

**The Recording Career of Vasilis Tsitsanis (1936-1983)**

**An Analysis of his Music and the Problems of Research into  
Greek Popular Music**

Nikolaos Ordoulidis

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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*To music that lives forever...*

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## **Abstract**

There is a clear and abundant evidence to suggest that Vasílis Tsitsánis (1915-1984) was a well known songwriter, bouzouki virtuoso, lyricist and singer both in Greece and abroad. The evaluation of his work reveals that he remains a key figure in the history of Greek popular music. Vasílis Tsitsánis as musician and composer was an innovator, his musical roots in rembétiko being transformed through his creative effort is said to have led to the development and establishment of the modern laikó style. An analysis of Vasílis Tsitsánis's commercial recordings does indeed reveal aspects of his unique contribution as both performer and composer. However, the analysis also reveals the development of a style that was to have a major impact on the history of Greek popular music. Situating Tsitsánis's work in the context of broader social and political developments in Greece, this thesis is the first in-depth analysis of Tsitsánis's musical style with a focus on songs found on his commercial recordings, from 1936 to 1983. Research on the recording career of Vasílis Tsitsánis not only reveals information regarding his own music, which is in itself important alone given the contribution he is said to have made by rembétiko scholars, it also sheds light on more general issues regarding the Greek popular style that have been previously neglected.

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## Notes on Transliteration

Although I used the transliteration system suggested in the style sheet of the journal of the Modern Greek Studies Association (JMSGs),<sup>1</sup> I have made some changes owing to the fact that I located some transliteration problems in this particular style which are explained here. I should underline that the point of my transliteration is the pronunciation and not the orthography/spelling of the words, something that seems to be impossible for any language. However, we can succeed in being as close to a word's pronunciation in its original language as possible. This can be achieved by using correctly the available alphabet of the language into which it is being transliterated, or by figuring out new ways, like the usage of the accent and by combining some letters. A comparison between JMSGs' transliteration system with mine follows (Table i).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://mgsa.org/> for the Modern Greek Studies Association and <http://mgsa.org/pdfs/jmgsstyl.pdf> p. 11 for the transliteration rules.

<sup>2</sup> Table i contains only the differences between JMSGs' system and mine.



Greek letter	English letter (as in the JMGS)	Examples	T.W.T.B.T.G. <sup>3</sup>	English letter (as in this thesis)
Γ, γ	G, g (before a,o,u and consonants)	gámos, megálos	γκάμος, μεγκάλος <sup>4</sup>	Gh, gh <sup>5</sup>
	Y, y (before i,e)	yínete, yéros	γίνεται, γέρος <sup>6</sup>	
Δ, δ	D, d	drómos, pódi	ντρόμος, πόντι	Dh, dh <sup>7</sup>
Χ, χ	Ch, ch (if phoneme has long been known in English this way and after s)	scholíio, chróma	σκολείο, <sup>8</sup> κρώμα	H, h
	H, h (otherwise)	ého, háno	έχω, χάνω	
Γχ, γχ	Nk, nk (before a,o,u and consonants)	sinkarítiria, ánkos	συνκαρητήρια, άνκος <sup>9</sup>	Nh, nh
Οι, οι	Oi, oi	ánthropoi, schoini, toíhos	άνθρωποι, σχοινί, τοίχος <sup>10</sup>	I, i
Μπ, μπ	B, b (initially)	belás, bóra	μπελάς, μπόρα	B, b (initially and sometimes medially as well, depending on the pronunciation of the word <sup>11</sup> )
	mb (medially)	koumbí, kambána	κουμπί, καμπάνα	
Αι, αι	Ai, ai	kai, aíma	και, αίμα <sup>12</sup>	E, e

**Table i: Comparison between JMGS' transliteration system and this thesis' system**

<sup>3</sup> Transliterated word transliterated back to Greek. If the transliteration is correct, then the original-Greek word should come up again.

<sup>4</sup> The words in Greek: γάμος and μεγάλος.

<sup>5</sup> I hereafter suggest the letter combination 'gh' for the Greek 'γ' which sounds like the 'y' letter in the word 'yesterday'.

<sup>6</sup> This one could possibly work. For example, the word 'yesterday': the 'y' letter in the beginning sounds like the 'γ' letter of the Greek alphabet.

<sup>7</sup> I hereafter suggest the letter combination 'dh' for the Greek 'δ' which sounds like the 'th' in the word 'this'.

<sup>8</sup> If it is to write down the word 'school' using Greek letters then that would be σκουλ. The correct pronunciation of the Greek word σχολείο, using the Roman alphabet, is *sholio*.

<sup>9</sup> Again, here, the word in Greek is συγκαρητήρια and άγχος. The combination of 'γχ' is something close to 'νχ' but not 'νκ'.

<sup>10</sup> As stated above, the real matter here is the right pronunciation and not the orthography of the word. Therefore, there is no need to 'imitate' the Greek spelling by using the 'oi' for the Greek combination of 'οι', simply because the pronunciation would be the same.

<sup>11</sup> Taking for instance the word *μπαμπέσα* (see song *tis babésas to ghlikó filí*, Odeon GO 3850 - GA 7416) we note that the pronunciation in Greek does not include a double-extended 'μ'. This is relational, of course, because the letter 'b' includes an 'm' in its sound.

<sup>12</sup> See n. 10.

## **Tsitsánis Electronic Database Access**

A demonstration and analysis of the database can be found at the end of Chapter 1. The Uniform Resource Locator (URL) of the Tsitsánis Electronic Database (T.E.D.) is: <[www.tsitsanis-database.com](http://www.tsitsanis-database.com)>. The information for logging on to the database, after clicking on the 'ENTER TSITSANIS DATABASE' is: application: tsitsanis-database; user name: examiner; password: 12345. After the log-in page, one has to click on the upper left on the word 'tables' and then on the word 'songs'. After this, the general table of the songs appears. There are two possible actions: click on the eye-button on the left of each song in order to view information on the song, or press the 'search/filter' button which is located at the centre-top of the table in order to apply a filter. Finally, it should be mentioned that the database's word length is approximately 30,000 words.

**Part I**  
**Introduction**

## Chapter 1

### Aims of This Thesis

*Tsitsanis lives on...*

The creation of the Tsitsánis Museum in the city of Tríkala, the prize won from the Music Academy Charles Gross in France in 1985, the first pan-Hellenic Tsitsánis conference, the book and homonym theatrical play ‘Ouzerí Tsitsánis’, the concert of George Dalaras in the famous concert hall ‘Méggharo Mousikís’ in Athens, the use of the instrumental song *Néο μινώρε*<sup>1</sup> [néο minóre = new minor] in the Woody Allen’s movie *Mighty Aphrodite* (1995) and the foundation of the Cultural Music Society ‘Vasílis Tsitsánis’ are events that verify all the claims regarding the significance of Vasílis Tsitsánis’s work, and the fact that it is still considered by *rembétiko* enthusiasts, academics and the people to be a national treasure. In the opinion of academics, Vasílis Tsitsánis made a fundamental contribution to the development of Greek popular music.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, he features in scholarly accounts of the development of Greek music, namely the creation of the new *laikó* style [urban popular] out of the older *rembétiko*.<sup>3</sup> The evidence to support such a claim, which will be examined and tested further in this thesis, can be sought in the following: 1) Tsitsánis’s large recorded output (more than 550 commercial recordings) and his long recording career (1936-1983).<sup>4</sup> 2) Evidence shows that he was well respected by his colleagues. Throughout his long career he co-operated with some of the most significant popular singers and musicians of his time many of whom (as evidence shows) became known after recording a song by Tsitsánis. 3) According to the chart sales that were kindly granted from his family, as well as other sources, such as contemporary CD album-collections, the popularity and the sales of his songs were significant. Figure 1.1, Figure 1.2 and Figure 1.3 represent pages from selected chart

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<sup>1</sup> Columbia 7XCG 1419 - SCDG 3129, recorded on March 27, 1962.

<sup>2</sup> See for example: Conway Morris 1980: 83; Manuel 1990: 134; Pennanen 1999: 25-6, n. 7; Kallimopoulou 2009: 26; Holst 2006: 14 and 65-6.

<sup>3</sup> Regarding the two genres (*rembétiko* and *laikó*) see also Morris (1980); Manuel (1990: 127); Pennanen (1999). Both styles are examined later on in this chapter.

<sup>4</sup> According to a rather rough research I did, based mostly on the archive found in Maniátis (2006), Tsitsánis’s recording output is one of the larger in Greek popular recording history.

sales from 1940, 1967 and 1978 respectively.

**COLUMBIA GRAPHOPHONE Co. OF GREECE LTD - ATHENS**

Record Shipments From ..... G R E E K ..... Factory

From ..... To ..... JULY ..... 19340

Copyright Owner: V. TSITSANIS A/C No. 31 Signed ..... COLUMBIA

RECORD No	TITLE	SHIPMENTS TO:			
		GREECE	EGYPT	Turkey	50% Athens Turk.
DG.6440	Archontissa	26			
6449	Alelioto O gamos tou tsitsani	21			21
6511	Serviko O Tsitsanis sti zougla	22 22			
6528	Thodeca i ora tin kiriaki to thilino	108 108		1 1	
6535	Tokatsaro sou to malli	30xx		1	30 1
6546	Charemi me diamanta	632 632		1	
6547	Yi'afra ta mavra lmatia sou Fina tha tin pername	484 484		1 1	
		2539		6	51 1
Greece		2539	at 2.55 = 6474.40		
"		51	" 1.275 = 65.-		
Turkey		6	" 3.45 = 20.70		
"		1	" 1.725 = 1.725		
		2597			

Figure 1.1: Chart sales of Vasilis Tsitsanis (1940)



47 ΚΡΜ.

ΑΝΩΝΥΜΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΦΩΝΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ "ΚΟΛΟΥΜΠΙΑ,, -3-

Έξαγωγή Δίσκων από ΣΕΠΤΕΜΒΡΙΟΝ 1966 μέχρι ΦΕΒΡΟΥΑΡΙΟΝ 1967

Δικαιούχος Συνθετιών δικαιωμάτων: Β. ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗΣ Μάρκας: Η Μ V ΝΠ

Αριθμός Δίσκου	ΤΙΤΛΟΣ	ΕΞΑΓΩΓΑΙ ΕΙΣ		
		ΕΛΛΑΔΑ	Η.Π.Α. - ΚΑΝΑΔΑ	ΛΟΙΠΑ ΧΩΡΑΙ
	Έκ μεταφοράς	6078		100
7EGG2578	ΜΕΓΑΛΕΣ ΕΠΙΤΥΧΙΕΣ ΤΟΥ ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗ	1484		5
	ΑΝΤΙΔΑΛΟΥΝΕ ΤΑ ΒΟΥΝΑΣ/ΠΕΦΤΟΥΝ			
	ΤΗΣ ΒΡΟΧΗΣ ΟΙ ΣΤΑΛΕΣ/ΜΗΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙ-			
	ΖΕΣΑΙ /ΓΙΑΤΙ ΜΕ ΕΥΠΝΗΣΕΣ ΠΡΩΙ	1484		5
"	ΤΙ ΣΕ ΜΕΛΕΙ ΕΞΕΝΑ ΚΙ ΑΝ ΓΥΡΝΩ/ΤΡΙΚΑ-			
	ΛΙΝΗ ΤΣΑΧΠΙΝΑ	1484		5
2585	ΧΑΣΑΠΙΚΑ	903		15
"	ΓΥΡΝΑ ΜΟΝΟΣ/ΣΤΗΝ ΚΑΛΑΜΠΑΚΑ	903		15
<del>7EGG2580</del>	<del>ΜΙΑ ΒΡΑΔΙΑ</del>	<del>903</del>		<del>15</del>
	50% TOURIST	13239		160
7EGGI2502	NEO MINOPE			24
	<u>ΣΥΝΟΛΟΝ</u>			
	✓ 9454 @ 0,975=Αρχ. 9.217,70			
	559 @ 0,7313=" 408,80			
	1268 @ 0,78 =" 989.-			
	23 @ 0,6338=" 14,60			
	150 @ 0,4875=" 73,10			
	175 @ 0,975=" 170,60			
	75 @ 0,78 =" 58,50			
	50 @ 0,4875=" 24,40			
	100 @ 0,6825=" 68,30			
	13239 @ 0,82875=" 10.971,80			
	1484 @ 0,62156=" 922,40			
	903 @ 0,4143 =" 374,10			
	24 @ 0,4143 =" 10.-			
	160 @ 0,82875=" 132,60			
	5 @ 0,62156 =" 3,10			
	15 @ 0,4143 =" 6,20			
	<u>ΕΡ</u> 25% <u>23.445,20</u>			
7EGG2585	ΠΑΛΗΩΣΕ ΤΟ ΣΑΚΑΚΙ ΜΟΥ	903		15
	37,5			
7EGG2578	ΟΜΟΡΦΗ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ/ΤΟ ΣΚΑΛΟΠΑΤΙ	1484		5

