Psaroyiannis, Psarandonis, Psarogiorgis etc. The first part of the name – *Psaro* – is common to all of them. The word *psaro* comes from the word *psari* (ψάρι) meaning fish. When I asked Psarandonis about his name he explained that the nicknames of the family originate from his grandfather. "My grandfather whose name was Yiannis (John) took part in the war with the Turks. The Cretans used to follow the Turks at night and stole their belongings after killing them. My grandfather was very quick at catching them as if they were fish. For this he was called "Psarotourko" (man who fishes the Turks) or Psaroyianni. This nickname was carried over to the following generations and that is why I am widely known as Psarandonis" (Interview with Psarandonis, April 2004).

time, however, he is very modern and fashionable. “Along with his largely romantic but often nationalistic versions of a New Minoa in music and its authenticating vocabulary has come the increased popularity of live recordings” (Dawe 2007: 156). One could say that he epitomizes the image of the “traditional” Cretan male in the contemporary world. He coalesces the “old” with the “new” and reveals something from the past in the present, which makes him highly appreciated. Other aspects of his character are his disarming sincerity,⁷⁸ and his strict manner of performing. Together they construct a strange, idiosyncratic amalgam. Whenever, and wherever in Crete there is a *glendi* with Psarandonis performing, it will be attended by many people. Many Cretans and even tourists often ask where and when Psarandonis is playing. As an authentic representative of the Cretan musical tradition, he is considered to be a “must” by those who visit the island, because everyone enjoys his performances (**figure 43**).



Figure 43. Antonis Xylouris known as Psarandonis

As in the rest of Greece, the island of Crete abounds in billboards and advertising posters. In the summer, many of those display pictures of performers or ensembles, and the dates and places of their concerts. There are two types of billboard: one has only the picture of a performer, such as Psarandonis, and the venue of his forthcoming performance; the other has the artist’s picture together with his telephone number. It is remarkable how many young performers advertise their phone numbers in order to

⁷⁸ Psarandonis’s sincerity on many matters also relates to the “purity” of Cretan music and its origins. He believes that all music throughout the world has its origin in ancient Greece. He also claims that Greek music was born in Crete. His strong national feelings are expressed without any hesitation even when he sometimes criticizes the present Greek political authorities.

broaden their audience. This is an easy way to earn money. The numbers are there for them to be invited and to attend as many *glendia* as possible. This is why one sees a plethora of posters hanging on a wall. Half of them depict famous *lyra* players; the rest portray unknown or less well known *lyra* players who wish to gain popularity. There is also the possibility to post the phone number of the venue the performance is going to take place. Therefore, this is for the benefit of the venue's owner, who is going to have more tables reserved (**figure 44**).



Figure 44. The phone numbers of the taverns depicted on the posters

One of the *mantinades* that refers to the artistic talents of the Cretans says:

Στην Κρήτη έπεψε ο Θεός την πιο καλή του τέχνη

Κι όντες γεννά τον Κρητικό τον κάνει καλλιτέχνη

God sent to Crete his greatest art

And when a Cretan is born he becomes an artist

(Taken from a *glendi* with Spyros Parakatselakis in *Pachia Ammos*)

Many Cretans are involved with music and dance from a very young age. Over forty years ago, anyone engaged in music, song and dance was dubbed *meraklides*

(connoisseurs). In fact the option of the professional musician did not in fact exist. The *meraklis* would learn the “tradition” from the elders by imitation. Then he would seek to be part of a musical *parea*. In this way, his aim was not to have a job as a musician to earn his living from music but to entertain others. Nearly all of them were involved in other paid employment. At that time people did not have much money to pay musicians hence most amateurs were not greatly skilled musicians, but they were well known to their co-villagers or to villagers from their local rural communities. These musicians helped their compatriots in their camaraderie through the institution of the *parea* which was very important for them. Playing music in a *parea* was the best way to keep a society united and the *glendia* in fact took on the appearance of one large *parea* of which all were members. This in no way resembles what happens today where thousands of people from all over the island gather and pay heavily in order to have a good time.

The *glendi* has now become a point of departure for “lonely hearts” who want to communicate through music and dance. It is a kind of display for those who want to impress. The *glendi* is also perceived nowadays as the epitome of professionalism. Some of the professional musicians have become popular idols throughout Crete. The “*Lyra* is God’s instrument,” according to Psarandonis and sometimes performers are treated like gods. So, why not try to be a professional musician? No matter how hard it is for some to reach the heights, those who do manage to become famous, either because they are very talented or because they come from a musical family, are recognized and become wealthy (Loudovikos of Anoyia, Psarandonis, Giorgis Xylouris, Giorgos Zervakis, Manolis Aleksakis and many others).

Professional musicians in Crete have made a point of playing various styles of Cretan music. Some of these styles pre-existed but they had a regional character; as such they have been developed in contemporary Crete. Novel arrangements of the music, the instruments and the lyrics have been made by performers who established themselves as professionals. The professionalization of music ushered in musical ideas, some of which became synonymous with their Cretan identity. Consequently, one can observe a new flow of musical schemata which, on the one hand, were actually based on “traditional” music but were also innovative on the other. The professional’s aspiration is music

making and money making in a culture where, today, both music and money are paramount.

4.5 Conclusion

In this section I have contextualised the music profession in Crete since the early 1920s. Although I focus largely on contemporary music-making, past traditions are clearly crucially important in determining both the shape of Cretan music today, and in helping to identify patterns of musical change that are at the heart of this thesis. The profession of the musician today has been shaped by those social, demographic and infrastructural changes that have taken place on the island. Hence the importance of the period between 1920 and 1960, when music-making was not financially driven in the manner which it often is today, notwithstanding that great Masters of Cretan music of that time composed some time-honoured melodies and songs. The regional character of each prefecture suddenly had its focus on Rethymno where the most famous music figures had their origins. Thus, Rethymno was the core of the expansion of a pan-Cretan repertoire since everyone would imitate the performers coming from this part of Crete.

The two most recognised *lyra* players of Crete in terms of their playing techniques and their teaching methods, Thanasis Skordalos and Kostas Moudakis, gave another dimension to Crete's repertoire, and the record business in Crete started being one of the most powerful in Greece from the 1980s. As a consequence, the musical profession became more and more profitable. As Kevin Dawe puts it "*Lyra* musicians in Crete, as elsewhere, exist in a world of work based on aspects of economic and symbolic exchange, and they too exist in a marketplace that has opened up new opportunities for them" (Dawe 2007: 41). Following on from Dawe, I would argue that these new forms of exchange have led to new and innovative forms and styles which have become subsumed within the contemporary Cretan musical landscape.

CHAPTER FIVE

Tradition and the different genres of Cretan music today

5.1. *Traditional and “neo-traditional” trends in the music of Crete*

5.1.1 Contemporary Cretan Music

Loudovikos of Anoyia (Giorgos Dramoudanis), organizer of the Cretan festival *Yakinthia*, once mentioned to me that he had invited Valieri Poliakov, the astronaut who spent seven hundred days in space, to speak at the festival. In his speech he observed that from high up Crete looks like a paper boat in the Mediterranean Sea. This boat has set sail and tradition is on the move.

In trying to gain access as an ethnomusicologist to the musical events on the island of Crete, I have had to take into account various trends in the current scene. Contemporary musical practice, often based on the re-construction of past styles, is approached differently by different performers. Despite the fact that Crete still maintains its identity as a unique place in Greece, there is profound *musical change* at various levels.

In order to identify musical change, it is necessary to distinguish between innovations within a musical system and changes of the system. Such distinctions can only be properly made by relating variations in musical processes and products to the perceptions and patterns of interaction of those who use music (Blacking 1995: 169).

In attempting to document and classify the music styles of Crete, as understood by both performers and consumers, I have detected basic trends which move in three different directions, and are all part of what local people call “tradition”. Before examining the three strands that constitute the Cretan music network, I need to explain the term “tradition”. The Greek word is *paradosi* (παράδοση), which comes from the

verb *paradido* (παραδίδω), meaning something that is “handed down”, in this case from generation to generation.

According to Cretans from many areas of the island, tradition is the bedrock of the practices on which is based the “authenticity” of their culture. It is passed on through a process designed to preserve the distinctive cultural traits which differentiate Crete from other geographical regions of Greece. This notion of tradition applies to Crete as a whole, but has local variants from one prefecture to another and even from one village to another, in accordance with the strong local spirit of particular regions. “Tradition tends now to be regarded as being antithetic to change - as representing customs that prevailed, before industrialization, urbanization and electronic communications rendered them largely redundant. Tradition, however - even as thus defined - was never a stasis” (Fletcher 2001: 599).

In Crete, many aspects of culture are assessed in terms of tradition, being judged as either purely traditional on the one hand, or innovative and detached from tradition on the other (Falck and Rice 1982). The rotation of new music in Crete is around the axis of the local tradition, which seems to be an oxymoron. I shall now discuss how some Cretan performers, who represent various genres of music, define and use the concept of tradition

According to some Cretans I interviewed, *stability* is not what defines tradition. This concept of tradition is linked with language. Thus, tradition can be seen as a developing linguistic idiom where words and letters have their own sounds. Because of the Cretans understanding of their language, they have established their own interpretations of emotion, thought, ideas and so on. This is what Cretans originally defined as tradition. Blacking refers to the analogy of language and musical change in a way that informs our understanding of their development in culture (Blackinng 1995: 166). Although they do not operate in the same way, language and music share some similarities in the sense that both of them are cultural products of a society.

Akis Panou, one of the best known Greek composers, has said, “tradition” comes from the word verb “to deliver” and not from the verb “to receive or “to take” (Interview with Loudovikos of Anoyia August 2005). The idea here is that tradition is not something we take from the past, but which is delivered to us from the past.

The factors that gave birth to what we currently call “traditional” music have vanished because fundamental social and cultural factors have changed, such as sexual mores, modes of communication, media, transportation, the soundscape and the environment. Loudovikos affirms that tradition demands respect, and rigorous and exhausting examination, in order for the audience to accept what one has done and created. “If you wear the same nice T-shirt or jumper every day, each time you put it on it will be less nice. You cannot repeat the phenomena of the past. You have no right to sing *Oso varoun ta sidera* (“As long as the irons beat”) because these irons do not thrash for you today. No matter how often you sing this song, you have to apologize first to the person who composed it”. In other words, the original piece should actually be mentioned as a mark of respect to the person who created it or first sang it.

The cultural effervescence that develops with the passing of time in a living tradition does not leave untouched the “authenticity” of a cultural product. Therefore, new elements are incorporated into the culture, and they come to redefine and “re-authenticate” the meaning of “tradition”. Consequently, we observe a continuing circle, which moves round the borders of an already defined standard “tradition” of music that apparently is susceptible to limited changes and also does not modify the entire cultural scene a great deal. Cretans, who are attached to tradition, in fortifying their local and national conviction as part of a society that functions under specific and peculiar cultural orientations, applaud the keeping of the stereotypes of the past. “Musicians in Crete are ‘keepers of a tradition’ in a rapidly changing music industry” as Kevin Dawe states in relation to the opinion of the tradition keepers themselves during 1990s (Dawe 1998: 23).

On the other hand, some Cretans have a more flexible understanding of the term “tradition”. The word, which is composite, comes from *paras* (money) and the verb *dido* (to give). In other words: *Paradosi* = *paras* + *dido*. This refers to the interaction that transpires between audience and musician with regard to payment during the course of performance. This interaction hides an entire philosophy that is based on cultural components of the past. The *bakshishi* - the money given to the performer to play the song requested, (frequently something from the past) has become a way of displaying one’s social status; it is a form of ostentation. The more songs someone requests the more

money he must give to the *lyra* player, who tries his best to earn as much as he can by pleasing the audience.

Ross Daly, who has contributed to the outcome of this thesis by providing me with valuable information about Cretan music, past and present, expressed doubts about the meaning of the word “tradition”. According to him “tradition” is an illusion. It is not a body of material from the past, but refers to an internal dynamism of a music which develops in time. This dynamism has revealed that we do not deal with a restricted system that cannot include new components, but the novel musical elements or cultural components should be compatible with the pre-existing music system. It is however, a limited system; one that does not acquire external elements beyond those already encompassed from one time to another. The imponderable factors that can be determinant though, can influence it gradually, according to what the tradition needs in order to take a step forward. If we objectively accept the meaning of the term “tradition” as devoted to content, the needs of the people it serves or it is served by, then its existence is transformed into something pioneering, which is quite contradictory as tradition is usually seen as a record of the past. In this way, its purpose as a living document of the past, that keeps unfolding in the present, is evident. Every time someone refuses to accept tradition as it is fashioned, and adds new elements to it, is judged in relation to the “tradition”. When these new elements are incorporated into the tradition the resulting outcome is the development of the tradition (as in Ross Daly’s modifications to the structure of the *lyra*). This approach towards a new direction, one that accepts tradition as a flexible concept, seems to be the explanation of Crete’s musical development, which otherwise would have faded away, unable to adapt to the modern way of life. Substantiating his opinion Ross Daly asserts:

Whenever I work on a Cretan music form, my ambition is not to lose the internal determinism and the self-sustainability of the Cretan system that is already there. Hence, I want to do something beyond what has already been established but is also in accordance with it (Interview with Ross Daly, June 2002).

Refuting the conviction of many people in Crete about “tradition”, he believes that contemporary Cretan music is based on a rupture with the past, not on continuity. For

that reason, tradition seems to be an illusion. What many of us call “tradition” should involve an exact copy of what was performed one hundred years ago, assuming that we know exactly what was played then. “There will always be some distortion of past events - and every case of musical change is by definition a past event- because they are perceived in the light of the exigencies of the present” (Blacking 1995: 163). Consequently, Daly asserts that the musical performances in contemporary Crete are not actually related to “tradition”, because they are simply a copy of a product of another time, and this is the domain of “folklore”.⁷⁹ Thus, one might think that it is an illusion to describe “tradition” as the propagation of past schemes even though “no musical change is possible without a diachronic perspective” (Blacking 1995: 168). The extent of the evolution that comes afterwards, either good or bad, always depends on the subjectivity of the audience who appoint and direct the norms on which the Cretan music “scene” moves on. Moreover, going beyond the beaten track relocates the “modern”, so that its comparison with the “traditional” is inevitable. Musical change, according to Blacking, presumes a historical process and a moment of cognitive change. Hence,

Every case of musical change presupposes a historical process and a critical moment of cognitive change, but because the moment of conscious change, in which individuals decide to move in a different direction, may have been preceded by a period of latency, in which there is a gradual feeling towards change, it may be necessary to study events related to music over a considerable period of time. From a purely practical point of view, there are the conflicting needs to study a musical system both intensively in its social context and at various stages of its evolution (Blacking 1995: 168).

Many questions arise when music becomes more complex in terms of being part of globalization trends, modernity and universality. Tradition then loses something of its integrity and tries to find a new identity that reflects another reality created by the contemporary norms of people living in the present. But living in a world of dichotomies

⁷⁹Musical folklore is another early ethnomusicological model, practiced by Zoltan Kodaly, Bela Bartok, and Constantin Brailoiu in Eastern Europe, and Maud Karpeles and Cecil Sharp in the British Isles. It shares with comparative musicology a scientific paradigm that conceives of music as collectable, comparable, and ultimately explainable object within an observable cosmos (Barz and Cooley 1997: 9).

such as local/global, folk/pop, authentic/inauthentic, rural/urban, traditional/modern, past/future, some societies try to find whether the lost children of the past are alive, always believing that keeping a tradition alive is a duty of respect owed to those who created it.

5.2. “Entertainers” and “Traditional” music as a genre of Cretan culture

In his paper, “The music process as a function in a context of functions” Charles Seeger attempts to distinguish different categories of music usage that he calls “music idioms”. One of these refers to the “folk idiom”, the “survival or retention of features characteristic of the oldest cultural heritage and, especially, rural traditions” (Seeger 1990: 120). Since Cretan music was primarily associated with the rural areas of the island one can say that many “idioms” derive from a musical folklore. No matter how these idioms were musically or technically developed, they nonetheless evolved into branches of what has been identified as “tradition”.

Having as a starting point the “tradition”, we consider that many musicians, basically *lyra*, *laouto* and violin players, improvise with the established music forms that are embodied in the Cretan repertoire and, over time, have been characterized as “traditional” through their recordings. The appearance of a variety of musical ensembles has led to the characterization of artists as “traditional”. There is an obvious trend towards making a direct copy of the past: *etsa to ikousa, etsa’ne* (“This is how I heard it; this is how it is”), *to ksepatoma* (“reproduction” or “imitation”), as they say in Crete, of the particular musical style of a specific older musician. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that questions about authenticity can best start from the “folk”. Peter Kivy gives an interesting account on the meaning of “authentic” in this sense. He argues that “an authentic performance reproduces either the *way* music was performed in the composer’s lifetime or the way it *sounded*” (Kivy 1995: 4). Thus, one of the characteristics of a “traditional” performer according to Cretans perception is the imitation of an original piece of music. The rejection of contemporary instruments and the non-distortion of components of the early days are the safest ways to preserve and protect the past. Furthermore, “a performance of musical work is correctly called ‘authentic’ if it follows

the intentions, wishes, and instructions with regard to the performance of that work that the composer has made known to us, or what we infer, ‘inauthentic’ if it does not” (Kivy 1995: 5). In the case of “traditional” music, however, which is based on the oral transmission of old songs, the composer is generally unknown. Nonetheless, any piece that a singer or *lyra* player has spread widely over the island is validated as authentic. Any contemporary instrumentalist or vocalist who plays a work in the same way as the artist who first played or sang it is also considered to have carried the music in a manner that is “authentic”, “traditional”, “real”, even “pure”. According to Richard Middleton, any approach to music which intends to contextualize it as cultural expression must foreground discussion of “authenticity”, since “honesty (truth to cultural experience) becomes the validating criterion of musical value” (Middleton 1990: 127, see Moore 2002). The *purity of practice* according to Bohlman verifies the lucidity and the transparency through which many performers try to render the past. In other words authenticity is pledged by “reflecting back” to an earlier authentic practice (Bohlman 2002: 213).

Additionally, if something sounds as “authentic” as the prototype, the performance is likely to be typified as “good”. The quality of a performance is now judged on its success as a copy of the past. The straightforward conclusion of a Cretan is that if a “traditional” song continues to exist in the present it must be of good quality. Passing the test of time, and continuing to be performed at various *glendia* with the same enthusiasm as years ago, it is epitomized as “traditional”. It is what is known as “old time classic”.⁸⁰

Performers who sing or play past songs without “polluting” them with novel elements are also characterized as “traditional”. Fornas offers explanations about “social authenticity” (Fornas 2002: 215) that is an authenticity imbued with judgmental legitimacies within a highly judgmental society. His term “social authenticity” applies to “traditional” performers in Crete. A conservative listener, who essentially acts under the umbrella of “social authenticity” is in fact primarily attached to ethical evaluations according to his/her own “subjective authenticity”. What I characterize as “authentic” might not be “authentic” according to someone else’s criteria. Yet, there is a tacit

⁸⁰ The English term “old time classic” is also used in modern Greek.

convergence on what is and what is not culturally authentic. Blacking emphasises how so-called “purists” strongly attach themselves to the musical practices tied to the past. He maintains that “the *purists* assume that radical changes in the sounds of orally transmitted music reflect some sort of moral decay, and that restoration and promotion of the ‘authentic’ music of the people will help to re-animate the life of the community, but they do not explain how this could be so” (Blacking 1995: 155).

Although music can never “belong to me”, according to Middleton (Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000: 59), Cretans have an obvious sense of belonging as far as their cultural emblems are concerned. Since music is so defined, a sense of belonging is very deep as well as greatly connected with their identity. To reject or disapprove of “traditional” forms of music is like abandoning one’s cultural identity. Thus, those performers who make remarkable efforts to safeguard older music styles, even by imitating them, are at least respectable. Cretans, especially the older generation, seem to wish for such a connection with their past and the so-called “traditional” performers satisfy a great part of the Cretan audience (**figure 45**).



Figure 45. Vangelis Pytharoulis and Stelios Makropoulos, followers of tradition. The pictures are taken from posters on the road. This is the way they promote their performances during summer. For example, Pytharoulis plays for the cultural society of Sfakas village (Saturday 13th August 2008) and Markopoulos plays for the athletic union of Kotsifianis village on 29th August 2008 in *Maistrali* tavern.

There is also another tendency on the part of fewer musicians because of its demand for hard work. The metaphor that applies here is the musician who takes a small stone from the bedrock of their experience and their knowledge of the past, and enriches this past with innovative elements. In that the rules of tradition are quite vague and

musicians are free agents of expression, the artist must be a connoisseur of the past. He ought to be aware of melody-construction in order to understand what is to be transmitted to his contemporaries and to generations that will follow. Zacharis Spyridakis, the *lyra* player in the *Palaiina Seferia* ensemble, gives an account of how the “recorded tradition” acts as a means of understanding “tradition”:

Tradition exists today, but there is also the recorded tradition... a lot of material can be included. That is how I conceive things. There is much material if you want to learn something from another era. This is how I learned: I adopted two ways of learning. The first was to learn from various sources, from books and from different recordings, not only what prevailed at a certain period before my time but also how compositions were on paper or on a vinyl disk. The second way of learning though was the binding link of two generations, meaning that I could not approach Rhodinos’ time unless I had Dais’s help. He used to be my teacher and he already knew some of the Great Masters of his time. Therefore, there is a claim according to which I am he who sustains the tradition, not from the perspective of creativity but from that of learning. What I learned from them... I cannot think of other ways of learning. Whether from books, recordings or from a particular teacher each is a complete learning process. These were the two ways I used for learning and through them I tried as well as I could to approach the styles that I was listening to.

At first I attempted to learn these things by performing them as traditionally as I could. This is a good method for learning that music of the past which interested me. Hence, I covered a wide gamut of music. This was my starting point of involvement with something different later on. Sometimes I say that we play according to traditional forms. We do play traditional songs but not only (Interview with Spyridakis, March 2003).

The skilful performance of past melodies which includes eschewing any simplification on the part of the contemporary musician is relevant to the development of tradition. Rapid finger movement is of great significance for a skilled, “traditional” musician, irrespective of whether the *lira* or the *lagouto* is played. The *lyra* for example, as noted earlier, has become more widely spread over the island in the last fifty-sixty

years. The violin, on the other hand, is more restricted in its distribution. The *lyra*'s promotion throughout the island as the "traditional" Cretan musical instrument found no resonance in the traditions of the prefectures of Chania or Ierapetra sixty years ago. The populations of western and eastern Crete had long been accustomed to the sound of the violin. In other areas of the island the *lyra* has become a "tradition" for young people who accept the *lyra* sound in different versions, even electrical: *lyra*, *lyraki*, *vondolyra*, *lyra* with sympathetic strings and electric *lyra*.

The most important issue for many Cretans as far as the "tradition" is concerned is that they can listen to their island's music without being contaminated or altered by innovations that assault the tradition. As Blacking comments, "they do not explain why 'folk' music is supposed to be preserved without change" (Blacking 1995: 156). Again this is a broad and unclear matter. Who can actually say with authority what and what does not insult tradition? What are these elements or novelties that alter a tradition and who can guarantee that new material will not become part of what the next generations might call "tradition"? Music might belong to everyone but for those who view it as a cultural emblem, they demand that music should be safeguarded in its original forms and not be contaminated.

One might say that "entertainer" is a subcategory of "traditional" musician. It is significant that most Cretan musicians began their careers as entertainers. Highlighting the importance of a "present" identity in every course of action, Cretans appreciate *glendia* that comprise old time classic *mantinades* and are accompanied by the *lyra* and the *lagouto*. "Entertainers" need to be sensitive to the musical heritage of Crete since audiences typically demand authenticity in what is presented. Young musicians, in particular, are quite conservative in terms of the way they approach old pieces. Any extravagant theatricality or other extremes in the performance of a song which departs from the original can ruin their reputation. As such, the players will avoid vulgar excesses in their performances in order to demonstrate to the audiences that they respect the tradition on the one hand, but that they are able, on the other hand, to entertain the *glendiots* with virtuosity and talent. These are the main considerations for young musicians at the beginning of their careers. One could argue, what is entertaining in this context since there are no extremes in these performances? As far as I understood the

concept of the “entertainers” while doing fieldwork, people need some performers to remind them of the past with respect to it. This is a way of entertainment without any extremes that may disappoint the audience, especially the older ones.

If the audiences approve of the “entertainer’s” performances he can either continue playing under the “entertainer” label or he can take a step forward in the recording business. Many performers seem to pass the test of entertaining Cretan audiences but they can also be doomed to failure if they choose a recording career in order to earn more money and become famous. It may appear to be easy to enter the industry, but this is not the case. Such a move indicates the musicians’ ambition to play and sing songs that are new and that appeal to a wide audience. Naturally a budding musician will choose songs concomitant to his personal taste in terms of music style. What is evident is that most performers wish to avoid “tradition” and prefer to make hazardous tryouts which may drive them to oblivion. Their lack of taste sometimes proves to be disastrous for their career, but again taste is a subjective matter.

Those who do not succeed in the recording business but still want to perform on various occasions, maintain the entertainer’s role and lead those *glendia* that have a traditional character since the audience approves of their skills. On the other hand, if they do enter the record industry and become prominent they may lead a *glendi* under different labels (see below), and with application to different target groups. The specific distinction between an “entertainer” and a Cretan “popular” artist for example, is based on the audience’s awareness of what he/she is going to hear. To make this distinction clear I will refer to typical dialogues among Cretans who are about to attend a *glendi* or a concert.

- *I heard that in the village of Riza, there will be a glendi going on tonight. Are you in?*
- *Yes, it’s been a long time since we attended a glendi. Who is going to play by the way?*

The other person usually replies with the name of the performer. In this case, it is the intention of going out that matters and not actually the performer.