Figure 1.2: Chart sales of Vasilis Tsitsanis (1967)

8 75-1-15000


**STATEMENT OF OUTGOINGS**  
 SHEET NO 100

ATHENS — GREECE  
 296, Messolongion Avenue  
 Telephone 672509317

**LOCAL OWNERS TSITSANIS VASILIS**  
 during the period **1 JUL-30AUG 1978** **FIESTA** **LP12, 142ERS** **6,24 %**

The following records were dispatched

COUPLING NO	T I T L E	COMPOSER	AUTHOR ARRANGER	SHIPPED TO		
				GREECE	U.S.A. AND CANADA	OTHER COUNTRIES
000004005	ACHARISTI	TSITSANIS VASILIS	BROUGHT FORWARD	666	50	300
*****				TOTAL UNITS 666 DRS PER UNIT 4,25 INDRS 153		
000004014	DERAKINA	TSITSANIS VASILIS		538	50	300
*****				TOTAL UNITS 538 DRS PER UNIT 4,21 INDRS 167		
000004005	PAME TSARKA	TSITSANIS VASILIS		666	50	300
*****				TOTAL UNITS 666 DRS PER UNIT 4,26 INDRS 153		
000004014	PERISAME ENA DILINO	TSITSANIS VASILIS		538	50	300
*****				TOTAL UNITS 538 DRS PER UNIT 4,26 INDRS 153		
000004014	FIESTA	TSITSANIS VASILIS		1670	150	900
*****				TOTAL UNITS 1670 DRS PER UNIT 4,36 INDRS 673		

**Figure 1.3: Chart sales of Vasílis Tsitsánis (1978)**

Vasílis Tsitsánis's songs form part of the core repertoire of Greek popular music: one only has to listen to the output to realise that his work bridges both *rembétiko* and *laikó* styles and it is claimed that he contributed in fundamental ways to the development of both genres. Moreover, of vital importance for this thesis are the changes in his approach to songwriting – which can be heard as his recordings progress – because, as evidence further suggests, other songwriters begin to follow

this new style.

Based on the above, key issues and questions arise, given the potentially fundamental and far-reaching significance of Vasílis Tsitsánis's work. Despite the quantity and claimed importance of his recorded output, it is surprisingly scattered and understudied. An in depth analysis of his musical works and compositional style has not been conducted. Furthermore, a thorough contextualization of Vasílis Tsitsánis's recordings with reference to wider, musical, social and cultural developments is absent from the literature. There will be some attempt to address the wider significance of his work in this thesis. Finally, various important and potentially far-reaching claims about his work have yet to be fully examined and verified, such as the development of the chordal harmony,<sup>5</sup> the new role of the singers, the re-determination of the role of the bouzouki and so forth.

This thesis is, therefore, timely and important in several ways, and makes its original contribution by offering a study of Vasílis Tsitsánis's recorded output which, it is argued, provides a key to the unlocking of a number of musical, historical and socio-cultural issues pertaining to Tsitsánis's role in the development of Greek popular music. In attempting to do just that, this thesis represents the first academic study to collate and synthesize a great deal of information about Vasílis Tsitsánis and his career in the context of the development of Greek popular music. It provides an analysis of his compositional technique from every period in his recording career,<sup>6</sup> involving consideration of the ensemble and vocalists he wrote for, and the various structural elements which can be used to identify his style.

The key aims and objectives of this thesis are: 1) to provide a database of Vasílis Tsitsánis recordings; and 2) to transcribe and analyze selected recordings throughout his career (charting structural, instrumental, textural, timbral, rhythmic, harmonic and modal changes). Through these analyses the identification of the elements that determine and identify the development of his musical style will become easier and clearer. Finally, the identification of any major changes in his musical style (with reference to musical, historical, social and cultural contexts) will put things in order with regard to the development of the Greek urban folk/popular

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<sup>5</sup> The term 'chordal harmony' has been taken from Pennanen 1999.

<sup>6</sup> The recording periods of Tsitsánis recording career, as well as the reasons for this particular division are examined further below in Tsitsánis Electronic Database section.



genre. The key research question is: if significant musical changes can be identified in Vasilis Tsitsanis's recordings, do they represent not just a change in his own style but the transition from *rembétiko* to *laikó*, that is said by *rembétiko* enthusiasts to be embodied by his work?

The entire thesis is, therefore, built upon some critical research questions that have wide significance for the study of Greek popular music. Through a thorough consideration of the material collected I will provide a critical assessment of the evidence in order to provide a better understanding of complex and long-standing issues that have been troubling musicians and musicologists in Greece and elsewhere. Some of the key questions here are: is Tsitsanis's music in a style or even genre of its own? What does an analysis of Tsitsanis's music reveal about the boundaries of *rembétiko* and the newer *laikó* style? What are the differences between the way Tsitsanis used the Greek popular modes and the way other songwriters used them? Was he the one who did the arrangements of all of his songs? What are the crucial differences between Tsitsanis's songs and *rembétiko* songs before him? What are the main elements which form the new musical style called *laikó*, claimed to have been started by him as identified in his work? The non-existence of answers to such questions points out to the dearth of scholarly research on Greek popular music, something which is examined later on.

## **Rationale and Methodology**

Despite the complex interdisciplinarity nature of the research demanded by the subject matter, it is impossible to cover it from every perspective. However, theories and ideas from several disciplines are used occasionally when and where the demand for the contribution for a clearer and a more holistic understanding arises. Within the field of popular musicology (see Scott 2009), or of the musicology of popular music (see Moore 2007), discographical research and musical analysis provide the main means of examination of the evidence. Scott's and Moore's 'popular musicology' also exemplifies the interdisciplinary trends in music studies.

Ever since I realized that there was a lack of complete, detailed and trustworthy discographical research on Vasilis Tsitsanis's recording career, I believed that I should devote a large part of this project to the creation of a comprehensive

discography. A full discography would have two major positive impacts: it would put things in their place, as regards wrong information provided in publications made in the past, and it would work as the frame on which the entire thesis could be built.<sup>7</sup> A vital method utilized in the discographical research is source criticism, for it was the only way to test the validity of numerous historical documents and material.<sup>8</sup>

The negligence towards some critical musical issues of *rembétiko* and *laikó* occurred because most of the available academic material covers the aforementioned styles from ethnographical, historical and anthropological perspectives but not (apart from a few exceptions) from a musicological perspective (musical analysis). From the historical point of view, this thesis provides more accurate recording dates than any other published material has done before. This is due to the finding of crucial historical documents that previous scholars were either not aware of, or they were not able to locate.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, it examines, for the first time in detail, in the context of Tsitsánis's work, fundamental musicological issues, such as the Greek popular modes and rhythms. The backbone of this project is the *Tsitsánis Electronic Database (T.E.D)*. In this database, all the data gathered during the four years of research are available. Finally, this thesis deals only with the first recordings made by Tsitsánis. This means that songs that he recorded twice or even three times, as well as contemporary recordings made by other artists, are not included, neither in the statistical tables nor in the text body of the thesis. However, if someone examines the T.E.D., they can also find details on contemporary recordings of a song.

### **Author's Background**

A significant characteristic of this thesis is the employment of terms from both the field of popular musicology and the vernacular terms employed by Greek musicians on the music stands. My personal experience has been crucial in setting the scene for this investigation. I have been listening to this musical style since I was eight years

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<sup>7</sup> For instance, accurate recording dates are a critical piece of information, important not only to the discographical analysis, but to the musical analysis as well.

<sup>8</sup> The vitality of source criticism is also discussed in Pennanen's thesis (1999: 16).

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 3 for comments on these historical documents and generally regarding the sources used in this project.

old and played and sang my first rembétiko and laikó song when I was twelve. Since 1999 (17 years old), I have been working as a rembétiko-laikó pianist and singer, playing and also studying these musical styles.

In Greece, a considerable part of the population, alongside many musicians who are involved in playing rembétiko and laikó on the *πάλκα* [pálka] or *πατάρια* [patária],<sup>10</sup> strongly believe that laikó style has been created by the *λαός* [laós = the people] so it must continue to belong to them and generally remain simple in form and function, and be kept away from schools, researchers, and academies.<sup>11</sup> This approach or common belief is, of course, problematic.<sup>12</sup> It is hardly objective and raises many ideological and political issues, revealing a rather conservative thinking. This is, perhaps, understandable if one is aware of the considerable reputation and respect that Tsitsánis still has in Greece. As noted earlier, he might be seen as a national treasure, an intangible cultural asset, and in a time of economic downturn, such nostalgic icons take on ever greater significance as people look back to what they may believe to be better times gone by. With such adulation directed at my subject, my role as researcher was going to have to be carefully negotiated. There is a need, then, for rigorous and objective academic research into the popular music of Greece, but there is no need to prise the evidence out of the hands of fans and admirers. That is why a broader contextualisation of Vasilis Tsitsánis's work is maintained in this thesis. The views of his family, friends and fans play a significant role in informing the approach adopted here. However, as a performer of his music, I argue that his work clearly deserves the scholarly and objective treatment and interrogation it has not yet received and that this is completely necessary given the complexity and significance of the subject matter.

Returning to the significance of the experience for me so far, I should add that I was a student who reached Master's level, while working as a musician playing rembétiko and laikó songs. Prior to this, I was studying in order to obtain a degree in classical piano while I was playing the rembétiko-laikó piano in venues. In addition, I

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<sup>10</sup> *Πάλκα* (singular *πάλκο*) or *πατάρια* (singular *πατάρι*) = music stands. Regarding the music stands in Greece see also Tragaki 2007: 200.

<sup>11</sup> Interestingly connected to this is the point raised by Peter Manuel: 'does popular music rise from the people who constitute its audience, or is it superimposed upon them from above?' (1990: 8).

<sup>12</sup> There are countless discussions around these matters on the internet (see, for example, <<http://www.rembetiko.gr/forums/>>).

was having classical singing lessons while studying Byzantine Ecclesiastic chanting in the University of Macedonia in Greece, and at the same period working as a *rembétiko-laikó* singer. The fact that I am an active composer, including *laikó* songs in my portfolio and four discographical works, is something that could be considered extremely helpful in analyzing the compositional style of Tsitsánis and, generally, *rembétiko* and *laikó*. The combination of studies on Western and Eastern musical styles can grant researchers the tools they need in order to not only try to understand and examine the styles more easily, but also to explain the findings of their research to their readers as clearly as possible. The fact that an active musician of the genre (that is, myself) undertakes an academic research on the subject shows that a strong and old trait of Greek society reaches its end. This ‘collaboration’ between practice and theory (music stand and scholarship) is fruitful, for it can be used in order to cover the subject from as many of its angles as possible, making use of every beneficial aspect of both. Taking advantage of the knowledge that can be obtained on the *rembétiko-laikó* music stands can solve many problems that perhaps an ‘outsider’ would have to confront with more difficulty. After all, I am capable of using one of musicians’ greatest assets, my memory, as described by Tenzer:

Musicians in many cultures preserve complex musical structures in their minds without notation as a reference and think theoretically or analytically about them. Analysis is made possible by musical memory (Tenzer 2006: 6).<sup>13</sup>

Such memories are both of the mind and of the body. For example, in the motor movements touch and feel of bouzouki performance. ‘Learning to perform’, as described by John Baily (2001), is a fundamental research technique in ethnomusicology and, I would argue, can be considered a fundamental research technique when approaching the work of Vasilis Tsitsánis. I should, therefore, mention how studying the bouzouki and the accordion were beneficial for the purposes of the project. Along with the piano and singing, that I was already familiar with, I was able to directly engage with the performance techniques of the style’s

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<sup>13</sup> See also Lilliestam’s article regarding the role of memory in popular musics (1996).

main instruments.<sup>14</sup> It has become clear to me that through my research that knowledge of the basic instruments of a style can bring a popular musicologist closer to the style's totality, from the inside out.