If a recognized artist (celebrity) were giving a concert or playing at a *glendi*, the dialogue would be quite different:

- *I heard that Michalis Tzouganakis is playing tonight. Are you in?*
- *Yes, I'm a great fan of his. We should not miss that. It's been a long time since we attended one of his performances.*

In the latter case it is the name of the performer that matters. Most Cretans are aware of the repertory and style that this performer represents. Indeed, music lovers will go to a *glendi* primarily because they like this performer's style. In the former situation the auditors simply want to have an enjoyable night out. By extension, I maintain that a popular figure can also be an "entertainer" when he performs both traditional and popular songs at a *glendi*. The "entertainer" cannot move beyond his limits. In other words, the breadth of his repertoire is constrained to well-known or to classic songs of other performers and his distinctiveness is chiefly shown by his playing skills and how much he respects the "tradition".

5.3. Progressive (Proodephtiki) Cretan Music

The diversity of styles by which the identity of Crete is maintained is not confined only to the "traditional". There is an "otherness" that lies hidden in different music idioms that Cretan forms borrow from in terms of musical instruments or just in the music itself. In many cases, additions of musical components that are not part of the established aesthetic rules of the 'tradition' contribute to the creation of another micro-music style: the *neo-traditional* or *post-traditional music*, meaning the "traditional" projected in an artistic and sophisticated way. According to this trend, which moves away from folklore, music is somehow ennobled and shaped for a specific type of audience, the cultivated and "arty fellow". In Greek this would be translated as *koultouriakiko*. The enthusiasts of this style do not view dancing as a primary gauge in judging a good performance, despite the fact that Cretan musical traditions are indissolubly attached to dancing. Approaches such as these are unavoidably synonymous with notions of "quality". "The sophistication of the

audiences means that while visibility is the first filter of acceptance, knowledgeability might then select out carefully chosen styles” (Slobin 1993: 19).

At this point “neo-traditional” music reminds me of Eduard Alekseev’s classification of micro-musical life in the former USSR. Two of the four types he identifies are similar to those mentioned above. The first is *musical folklore* (the so-called “traditional” in the case of Crete), which roughly overlaps with our commonsense understanding of folk music, and the second is similar to the *professional music of the oral tradition*, which somewhat resembles what ethnomusicologists used to (and still tend to) call “classical” or “art” music outside the western tradition. I may also include certain kinds of professional folk musicians who stand out from the crowd of average music-makers in a peasant or nomad society (see Slobin 1993: 57).

For any “serious” music that borrows Cretan components, including Cretan forms and instruments, for enrichment and innovative acoustic effects, Cretans label it *entechno* (“art music”), as distinct from *paradosiako* (“traditional”). Dionysis Savopoulos, one of the most famous composers of the Greek *entechno*, was asked by Giorgos Kontogiannis, what this term meant for him. His answer was the following:

If we look the word *entechnos* up in a dictionary we see that it refers to someone “having art”. If we look below, other, secondary meanings are given. For example *entechnos* has also the meaning of the “artificial”, “poser”. Another meaning given is that of “skilful”, “slick”. It is true that the so-called *entechno* has been reduced to these categories. But which music isn’t reduced nowadays? Not only the recording industry is in its last days but also music in the clubs is disappointing. I also believe that *entechno* is not actually a musical term, as well as the term *elaphro* (light music) and the term *sovari mousiki* (serious music). Musicology understands terms such as “sonata”, “symphony”, “blues”, “rock”, “folk” etc. The rest are invented words, so that we communicate with each other (Kontogiannis 2010: 15).

In his discussion with the journalist he adds:

Entechno is a combination of deep musical stratum that exist in our souls. We have the need to listen to this kind of music in order to be able to bind together our pieces. If I'm not wrong (the journalist replied), you do not distinguish *entechno*, as a genre but as something that projects quality.

Yes, I discern it as something being of quality, as the daring step of the musician.... Most of the Greeks use the term *entechno* as a synonym for the *literati*. The fact that famous poets' poems were orchestrated had a great impact on this musical style. Mikis Theodorakis for example had a great talent in orchestrating poems. (Kontogiannis 2010: 16-17).

Master composers such as Manos Chatzidakis (1925-1994), Mikis Theodorakis (1925), Yiannis Markopoulos (1939) and others composed Western classical music named as *entechno*. By incorporating Greek folk components, they expressed their Greekness and the locality of their music's character. When comparing these composers and musicians, with those of the present, one notices a large number of artists whose music is manifestly dissimilar although very important for the Greeks. Consequently, some have expressed concern about the way in which the term *entechno* ("art music") is used and defined. Dimitris Lambrakis, a musician with whom I discussed *entechno* asserted that "*entechno* is everything that propels art" and he stated that "the most interesting explanation for this term, was given by Mikis Theodorakis who suggested that *entechno* is a modern composite music a piece of art which can be creatively assimilated by the masses" (Discussion with Dimitris Lambrakis October 2008). Shelemay in Seeger asserts that "art music" or "cultivated music" is synonymous with the term "serious music" and also gives some details about the characteristics of this idiom, also entitled "the professional idiom".

Some Americans have referred to it (the professional idiom) as "cultivated music" or "art music". I find both of these unacceptably solipsistic and ethnocentric. The American music industry has coined the odious, even more biased, term "serious music". I have adopted from time to time, in varying contexts, such slanted terms as "elite", "elegant", "genteel", but have usually settled for the "fine art of music", which is clumsy and permits only the bastard adjective "fine-art", which I have abandoned (Seeger 1990: 11).

Despite the fact that the term *entechno* (art music) is used by many people as the general orientation of a genre that the performer represents, it is applied to those composers who have used folk components in a western classical style. In Greece the term “art music” composer (*entechnos*) is also used for those who mainly write music that is considered to be “of quality”. Taking into account that the term “art” music presupposes a “non-art” music, I sympathize with Theodoros Riginiotis, theologian and well known *mantinadologos* (writer of *mantinades*), who proposed the term “alternative music” (*enallaktiki mousiki*), (Riginiotis 1996: 132-133), being analogous to alternative lifestyle, alternative entertainment, etc. I think the best term is “progressive Cretan music” (*proodephtiki mousiki*), meaning a music that is distinguished, eminent, or notable; having quality as well as enjoying wide acceptance. However, the various terms for *entechno* are essentially for philological use, and as Savopoulos noted above, these are invented terms. The *entechno*-progressive-alternative style of music in Crete, according to its admirers, is played by ensembles which perform music in an acoustic, slow, ballad-like style. Musicians devoted to the old stereotype of the *kompania*⁸¹ (expressing the present-day need of many for “chill out” music without dancing), highlights one of the faces of Cretan music. In addition, there are some experienced performers who, having played at traditional feasts (*glendia*) at the beginning of their career, have now consciously constructed and promoted their own personal progressive styles.

One of these performers is the young *lagouto* player Michalis Tzouganakis, who has reversed the roles of the *lyra* and the *lagouto* in his performances. Himself a virtuoso *lagouto* player, and also being a traditional music expert, he has created his own ensemble, which from the beginning played music that was far beyond the “traditional”. This large ensemble consists of a drummer, a guitarist, a bass player, a percussion player, a *lyra* player, and Tzouganakis himself as leader of the group. This was thought by some to be extravagant by Cretan standards. It was unthinkable that the *lyra* was not the leading instrument in Cretan performances. Cretan ensembles usually consist of *lyra*, a *lagouto* and a guitar. Tzouganakis’s initiative in giving the chief place to the *lagouto* and not the *lyra* was too progressive for Cretan audiences. Nonetheless, his deep knowledge

⁸¹ The word *kompania* here implies a group of musicians.

of tradition maintained the balance and most Cretans appreciated his innovations. Since Tzouganakis did not offend tradition but, on the contrary, retained traditional forms in line with his personal aesthetics, he managed to become one of the most well-known performers of the last ten years. (figures 46-47).



Figure 46. Michalis Tzouganakis, playing his *lagouto* passionately



Figure 47. Michalis Tzouganakis and his ensemble

One can detect in the progressive ensembles a propensity towards old-style Cretan music, which was not as sweet as what is familiar today. Moreover, such ensembles use many traditional Cretan instruments as well as others from regions inside and outside Greek national borders, in order to attract followers of “good” music. Ensembles such as *Paleina Seferia*, *Chainides*, *Aksegnioi Perates*, and musicians such as Ross Daly, Michalis Tzouganakis, Stelios Petrakis, Loudovikos of Anoyia, and many others, have contributed to the creation of a special progressive style by expanding Cretan music not only in local and national levels but also to audiences outside the Greek territory. Notable is the fact that it is difficult, even for the performers who produce this kind of music, to define to which category it belongs. The *lyra* player Zacharis Spyridakis states (**figure 48**):

We are talking about categorizations of the genres of Cretan music. We referred to some basic categories but these things are very delicate and sensitive to talk about. If you ask me to which category I belong or which title I would give to our ensemble I wouldn't know what to answer. I really don't know what I am doing at the moment or how to define it. What I can say about *Palaiina Seferia* is that the basic material is taken from tradition. The pieces we compose are based on traditional, musical and lyrical forms, but made by people who live in 2003. These are parameters which cannot change. Therefore, all these mean something which I cannot precisely define.

No one can be completely aware of what he/she does. If I knew, I would be much more relaxed. But you cannot be completely aware of what you do. What you know is telling yourself that you did your best and have used all of your knowledge and your experience. I can guarantee you that using all of my strength and knowledge, with all of my weapons, I can produce something good. But I would never know if or how this will be heard in ten years time or longer (Interview with Zacharis Spyridakis, June 2003).



Figure 48. Zacharias Spyridakis, leader of the ensemble *Palaina Seferia*

Loudovikos of Anoyia introduced a new kind of performance, one which combines long spoken passages and some dirges. When I asked him about his work he had the following to say:

I soon realized that in order to be part of the music scene of Crete you have to do things that are unique and original. Not try things that have already been performed. There is no meaning if you say or do things someone else has already done. That's how I entered to the field of laments; a field that no-one else has thought as a category of music to be performed out of context. So, I referred to unrequited love in the northern parts of Crete as well as to the profiles of Cretan women who play significant roles throughout Crete. It is true that females take the lead in many activities of Cretan society, in contrast to males who are mistakenly regarded by many as the stronger sex.

It seems that the audience liked my approach and little by little I started my musical productions. Between the years 1987 and 1988 I made a record entitled as *O erotas stin Kriti einai melancholikos* ("Love in Crete is melancholic") based on traditional verses. The music was mine. It was obvious that I was defending the place of my origins for I owed Crete all that I enjoy today... fantasy, air, blood, my human body and also everything that I learned from my ancestors, who were all from Crete.

The way I approach my art is prototypical because I use speech and words which are the basic components in order to build a song. The combination of speech accompanied with music helps the listener to understand what you want to articulate. That's how I started narrating stories about Crete and playing songs about them. The song I sing after telling a story is a way of putting the finishing touch and also a way of musical function. That is what I have been doing to the present (**figure 49**), (Interview with Loudovikos of Anoyia, July 2005).



Figure 49. Loudovikos ton Anoyion narrating stories with his mandolin (picture taken in his house in Athens)

Loudovikos adds:

I consider myself to be anti-traditional. Tradition is something that you pledge. I don't think that we can deal with it unless tradition itself accepts you and consequently absorbs you. Certain ideas, melodies and verses which are taken as traditional should be treated carefully. It is a great honour for someone to be part of the tradition. It is as if you have been awarded the Nobel Prize. No-one needs to be traditional and no-one should be self-characterized as such. Tradition is something that happened in the past and I believe it is very selfish to label

yourself as “traditional”. It is much more modest to portray yourself as an *entechno* (“art”) musician (Interview with Loudovikos of Anoyia, February 2006).

The thin line between “traditional” and the “ethnic”, which is often affected by market conventions and promotional systems in the world music landscape, is that traditional music is modified and sold as “popular” music. “Traditional melody and functions must undergo transformation in order to be mapped on Western harmony and repacked for global consumption” (Bohlman 2002: 21). The most interesting example of Cretan components used in popular music is Elena’s Paparizou song, “My number one”, which won the Eurovision Song Contest, in 2004. The structure of this song is typical in contemporary pop songs and it was sung by a singer who had nothing to do with Crete. The lyrics were written in English, while the Cretan *lyra* accompaniment gave the sense of Greekness. The Cretan *lyra* became known in Europe after this contest and it gained even more popularity in its place of origin.

Other pop/rock singers have also contributed to the spread of the Cretan *lyra* throughout Greece and to its increasing use as an instrument that gives a folk sound in popular music. Manos Pyrovolakis, for example, was highly successful with his song *Stis ekklisias tin porta* (“In the church’s door”) in 2005. Pyrovolakis’s roots are in Crete and he took advantage of Cretan figures that could be used in a rock song. *Stis ekklisias tin porta* took the first place in the Greek charts for a long time. This was precisely a new perspective of rock music that was both accepted by his fans as well as by Cretans in general, who took pride in listening to something of their own cultural heritage gaining such popularity among so many. Again, the “folksiness” of these songs was repackaged and consumed under the aegis of Western musical norms, and this gives birth to novel musical attempts. Pyrovolakis (**figure 50**), a rock/pop singer, never denies his Cretan origins. He always plays the *lyra* in his performances. But, if one were to ask a Greek audience to which genre Pyrovolakis belongs most would probably say that he belongs to *entechno*. Fusions such as these always confuse. Questions about how far the musical horizons can travel often cross our minds...