Evidence clearly suggests that *rembétiko* and *laikó*, and thus the principle musical contexts for Tsitsánis's music, deserve academic treatment because it was mostly he that drew the boundaries and the path for what was to be called Greek *laikó* [popular] music.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, this is a syncretic musical style which perhaps, and as evidence suggests, is the very first national urban musical 'product' of Greece which,<sup>16</sup> according to Peter Manuel, 'has one of the most distinctively national popular musics of any European country' (1990: 126). The acculturation that happened (Ottoman-Turkish *makams*, Greek *paradhosiaká* [rural-traditional], Afro-Cuban rhythms [Latin America], Western harmony and so forth) is of major importance for Greek popular musicology.<sup>17</sup> It is exciting for me that Tsitsánis's music is still played and enjoyed in Greece, but disappointing that nobody has researched his music thoroughly at an academic level. What academic research there is on *rembétiko* clearly demonstrates that an investigation must be ongoing, as significant findings in relation to musical (for example, mix of Eastern modes with Western harmony), historical (the establishment of the dictatorships), social (the acceptance of the previously neglected *rembétiko* by the middle class), political (the Metaxás's censorship) and economic (the development of the role of the musicians, from the previously poor people into professionals) matters have emerged.

## **The Educational System in Greece**

The *laikó* style is not taught in conservatoires in Greece today, although the style is extremely widespread, while in other countries popular styles are part of the

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<sup>14</sup> A similar method was also used by Pennanen during his research (1999: 15-6).

<sup>15</sup> Although the correct phrase would be *λαϊκή μουσική* [*laikí music*] I only use the neuter type of the word, that is, *laikó*, in order to prevent confusion.

<sup>16</sup> This 'cultural vacillation' between East and West is the main subject in Pennanen's thesis (1999).

<sup>17</sup> Several facts and events concerning the syncretic nature and the acculturation in Greek urban popular music are mentioned and analyzed as the thesis develops.

educational systems, being also extremely popular with students.<sup>18</sup> Apart from the political issues, that is, the fact that the government does not decide to introduce programmes of popular music studies, lack of research is the reason for the negligence of popular music. This situation is beginning to change, but still needs to take many further steps in order to reach a standard equivalent to elsewhere (England and Finland, for example), that is, resolve some problems of the past, such as terminology, and go on into deeper research of the style. An example (and at the same time the best proof) of this negligence of popular music studies in Greece is that the memorandum of the State Conservatoire in Greece (on which all the other conservatoires' memoranda and teaching systems, state or private, are based) does not include the teaching of laikó music style (its instruments, singing, theory, and so forth) alongside the other Greek popular styles (rural or urban), such as Greek rock, Greek artistic (*éntehno*), *paradhosiaká* (rural traditional) and so forth. A passage, which can be found on the official web site of the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki ([www.odiokrat.gr](http://www.odiokrat.gr)), follows: 'Legislative decrees 1445/42, 2010/42 and 2870/54, Parliamentary decree of 1957 published in the Official Journal of the Greek Government (229/11-11-1957), define, until this day, the framework of the musical education in our country'.<sup>19</sup> But change is clearly possible within the Greek musical education system with the T.E.I. in Epirus [Technological Education Institute of Epirus] with its 'Department of Popular and Traditional Music' which was created in 2000-2001.

Bearing in mind the previous points, I will refer to some data collected from the National Documentation Centre ([www.ekt.gr](http://www.ekt.gr)) regarding doctoral theses held at Greek Universities. Four entries have been found with keyword 'rembétiko'. Two of them are from Psychology schools, one from a school of Media and one from a school of Sociology. There is not one from a school of Music. 84 entries with the keyword 'music' have been found. More than 50 per cent of them were held on Byzantine music at one of the two academic schools in Greece (Athens and Thessaloniki). This proportion alone gives rise to many questions, such as why this musical style merits

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<sup>18</sup> During my Masters programme of study in England, I have had many seminars, tutorials and classes concerning popular styles. See the universities of Salford and Leeds for evidence, for example.

<sup>19</sup> The entire decree can be found on the web site of the Official Journal of the Greek Government ([www.et.gr](http://www.et.gr)).

such an academic treatment? Four entries deal with folk/traditional music. None of them, however, was held at a music school. The rest are divided in various research fields: two of them deal with two very important musical figures, Nikólaos Mántzaros and Manólis Kalomíris, whose music is based on the Western style. The fact that the word 'laikó' does not return even a single result, reveals how neglected this music is and much about the musical value system of Greek academia.

One crucial act that the Greek government should take is to officially recognize popular music (theory, instruments and so forth), something that is not in effect today. I will describe a situation which reflects the gravity of the whole matter. Academic education is part of the purview of the Ministry of Education, while music education in conservatoires (private and state) is part of the Ministry of Culture. In 1988, the Greek government introduced Public Music Schools, secondary and high schools.<sup>20</sup> Today, music schools offer an alternative to pupils who do not desire to follow the programme of studies of the general secondary and high school and prefer to have in their daily schedule as many 'musical' hours as possible. The programme of studies of public music schools includes the teaching of Greek popular music, Greek traditional music, Byzantine music and Western classical music. Both Byzantine music and classical music are part of the official programme of study of both public and private education. In other words, both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture (that is, both the universities and the conservatoires<sup>21</sup>) provide official recognized degrees for these two specializations. However, it is only the Ministry of Education that recognizes the studies of the remaining two fields, that is, popular music and traditional music. In other words, if someone undertakes a BA degree in bouzouki at the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki, they will obtain an official recognized degree. On the other hand, if someone studies the bouzouki at a conservatoire, they will not be able to do so (obtain a recognized degree) because the Ministry of Culture has not yet recognized popular and traditional music and its instruments.

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<sup>20</sup> In Greece, public education is divided as follows: six years in *δημοτικό* [dhimotikó = primary school]; three years in *γυμνάσιο* [ghimnásio = secondary school]; three years in *λύκειο* [líkio = high school]. Although the law passed in 1988, the music schools became popular almost ten years after. For more details in terms of these schools see Kallimopoulou 2009: 135-45.

<sup>21</sup> It should be mentioned that all the universities in Greece are state.

Consequently, the majority of the music teachers at music schools have never obtained an official degree. That is, except for those who have studied at an academic level who form approximately a 10 per cent, if not less, of the teachers of traditional and popular music. Accordingly, in what way does the government appoint the remaining 90 per cent of the teachers? The answer is simple, yet very bizarre. The fact that the legislative decree, mentioned above, does not cover popular and traditional music does not mean that private conservatoires do not offer such studies. However, they cannot provide the student with a degree recognized by the Ministry of Culture. The government asks for a signed statement from the private conservatoire where someone has either worked in or studied popular and/or traditional music. The candidate, by bringing this statement, is appointed to music teacher for public music schools as an *εμπειροτέχνης* [empirotéhnis, *έμπειρος* (émpiros) + *τέχνη* (téhni) = experienced, practised + art, knack], as the law names these candidates.

### **Outline of This Thesis**

The thesis has been organized in the following way: Chapter 2 examines the development of studies in popular musicology and rebetology.<sup>22</sup> These studies have helped shape my own approach here and it is crucial to establish this foundational theoretical orientation and disciplinary framework. By referring to several scholars (both in Greece and abroad), this chapter points out what has been done, and what has to be done with regard to the study of popular music in Greece.

Chapter 3 deals with historical recordings and many of their aspects. It reflects on the well-intentioned interest but also sometimes problematic interpretations found in numerous published works by Greek aficionados and the problem around the sources in Greece. On the other hand, the examination of the role of the recording technology and its development in the style provides a perspective which seems to be critical for the research conclusions as is convincingly demonstrated in the work of Timothy Warner (2009), for example.

Chapters 4 and 5 deal with the Greek popular modes, which is one of the biggest problems in rebetological field studies, and central to understanding the basis

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<sup>22</sup> Although I write *rembétiko*, I choose to write rebetology without the ‘m’ and the accent (see transliteration) because this is the way that the term has been established within academic circles.



of Vasilis Tsitsanis compositional style. These particular chapters aspire to shed light on this issue by explaining the modes as well as by offering an in-depth analysis in order to help in the continuation of the research in the future. The explanation of the modes as well as the comparison with their ‘ancestors’, found in the Turkish makam system, but also, in turn, in Byzantine and Ancient Greek modal systems, is also a vital part of these chapters. Chapters 4 and 5 provide an examination and analysis of the harmonization in Tsitsanis’s songs; what is called, chordal harmony. The analysis shows the development found in Greek popular music in general, which is owing, on the one hand, to the fact that the foundations of today’s harmonization standards were set, to a great extent, by Tsitsanis and his music, and, on the other, to the fact that the same musicians took part in the recordings of other songwriters, too.

Chapters 6 and 7 deal, additionally, with the Greek laikó rhythms which, similarly to the preceding chapters, constitute another major problem in rebetology. Due to limited academic research, the most important source is the oral tradition used by the musicians. The nomenclature that this tradition uses is often problematic and therefore it causes confusion. Chapters 6 and 7 present and analyze all the rhythms found in Tsitsanis’s repertoire. By using rhythmic patterns which have been created for the purposes of this project, these chapters aspire to clarify the two most serious problems around the rhythms: I suggest a correct nomenclature and show (with the help of the rhythmic patterns) ways of interpreting them.

In Chapter 8 I provide my conclusions. This includes an evaluation of evidence and findings drawn from the chapters before. To all intents and purposes, this chapter examines the relation of *το πριν και το μετά* [to prin ke to metá = before and after] and the ‘journey’ of rembétiko towards laikó from the point of view of Tsitsanis’s contribution. It examines the role and impact of his music, then and today. Furthermore, a great part of the final chapter is devoted to the importance of the continuation of the research on Greek popular music. Chapter 8 deals with the distressing fact of the basic level of the research in the field, especially within Greek borders. Vasilis Tsitsanis’s music is a very important part of rembétiko-laikó music, but, a part, after all. The in-depth research on a musical style that is still alive and that is changing continuously is a matter that needs attention and solutions, proposals on which are given within this chapter.

## **Biographical, Historical and Cultural Background**

*Βασίλης Τσιτσάνης* [Vasilis Tsitsanis] was born in the city of Trikala, located in central Greece near to the city of Larissa, on 18 January 1915. He had a very basic musical education, but nevertheless, this was something rather rare for the musicians who were involved in rembético style. Evidence suggests that, while quite young, he learnt to play the mandolin and after a few years the violin as well;<sup>23</sup> most of the time he played traditional/rural songs of the region of his hometown. He started playing the bouzouki when he was about 11 years old, and despite the fact that bouzouki was not a popular instrument at this time, according to rembético scholars and his son, he loved it more than any other.<sup>24</sup> At this point, it should be mentioned that the region of Trikala is a unique case, in terms of its cultural disposition. The fact that the region has produced many of Greece's greatest musicians and lyricists is something of great import. Apart from Tsitsanis, Apóstolos Kaldháras (1922-1990), Hrístos Kolokotrónis (1922-1999), Ghióorghos Samoladhás<sup>25</sup> and Kóstas Vírvos (1926) were also from Trikala. One might ask the question: 'why has this particular region given birth to so much urban culture'? Written and oral sources indicate that the region was an important economical centre (from as long ago as the 18<sup>th</sup> century) and used to gather roving musicians from every corner of the Ottoman Empire, as well as from Europe, too.<sup>26</sup> One should not underestimate the location of the city, either, which is in the very middle of the Greek peninsula (Figure 1.4).