Figure 50. Manos Pyrovolakis

Zacharis Spyridakis makes an interesting statement on how his ensemble operates within traditional Cretan forms (**figure 51**).

I want to tell you that, primarily, our aim is to respect tradition, never to insult it. We simply thought that it would be pleasant to play Cretan songs, since this is what we know, and we try our best. Whenever we make arrangements we say: “Here is the original piece and here is what we play”. One of the ways that traditional music functions throughout the world and especially in Greece or the Orient is as follows: Whatever is considered to be traditional is taken by the artist who transforms it in and through his performance. This is why there is not only one musical form. That is why you can hear a simple melody which has survived through time, played in another way by contemporary societies.

If you listen, for example, to the melody of the pan-Cretan *Protos Syrtos* [First Syrtos, the typical Cretan dance] you will see that its form is arranged as well as its musical idiom, its melodic line. It has been subjected to numerous arrangements. This is the power of traditional music which, if you don’t handle it in this way, then I believe you castrate it. What I mean is that nowadays we have the means and knowledge to write down the *Protos Syrtos* on paper as we hear it. If, after forty-fifty years, somebody takes it without having heard us play it he will play it exactly as it is written on the paper and he will continue to play it like

that. But this is not enough... it is this, as well as the experience which you must have in order to arrange it in such a way that you will maintain its lines yet changing essential elements without insulting its aesthetic. But again... it is difficult to define all of this (Interview with Spyridakis, March 2003).



Figure 51. CD cover from the album *Os ein' aeras* (“Like the Wind”), Palaina Seferia

Iakovos Paterakis, a young and established *lyra* player offers another interpretation of the term *entechno* and explains the interest of some musicians towards the Orient.

Entechno [art music] has a long story. So, what about other musical genres? Are they non-art music? What I see nowadays is a tendency towards Oriental music, Turkish music, meaning the study of the *maqams*, dealing with strange scales etc. There must be a connection between these musics and Cretan music, but they are not the same. Turks use different scales, whereas in Crete rhythm has the principal role. We cannot transfer the culture of the Turks or Eastern culture to Crete simply because these people have very slow rhythms and long improvisations. This is a propensity that can be detected in the performances of certain skilled musicians. What makes the difference in Crete is our Cretan soul. Our music is about being alert all the time and we have war-dances. It is not just

acoustic... sitting for hours just listening to slow-style pieces (Interview with Iakovos Paterakis, August 2005).

Thus, under the label “world music”, tradition comes again and again not to hint to the past but to re-establish new meanings for the present. Whenever we listen to the popular musics of the world, which are supposedly the crossroads between traditional (folk) and the “world music” industry and where local musicians may become “postmodern” myths⁸² of the present, ethnic music somehow usurps the past and the tradition in order to have an effect on what is current.

Music as a cultural product, exclusively identified with the society from which it comes, seems to be “exoticized” within society and transformed through procedures of cultural blending. As a result, there are hybridized musical expressions which are undoubtedly far beyond the “traditional” standards and which at the same time show the need for attachment to the local music “tradition”. Besides, hybridization would not have meaning as a term if it were not for “authenticity” and the fixed boundaries on which tradition is based. The “new hybridity”, in contrast to the “existing” or “old hybridity” as portrayed by Nederveen Pieterse, comes out of the recent combinations of cultural and/or institutional forms (Pieterse 2001: 222).

It is of value to mention the ensemble, *Greeks and Indians*, a collaborative approach to the fusion of the two cultural styles, the Indian on the one hand and the Cretan on the other (**figure 52**). In it, Ross Daly, despite his Irish roots, played on behalf of the Cretans. His opinion about such cultural blending is interesting:

Some Greek musicians could collaborate with performers from other cultures, such as Indians, and produce something which may be interesting both in Greece and in India. That’s what interests me. It is not of importance for me to play as a Cretan *lyra* player or Petroloukas Chalkias [the clarinet player] as a clarinet player from Epirus, or the *tabla* player demonstrating his Indian origin. Therefore, the point here is not an exhibition of Greekness. The point is the

⁸² Perhaps no other worldbeat star has better represented the crossroads of traditional and postmodern myths of world music than Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (1948-97), the Pakistani singer of *qawwali*, a Hindustani (i.e. North Indian and Pakistani) devotional music traditionally sung at the shrines of Sufi Muslim saints. The myths about Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan make a great deal of his connection to tradition (Bohlman 2002: 17).

teamwork these musicians achieve by carrying out their cultural experiences while playing. For me, personally, it sounds extremely interesting to add to the Cretan *lyra* a repertoire of techniques which will allow us to play in an Indian style (Interview with Ross Daly, June 2002).

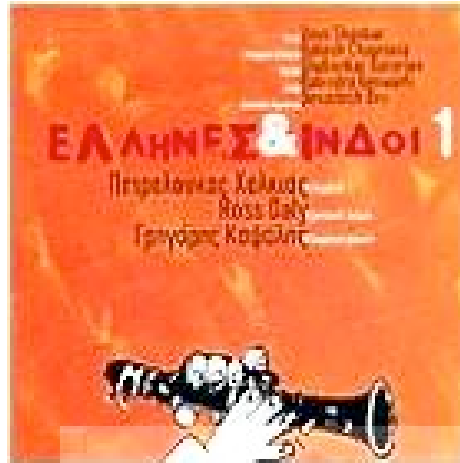


Figure 52. CD cover: *Ellines kai Indoi* (“Greeks and Indians”: Petroloukas Chalkias, Ross Daly, Grigoris Kapsalis)

Daly’s words appear to resonate with ideas expressed by Paul Gilroy in relation to hybridity.

Who the fuck wants purity? ... the idea of hybridity, of intermixture, presupposes two anterior purities ... I think there isn’t any purity; there isn’t any anterior purity ... that’s why I try not to use the word hybrid ... Cultural production is not like mixing cocktails (Gilroy cited in Hutnyk 2000:114).

At this point, the reaction of certain “traditional” musicians is noteworthy because these are the ones who actually want purity in addition to certain audiences. They simply wonder (I put this in my own words): If we take into consideration that Ross Daly has created his own school, whose ideas many young musicians have adopted, we all think of Crete not as a unit but as a small dot in the Eastern Mediterranean. This then leads us to the question of whether the wide education of a sophisticated man, an expert musician and also a conscious artist, is a dubious implement for those who think they deal with

tradition. His answer to all who ask confirms his involvement with the *lyra* as an instrument and not his association with Cretan music, which are apparently two completely different issues. Additionally he declares:

Over the last twenty years, I have collaborated in many projects with musicians from different countries, such as Sudan, India, China, Turkey, Arabia, Persia, Senegal and others. I was never looking though, for a Turk to play the *oud* in order to combine the Turkish with the Cretan. I met Metzati Kelik, who happens to be one of the best *oud* players in Turkey, and basically I feel I have something in common with his musical perception. This is the most important thing for me. Since he is Turkish he will play as a Turk. My instrument is the *lyra* since I was taught in Crete and there will be Cretan elements in what I play. Thus, my focus is not to combine the Cretan with the Turkish. There is no point in doing such a thing. The only issue, which may lead us somewhere, is the aspiration of some performers to play together because they have similar ideas about music (**figure 53**), (Interview with Ross Daly, July 2004).



Figure 53. Musical workshop in “Labyrinth”. Bulgarian *gudulka* and Cretan *lyra* playing together. The two men are participants-students in the workshop that took place in 2005.

Contemporary *lyra* players like Manolis Alexakis accept this kind of musical approach, and they are ready to step forwards, towards new fields where the *lyra* will take its place as a Cretan instrument, playing different styles of non-Cretan music. Indeed, the

lyra could play jazz or rock music or any other musical genre but always in terms of articulating the genre of the music being played (jazz, rock, etc.). We should not forget the 2005 Eurovision contest in which Elena's Paparizou pop song "My Number One" (**figure 54**) which won the competition, makes use of the Cretan *lyra*. Alexakis states:

The *lyra* is not an exclusively Cretan instrument. We classified it as Cretan by convention. If you conduct new experiments in order to see the potential of the *lyra*, then it is not bad at all. What I consider as bad is the alteration of a musical genre. If you play something Cretan for example, it has to remain Cretan. You can make experiments with something that has another identity. What if I want to play some jazz with the *lyra*? I will do it! But I cannot play a *syrtos*, which sounds jazzy. This is unacceptable. (Interview with Manolis Alexakis, May 2002).



Figure 54. Elena Paparizou

When people identify a particular instrument with a specific "tradition", any experimentation with techniques adopted from other world repertoires can frequently confuse and disarray the audience.

The definition given to this musical product, and the limitations imposed by on it by the rules of the genre it originally belongs to, appears to distance it from the inspiration of its creator. In these pieces what Paul Gilroy characterizes as "cultural absolutism" (Gilroy 1993: 34) and essentialism, is no longer what is presented by the performers, because fixed boundaries are ignored. The lack of stereotypes justifies the freedom of expression, paving the way for collaborations (**figures 55-58**).



Figure 55. Georgi Petrov, the Bulgarian teacher, showing the *gudulka's* techniques in “Labyrinth”



Figure 56. Young musicians try to adopt the *gudulka's* techniques on their *lyras*



Figure 57. Eleni Kalimopoulou and Dimitris Apostolakis try to follow the *gudulka's* techniques



Figure 58. Collaboration of various musicians from all over the world in Choudetsi

5.4. Cretan Skyladika [Cretan Dog Songs]

Rethinking Blacking’s account of musical change and the dissociation between innovation within the musical system and change in the system, many performers I interviewed believe that most current innovation in Cretan music does not appear to change the system. The framework of the musical event has not entirely changed and the novelties which have actually reordered the manner of entertaining (following current trends), seem to be innovations within the musical system itself. If Cretans were to acknowledge that there was a profound change in the system, it would be like refuting their “tradition”.

I have already referred to the “entertainers” - those musicians who follow Crete’s musical tradition and lead *glendia* in a manner which they believe to be as close as possible to their ancestors. I have also observed instrumental ensembles that play “progressive Cretan music” in concert halls and use lyrical and poetic elements in their performances, even occasionally without lyrics. However, the most questionable of all species of contemporary Cretan music is the so-called *skyladiko* (“dog music”). This is a distinct category of Cretan music, though it is not specifically a Cretan phenomenon. The *skyladiko* genre is found all over Greece, and the Cretan *skyladiko* or *skylokritiko*

(“Cretan dog music”) is a subcategory of Cretan music.⁸³ The “flibbertigibbets”, the *skylades*⁸⁴ or *kouloukades*,⁸⁵ who perform *skylokritika* (Cretan dog songs) stand (Vardakis, Ierapetra 2004) for a music in which mercantile criteria are of more importance than artistic principles. Thus, it is commonly recognised in Greece that the *skyladiko* is not a respected genre of music on one hand but it is extremely popular on the other. Indeed, the ambiguity of the status of the *skyladiko* is evident in the wrangling between its fans and its opponents. Questions as to how this kind of “rubbishy” music can be so highly commercial are often raised. What makes it “tasteless” and who listens to it? In the following part of this chapter I will try to illustrate both what the *skyladiko* is and what *skyladika* represent for Cretans.

To begin with, it is informative to investigate the *skyladika* from their first appearance in Greece and to see how this musical style was interpreted as it gained popularity throughout the country. The hey-day of the *rebetiko* genre lasted until the end of 1950, when it was gradually replaced by another species called *laiko*. *Laiko*, which means “popular”⁸⁶ (not “pop”)⁸⁷, was considered to be close to the Turkish popular music genre known as *arabesk*. Martin Stokes has this to say about *arabesk*:

⁸³ The word *skyladiko* can also refer to the place where this kind of music is performed.

⁸⁴ *Skylades* (sing. *Skylas*): is mainstream Greek pop music, performed by a throng of popular “yelpers” – dog singers - in flashy halls known as “kennel clubs”.

⁸⁵ *Kouloukades* (sing. *Kouloukas*): Derived from the word *koulouki*, which means “dog” in the Cretan dialect. This word implies that singers who perform this type of music yelp like dogs.

⁸⁶ Historically, the term “popular” has meant “of the ordinary people”. It was first linked in a published title to a certain kind of music that conformed to that criterion in William Chapple’s *Popular Music of the Older Times*, published from 1855. Not until the 1930s and 1940s did the term start to gain wider currency (Shuker 2005: 203). Middleton observes that the question of “what is popular music” is “so riddled with complexities...that one is tempted to follow the example of the legendary definition of folk song – all songs are folk songs, I never heard horses sing’ em – and suggest that all music is popular music: popular with someone” (1990: 3). However, the criteria, for what counts as popular and their application to specific musical styles and genres, are open to considerable debate... Many commentators argue that it is commercialization that is the key to understanding popular music, e.g. “When we speak of popular music we speak of music that is commercially oriented” (Burnett, 1996: 35). This approach is related to the emphasis on the popular, arguing that such appeal can be quantified through charts, radio air-play, and so forth. In such definitions, certain genres are identified as ‘popular music’, while others are excluded (Shuker 2005: 204).