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<sup>23</sup> See Alexíou 2001 and 2003.

<sup>24</sup> In fact the bouzouki was considered to be an instrument connected with the people of the underworld, thus its reputation was not good.

<sup>25</sup> Not able to find his year of birth and death. However, he lived in the same period as the others.

<sup>26</sup> Néarhos Gheorghíadhís examines the aforementioned situation in Trikala (2005). Valuable information is also provided by Theófilos Anastasióu (2010).



**Figure 1.4: Map of Greece and the city of Trikala**

Tsitsánis travelled in 1936 from Trikala to Athens in order to study Law at the University of Athens. Oral evidence (from his son and from some Greek scholars<sup>27</sup>) supports the theory that he abandoned his studies quite early because of the dictatorship (1936 – 1941) and World War 2, when Greece was under German occupation (1941 – 1944).<sup>28</sup> The major events that happened in his life can be found in Appendix A, entitled ‘Tsitsánis Chronology of Events’. This illustration is designed to be used as a companion throughout the entire thesis. It shows all the important facts that happened during Tsitsánis’s recording career. These facts have been cross-

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<sup>27</sup> I have engaged in interviews with Kóstas Tsitsánis since the beginning of this research project. In fact, very soon, we became friends and I visited him in Athens 15 times.

<sup>28</sup> In an interview with Hatzidhoulís, Tsitsánis says that the circumstances were extremely difficult in Athens and that he needed to work in order to survive (Tsitsánis 1980: 11-12).

checked by taking information from oral stories, interviews, books, newspapers and magazines.<sup>29</sup>

In 1980, and with UNESCO's initiative, Tsitsánis recorded a new album called *To χάραμα* [to hárama = the daylight],<sup>30</sup> as this was the name of the tavern where he worked during the last 14 years of his life. The album includes many of Tsitsánis's old songs and many improvisations on bouzouki. In France in 1985, this album won the prize of the Music Academy Charles Gross, a clear sign of his work's significance. Tsitsánis, however, had already passed away (January 18, 1984).

In 1923, as part of the treaty of Lausanne (signed on July 24, 1923), a great exchange of populations took place, and approximately 1.5 million Christians of Turkish citizenship moved from Turkey (mainly Asia Minor) to Greece, while approximately five-hundred thousand Muslims of Greek citizenship moved from Greece to Turkey. The criterion of the exchange was the respective religions of the populations.<sup>31</sup> This sparked off the modern Greek urban-popular, the so-called *rembétiko* musical style, for the refugees from Asia Minor took with them their musical traditions.

To give an idea of the prevalent discourse surrounding the history of *rembétiko*, Greeks consider and call the music style that came with the refugees from Asia Minor in 1923 *Σμυρναίικο* [Smirnέiko = from Smyrna] and, hence, they consider it the very first stage and the forerunner of the *ρεμπέτικο* [rembétiko] music style. However, the use of the term Smirnέiko is problematic and misleading, for there were songs from several other origins, such as Constantinople and Adrianople, which were part of the repertoire that Greeks address as Smirnέiko. Risto Pekka Pennanen discusses this problematic use of the term Smirnέiko (1999: 68; 2004: 3-4). Furthermore, according to common beliefs, *rembétiko* has its roots in Piraeus with pieces very much based on the style of Smirnέiko but also with many differences, such as the usage of a completely different orchestration and a different lyrical

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<sup>29</sup> In terms of more detailed information on the city of Trikala, as well as on Vasilis Tsitsánis's life see Alexiou (2001 and 2003) and Anastasiou (1995).

<sup>30</sup> The title of the French edition is 'Grèce: Hommage A Tsitsanis, Bouzouki'.

<sup>31</sup> See Blanchard (1925); Valaoras (1960); 100 years Greece (1999: 176-77); Pentzopoulos (2002); National Geographic (2007: 30); Isiz (2008).

theme.<sup>32</sup> After *rembétiko*, with Márkos Vamvakáris as its major representative (he is often called by *rembétiko* enthusiasts ‘the Patriarch of *rembétiko*’), the Greeks speak of the new *λαϊκό* [laikó = popular] music style with its most important representative, Vasilis Tsitsánis. In fact, even Tsitsánis himself speaks and refers to himself as a laikó composer and always avoids using the word *rembétiko*.<sup>33</sup> The work of Vasilis Tsitsánis is credited for the genre’s broader acceptance, under the term laikó. *Rembétiko* enthusiasts in Greece consider the turning point to be somewhere around the 1940s – 1950s, basically with Tsitsánis’s post-war work which is often labelled as his ‘classical period’.<sup>34</sup> I use the terms *rembétiko* and laikó in the way that they appear in the colloquial language, even though as terms they have proven to be rather insufficient and problematic.<sup>35</sup> Risto Pekka Pennanen and Conway Morris subdivide *rembétiko* into the following periods: the first period consisting of the music of the cafés (what the Greeks call *Smirnéiko*), and the second consisting of the *τεκέες* [tekés = hashish den] style or bouzouki-based Piraeus style.<sup>36</sup>

*Λαϊκός* [laikós] stands for popular, of the people.<sup>37</sup> A very good approach for understanding the term laikó is contained within the ‘rebetika’ chapter of Peter Manuel’s book *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World* (1990: 127). Manuel describes Greek popular music as being modern Greek working class music. Manuel also gives a very good description of the *rembétiko* style: ‘urban Greek lumpen proletarian music of the early twentieth century’ (1990: 269).<sup>38</sup> For Pennanen, laikó

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<sup>32</sup> I should also mention at this point the derivative *ρεμπέτης* (plural *ρεμπέτες* [rembétis – rebétes]). Apart from the musical style, the word also covers a more general and broader life stance, connected to people living in the underworld, such as criminals and drug-addicts, who had their own ideology, appearance, idiolectic and moral rules. Regarding rebétes, see Dimitri Monos (1987: 111) and Pennanen (1999: 67, n. 1).

<sup>33</sup> See Despina Michael (1996) regarding the tendency of Tsitsánis to avoid the term *rembétiko* as well as regarding the negative attitude of society towards the word and everything that allegedly represented (members of the underworld, musicians, music style, instruments).

<sup>34</sup> In numerous discussions I had with many *rembétiko* enthusiasts, I listened to them addressing this specific period of Tsitsánis as his ‘classical period’, and this is the reason that I, too, use this term in my thesis.

<sup>35</sup> Regarding *rembétiko*, see Pennanen 2004.

<sup>36</sup> Pennanen (1999: 68); Morris (1980: 81).

<sup>37</sup> *Λαϊκός* [laikós, masculine], *λαϊκή* [laikí, feminine], *λαϊκό* [laikó, neuter].

<sup>38</sup> A similar approach can also be found in Státhis Dhamianákos (1994).

songs are generally ‘post mid-1950s Greek popular songs’. However, he points out that the term ‘is used for urban Greek popular music in general as distinct from the rural *dimotika* music’ (1999: 67: n. 1).

Some issues regarding the musical background of the refugees must be highlighted. The refugees were certainly aware of the Western tradition, since many of Asia Minor’s big cities were at their peak for various reasons: cultural, economic and so forth. Smyrna [*Σμύρνη* (today Izmir)] is known for its flourishing culture at this time: museums, theatres, conservatoires and schools.<sup>39</sup> Also known are Asia Minor’s connections with Europe, since merchants used to travel to and from many major cities frequently. It is not accidental that Smyrna had an English community (Bornova) and two French printing-houses. It was a multinational city and its population consisted of Turks, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, and (obviously fewer) English, Italians, French, which the locals used to address as ‘Franks’.<sup>40</sup> Aristoméni Kaliviotákis informs us that during the period of the city’s destruction and the population exchange (1922-1923), the number of Greeks that lived there were 165,000, the Turks 80,000, the Armenians 40,000, the Jews 50,000 and the remaining 36,000 were Europeans and other nationalities (2002: 16, taken, in turn, from Hrístos Solomonídhis 1972). As Kaliviótis stresses, in 1920, the population of Athens was 300,000 while Smyrna’s was 350,000 (*ibid*). As far as Western musical impact is concerned, there were numerous music groups that were called *εστουντιαντίνες* [estoundiandínes]; they were based on the French *estudiantines* which were groups consisting of two mandolins, a mandola and a guitar (Ghalátou 2008: 23). The so-called *Ελληνική εστουντιαντίνα* [elinikí = Greek *estudiantine*] recorded its first songs as early as 1909. The nature of the recordings of the *estudiantines* varied: urban popular songs from the broader region (Constantinople, Smyrna, Adrianople and so forth), Turkish and Greek traditional, Western-style popular, accompanying many times foreign lyrical singers such as Paul Armao, Antonio Walter and Alfred Solar (Ghalátou 2008: 25). Furthermore, one of the most interesting styles recorded included songs whose melodies were explicitly based on Eastern modal based styles,

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<sup>39</sup> See also Politis (2005a).

<sup>40</sup> One of the most popular songs of Márkos Vamvakáris talks about a Catholic girl from his island, Syros. Vamvakáris calls her *Φραγκοσυριανή* [frangosirianí = Frank (that is, Catholic) girl from Syros], which is also the title of the song (HMV AO 2280 - OGA 237, recorded in 1935).

but, on the other hand, were mixed with Western elements and thus, they created a style that sounds unique and clearly recognizable, even today.<sup>41</sup> Some of these characteristics were parallel thirds in the voices' as well as the instruments' parts, and rhythms such as the habanera and the march (see song: *Εμβατήριο Σμύρνης* [emvatírio smírnis = March of Smyrna]).<sup>42</sup> The habanera based songs were often used for a very popular activity which was brought by the refugees in the mainland too: the cantadas (serenades). Groups of men used to go under girls' balconies that they wished to court and sang these songs in an attempt to lure them down. The actual songs are also known with the same name, that is, cantada. Later, Tsitsánis used this term (*καντάδα* [kandáda]) in order to refer to some of his new songs. The elements that characterized these songs (and this is the reason that Tsitsánis put them under this label, that is, cantada) were basically the two and even three voices used, usually moving in parallel thirds, the generally simple and, in a way, Western-based chordal progressions, and the hasápiko (2/4) rhythm.<sup>43</sup>

Of the highest importance is what Tsitsánis said about what he meant with the term cantada, in his interview with Stathis Gauntlett (2001: 173-81):

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<sup>41</sup> The book of Kaliviótis (2002) is a great source of information regarding the musical life of Smyrna during the period 1900-1922. One can find lists of recorded songs, references to the multicultural hypostasis of the music in the city, old photographs and postcards of important buildings such as the theatre of Smyrna, photographs of record labels of high importance, as for example is the record label in page 134. One can read the word 'rembétiko' on that label, something which, according to the author, is one of the very first references to the word in discography.

<sup>42</sup> Orfeon 10439, recorded approximately in 1907-1908. At this point, I should mention that whenever a song is mentioned within the entire thesis (along with its recording details such as matrix number, recording date and so forth), it is implied that it is a Tsitsánis's creation, unless stated otherwise. The recording dates of the songs of Vasilis Tsitsánis are accurate, for I have spent three years visiting archives and locating authentic documents. However, the dating of the other songs by other songwriters is likely to be mistaken, although I tried to cross-check the recording years as best as possible. Regarding fundamental problematic issues such as dating and generally locating primary sources see Chapter 3. About these problematic issues, see also: Smith (1989); Pennanen (1995 and 2005).

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, songs: *Αρχόντισσα* [arhóndisa = mistress], Columbia CG 1874 - DG 6440, recorded in December, 1938; *Αχάριστη* [aháristi = ungrateful woman], HMV OGA 1238 - AO 2740, recorded in June, 1947. A 'Western based chordal progression' would be for instance (in the Matzóre [major] popular mode) the progression: I+ // IV+ // V+ // I+.

Εννοώ ως επί το πλείστον τα πρώτο σερόντο τραγουδάκια τα λεγόμενα ματζοράκια-μινοράκια, όπως το Αραμπάς περνά, Μια Κυριακή σε γνώρισα κ.λ.π.

I basically mean the ‘primo-secondo’ songs (two voices), the also called little-majors and little-minors, such as the *arambás perná*<sup>44</sup> (the car is passing by), *mia kiriakí se ghnórisa*<sup>45</sup> (I met you one Sunday) etc.<sup>46</sup>

In countless discussions with rembétiko enthusiasts in Greece, I understood that they believe that rembétiko was Westernized and became laikó (pulled out of the hashish dens and the underworld and became of broader acceptance) because of these songs style by Tsitsánis. As one can see, the cantada term acquired several meanings and was applied to several things: 1) the activity of singing under the balconies; 2) the songs that men used to sing under the balconies; and 3) the term with which Tsitsánis described a group of his songs. We shall also not forget that the term was also used according to its Italian origination, that is, serenade,<sup>47</sup> due to many songs that were known and were also recorded on the mainland.

### **The Backbone: Tsitsánis Electronic Database**

The great need for a database for the songs of Tsitsánis appeared from the very first days of the project. The database accompanies the thesis as a website which URL is <[www.tsitsanis-database.com](http://www.tsitsanis-database.com)>.

Tsitsánis Electronic Database (T.E.D.) is the central body of the entire project and it only deals with the original recordings. However, it cites information regarding contemporary recordings as well. All the writings of this thesis that concern statistics had to pass through the T.E.D., sometimes for a simple cross-check of the data and some others for much more complex reasons, such as creating statistical graphs and

<sup>44</sup> Parlophone GO 4009 - B. 74136-I, recorded on September 20, 1948.

<sup>45</sup> HMV OGA 705 - AO 2463, recorded on March 17, 1938.

<sup>46</sup> Gauntlett 2001: 176.

<sup>47</sup> Many of the Ionian islands were under Italian rule for many years.



tables, the creation of which would have been much more difficult without the database. The T.E.D. is a database that contains all the titles found credited to Tsitsánis's name, either as the composer or as the composer and the lyricist.<sup>48</sup> Next to the songs' titles there are columns – each dealing with a different characteristic of either historical or musicological context. Most of the books that have lists of Tsitsánis's songs do not deal with the characteristics that the T.E.D. does. The only common columns-characteristics with the aforementioned publications are: the recording date, which, many times, mistakenly refers to the date of release,<sup>49</sup> the rhythm, where a lot of mistakes are also found, the company, the catalogue number<sup>50</sup> and the singer(s). Some of the books include some re-issues and some contemporary recordings (see Kóndos in Rígha 2003). Some of them also include the name of the lyricist which, however, sometimes is wrong. Finally, some of them include information regarding the personnel of the recordings.

The special element-function of the T.E.D. is the filter tool which can be used in order to ask the database to filter the results of a single or even a multiple inquiry. There are two ways to filter the results according to the searcher's wishes: either by clicking on the filter tool at the upper centre of the page or by clicking on a column's title, depending on what someone wants to do. For example, if someone wants to list the songs in alphabetical order according to the title in Greek, they have to click on the title of the column 'Title (Greek)'. In this way, someone can also click on the recording company column (on the title of the column) in order to have the songs categorized according to their recording company. The filter tool is more complex but its function is more powerful. For instance, if we want the database to show only the songs in new zeimbékiko rhythm, we simply choose the '9/4 - new zeimbékiko' in the rhythm's area, after we click on the filter tool. One can apply a multiple inquiry; for instance, we can ask the database to show the songs that were issued on Odeon's label with Pródhromos Tsaousákis singing the leading voice and which are based on the old zeimbékiko rhythm.

The sources used within the database, which are not mentioned within the text body of this thesis are: Torp (1993); Kaliviótis (1999); Hatzidhoulís (2002 and 2005);

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<sup>48</sup> Tsitsánis never gave his lyrics in order to be set to music by another composer.

<sup>49</sup> For further analysis of such kind of mistakes see Chapter 3.

<sup>50</sup> Only the Maniatis (2006) includes the matrix number along with the catalogue number.

Rígha (2003); Spirópoulos (2006); Dhraghomános (2007); Matsoúkas and Dhiamandís (2009).

The Tsitsánis Electronic Database contains 38 columns. A list (Table 1.1) and a description of these columns follow below.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> It should be mentioned that the general table does not show all the columns. One has to click on the ‘eye button’ on the left of each song in order to view the record of the song and, thus, all the columns.

Title (Greek)
Title (Transliterated)
Title (English translation)
Company
Matrix number
Catalogue number
License number
Label
Record's other side
Recording date
Period
Recording date (Columbia Logistics)
Recording date (Howard's Archive)
Recording date (AEPI's Archive <sup>52</sup> )
Recording date (Ránios's Archive)
Recording date (EMI's Archive)
Recording date (Maniátis, 1994)
Recording date (Maniátis, 2006)
Recording date (Alexíou, 2003)
Recording date (Kóndos, 2003)
Recording date (Anastasióu, 2004)
2nd and 3rd recordings info
Lyricist (B and C)
Singer A (B, C, D and E)
Director
Personnel
Tonality
Double tonality
Main dhrómos
Secondary dhrómi
Chordal harmony
Rhythm
Rhythmic value
Song timing
Taxími
Fantasia
Pitching problem
Comments

**Table 1.1: Columns found in the Tsitsánis Electronic Database (T.E.D.)**

<sup>52</sup> AEPI = Hellenic Society for the Protection of Intellectual Property.

**Title (Greek)**

This column contains the song's title in Greek as written on the labels for the songs that I was able to locate one. Otherwise, the title has been cross-checked either with a primary source, such as the logistics books of Columbia, the files from AEPI or the files from EMI, or with the personal archives of several rembetiko scholars. A second and occasionally a third title are written in case the particular song has been re-issued with another title, or it is simply very popular with an alternative title.

**Title (Transliterated)**

This column can be considered as the transliteration of the titles.

**Title (English translation)**

The Greek title of the song translated into the English language. In case further explanations are needed, an asterisk means that there will be details in the comments column.

**Company**

The recording company of the recording.

**Matrix number**

The matrix number of the recording.

**Catalogue number**

The catalogue number of the recording.

**Licence number**

The license number that is written on the label or within the logistics books of the companies. Data such as the license number, the matrix code and the catalogue code has been taken from sources in the following order: from the actual records or photographs of them; from the logistics books of Columbia; from the files of EMI; from the files of AEPI; from the paying receipts from the archive of Tsitsánis family; from the files of Charles Howard (see Chapter 3); and from Maniátis (2006).

**Label**

Photograph or scanned image of the label of the record.

**Record's other side**

This column contains the song's title that is found on the other side of the record. This column applies on the songs that were recorded using the 78 rpm and the 45 rpm technology. In the cases of a 33 rpm LP, the column contains the title of the LP. The titles of the songs in this column are given in their original Greek language.

**Recording date**

This is the central column for the recording date of the songs. The most 'correct' recording date from the several sources (see other recording date columns) is written in this column.

**Recording period**

This column shows the recording period that the song belongs into. I should mention that I have divided Tsitsánis's recording career into four periods based on some of the aforementioned significant historical facts. These are: 1936-1940: pre-war period; 1946-1955: first post-war period and until the first release of 45 rpm records; 1956-1966: second post-war and pre-junta period; 1967-1983: junta, post-junta and last period. I considered a division of this sort to be necessary for two reasons: Vasilis Tsitsánis's compositional style changes from period to period in the course of time and thus, this division allows for a more proper categorization of the songs, since the historical criterion coincides with that of stylistic alteration. Moreover, the enormous amount of his work necessitates an organization of the songs in smaller groups thus, enabling the work to be better and easier examined and analyzed.

**Recording date [Columbia logistics; Howard's archive; AEPI's archive; Ránios's archive; EMI's archive; Maniátis (1994 and 2006); Alexíou (2003); Kóndos (2003); Anastasióu (2004)]**

Each one of these columns refers to the recording date found in the archives of these individuals respectively. Some of them are publications existing before this thesis and they basically serve as reference points regarding the, until this thesis, known and published recording dates. The others are documents that have been discovered during my research which contain critical pieces of information. For information on these sources/archives see Chapter 3.

**2nd and 3rd recordings information**

Basic information regarding the second and the third recording such as the matrix number, the catalogue number, the recording date and the singer(s). It should be clarified that this column (as well as the entire thesis) deals only with songs recordings made by Tsitsánis, or under his supervision. This means that contemporary recordings made by other artists (which are countless) are excluded.

**Lyricist**

The lyricist column mentions the name of the lyricist. The finding of information regarding the lyrics of the songs (not only regarding Tsitsánis's work but regarding *rembétiko* and *laikó* in general) was one of the most difficult tasks of the research project. Although most of the songs are clear regarding their lyricist's name(s), there are some cases where it is almost impossible for someone now to be sure about the name(s). My suspicions regarding this situation started when I listened to some myths, stories and rumours around the paternity of the lyrics of some songs. Ultimately, evidence uncovered in my research revealed that indeed some of these stories were true.

**Lyricist B and C**

The lyricist B column as well as the lyricist C and D refer to any possible lyricists that have worked on the lyrics with Tsitsánis or whose name is credited on the label or anywhere else (logistics books, AEPI's files and so forth) along with Tsitsánis's

name. Where information are confused and the sources do not go well together, I put the name of Tsitsánis as one of the possible co-lyricists.

### **Singer A**

The singer A column refers to the name of the leading singer of each song.

### **Singer B, C, D and E**

The singer B, as well as the columns singer C and singer D refer to the names of the singers singing a second, third and fourth voice respectively.

### **Director**

This column contains the name of the director of the recording. Information has been taken either from the record labels, or from the logistics books of Columbia.

### **Personnel**

This column contains the names of the musicians that took part in the recordings. Information has been taken from the logistics books of Columbia, from the archive of Charles Howard, from the notes of Dhímítris Sémsis (found in Torp 1993), from Kóndos (2003), from Maniátis (1994) and from the record labels or sleeve notes (for the LPs).

### **Tonality**

This column refers to the song's main tonality. Due to many damaged or generally problematic qualities of the sounds of some recordings, the hearable tonality may not be precise. Therefore, a 'YES' in the 'pitching problem' column is marked.<sup>53</sup>

### **Double tonality**

Due to the structure of Greek laikó music, in many cases there is more than one central tonality. Usually, the second tonality is a fourth interval lower or higher from the central tonality.<sup>54</sup> In such cases, a 'YES' is marked in this column.

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<sup>53</sup> See Chapter 3 for problems regarding recording technology.

<sup>54</sup> An analysis of the theoretical system of the modes can be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

**Main dhrómos (mode)**

This column refers to the central popular dhrómos (mode) that is utilized in the songs.<sup>55</sup> The name of the Turkish makam that the Greek dhrómos corresponds to is written in parenthesis (see Chapters 4 and 5).

**Secondary dhrómi**

In many cases, a song is not based on a single popular mode but it is a combination of several modes. These subsequent modes are mentioned in this column. Where the proportion of more than one mode is the same, then the ‘main dhrómos’ column writes ‘equal mix’.

**Chordal harmony**

The ‘chordal harmony’ column contains all the chords played in the songs according to the order of their performance in the song. It should be clarified that the musical degrees (chords) I write in this column are always based on the first/main tonality of the piece. Where a chord is put in parenthesis, it means that this particular chord is not clear or it is not played by everyone in the band.

**Rhythm**

This column mentions the rhythm that the song is based on. The time signature of the rhythm is written first, and then follows the name of the rhythm. The way Greek musicians refer to some rhythms (especially the Latin American) is written in brackets (see Chapters 6 and 7).

**Rhythmic value**

The rhythmic value column refers to the tempo of the song by giving the arithmetical value of the unit. The approximately equal symbol ( $\approx$ ) is used instead of the equal one ( $=$ ). This happens because we are dealing with live recordings (almost all of them) and the tempo of the songs is not constant.

**Song timing**

This column shows the duration of the song.

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<sup>55</sup> Dhrómos, plural: dhrómi.