⁸⁷ Musically, pop is defined by its general accessibility, its commercial orientation, and emphasis on memorable hooks or choruses, and a lyrical preoccupation with romantic love as a theme. The musical aesthetics of pop are essentially conservative: “It is about providing popular tunes and clichés in which to express commonplace feelings – love, loss, and jealousy” (Frith, 2001: 96). Along with songwriters, producers are often regarded as the main creative force behind pop artists. Accordingly, as a genre in the marketplace, pop’s defining feature is that “It is music produced commercially for profit, as a matter of enterprise not art” (ibid.: 94), (Shuker 2005: 201).

No single, all embracing definition is possible, since arabesk is, and means, a lot of different things... Intellectual commentators see arabesk in sociological or historical terms. Arabesk is, for them, the more or less disastrous consequence of certain processes of modernization and urbanization... To generalize, for fans, the singers are ordinary suffering human beings like them, who share, as outsiders from the Turkish provinces, uncertain destinies on the fringes of the big cities. Arabesk, for fans, is about love, separation, manipulation, betrayal, and hopeless dreams of glamour, wealth and escape (Stokes 2000: 217).

It is important to emphasise Stoke's statements because there is much confusion about this genre in Greece. The *skyladiko* would seem to have similarities with *arabesk* music since it is also about love, hate, separation, manipulation, betrayal and other circumstances of life of contemporary, "ordinary" people. But how did the term *skyladiko* arise in Greece? The phenomenon of *laiko* (popular), as an established genre, can already be seen in the 1950s and 1960s. What actually happened to the *laiko* genre after the 1960s?

Over the past four decades, we have witnessed the mass production of thousands of songs. *Elaphrolaika*⁸⁸ songs (light *laika* songs) as well as pop music were mainly adopted by the petit bourgeois and the nouveau riche. Some named those songs that were more like *laika*, (and possessed an *arabesk* quality), *skyladika* which themselves were named after the clubs ("kennel clubs") where these songs were performed. As a result, that kind of music was distinguished from what was considered as purely *laiko*. Ultimately it remains true that *laiko* song still exists even though it may often be labelled by epithets such as *elaphrolaiko* (light popular), *neo-laiko* (neo-popular), *oriental*, *skyladiko* (dog songs), *kapsourotragoudo* (love songs), *souksediariko* (hit songs), etc. A satisfactory account of the sub-culture of *skyladiko* requires a full understanding of its ambiance, the so-called "kennel-clubs", as originally described by Takis Tzifas in the magazine, *Laiko Tragoudi* ("Popular Song"). Although Tzifas's comments on the *skyladiko* may sound sarcastic, in fact they are not. Many who are not entirely repulsed by *skyladika* may often produce humorous descriptions of them.

⁸⁸ *Elaphrolaika* (sing. *Elaphrolaiko*): A term that emerged simultaneously with *laiko*. It is a composite word from *elaphro* (light) and *laiko*. Thus, it refers to music with a popular and "lighter" character.

The power and the charm of the *skyladiko* are unquestionable. If you are not changed by the big clubs of the eponymous degradation where, monkeys play the ape in front of assorted mirrors, influenced by the rock and pop cholera which yells about nothing. If you are not affected by the perplexity of *entechno* [art music] which regurgitates old glories in order to sing a hit song, then you should go to a kennel club. You should honour these clubs with your presence since the only certainty is that they will award you with wobbly take-offs and dives into the bowels of the earth.

These clubs have very talented musicians who play for a demanding audience that visits such places quite often and that discriminates between skilled and not so skilled singers. The audience is not interested in the age of people, and is indifferent to beauty or to strange tastes. But this audience does love the songs that are performed there. The listener loses sight of what is mediocre with respect to the singers, but he is strict with the instrumentalists who will not be replaced by any others all night long.

These places are the triumph of the fantasies of various musical tastes... If you ever decide to visit one, the most important question you should ask yourself is who you're going with. This is very important no matter how weird it may sound. You should sift through your educated friends. Most of them will be thrilled at the idea of visiting a kennel club, because they think they are going a place full of drugs, whores and pimps. Of course you must not let them drink too much because they might get over-friendly with the people sitting near you, and this is quite risky. The ideal person to take with you is a low profile petit bourgeois person, because he won't drink so much, he will make low-voiced comments, and he is not going to run wild. He will behave as if he were a public servant who, by mistake, finds himself at the annual party of the Mafia, and really enjoys it.

You should also be concerned about the females you want to take there. Females are like moving bombs in such places and they are fully aware of this. The common steady, seductively dressed, dances everything and never gets off the dancing floor, while the men drink whisky and yell...

The provinces are habitat of dog music. In a kennel club near Yiannena [a town in Northern Greece, I appreciated the reputations of the degraded music stars. What actually matters is the powerful song. The amazing musicians who I met left

me speechless because they performed so solemnly in a comical environment, full of drunks who clutched prostitutes. Those who experienced the original “dog songs” were very lucky people (Tzifas 2003: 38).

Contemporary “kennel clubs” are not exactly as described above. They have adjusted to present circumstances and to modern audiences that like this kind of music. But, it is still difficult to clarify what the word *skyladiko* means because it is interpreted in various ways according to the kind of people that define it. However, the “representative” description by Takis Tzifas indicates a musical style that is quite decadent and would seem to appeal to people of the underworld. Some would simply argue that the musical style of the “dog songs” is banal for banal people. Nonetheless, the “dog songs” have been deeply misunderstood by those audiences that favour other kinds of music. Panos Kaponis, an experienced bouzouki player, provides an account of what the *skyladiko* means to him, and to what extent it differs from the *laiko* genre:

Skyladiko is a commercial genre of Greek music. However, it has an expiry date and those who basically promote it are the record companies. It is not to their advantage to produce everlasting songs. What is important for them is constant change. What actually matters is the promotion of as many artists as possible and the sponsorship of new musical material because consumers are easily bored. It is also significant that this music fills the clubs with people and sets all kinds of fashions and styles. In the old days it didn’t matter what the performers would wear, with whom they were going to sing or how they would appear on stage. Today, however, all of these issues are of paramount importance. In addition, the admirers of the *skyladiko* actually feed the mass media with their provocative verses and weird attitudes. All of this sounds to me as if it belongs to the vicious circle that is called “show biz”.

By contrast, the *laiko* has purer lyrics, though I believe that the “authentic” *laiko* is vanishing. The *laikoi* performers approach the themes of their songs with romanticism and respect. They deal with “true” culture and nothing “fake”. I wouldn’t say that the *laiko* is as commercial as *skyladiko*. All kinds of commercial music have more or less the same lyrics and much the same music. The problems

of love may be similar but how to approach them differs widely (Interview with Panos Kaponis, August 2007).

Some of the characteristics of *skyladiko*, which are mentioned above, seem to be at the root of the trouble and that is because *skyladiko* seems to be a genre that is questionable. It is fact that it is not preferred by a massive part of the Greek audience because of its lack of taste whereas on the other hand, young people think of it as an unconventional way of entertainment. The performance of less-talented singers, for example, a matter of unimportance to the audience, makes this type of song inferior to those who lay importance on both the voice of the singer and the quality of the lyrics. The places where *skyladika* are performed appear to be so kitsch and tasteless that it would tempt a “sophisticated” to person visit them just for fun. References to drinking whisky and the other untoward incidents are also very much a part of the subculture of “dog songs”, as is the female dress code which allows much more provocation than that worn in any other music hall.

Ross Daly recalls how music is transformed in the urban centres where it is heard in clubs:

I remember the first clubs of this kind. Originally, these operated according to the performances of the village *glendi*. They were like small copies of the village inside the town. However, this was nothing but a business. Afterwards, the owner of the club, and also the musicians, became conscious of the existence of another kind of club: the so-called *bouzoukzidiko*⁸⁹. When comparing the Cretan *kentro* (music venue) with the *bouzoukzidiko*, one cannot equate them in terms of commerciality. The *bouzoukzidiko* of course earns much more and because it is business, the place begins to be the model, of what is economically more successful. The decoration of the place is changed and whisky replaces the traditional drink, *raki*. In addition, a different mode of musical presentation is established, with the support of big sound boxes, dancing floor etc. All of these

⁸⁹ The *bouzoukzidiko* (Μπουζουκζίδικο) is an entertainment venue, where the kind of music played is not folk but contains folk elements fused with other musical styles. In other words, the *bouzoukzidiko* was a music hall where the *laiko* genre was performed and it still bears that name. The main instrument used for its performances is the *bouzouki*. Today this place is also called a *skyladiko*.

features have been imported from the *bouzoukzidiko* to the Cretan *kentro* (Interview with Ross Daly, August 2003).

Each of the above points of contention for those who dislike this genre makes evident the disparaging and almost slanderous conceptions of the *skyladiko*. Thanos Alexandris claims that the *skyladiko* is a misjudged genre of the twentieth first century just as the *rebetiko* genre was in its hey-day. He says, “Dog songs will be the matter of sociological debate. I am firmly convinced that students will approach this part of our cultural inheritance with respect and deep emotion” (*Laiko Tragoudi*, 2003: 39).

It is questionable whether young people and especially university students show particular esteem towards the *skyladika*. Indeed, many young adults avoid listening to “dog songs” at all costs because of their low quality. But not in Crete. There, the youth is the sole group who listens to this kind of music, especially those fifteen and twenty five years of age. Young people in their late teens want to listen to “easy” music and the *skyladiko* seems to satisfy them. Repetitive musical phrases, lyrics inspired by current norms, strong rhythmic patterns reminiscent of such cultural forms as the *mantinades*, along with the use of traditional instruments (*lyra* and *lagouto*) together make up a recipe for success. Nevertheless, there are long debates among Greek youth in general about the *skyladiko* and other genres of Greek music that are considered to be of superior quality. The following is a typical conversation between young people in Crete who, on the one hand, are not *skyladiko* fans and, on the other, those who like or listen to *skyladika* when they go out. Debate usually begins with comments from those who dislike *skyladiko*. The conversation below took place in Heraklio between Maria (a medical student), Manos (a bar tender) and George (a mechanic), young adults that I met in Crete. The exchange was enlightening and of great interest for someone involved with these issues. Unfortunately, I did not record this conversation, because the original plan was to go out for a drink with some friends. Therefore, I could not carry the m.d with me to the pub.

Maria: I can tolerate many styles of music except for the *skyladiko*. Cultivated people, far above our materialistic world cannot bear to listen to it. The only thing that matters for the *skylades* is the “easy”, the “quick” and the “dirty”. They are merely followers of the mainstream.

Manos: I absolutely agree with your comments. What gets on my nerves is that the *skylades* are so narrow-minded. They say that whoever refuses to listen to *skyladiko* likes *entechno*. Of course, if you are so narrow-minded how far can you see?

Maria: If we could eliminate the *skyladiko*, other genres would become more popular and this would raise cultural development in our country.

George: What do you mean “the elimination of *skyladiko*?” Who can possibly prevent anyone from singing such songs? At the end of the day, who stops any of these people from going to *skyladika* clubs? If they go there, that means they like that kind of music. They have fun and that’s how they entertain themselves. I like *sklyladika*. Does that make me the child of an inferior God? You claim that we are not educated and cultivated because we do not listen to “art” music. What if I like both “dog singers” and “art” musicians? One does not mutually exclude the other. I like to have fun. I can’t have fun in a place where everybody sits around looking miserable. When I’m in love I like to shed tears with music of quality and hit myself on the floor with *skyladika*. Have you got any idea how many people I’ve seen who love cultivated music being drunk at *skyladika*? I’ve had enough of their false attitude! On the other hand, you ought to know that *skyladiko* is a distinctive genre of Greek music. The fact that you can’t stand it does not necessarily mean that is not for other people (Crete, August 2006).



Figure 59. Pavlos Zambetakis No2, *5 to proi* “5 in the morning”, Live



Figure 60. Giorgos Zervakis, *Stin Entatiki*, (“In the intensive care room”)

The Cretan *skyladiko* belongs to the *laiko* genre, and this is true for almost every other place in Greece, but they differ in some respects. It would be impossible for Cretan performers not to leave it untouched without putting their stamp on it. Owing to their strong affiliation to their Cretan homeland they perform this music without ignoring their Cretan identity (**figures 59-60**). And because Crete’s musical identity consists of poetry (*mantinades*), music (*lyra*, *lagouto*) and dance (traditional dances), the *laiko* genre and the notion of *skyladiko* as perceived in urban centres were unacceptable by Cretan standards in their original forms. Since Cretans feel the need to incorporate and amalgamate all new developments into their culture, it is evident that this is exactly what they have done also with the *skyladiko*. The *skyladiko* genre originated in the large urban centres, before spreading to rural Greece, and in due course it arrived in Crete where it was absorbed into their own music. Employing representative musical emblems, the Cretan musicians created *skyladika* songs with a Cretan character, the so-called *skylokritika* (Cretan “dog” songs).