### **Taxími**

A ‘YES’ shows the existence of a *ταξιμί* [taxími] in either the beginning or inside the song. The taxími (plural taxímia) is a non-rhythmic improvisation based on the dhrómos of the particular song or on a combination of dhrómi. It is played at the beginning of the song. The other instruments may play the *ίσο* [íso], which is a single sustained note. The role of the taxími is either to show a musician’s talent, imagination and skills, to emphasize the tonality and the dhrómos of the song or both. A taxími could also be played inside a song with the orchestra continuing to play the rhythm and the soloist improvising either based on the rhythm or not.

### **Fantasia**

A ‘YES’ shows the existence of a fantasia at the beginning of the song. By using the term ‘fantasia’ I separate what it looks like more pre-arranged (that is the fantasia) from the more improvised style taxími. For instance, *Για σένα ξενυχτώ*<sup>56</sup> [ghiá séna xenihtó = I stay awake at night for you] is a song with a taxími in the beginning while *Γι’ αυτά τα μαύρα μάτια σου*<sup>57</sup> [ghi’ aftá ta mávra mátia sou = for these black eyes of yours] is a song with fantasia in the beginning.

### **Pitching problem**

A ‘YES’ shows the existence of problems in the sound of the recording, such as problems with the record’s revolutions per minute.

### **Comments**

Comments of musicological and historical context are written in this column. This column also includes translations of Greek words where needed. Comments of a different content are separated by two forward slashes (/). Generally, the comments are given succinctly. Therefore, a comment such as ‘EMI: only composer’ means that the lists of EMI give credit to Tsitsánis only as regards the music.

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<sup>56</sup> Columbia CG 1670 - DG 6344, recorded in December, 1937.

<sup>57</sup> Columbia CG 2067 - DG 6547, recorded in June, 1940.

In the next chapters, the details, characteristics and constituents of Vasilis Tsitsanis's work are unpacked. In order to prepare the reader for the special issues found in Greek popular style as evenly as possible, the examination and analysis of the subject matter, that is, Tsitsanis's style, under the prism of popular musicology and rebetology are critical. Therefore, a presentation of the aspects from the aforementioned disciplines that helped the analysis of the music are presented and analyzed in the next chapter. Moreover, the issues of the development of the style and of the development of research around it hold special places in this chapter.

**Part II**  
**History and Theory**

## Chapter 2

### Popular Musicology and Rebetology

#### Popular Musicology

Clearly, academic research on popular music has been developing rapidly;<sup>1</sup> this can be verified by the numerous theses, books, articles and so forth.<sup>2</sup> Let us look upon a problematic issue concerning this field of studies. If we take as a fact the domination of the English language in the published texts<sup>3</sup> and that it is usually Western scholars that undertake research on non-Western musics, a critical question arises: what if these non-Western countries develop popular music studies in their countries using, of course, their own language; will they have to take as facts the English nomenclature already established? What is the proper translation for the term ‘Critical Musicology’ in Greece? What about terms such as ‘etic’ and ‘emic’? Basically, all of these form a simple yet crucial question: how can we communicate with each other at an international level? Perhaps, ‘The International Association for the Study of Popular Music’ (IASPM) can play a vital role in this. Although there is something that brings together everyone involved in popular musicology, that is, the music industry and the recorded music,<sup>4</sup> there is need to find more connecting elements, one of them being the nomenclature. For instance, when the time comes to translate my thesis into Greek, how am I going to translate the term ‘popular musicology’? If I choose to use a term such as ‘*λαϊκή μουσικολογία*’ [laiki mousikologhía] or ‘*λαϊκολογία*’ [laikologhía – laikology], will this be accepted by scholars in Greece?

The primary source of my research is commercial studio recordings, for these are the basic media for the spread of a songwriter's work in the twentieth century. Moreover, the sound as well as other parts of the record such as the label, reveal a great deal of information, such as recording technology, performance techniques and

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<sup>1</sup> A small part of this chapter has been included in the notes of the compact disc ‘The Tsitsanis Collection – First Recordings (1): The Songs of Tsalousakis’ [CD Box]. Cultural Music Society ‘Vasilis Tsitsanis’ Publications (2012).

<sup>2</sup> The term ‘Popular Musicology’ used in Moore (2007), Scott (2009) and as a title for the electronic journal ‘Popular Musicology Online’ is the term that I, too, preferred to use within my thesis.

<sup>3</sup> See Moore (2007: xii) and Scott (2009: 4).

<sup>4</sup> Scott 2009: 2 and 4.

so forth. Finally, the sound recordings demonstrate, in a sense, the final decision of the songwriter as regards the final form and sound of their songs at a specific time period. Although it could be argued that, many times, the original/true compositional style of a songwriter (their musical identity) cannot always be revealed through commercial recordings, I see them as the only objective historical material. A question of what is an authentic musical style or simply authentic music is raised here. What *rembétiko* lovers in Greece think about their beloved songs, as regard their authenticity, matches, to a great extent, Derek Scott's argument that 'authentic music may be defined as the music that has the effect of making you believe in its truthfulness' (2009: 4). After all, sound recording is considered to be the primary medium of popular music (see also Warner 2009 and Wicke 2009). Moreover, 'popular music values are created by and organized around the music industry' (Brackett 2000: 19). However, the role of recordings in society has always been fluid and changing. For instance, during the 1930s and 1940s only taverns and cafés used to have gramophones and thus, the only way for someone to listen to a new record was by visiting one of these places and later on listening to songs on the radio, when and if there was any station broadcasting popular music, in our case, *rembétiko* and *laikó*. Later on, things changed: the medium (the record) became cheaper and their mass production, as well as that of playing devices, made them easier to purchase. All of these, naturally, constitute the sound recording industry and the development of recorded music which 'opened up the possibility for increased numbers of people to become listeners in their own time and space, a trend enhanced through mass-copied recording media, then through radio and TV, and finally through electronic means, such as internet distribution' (Bergh and Denora 2009: 104).

Similarly to most of the popular musical styles in the world, one cannot say for sure if the final output of a song was always Tsitsánis's creation. This is because we are examining a popular musical style that did not need to be based on musical scores.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, in most cases, the individual skills and the musicality of the musicians that took part in the recordings played an important role. This kind of 'composing' can also be described as 'collective composing' about which many interesting points are raised by Lars Lilliestam (1996: 209). It should always be borne in mind that 'most

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<sup>5</sup> A very good term is provided by Pennanen: 'urban memory-based music' (1999: 11). Lars Lilliestam names it 'on playing by ear' (1996).

successful popular music recordings are the result of teamwork, and such collective creative practice tends to undermine the still somewhat prevalent romantic notion of the single, artistic genius' (Warner 2009: 136). From published interviews of Evangelía Margharóni (Tsitsánis's pianist and accordionist for 34 years), as well as from an interview I personally conducted with her,<sup>6</sup> it is known that Tsitsánis trusted her with regards to many aspects of his music, such as the harmonization of his songs, the arrangements, and even changes to the melody. She, as well as other people who knew Tsitsánis, say that he used to call her and play melodies on the telephone while she would propose the harmony and give her opinion on the melodies. Furthermore, the same sources give evidence of Tsitsánis's yet another habit. Many times during his evening work, when he was particularly struck by an improvisation of his, he would turn around and ask Margharóni to write down what he had just played so that he would not forget it. Margharóni (who was a classically-trained pianist) remembers that she used to write down these notes in a personal notation 'language' on packs of cigarettes. Margharóni is now about 83 years old.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the case of Margharóni raises an interesting issue which also seems to be one of both *rembétiko*'s and *laikó*'s fundamental characteristics. This is the domination of 'manhood' over the genre. Without doubt, the musician's job (in *rembétiko* and *laikó*) is perceived as a man's job. Apart from this being a common belief amongst musicians and *rembétiko* enthusiasts, the facts also support it. Except for some female singers,<sup>8</sup> there has never been a woman songwriter or musician in *rembétiko-laikó* history. This makes Margharóni's case even more interesting, for it is not only that she was one of the very few musicians who stayed close to Tsitsánis for so many years, but it is the fact that she was a woman, something extremely rare, if not impossible, given the genre's ethics and principles.<sup>9</sup> The following figure (Figure 2.1) is a photograph where Margharóni is viewable (first from right).

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<sup>6</sup> The interview with Margharóni took place in June 2010.

<sup>7</sup> See also Margharóni (2009).

<sup>8</sup> For example, Róza Eskenázi, Sotiría Bélou, Stéla Haskíl, Marika Nínou.

<sup>9</sup> Regarding manhood see also Dawe (2007: 13).



**Figure 2.1: Photograph where Evangelía Margharóni can be seen (first from right; Tsitsánis is first from left; photograph given by Kóstas Tsitsánis)**

Lars Lilliestam underlines the necessity and importance of examining popular music outside the ‘borders’ and the standards that traditional musicology has created. In his article ‘On Playing by Ear’ (1996), Lilliestam tries to show the differences existing between written and unwritten music, that is, music played using scores and music played ‘by ear’ – popular music. He emphasizes the methodology that the researcher should use when dealing with popular musical styles which has to differ from traditional methodological ideas applied to notated music. Another issue raised in Lilliestam’s article is the importance of the musicians’ part and what their view can show about the music. Clearly, the terminology and the vocabulary used by the musicians is something that was totally neglected in previous research. It deserves attention because its examination is like examining the music from the inside. Lilliestam’s research raises critical questions such as ‘how songs are made, how people learn to play an instrument, how songs are taught and learned, how musicians think of and theorize their music – in different types of music played by ear’ (1996: 213). His work is of major importance for it is based on a different basis than

traditional musicology; a basis, though, that seems to be the alpha and the omega of popular musicology. Many issues discussed in Lilliestam's work concern, some directly while some others indirectly, research around laikó style which, ultimately, seems to be a rather problematic term for describing such a huge range of song styles.

### **In Need of a Term**

The term 'laikó' is extremely vague. Having been born into and lived in Greek society for 27 years, I will give some examples regarding the use of the terms rembétiko and laikó by my fellow countrymen and women. These examples are products of discussions with other people (musicians or not) and readings of printed material such as article in magazines, newspapers and so forth.

Whenever someone hears Márkos Vamvakáris's voice in a recording, Greeks, without any second thought, speak of a rembétiko song. I would call this 'voice identification'. Moreover, they roughly determine the date of the recording/song somewhere in between the period of 1930s and 1950s. However, if the same people listen to a contemporary recording of the same song, made by a modern singer, they then speak of a laikó song. The most bizarre part of the story has to do with the case when someone listens to the contemporary recording before they listen to the original one. When they then listen to the original one, it is quite possible that they will not even realize that they are listening to the very same song or, in a better scenario, they are shocked and wonder whether this is the same song (than the one they already know) or not. A good example is the George Dalaras's production at the Athens' Concert Hall which is a tribute to Vamvakáris.<sup>10</sup> In these CDs, there are many songs that seem unrecognizable, when one compares them with the original recordings. Obviously, modern arrangements, the use of more than one bouzouki, the use of a large ensemble, the use of a different singing style than Márkos's<sup>11</sup> and changed tempi can transform the song from rembétiko to laikó. And then comes the role of technology. Performing and/or recording a 1930 song in a country's best concert hall, with virtuoso bouzouki players using sophisticated arrangements and advanced

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<sup>10</sup> Two CDs, MINOS-EMI: 5099968855222 (2003).

<sup>11</sup> In fact, generally harsh voices such as Márkos's found in old recordings bring the same results in the categorizations made by the people.



technological media, is like making a movie based on a Socratic dialogue. You use the original text but, in the end, you know that this is only a reconstruction.