Cretan performers are gifted with outstanding flexibility and speed in their playing, and with excessive zeal. In one of my meetings with Vangelis Vardakis, a successful violin player and virtuoso of eastern Crete, a supporter of “traditional” music and a profoundly conservative musician, he said something quite remarkable about the “dog songs”:

All of the dog performers play at an extremely fast tempo. Whenever I play and they listen, I must follow certain rules. Each one has its significance; otherwise I would be a flibbertigibbet. These rules are not only traditional but also aesthetic. This implies that it's good for a musician to understand what the audience can derive from him. If he plays whatever comes into his mind, anyone who is ignorant of music will say: "Wow!!!" Whoever is more educated about the music will say that the performer overreacts. How can someone understand the aesthetics of music? This is an aesthetic rule: Don't overdo your playing! And there are other rules that make a performer a virtuoso. That's what our friends the *skylades* do. They have a speedy technique of playing which they call virtuosity. These people though, do not know how tradition works so they try to steal or borrow elements from other musicians. Why do I call them *skylades*? Simply because they are failed *bouzouki* players! These people would be in their natural environment if they played in a den with a four course *bouzouki*. They were unable to do it so they try to succeed with the *lyra*. Unfortunately, they have found an audience to encourage them. What they do is very shallow. I do not blame them because they are accepted somehow and are well paid. The worst thing is that they not only play Cretan music but they also play dog songs using the *lyra*. This is unacceptable! (Interview with Vangelis Vardakis, July 2004).

Bearing in mind Vardakis's comments about the folksiness and popularity of some Cretan performers, I observed that the Cretan newspaper *Tolmi* printed an interesting article in which two of the most well known *lyra* players were commented upon. One was characterized as a *skylas* (dog singer) and the other as a *laikos* (popular) singer. When I had the opportunity to talk to one of them in Crete, the so-called *skylas* told me, showing marked annoyance:

The "popular" singer is the one who merely bases his music on the folk, whereas the "dog singer" corrupts the folk and it makes it cheap. "Dog singer" means we dance about on the tables, we break everything, we pay and we leave. That's true. But bearing in mind that Cretan music is something sacred for the Cretans, both of these characterizations (pop and dog) are bad (Interview with Nikos Kyriakakis, August 2005).



Figure 61. Nikos Kyriakakis

The straight-forward answer, by way of reaction to such comments, is hidden behind the idea that “modern Cretan” music is not a museum piece. It is alive and part of the evolutionary process of culture. Therefore, to imitate “traditional” and to promote it as authentic is regarded as stagnation as Loudovikos of Anoyia states. “Neither identities nor traditions are static; both change with changing circumstances and with the continuous interaction of peoples” (Frith 1998: 311). Taking into account the inevitable change of tradition, which is always a matter of invention and reinvention, what is at issue for the “traditional” and “progressive” performers is not the commercialization of music, despite the fact that they can be commercial at some point. For the “dog singers” the commodified and economic benefits that should be born in mind do not exclude the possibility of a product having a good quality. Moreover, they point out that something of quality can also be commercial. This depends on the marketplace. Consequently, by following the trends and the standards of international pop, “dog music” is to be regarded as something commercial as well as appealing mainly to young people.⁹⁰

“Dog-music” is directed at the consumer youth since it is sold basically to young people. One seldom sees elders buying such kind of music. This would be evidenced by the essential youth orientation of some CD covers. It is also evidence that most of these

⁹⁰ According to Ross Daly “Most musicians know few things about their own music, nowadays, especially the youth. But I do not think that it is the young people’s fault that they are not aware of Cretan music. According to my opinion this is bound to happen, since the previous generation was not interested in Cretan music either. They lived in a period where everybody’s aim in this business was to earn as much as he could, so they made all kinds of compromises in order to become richer. Consequently, the finished product was of a very low quality and the youth understood that and didn’t like it. It is not their concern any more. On the contrary, you can observe that the records, which everybody criticizes, sell. This is a contradiction that didn’t exist in the earlier days” (Interview with Ross Daly, Athens 2002).

performances are attended mainly by young people. Also known as *souxediarika songs*⁹¹ (hit songs), the “dog songs” stimulate interest through the low quality of the lyrics and the trendy profile of the performer who sings until early in the morning. The “gastronomical” music, as Eco denotes, is a manufactured product that does not adhere to any artistic field that satisfies the demands of the market (Eco 1994: 342).

One of the aims of modern performers is to imitate musical features of pop culture. In order to sell songs such as these for mass consumption, that is to say, for young people who are accustomed to “easy to digest sounds” (*efpeptous echous*), the record companies have constructed a type of music that disregards forms of “serious” music such as the classical for example. While record companies assail pejorative audiences by promoting pop music, the local music culture, Cretan at this point, loses ground and is pushed out of the limelight. The paradox at this point is that the records many people criticize as “shit”, therefore as “dog songs”, have excellent sales. Keith Negus talks about the portfolio management of the record companies and he asserts the following:

Dogs produce little, if any, profit and are usually considered a bad investment. A company may wish to divest itself of a genre or artist defined as a dog. However, record companies may retain a dog for reasons other than immediate financial gain. This has sometimes been the case with more experimental or avant garde performers and with classical music and jazz. This practice can benefit a company, both internally and externally. Such a strategy can impress and attract other artists and it can boost the morale of personnel within the company. It can be used to justify the claim that the company is interested in ‘art’ as much as profits (although such a strategy can also have indirect commercial benefits), (Negus 2002: 48-49).

⁹¹ “The so-called *souxediarika* songs (hit-songs) are basically songs with very commonplace lyrics that are accepted by the audience but do not last for long. I believe that there are very few people with a well developed critical consciousness. For this reason artists at the top suddenly disappear. Who raised them so high? The audience, the media... That is so bad ... because young people especially are still ignorant of how the system works. Night-time is a big school and these artists do not know that only a few support them and if they leave them, they’ll fall down” (Interview with Manolis Alexakis, May 2002).

Another matter of concern for contemporary Cretan music and related to the “dog songs” is the lyrics. The words of the songs neither developed from nor are related to the modern Cretan lifestyle. The principal theme of modern “dog songs” is a highly erroneous conception of love, which stems from a modern misconception of the past. These are the so-called *kapsourotragouda*⁹². An examination of the music’s form and of the content of the lyrics makes it obvious that these songs belong to the genre of *skyladiko*. They intend to attract Cretan audiences by using familiar elements, such as the *lyra*. In contemporary Crete one can buy small knives with *mantinades* written on them, or simple rhymes written on cups and other types of traditional artefacts. *Mantinades* have become commodified and sold as items of cheap consumption. According to Dimitris Apostolakis from the *Chainides* ensemble, singers of the new flashy lyrics requires, oblige the singer to alter accentuation away from the Cretan idiom and towards a homogenous pan-Hellenic pronunciation (for example *tsi* becomes *ki*). Modern “dog-song” texts tend to borrow ideas from older, traditional *mantinades* such as the obsession with weapons, animal stealing, feuds and other familiar facets of social life in rural Crete.

Καλάσνικοφ και Μπράουνινγκ για πάρτη τση επήρα
Κι όπου κι αν πάω την κρατώ διπλή τη γεμιστήρα
Kalashnikov and Browning for her only I bought
And wherever I am going I keep the loaded magazines close by

Μόνο τη σκέψη των οζώ να ’χω ευχαριστούμαι
Και βγαίνω στσι εφτά ουρανούς στη μάντρα όντε κοιμούμαι
When I think of my animals [a flock of sheep] I’m happy
I’m in Seventh Heaven when I sleep in their enclosure

Πες του το του πατέρα σου να κόψει τη φοβέρα
Γιατί δυο κατοστάρικα κάνει η κάθε σφαίρα
Tell your father to stop threatening me

⁹² *Kapsourotragouda*: (sing. *Kapsourotragoudo*) is a Greek compound derived from the words *kapsoura* (slang for “love”) and *tragoudi* (song). These are songs that refer to all aspects of love, happiness, nostalgia, pain etc. but with a very negative connotation.

Because every bullet costs two hundred drachmas

Στο μπέτι σου με το CZ σκοποβολή θα κάμω

Σε όποιον μπει εμπόδιο στον εδικό μας γάμο

I'll shoot him [your father] in the chest with my CZ

And everyone who stands in the way of our wedding

Μπορεί πιστόλι να βαστώ, το 'χω για τη δουλεία μου

Δεν γίνεται ζωοκλοπή χωρίς αυτό κερά μου

I may hold a gun as part of my livelihood

There is no animal stealing without it, my dear

In recent years a new kind of *mantinades* “quiz” has appeared on the internet (**figure 62**), TV shows and radio programmes where the first few words of a *mantinada* are given in order for listeners to compose the ending. The pre-constructed and non-spontaneous rhyme-making that is carried by the music, results in reduction of quality. Modern society, however, inspires many to compose *mantinades* such as the following⁹³ (Kateri, *Kritopolis* Vol. 5):

Γίνε κυρά μου internet να γίνω ιστοσελίδα

Κάθε που ανοίγεις το PC να 'μαι αρχική σελίδα

You my lady be the internet and I will be a web page

Each time the PC is on I'll be your very front page

Δυο κινητά τηλέφωνα μου βάλατε στο μνήμα

Το ένα αν δεν πιάνει εκεί να 'χει το άλλο σήμα

Two mobile phones you put in my tomb

If the one has no reception the other will be on

Μου 'πανε υπολογιστή επήρες κοπελιά μου

⁹³ These *mantinades* are a small sample of what is heard in these times. These lines are written down as heard, mainly from young people. Many can also be found on various internet sites.

Κι εγώ αμέσως άνοιξα e. mail στην καρδιά μου
I've been told that you bought a new computer, my girl
That is why I created an e. mail in my heart immediately

Φαίνεται είναι ακριβές του κινητού σου οι κλήσεις
Γι' αυτό και στα μηνύματα δεν δίνεις απαντήσεις
It seems they cost a fortune the calls on your mobile
You never send an sms, that's the reason why

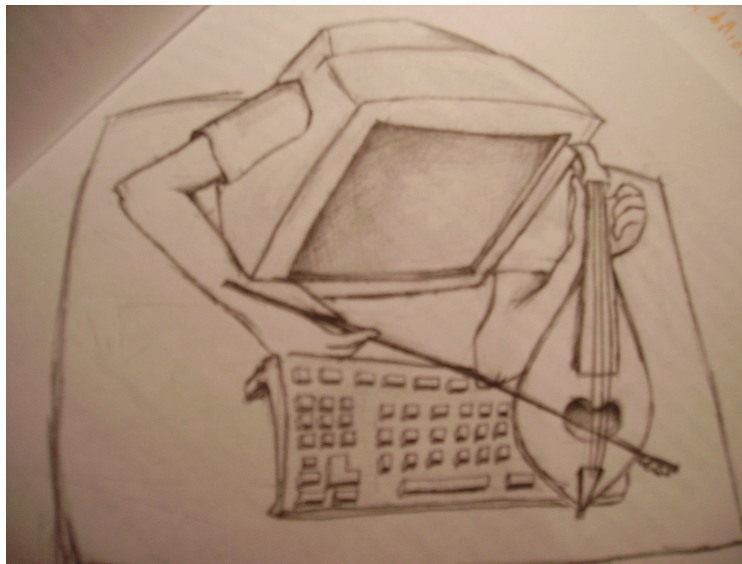


Figure 62. Picture taken from the magazine *Kritopolis*, Vol.5

Θα γίνω hacker της καρδιάς τους κωδικούς να σπάσω
Να σ' έχω σ' ένα CD ROM να μη σε ξαναχάσω
I'll be the hacker of your heart to break all the codes
I'll burn you on a CD ROM and not lose you again

Θα κάνω site την καρδιά με σένα αν μπορέσω
Και μ' ένα κλικ αριστερά θα σε αποθηκεύσω
If I could only make a site in my heart with you
I'll save it with a left click only

Σου 'στειλα το e. mail μου μα εσύ πριν το ανοίξεις

Στον κάδο ανακύκλωσης διάλεξες να το ρίξεις

I sent you my e. mail

But before you read it you deleted it

Να πεις του κανακάρη σου να πάει να πάρει βέρες

Γιατί ενάμισι ευρώ έχουνε πάει οι σφαίρες

Tell your son to go and buy wedding rings

Because the bullets now cost one and a half euro

These sung verses, which undoubtedly reflect the expressive and communicational acts of modern Cretans constitute but one side of the Cretan musical coin. On the other side is traditional poetry and a developing “neo-tradition”. In contemporary Cretan society verses of the kind reproduced above might be characterized as trendy, cool, or super: a new approach to cultural creativity in line with a cultural identity that already exists in Cretan communities. Adorno proposes the phrase “cult of the new” (Adorno 1951/1974: 235) for something radical and revolutionary implying that there is nothing new since everything is guided by the rules of mass production. Even in Crete, therefore, as observed earlier, easy listening and “trendy” rhyme belongs to songs of low quality on the one hand but also to commercial and profitable music productions on the other, in order to satisfy current tastes.

When talking about “traditional”, “progressive Cretan music” or “dog songs”, we realize that music is among others, a world of invented genres; a world of different tastes. As Frith has perceptively written

A new ‘genre world’... is first constructed and then articulated through a complex interplay of musicians, listeners, and mediating ideologues, and this process is much more confused than the marketing process that follows, as the wider industry begins to make sense of the new sounds and markets to exploit both genre worlds and genre discourses in the orderly routines of mass marketing (Frith 1996: 88).

This ‘genre world’ reveals a sphere of self-knowledge, a blend of the logical and the illogical because of the many contradictions hidden within it. There is no need to highlight identity by adjusting to present norms or by overreacting in being antithetic to the ubiquitous pop subculture. Consequently, what we need to do, as Dimitris Apostolakis poetically articulates is: “Follow the road of truth that comes together with the paths of truth of many other people. We should heed the sound of the earth, the tear of the sky and the sorrow of other people. There is nothing else to do...” (Interview with Dim. Apostolakis, April 2003).

5.5. Social Networks and Cretan music in 2010

Despite Apostolakis’s poetic thoughts it seems that in Greece of 2010 young people conceive contemporary Cretan music as a matter for debate. They discuss it and share their concerns about past, current and future norms. The exchange of ideas does not only portray the questioning of the doubtful future of Cretan music but also the involvement and real concern of young people with the current music scene. During my research I have been following some social network dialogues. The following Facebook debate is an excellent example of one such dialogue that discusses mainly the boundaries of Cretan music but also touches upon tradition, *mantinades*, different genres of Cretan music, definition of Cretan music and its use in the society, the use of lyrics, dance, and many social and cultural aspects that embrace the island of Crete. In other words, an internet debate came to sum up my interests, questions and ideas about Cretan music. The main topic of discussion in the following dialogues is the boundaries of Cretan music.

Do you believe that Cretan music has specific boundaries? If yes, can you explain which are these boundaries?⁹⁴

⁹⁴ This question was posted on Facebook chat. The blog which follows is taken from <http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=112810298672&topic=16235>.

Giorgos

I believe that the only boundaries it needs to have are those of our tradition!! Not humiliations with beat, drums, harmony and commercial and rotten *mantinades*!! I can't take it guys!!! I'm sorry...Our music tradition requires respect!!! If we don't ought it to us we ought it to our children. We need to deliver our musical tradition in the form that it was passed down to us.

The relation between music and tradition has been for a long time one of the most prominent themes of debate in musicology and ethnomusicology and it seems that it can also be a major discussion topic on the internet. This question is multifaceted, insofar as the term tradition is itself ambivalent. Aubert notes that “it defines a transmission process, a chain joining the past to the present, as well as that ‘which is transmitted’ (*traditum*); in other words, it refers to a specific inheritance of a collective phenomenon” (Aubert 2007: 16). Despite the fact that traditional music belongs to the ‘public domain’ as a common view, there are still people who consider it as a living entity of the past as they put an emphasis with respect to its identity. Therefore, according to them, no exaggerations such as drums backbeats should be added to the crystallized views of their notion of tradition.

Sofia

How can we talk about boundaries in music? No barriers can stop music (apart from the kinds of music with swear words). And as far as Cretan music is concerned, as long as there are people that create *mantinades* in Anoyia all is cool!!!!!! This is the way it should be – in a nice and traditional way – the proper way that we ought to keep out tradition. Especially Cretan music – that music that we adore.

Again despite her denial regarding the boundaries of music, Sofia puts her own limits to what she tries to communicate. On the one hand there are no barriers in music, and on the other no swear words and the creation of *mantinades* in Anoyia (a small village in Crete), is a guarantee for the quality of the verses because of its musical

tradition. Who defines the “nice” and “traditional” way for keeping a tradition alive and which is the proper way for its continuation?

Andreas

“Cretan music”... “Cretan music”. The term Cretan music has become the same with all styles of music. I believe that the traditional music of a place is closely linked with one’s way of life, their day to day life, and it covers the needs of a society. The traditional “folk” music of a place (folk because it expresses the feelings and represents the society as a whole and not just one person, and traditional because it retains elements from the past) never existed disconnected from the speech and dance and it always had a purpose. It is not the same as today (hey- let me play some music for you). In other words there were table songs, mourning songs, lullabies, melodies for improvised couplets, dances etc. In one word ‘the use of music’ not just music to listen to. The instrumental players in small societies usually came from those societies, knowing the local melodies, the dances, and the processes that came with this music. They were not however the protagonists of the *glendi*. They would not necessarily sing or play whatever they wish. On the contrary they would sing and play whatever the people would request. There were often influences of foreign elements and influences in music, dance, or language. It is the society that managed to adjust it all to its present form and due to that they are still very much alive. Now – talking specifically about music: in those societies music was either self taught or it was passed down from a local. As mentioned earlier however, the instrumental players were not the protagonists. If a musician would act without taking into consideration the music aesthetic of the locals he/she would be judged. The musician who would act ‘selfishly’ would become an outcast of this musical tradition. Let us not forget that although music was part of everyday life, everybody knew how to sing and dance. This means a closer relationship with music which also leads to a more developed understanding of music. Taking all this into consideration let’s look at what is happening today: our way of life is different. Not all people live in the same society. When we think of music today, we tend to think of concerts and recordings. Whether we like it or not we are all influenced by the music that is produced and circulated by record companies. We are also influenced by styles of music that are foreign to our musical tradition.

Nowadays musicians are paid professionals and their main concern is that they become popular. Lyrics have become stagnant. In other words: in the past, musicians would use melodies as inspiration for the creation of improvised lyrics. The same tune could become the source of inspiration of many musicians and many different sets of lyrics would be written for the same tune. Nowadays things have changed and every tune belongs to one and only one set of lyrics. For example, the *syrtos* that was once known as *Kolybarianos*, after the spread of discography became known under the name “I like your eyes” (*Ta matia sou mou aresoune*). This makes one think that the lyrics of “I like your eyes” are the only lyrics that one is to sing to the music and is in contradiction to the tradition of music as a means of inspiration for improvised lyrics. Thus one discovers that the purpose of melodies has changed. To cut a long story short, things in our way of life have changed so much in comparison to the way of life of the older generation that it would be naïve to think that through discography or dances or even the musicians themselves music tradition is kept intact. It is stupid to use the word “traditional” for music that simply includes traditional instruments when so much else is alien to traditional music.

“Difference may well be *the* sign of our times” (Agawu 2003: 227) and it is true that “difference” is a topic of discussion in other ethnographies as well. Christopher Waterman proffered an opposing view in 1991, claiming that “the portrayal of similarity and difference” is a subject “infrequently discussed” in Africanist ethnomusicology (Waterman 1991: 179). Waterman did acknowledge the fact that ethnomusicology had always drawn unreservedly on notions of difference, distance, innovation and alteration. However, difference is discussed in Crete, as being the sign of our times. The comparison between the past and the present is, beyond doubt, a matter of concern for Cretans. The importance of the “use of music” in the past, and its reduced significance in the present day, the roles of the musicians that have changed profoundly, the adjustment of society to foreign elements that have been accommodated within a narrow view of “tradition” not only as it has occurred in the past, but also as it is occurring in the present seem to preoccupy contemporary Cretans. Change can also be viewed as it originates from within a culture, or externally. The internal change, called “innovation”, (Merriam 1964; Murdock 1956) which includes variation, invention, and cultural borrowing, is not

socially accepted unless the culture is distributed by some form of what has been called historic accident (Herskovits 1948: 588-593). The Turkish occupation for example, had a major historical impact on the music of Crete, as well as other periods of political regimes such as the Junta.⁹⁵ These are political developments which have marked the cultural history of Crete. What does not seem to be of acceptance for young Cretans, are issues of professionalism, popularity, stagnation of the lyrics and the use of music and verses by contemporary performers. The dialogue below touches upon these subjects.

Afoi Makridaki (Makridaki Brothers) – B

Many Cretan clubs that are established in Athens take a large part of the blame for the present state of things. For purely financial reasons these clubs promote musical divas that insult Cretan music and show complete lack of respect for the Cretan musical tradition. Linked with the divas are outcasts of Cretan music tradition that happen to listen to one or two *mantinades* that promote a certain brand of whisky. I am glad to say that this is all a sickening situation that serves financial interests and does not represent the majority of those who listen to Cretan music. It simply refers to people who are corrupted and irresolute and who have no respect for our music and for themselves. We are all to blame dear friends for allowing this to become the standard image of Cretan music.

Clubs in Athens according to Vasilis Skoulas, do not belong either to the performers or to their owners. He claims that they are places of gathering, and posturing, and that no-one has the right to act as he/she likes. He believes that the performer is like a model of good or bad behaviour for the audience. If he does not respect the place he performs, the audience will behave accordingly (Interview with Vasilis Skoulas, August 2010). It is the “body politic” in accordance to the behavior of the artists that actually control the audience’s manner. As Dawe states: “dress, bearing, postures, gestures, ways of walking, talking, standing, sitting – are cultivated, disciplined, conventionalized by the *incorporation* of social meanings (where the body becomes imbued with social meanings, norms, values, and beliefs) and is therefore socially constructed. Indeed the body is

⁹⁵ The military junta, simply known as the Junta in Greece was imposed on 21 April 1967 and it lasted seven years, during which the military dictatorship abolished all political freedom, and imprisonments, torture and exile became an everyday phenomenon for every Greek. (<http://www.greeceindex.com/history-mythology/Greek-Junta.html>).

colonized, politicized” (Dawe 2007: 128). Hence, the body politic including the social manner adopted by the performer, is of importance for determining the “ethos” of any social gathering, including a *glendi*. An emphasis on performativity, however, does not mean a supposition of flowing, everlasting changing identities. Taking the temporal, performative nature of identities as a theoretical basis means that more than ever, one needs to question how identities continue to be produced, embodied and performed, efficiently, passionately and socially.

Spyros

Let’s get to the point: are there any limits in Cretan music? I think that people like us who deal with Cretan music of a certain musical value believe that ‘pure’ Cretan music is that which does not cross the boundaries of Cretan tradition. And I’m talking about the performers, the singers, and the *mantinadologous*. I am even going to mention names as I am afraid of nobody. Michalis Tzouganakis for example is a great artist. He is a brilliant *lagouto* player and also has a great voice. Unfortunately however, he plays the *lagouto* as if he was playing the guitar and he has rendered Cretan music to pop by including bass and drums in his concerts. This is something that – according to my view – crosses the boundaries of traditional Cretan music. Furthermore some people like Zoidakis, Kyriakakis, Zervakis, and Kodaros, need to understand the harm they cause. I do not want to further comment on these people as they are not worth it. My brothers let’s keep our Cretan music tradition real. We adore Cretan music and we must pass it to our children, brothers, and friends.

Andreas

I repeat. Cretan tradition in the old sense of the word does not exist. If it exists it is disappearing as we speak. None is able to help it survive – neither the concerts, nor the discography, radio, the musicians on stage or the divas. Cretan music changes through the aforementioned and the end result becomes what we think of as traditional Cretan music, since it is this music that we experience in our everyday life.

Spyros

I disagree. Cretan music is flourishing. More and more young people are learning traditional instruments. More and more people are coming together and play music! This is Cretan music. This is tradition.

Andreas

I was not going to speak but I cannot help it. The problem is that we examine Cretan music under the same lenses as we examine other styles of music. In a Cretan *parea* today people will play *lagouto*, *lyra*, mandolin, and sometimes a violin. (I will give you an example of a typical *parea*). And what are they going to sing? Whatever they have learned from the records. They will usually sing the same *syrtta* with the standard *mantinades*, they will play some *kondylies*, and everyone will speak some love *mantinades* and so on. In the same way a non-Cretan *parea* would be able to take a guitar and sing rock, pop, and so on. Right?

Spyros

No my friend. The difference with the Cretan *parea* is that one is going to speak the *mantinada* that he/she prefers and that expresses their feelings at the present time and moment!!! I have often come up with a number of *mantinades* in that setting. With the *syrtta* we sing whichever *mantinada* we prefer. That is not to say that the standard *mantinades* do not exist. But what is worrying concerning that? What do you expect from a young person of 20-25 years of age that is in a *parea*? Do you expect them to produce the music of a professional standard like Skordalos or Moudakis?

Andreas

According to my opinion there should not be pre-set *mantinades* for melodies. The purpose of all those melodies is to improvise a *mantinada* and say it whilst in a *parea* as a means of communication. What is the purpose of improvising a *mantinada* that its purpose for example is to tease someone in my *parea* if the *mantinada* that I receive as a response does not answer to my teasing? Let's not get stuck to Skordalos and Moudakis! They also started exchanging *mantinades* in the same way and their *mantinades* are now popular because of the recordings. It's a shame that such music is not created any more. Why? If you want to listen

to some live music tradition go to places such as north Karpathos and you will understand that the reason why traditional music is still very much alive in this place is because transport, electricity and modern living have only recently arrived. We ought to demystify the older era if we want to move forward. Back then life was very difficult but I hear old people saying that the years of their youth were beautiful...The only reason why those years were beautiful is because these people were young. Now we have the opportunity to do great things as far as Cretan music is concerned. We have people who are specialized in Cretan music, smart, and educated. Tradition is retained and goes strong! Those who do not want to believe it they become the perpetrators and they are to blame if Cretan music is to decline. We ought to look ahead the present and the future! The past is not to return! Ok, past teaches us a lot of things and it gives us the motive to reserve and improve (if possible) what was given to us.