If we think that we have somehow cleared things up in terms of the characteristics of the *rembétiko* and how people categorize old and new songs, things seem to be even more complex for the term *laikó*. If we accept that indeed the transition towards *laikó* is somewhere around 1950s, how can we have Theodorakis, Hadjidakis, Tsitsánis, Kaldháras, Zambéatas, Hiótis and Koughioumtzís under the same label, that is *laikó*? Literally speaking, all of these are *laikó* songs, because they form an urban popular (= *laikó*) musical style which is intended and made for the people (*laós* = the people). On the other hand, Theodorakis's compositions range from Western style concertos and operas, to *laikó* songs (in the 1950s' *laikó* context); and yet, the same term, that is, '*laikó*' is applied to both of them. In other words, songwriters with different musical backgrounds and outputs are labelled under the same term, that is, *laikó*. As will be made clear in Chapter 3 regarding historical recordings, musical genres and styles cannot be labelled based only on dating. Thus, artists may fit into one or more genres simultaneously. There is a mixture of elements which fit together like a bespoke suit which can be applied to a song. From this, we can consider two things: first, we cannot change any part of the fit for there it will not be able to represent a particular style anymore, and secondly, the fit can and should be applied only to a single piece and not to an entire repertoire. In other words, if we consider the items of the preceding paragraph as being the 'ingredients' of a musical style (that is, parts of the fit), a different arrangement (such as the paradigm of Vamvakáris and the concert hall) would be like changing a button on a suit and thus, the suit that was worn on the original recording of Márkos (that is, labelled as *rembétiko*) cannot be the same for the contemporary recording, too. Using the same scepticism, we cannot categorize all songs made by a particular songwriter in a single musical style, especially if their careers have been long-lasting, such as in the case of Vasílis Tsitsánis, for it would have been almost impossible for someone to compose music based on one musical style, that is, using the very same ingredients, again and again.

A great sample of this confusion amongst the people regarding the terms *rembétiko* and *laikó* is to be found in the text written outside the Vamvakáris museum, next to his bust in the island of Síros (Figure 2.2).



Figure 2.2: Vamvakáris's bust in Síros (the author, July 2011)

One can read on the plaque:

Here, the great master of laikó song and craftsman of rembétiko was born and lived his early years of his life.

It should be noted that the English text found below the Greek and French versions is not a correct translation of the Greek one. However, one can notice the words ‘rembétiko’ and ‘popular’ in the English text, too.

## A Changing Musical Style

Research has revealed that the *rembétiko* musical style has been changing.<sup>12</sup> The impact that some historical events have had on this change is of great importance and thus, they are referred to and examined below. We should bear in mind the interrelation between some of the events, for these were never isolated. They were either the aftermath or the cause of others.<sup>13</sup>

The Metaxás's junta ruled from 1936 to 1940. The military regime imposed censorship on all recordings and this, unavoidably changed the recording repertoire. As Ole Smith argues, 'the imposition of censorship in 1936-1937 provokes a fundamental change of themes in the recording songs which are our only evidence. References to the underworld and to drugs disappear' (1991: 184). However, Pennanen insists that 'although the regime promulgated a censorship law on 19 August 1936, it was at first more concerned with newspapers and books than the recording industry (cf. Kofas 1983:98-100; Hering 1996)'.<sup>14</sup> The greatest 'enemies' of the censor were the Turkish-based *gazeler*<sup>15</sup> and the hashish songs.<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that it was in this period that Greek society greatly tended towards Westernization. This affected almost every aspect of Greek life such as dressing, food, entertainment, thinking, language and more. In other words, the lyrics can change (and they did change) but that does not mean that the style changes; still, the sonic aesthetic core remains. This is obvious if someone compares the non-hashish songs with the hashish ones that lived until today. There have been some intervals that the censorship was not in effect, and that is when the hashish songs were recorded.

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<sup>12</sup> At this point, a critical question is raised: is *rembétiko* still alive today? Some musicians and *rembétiko* lovers argue that, perhaps in its special way, *rembétiko* is still alive, while some others that it is not. See, for example, the discussion on the 'rebetiko forum' on the Internet:

<<http://www.rebetiko.gr/forum/viewtopic.php?t=531&postdays=0&postorder=asc&start=0>>

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix A: *Tsitsánis Chronology of Events*.

<sup>14</sup> Pennanen (2004: 11).

<sup>15</sup> Singular, *gazel*: 'a vocal improvisation on a chosen poetic text in flowing rhythm to compositional systems called *makams*. The singer tries to create four sections, in which the third contains a modulation or alternatively a switch to the high register of the *makam*. *Gazel* is performed without or with a rhythmic *ostinato* accompaniment and it can be classical or semi-classical in character' (Pennanen 2004: 9).

<sup>16</sup> For details about the censorship, see Pennanen (2003) and Politis (2005b). See also Chapter 3 about the license number [*αριθμός αδείας* = *arithmós adhías*] that is written on many records.

For example, the first months after World War 2 when many songwriters run to record these previously prohibited songs. Others went to the USA (these trips are examined below) where they recorded these songs. Finally, other songs lived through the oral tradition.

World War 2 (1940-1945), the civil war (1946-1949) and the second military junta, also known as the ‘Colonels’ Regime’ (1967-1974), were events whose aftermath inspired themes for the lyrics of many songs. Many of these songs had lyrics that were allegorical. We are, obviously, dealing with an ideological aspect that is always present in popular music.<sup>17</sup> In general, all these are parts of ‘the notion of the musical code’ which ‘permit us to speculate about the connection between the musical sounds we hear and the “human universe” implied by the lyrics’.<sup>18</sup>

Continuing with the analysis and assessment of important historical events, scholars have coined the term, *περίοδος της Ινδοκρατίας* [períodhos tis indhokratías], that is, Indocracy period, which is a key period when many great changes took effect. This is the time when movies from India started to be shown in Greece, from approximately 1954. These movies contained many popular and traditional songs from India. Many famous and not so famous songwriters of that period took some of these songs and supplied them with Greek lyrics (it was either themselves or professional lyricists who would do the job).<sup>19</sup> Then, these people recorded the changed songs using Greek-style popular orchestras, and by selling the records, achieved great profits without people knowing the truth about their origins and giving credit to the original songwriters.<sup>20</sup> In his autobiography Vasilis Tsitsánis talks about this period and blames the songwriters that took part in this ‘scandal’ (1980: 39). The

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<sup>17</sup> See, for example, songs: *Κάποια μάνα αναστενάζει* [kápia mána anastenázi = a mother sighs] recorded in 1947 (Parlophone GO 3796 - B. 74100-I); *Της γερρακίνας γιος* [tis gherakínas ghiós = haggard woman’s son] recorded in 1975 (MINOS-EMI 7YCG 5234 - 2J-064 70172); *Της κοινωνίας η διαφορά* [tis kinonías i dhiaforá = the dissimilarity of the society] recorded in 1980 (Minos 7XGO 10302 - MSM 391 / 480056).

<sup>18</sup> David Brackett (2000: 9 [quoted by David Laing, quoted, in turn, in Middleton, *Studying Popular Music*, 228]).

<sup>19</sup> The book by Helen Abadzi and Manólis Tasoúlas (1998) is a great source of information regarding the very important period of the Indocracy. The book even contains lists of the songs that have been copied from Hindi film music.

<sup>20</sup> A Greek-style popular orchestra of this period would consist of one or two bouzoukis, a piano, a double bass, drums and percussion and a Spanish or acoustic steel-strung guitar.

following statement from Tsitsánis shows his sadness, as well as the impact that this situation had on him:

Αρμόδιοι μουσικολόγοι ας ερευνήσουν σε βάθος το τεράστιο αυτό θέμα με τις επιπτώσεις του τις σημερινές, και για το μέλλον, και ας βάλουν στον μαυροπίνακα τους υπεύθυνους.

[May specialized musicologists research this issue extensively, and its consequences today and in the future, and may they put whoever is responsible on the blacklist.]

Inevitably, many elements of the Hindi music style ‘stayed’ in Greece after this period ended. New rhythms appeared and were transformed in order to match Greek ears, and which year by year became musts on Greek stages and venues with *laikó* music. Alongside the rhythms, such as the *dādrā*, new scales and modes also took their place in the Greek discography. Evidence uncovered in my research shows that a major reason for the decline in the number of Tsitsánis’s recordings was this new era that Greek *laikí* music has entered, mainly beginning with the affection of Hindi music found in Hindi films that used to be played in Greece.<sup>21</sup> Rather obviously, Tsitsánis did not succeed in reciprocating this era’s demands, either due to his refusal to write in this modern style, or due to problems he may have encountered in writing in this style. However, Tsitsánis succeeded in making some major hits in this period’s style, too. Although few in number, the payment receipts as well as the fact that these songs are still played in venues in Greece attest to these songs’ popularity, both amongst the audience and the musicians.<sup>22</sup>

A further major influence was exerted by the trips made by many Greek musicians to the USA; trips that seem to have started as early as the 1910s-1920s (see also Smith 1995). The most important reason for these musicians to take these trips

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<sup>21</sup> The first Hindi film was played in 1954.

<sup>22</sup> See, for instance, songs: *Τα λιμάνια* [ta limánia = the ports], Columbia 7XCG 1570 - SCDG 3197, recorded on July 24, 1962; *Όσο με μαλώνεις* [óso me malónis = as long as you berate me], HMV 7XGA 1593 - 7PG 3216, recorded on November 10, 1962; and *Φαρμακωμένα χείλη* [farmakoména hili = poisoned lips], HMV 7XGA 2535 - 7PG 3586, recorded on May 31, 1966.

was their ambition for an international career, a better job, or simply for shows at places where many Greek migrants lived. Manólis Hiótiis (1921 – 1970), a bouzouki virtuoso and songwriter, was one of the foremost innovators. He travelled to the USA twice for concerts and returned, bringing to Greece his experiences from musical styles such as Jazz and Afro-Cuban (Latin American).<sup>23</sup> By combining these elements with the already existing multicultural style, he created a new school both in terms of performance practice and songwriting. Something remarkable in terms of Tsitsánis's recording activity is the fact that Hiótiis influenced the music of Tsitsánis. This is obvious in some songs where Hiótiis took part apparently as the bouzouki player.<sup>24</sup> The two most significant contributions of Hiótiis were the addition of a fourth pair of strings on the bouzouki and the utilization of the musical elements that he brought with him from North America.<sup>25</sup> There is a huge corpus of songs, creations of Hiótiis, based on this style (regarding his life, see Kasítas 2009).

One should also take into consideration some more interrelated historical events of social, musical and technological importance, beyond those discussed above. For instance, when the taste of the audience changed, unavoidably, the market aimed to adapt accordingly. The 'role' of the style itself has also changed, for what was once the music of the underground became indexical of the newly-emerging middle class after World War 2. The 'transition' from the hashish-den to luxury bouzouki clubs (known in Greece as *μπουζουκτσίδικα* or *τα μπουζούκια* [bouzouktsídhika – ta bouzoukía]) was not a simple fact, after all. Manuel's points that 'urbanization and modernization effect qualitative as well as quantitative social

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<sup>23</sup> Hiótiis's first trip to the USA was in approximately 1957-1958. According to account, he stayed there for thirteen months, while according to Méri Linda, with whom he travelled, they stayed for two years. The second trip was in 1964. He stayed there for four years (Andónis Kasítas 2009: 88-9 and 101-4).

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, songs: *Η συνοικία μου* [i sinikía mou = my neighbourhood], HMV 7XGA 8287 - PG 2858, recorded in 1960 and *Μεθυσμένος θα 'ρθω απόψε* [methisménos thá 'rtho ápópsē = I'll come tonight drunk], HMV 7XGA 7547 - PG 2832, recorded in 1960.

<sup>25</sup> Some Greek musicians and aficionados disagree, and claim that the fourth pair of strings had been added years before. I could not verify this claim and thus, I refer to Hiótiis as being responsible for this change. Anyway, even if there was someone else that initially added the fourth pair, Manólis Hiótiis was the one that made this 'new' instrument known. However, there are many of Hiótiis's compositions that he recorded using the traditional three-string bouzouki, based on the rembétiko style. One more notable contribution of Hiótiis, connected to the introduction of the four-string bouzouki, is the introduction of the electric bouzouki which is examined in Chapter 3.

changes' and that 'the evolution of popular musics, then, must be seen as paralleling the evolution of new societies' (1990: 16-7) are important here. This is precisely the case with regard to the transition from *rembétiko* to *laikó*. In terms of the technological aspect, the evolution of recording technology along with the change in the construction of the instruments, as well as the introduction of new instruments in the *laikó* band, such as the electric bass and the drums and percussion, gave birth to new orchestrations, new arrangements, new performing techniques and new sound-mixing techniques. Manuel points out that 'these latter (the former inhabitants of Smyrna and Istanbul) brought with them their own Turkish-influenced urban musics, which eventually evolved into a commercial Greek popular music in conjunction with the rise of the mass media' (1989: 82).<sup>26</sup> Moreover, as has been analyzed above, the borrowing of elements from foreign musical styles was interrelated to the aforementioned social and technological changes.