Andreas

There are no experts as far as Cretan music is concerned! This music does not belong to none – not the musicians, or the ethnographers, or the discography, or the dancing schools. It belongs to the people who gave birth to this music and who kept it alive until recently. Because we are talking about a living tradition. I do not accept that the musician who is alone on stage and sings is part of Cretan traditional music. The best you can do given that setting is to dance – something that happens with also pop and rock music. In addition to that most of us will dance as they were taught from the dancing school and not direct from their fathers and grandfathers. Is that tradition when we ask professionals to teach us how to dance, and when we listen to CDs in order to learn? Traditional music is not a genre of music that was created from the record industry. Traditional music existed in the everyday life of all people and not just the musicians. We took this music from life itself and we recorded it on discs because since the day we were born the term “music” is something else. It has been something else for many generations. If we want to erase a piece from the past we also erase a piece from the future. We have the nerve to use the term “traditional” music to characterize what we have created today and which is miles apart from the term itself.

Spyros

I do not believe that in our time there exists only that Cretan music that you mention Andrea. I believe that Cretan music is been kept alive through the *parea* even today. It is also true that they learn the dances from dance teachers but the best teacher is the *parea*! This is how I learned to dance! Apart from those that you mention go on stage and sing alone, there are also a lot who play and sing with many others! I believe that everyone who loves Cretan music contributes to tradition. I am not a musician but I love Cretan music. Tradition lives in the *parea*.

Andreas

As long as you retain certain unwritten rules that always existed regardless of the instruments that invaded the tradition. All was adjusted under those rules. Most people however do not follow those rules because they have not experienced them and are not aware of their existence. And you do not need to be a musician because as we mentioned it's not a musical genre. As much as it belongs to the musician it also belongs to you. People's music has ceased to exist and this is what should be our main worry.

It is not by any means assumed by all those above that the appearance of Greece as a modern nation alongside its partners in the European Economic Community necessarily implies the end of its once flourishing traditions. Deep changes have of course occurred. And it is probably a common truth, whenever oral traditions are recorded and studied and their productions published as texts, that the traditions themselves will be fundamentally affected. In Crete the tradition of oral poetry barely functions today as a process of re-composition in performance, and the length and coherence of recorded variants indicate a genuine decline. On the other hand, the function of preservation once performed by the techniques of formulaic composition and the more acute memory of the non-literate performer is now fulfilled by published anthologies, by CDs and records. The urge to sing the songs stays, despite the fact that the special creative property of performance without reference to a fixed text has transferred itself to other media; to literature in one direction, and to the thriving art of extemporizing rhymed distiches in the other. However, the need to keep the tradition alive still plays an important role in Cretan imagination.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

The idea of tradition and change has been a recurring theme in this thesis. The notion of tradition is axiomatic for most Cretans, who believe themselves to be closely connected with traditions they take to be characteristic of their cultural identity. However, as Bruno Nettl observes, change is the norm, and we live in a world that is constantly changing (Nettl 1983: 177). In the case of Crete I have endeavored to show aspects of cultural change through a consideration of instruments, genres, social organization of musicians, performance events and historical facts.

I have demonstrated the role of contemporary music in the production of cultural identity among Cretans, rather as Waterman has done for the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria (Waterman 1990) or Booth, who examined tradition, change and the mass media in Indian wedding music (Booth 1990). For ethnomusicologists, these changes pose a number of questions that are both specific to Cretan music itself and relevant to wider areas of cultural change and interaction. Notwithstanding that Crete is a crossroads between three continents, and its strategic geographic location, Cretans believe that they have managed to keep their identity almost intact. With respect to Crete's two longest occupations, that of the Venetians and the Turks, Cretans assimilated foreign elements into their traditions and character. As Clifford observes, "All human identities, no matter how deeply felt, are from a historical point-of-view mixed, relational, and conjectural" (Clifford 1988: 10-11).

The position of music in "traditional" Cretan society is very different from that of the rest of Greece. Dexterity in *lagouto* and *lyra* playing has been particularly appreciated in Cretan social life. Erotokritos, the archetypal hero of the newer Cretan, seduced Aretousa with his *lagouto*. Such a broadly-based preoccupation with music inevitably encouraged an appreciative audience that has fostered new talents to this day.

In the 1960s, when record companies in Athens were shaping traditions of a "new" sound all over Greece, Cretans preserved their own identity. It was not the case that

influences were absent, but all were filtered by Cretan perspectives. Some were retained and others were removed as “alien”.

The intense, pan-Cretan tradition manifests its diversity both with regard to the independent locality of each prefecture and the impact of performers who have left their mark. The *lyra* symbolises Cretan tradition. Although widespread in eastern and western Crete, the violin no longer characterises the extremities of the island, even though remarkable efforts to preserve its tradition are being made.

The *lagouto*, together with the guitar, is the most common accompanying instrument, while the mandolin, ubiquitous in the past, is now played only in small *parees*. The manner of accompanying is also different. Older recordings indicate that the *lagouto* accompanied only occasionally, playing the melody in unison in order to emphasize the tonic. As such, its employment as a key melodic instrument accompanied by the guitar is abnormal. When it began to replace the *daouli* or *daoulaki*, a feature of the eastern regions, however, a new type of rhythmic accompaniment emerged which, was incrementally enriched by harmonic movements and provided a more western European sound.

Ross Daly, one of the most interesting musical figures on Crete, who is very knowledgeable about western European functional harmony, studied the traditional melodies of the island with one of the greatest teachers, Kostas Moudakis. He also tried to revive the local melodies of the past by collaborating with various musicians, not only Cretan, but also from other cultures. His innovations in relation to the *lyra*, with sympathetic strings and oblong tuning pegs, have begun to spread not only over Crete, but also elsewhere. Thus, the *lyra*, on the one hand, commands a dominant role in traditional Cretan pieces, while on the other hand, it also demonstrates new potential for collaborations with other cultures and styles.

It is clear that Ross Daly, together with other important musicians in Crete, promotes “different” sonic awareness in a society that is typically not “open” to innovation. At the same time, the proud Cretan insists on a degree of authenticity in his culture. Thus, there is perpetual contestation between those who seek to preserve what they construe as tradition, and those who wish to promote musical change. This deep questioning about the trajectory of Cretan tradition – not only by musicians and dancers,

but also by musicologists, *mantinada* experts and the audience itself – varies with respect to age; unsurprisingly, perhaps, the older and younger generations differ considerably in their opinions about music and the nature of established genres in Crete.

With respect to the primary elements that comprise a musical performance one may consider the *mantinada*. Its rhyme in fifteen syllable iambic meter, and use of the local dialect, create an extremely evocative effect that characterizes the majority of Cretan songs. Looking back to the past, we see that the improvised *mantinada* was a means of expressing joy, sorrow and other sentiments. The lengthy dialogues of the *mantinades*, accompanied by instruments, could describe, satirize or denigrate local society. Ancient compositions were transmitted orally. Over the years the calls and responses, expressed through vivid and ingenious dialogues, have gradually faded. The *mantinades* aroused interest through their success and their creators. Until the 1970s *lyra* players and singers performed beautiful but anonymous *mantinades* which were identified only by the name of those who performed them. Subsequently, the creators of the *mantinades*, who were not necessarily their singers (the so-called *mantinadologoi*), began claiming rights, as verse writers in a new discography. Despite their efforts to maintain the *mantinada* at a high standard, many would argue that there has been a decline in recent years with respect to the lyrics. Many Cretans assert that the foreign words which have recently invaded and have established themselves in the Greek language are unacceptable for the *mantinades*. Hence, the *mantinada*, which is flourishing currently through local radio broadcasts, television programmes and the internet, is said to be of a low quality. The purists see the employment of fashionable and often foreign words as downgrading the *mantinada* to a product, exclusively made for easy consumption.

This kind of *mantinada* is widely promoted by the contemporary Cretan record industry. It parallels the path of modern pop culture, which is similarly based on easily-digested lyrics, and simple, repeated melodic lines, and sells in significant quantities. Up-to-date verses, targeting a young audience, and performed by less skilled musicians drive youth to a frenzy, or so it appears to the older generations.

Dance, for example, which is a vital element in Cretan culture, is regularly performed by the young, and in part connected with their enjoyment of these new, modern lyrics. It is also clear that the young, though heirs of this tradition, do have

command of the older steps of particular dances. However, they are limited to the four most common and best known dances (*Syrtos*, *Pentozalis*, *Maleviziotis* and to a less extend *Sousta*), as well as dances borrowed from other parts of Greece, such as the *Kalamatianos* from the Peloponnese. The old dances, therefore, are only performed by dance teachers who have extensive knowledge of the past; elsewhere, they are dying out through lack of use. The older dances are mainly performed in special cultural events, no longer at *glendia*. It is doubtful if the leaders of some Cretan ensembles are aware of the rhythms of these dances. During my research, what I was taught concerned mostly only these four dances and their variations. Anyone interested in traditional dance must learn the steps from trained instructors, bearing in mind that he/she will almost never perform them at a *glendi*. Thus, the repertory of dance performed at most *glendia* has become limited to a common framework.

In summary, we can observe a tendency to standardization directing the music of contemporary Crete. Many performers pay little attention to older forms. Dance is now seen to be a display from the best and most famous schools which, in line with their prestige, attract the most students. Thus, the commercialization of traditional music is evident but since it bears the Cretan stamp, Cretans themselves believe it to be unique. Contestation about the tradition and its different genres leads to three dominant trends, as indicated above: “traditional”, the *entechno*, (or what I call “progressive Cretan music”), and the *skyladika* (dog songs).

Traditional music is mainly performed by skilled musicians (otherwise known as “entertainers”) who, aside from producing some recording hits, are capable of playing at various events and of leading the *glendia* until daybreak. The repertoire of *mantinades* and songs varies according to audience taste and the artist’s discernment. Criticism of those artists who disregard tradition when performing at a *glendi* is unknown. Any disapproval is chiefly concerned with the *lyra* player or the accomplishment of the accompanying instrument in performing a musical composition with fidelity to its original version. Consequently, in these performances, what is judged is the virtuosity, the performance and the ability of the musicians to lead a *glendi* and keep the audience enthusiastic.

The “progressive” style (*entechno*) is a substantial genre of Cretan music which includes different styles of performance. It is the most innovative genre, in which many musicians try to change the conservative “tradition”. For example, Tzouganakis changed the role of the *lagouto* by using it as the main instrument of the ensemble. Ross Daly studied melodies of the past and experimented with these melodies by mixing instruments from other cultures. He also changed the *lyra* by adding sympathetic strings. Ensembles such as *Palaina Seferia* and *Chainides* appeal to a wide audience by using very poetic lyrics. The combination of different instruments in addition to these lyrics have made them a popular and successful group. Even artists from pop culture who have their origins in Crete may use the *lyra* at their performances e.g. Pyrovolakis. The use of the *lyra* in his pop songs demonstrates his innovative approach to popular music and promotes the *lyra* throughout Greece. Psarandonis has a uniquely rough style of performance. He is considered a Cretan music “rocker”. Loudovikos of Anoyia: his performances are intensely and sometimes dressed as a troubadour, he evokes images of a bygone age. But the common denominator of all these songs are the lyrics: the lyrics are always deemed to be of “good” quality.

This kind of music cannot be viewed as a globalized “world” music because it seldom travels beyond Crete’s boundaries. It is seen by many as a synthetic concoction, aimed only at generating record sales. Progressive musicians aim at amalgamating the “old” and the “new”, the “traditional” and the “artistic” as well as “folklore” and “modern” while CD sales do not soar to the top of the charts in Crete the music is disseminated to wide audiences, and Athenians especially appreciate these kinds of fusions and the particularity of their performers.

In contrast to the “cultivated” artists and their audiences, are the “dog” singers who try to reflect modern Cretan society through their songs. All aspects of Cretan society (from vendetta, cattle stealing, special guards and cannabis cultivation to the Cretan heartache expressed via mobile phone or the internet) are mirrored in the *skylokritika* (Cretan dog songs), as they are known by many. These works eschew the sophisticated approach of melody and lyrics as priorities. Instead the dog song is praised purely because it entertains the youth. Despite the modernized verses, this music is also based on traditional forms, and, therefore, might be considered as the projection of modern Cretan

society. The dog songs' use of modern lyrics projects, in its own way, the music of Crete. Therefore, since tradition is being kept alive, the dog songs constitute a way of assimilating modernity.

Continuity of tradition has always been a major issue for ethnomusicologists. A fundamental question has been: how could a tradition continue to exist once the society that engendered it has disappeared or changed dramatically? This requires lengthy discussion about the possibilities of the rebirth of fading traditions, as well as the possibility of their transplantation to new robust societies. Transplantations provide the salt and pepper that gives flavour to the familiar piquancy of edible culture. It is my belief that this thesis demonstrates that Cretan musical tradition is still alive and far from being endangered. It is, so to speak, in a process of metamorphosis. It is being transformed by external currents that dominate all levels of everyday life. If transformation means evolution then Cretan music has certainly evolved and taken new paths. What remains to be seen is which of these new components that have been added to the pre-existing "tradition" will become part of the culture of Crete, and whether they will also belong to the "neo-tradition" of the generations to come.

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