A major chapter in this story is the change of the relationships between musicians. The 'old school' style can be characterized by the leading role played by the composer. In most cases, the composer was also the lyricist, a skilled bouzouki player and a singer. This is evidenced by recalling some of the most popular names of the period such as: Márkos Vamvakáris (1905-1972); Vasilis Tsitsánis (1915-1984); Apóstolos Kaldháras (1922-1990); Ghiánis Papaioánou (1914-1972); Apóstolos Hatzihrístos (1904-1959); Ghióorghos Mitsákis (1921-1993). All of them (and many more) manifested the aforementioned characteristics. This practice could have been brought by the musicians from Asia Minor. Although there were younger composers that kept up with this tradition, such as Ghióorghos Zambétas (1925-1992), with a repertoire based on *laikó* and (for some of them) on other syncretic styles as well, it seems that *laikó* style changed this principle. The 'singer-star' was a characteristic that represented the new style. This is made obvious by photographs from the pre-*laikó* period which show the players of the basic instruments sitting in a front row of chairs and the players of the other accompanying instruments sitting behind them. For example, the composer with his bouzouki should sit in the front row along with another bouzouki player, the guitarist, a female singer and, occasionally the

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<sup>26</sup> However, the role of the recording technology needs in-depth examination and, thus, it is examined separately in Chapter 3.

accordionist while the double bass, the piano and the percussionists would be situated at the back.<sup>27</sup>

This image was later replaced by one of a top-name singer sitting or standing alone in front of everyone else (something which is very common today, in Greece and in other countries) with the rest of the band behind them. However, the major difference is not the way they were seated but the fact that a lead singer rather than a composer is at the top of the pyramid. Whereas some years ago the venues' owners used to sign contracts with composers, in the new era, the owners sign contracts with singers who became more popular than the composers. Obviously, the determining link in the chain was the rise of the recording industry, for it was this which determined the new hierarchies. As Manuel convincingly argues, 'popular music in capitalist societies usually involves a "star system"'<sup>28</sup> and thus, we can consider the 'singer star' as being a part of this system.<sup>29</sup> It should be emphasized though that the advent of a cheap medium (the 33rpm record) was a crucial moment that opened the road to these changes. We should also bear in mind that this situation transformed the life of the musician; from having as their only option to work during the night under difficult circumstances, they could later have the chance to become a professional musician, to sign contracts with venue owners and record companies and to earn more money than they had done before.

The comparisons with 'the past' and 'the future' reveal the differences, the similarities and the relations among the different periods. Here, one deals with two kinds of comparisons: comparing, on the one hand, his music with itself (that is, the changes observed in his style from period to period) and, on the other hand, comparing his style with the styles of other composers, before, along and after him. Interesting, yet critical questions arise: in what way has Tsitsánis affected the next generation(s) of popular song? In what way was he affected by the songwriters before him? The major problem, of course, lies in the fact that we are not talking about a static event, isolated from other events that happened around it. To put it another way, Tsitsánis's style, just like other musical styles in the world, did not just arrive, stop the

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<sup>27</sup> Obviously this is only an example regarding disposition, for this also depended on several other factors such as the particular period, the size of the venue, the budget of the venue and so forth.

<sup>28</sup> Manuel (1990: 3).

<sup>29</sup> See also Brackett's statement (2000: 2) regarding the 'power' of the singer.



previous one, play its role, then come to an end and leave the others to continue. We are dealing with an interaction where one is affecting the other before, next to, and after him. The most serious question here is: when he enters into the business (composing, recording and playing in venues), is he following the style, or, is the style following him? And then, one must also deal with another issue: is he aware of this situation? Is he creating music consciously? Is he aware of the changes he introduces and where they lead the style to?<sup>30</sup> And if he is aware, it would seem like someone (in this case Tsitsánis) is solving ‘equations’ in order to produce hits and to sell records, because this is what it has happened.<sup>31</sup> And then, how can this be possible, when everybody speaks of the great emotionality to be found in his songs?

Tsitsánis’s style is based on the traditional standards that many others songwriters used before him. Unavoidably, his repertoire is mostly based on the *rembétiko*-traditional rhythms and modes. Owing to the fact that his career lasted for many years, inevitably, his compositional style changed from time to time. By reading and watching his interviews, we can understand that he was very conscious of the changes he made. Oral stories also support the theory that he could understand the changes and the development that was happening in the music industry, such as the demands of the market, the desires of the audience and generally the trends that music industry was promoting.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, he always tried to change his music in order to be in vogue. However, we should bear in mind the characteristics he introduced immediately when the Columbia factory came back to business after the end of World War 2. From his interviews we learn that he was preparing a whole new repertoire consisting of new songs that he composed during the war, when living in Thessaloniki. Therefore, when he got back to his recording business, he was ready to record those new songs which seem to be the early stage of the so-called *laikó* style. Generally, the period of the 1940s and 1950s was a period of great change, much of

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<sup>30</sup> See Michael (1996: 70) regarding the role of Tsitsánis in creating ‘the new and more authentically Greek *laiki mousiki*’.

<sup>31</sup> The payment receipts that were kindly provided by Tsitsánis’s son Kóstas, show that indeed Tsitsánis’s songs were among the best-sellers of the period.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, his songs during the Indocracy period which were affected by Hindi-style songs (for example: *Ο κουμπάρος ο Τσιτσάνης* [o koumbáros o Tsitsánis = Tsitsánis the best-man], HMV 7XGA 1821 - 7PG 3335, recorded on September 10, 1963; and *Πονάω και μ’ αρέσει* [ponáo ke m’ arési = I pain and I like it], HMV 7XGA 2399 - 7PG 3540, recorded on December 11, 1965.).

which are credited to Tsitsánis and are examined within this thesis.<sup>33</sup> Since Thessaloniki has been mentioned, one should not forget the multicultural nature of the city due to the various nationalities that used to (and still) make up its population. Written sources give evidence of Greeks, Jews, refugees from Asia Minor and Pontus, Turks, Bulgarians, Gypsies and other ethnicities that used to be part of the city's population.<sup>34</sup> It is rather obvious that someone was able to listen to many different musical styles at this time, and perhaps this is what also happened with Tsitsánis. A unique example would be the case of the singer Stéla Haskíl who was a Sephardic Jew, that is, a Jew from the Iberian Peninsula. Haskíl was a very popular *rembétiko* singer and recorded songs of Tsitsánis too (see Chapter 6 for interactions of the Sephardic song with the *rembétiko* and *laikó* style).

### **Musical Analysis**

The analysis used within this thesis can be divided into three major parts: 1) comparisons; 2) transcriptions; and 3) statistics. The comparative methodology reveals many important elements. For instance, the development of the performance of a particular rhythm is revealed by comparing either Tsitsánis's songs with songs written by songwriters that lived before and after him, or by simply comparing early Tsitsánis's songs with contemporary ones. The musical analysis reveals information about Tsitsánis's songwriting style/technique and its development from the beginning of his recording career until its end. As Tenzer argues:

It is a given that analysis – whether based on focused interior listening, working with a composer's score, or by making one's own transcription – is a worthy exercise because it brings us to a more intensive relationship with the particularities of sound. What arises next is the question of how we interpret and present our perceptions and decisions (Tenzer 2006: 8).

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<sup>33</sup> See Chapter 3 'number of recordings by year'.

<sup>34</sup> See Hastaoglou 1997 (for instance, p. 494).

There are passages from several songs in the form of musical scores that are used as paradigms in order to help explain the findings of the research.<sup>35</sup> However, one should be aware of several problems when using ‘Western notation to “describe” music for which it was not intended’ (Brackett 2000: 27-8). After all, transcriptions of recorded popular songs ‘represent recorded sounds, not directions for performers to produce those sounds’ (Brackett 2000: 29). Finally, statistical tables and graphs play a critical role within the entire thesis because research has shown their great importance for the better understanding of various facts and issues. Therefore, the statistics that have been created from the T.E.D. accompany each of the chapters according to their relevance. Ultimately, the result of the analyses ‘is the identification and grouping of manifest sound patterns and their relationships to governing schema in a work, repertoire, or genre, and especially the compelling musical tension that results as the patterns become set off in relief from the schema’ (Tenzer 2006: 6).

Amongst all the works studied, the most useful, as well as most relevant to this specific research were: *Analyzing Popular Music*, edited by Allan F. Moore (2003) which presents various models of analysis for many different music genres according to the views of outstanding researchers in the field of popular music studies. *Communicative Contract Analysis: an Approach to Popular Music Analysis* by Thomas Shave (2008) proposes models of analysis that seem proper for this specific research. Peter Manuel’s *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World* (1990) examines *rembétiko* music in one of its chapters. It is an extremely useful text because it can work as the basis for someone who wishes to research the *rembétiko* genre. David Brackett’s *Interpreting Popular Music* (2000) opens up new horizons in analyzing popular musics through the utilization of technology. By using, for instance, spectrum analyzers, or by creating graphs of harmonic proportions in order to illustrate a song’s harmony, he finds new means of analyzing popular musics. Moreover, Michael Tenzer’s *Analytical Studies in World Music* (2006) includes various analytical models applied to a variety of different musical cultures, such as flamenco, Afro-Cuban and Balkan. These models as well as Tenzer’s own introduction help the *rembétiko* researcher to build up their own model of analysis, for there are musical aspects

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<sup>35</sup> The so-called ‘paradigmatic analysis’, as described by Brackett (2000: 26) and Middleton (1990: 183-9), was used, too. See also Tenzer (2006: 6-7) regarding ways in which the sound patterns can be mobilized.

among the aforementioned musical cultures that are similar. Derek Scott's *The Ashgate Research Companion to Popular Musicology* (2009) and Allan Moore's *Critical Essays in Popular Musicology* (2007) are truly companions to any researcher who wishes to research on and analyze popular music styles. The texts found within do not only concern various musical cultures, something that allows them to address a large corpus of readers and researchers, but they also employ several analytical methods of different natures, something that takes the analyses further and the researchers deeper as regards the understanding and interpretation of popular musics. Finally, the *High Analysis of Low Music* by Dai Griffiths (1999) is a review of various systems of existing 'high-art' analysis as applied to popular forms. It also contains the writer's own views and propositions regarding analysis. The fact that the Greek popular and *rembétiko* music has not yet been subject to a model of analysis is an issue of considerable significance. Hence, there is no model that has been tried out or even created for this specific music genre.

At this point, I have to mention the great contribution of technology, the role of which was catalytic in my project. Without specific technological media, it would have been more than difficult for some issues to be handled. These media can be categorized in two main groups: the electronic software and the electronic apparatuses. The T.E.D., as well as sound editing and mixing software that were used for several reasons, such as to clear old recordings from noises, are some of the media of the first category.<sup>36</sup> In addition, specialized earphones and sound speakers that made easier the hearing of details can be included in the second category. The technological means available today to the researcher are more than necessary, for they accelerate several processes and, thus, they save much time. Moreover, they make possible things that looked impossible in the past. In general, they are 'weapons' in the hands of researchers that can help them to innovate and promote research in their field.

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<sup>36</sup> Several issues regarding the utilization of technology were inspired by Brackett methodologies in analyzing his musical texts (2000).

## **Rebetology**

The study of rembétiko became firmed up in academic circles, during the late 90s, as ‘rebetology’. It has been accepted into the academy as the object of serious study. Rebetology could be considered as a subfield that draws on the disciplines of ethnomusicology and popular music studies. Rebetology has flourished during recent years, and important academic work can be found all over the world. Although there has been a huge evolution in academic research on rembétiko, Tsitsánis’s music, which is so important to the musical evolution of Greece, is almost completely absent within this research. Yet, Tsitsánis’s music can be found almost anywhere a live music band exists in Greece. Even in a performance based on Greek rock or other popular music styles, it is highly unlikely that a Tsitsánis song would not to be played during the performance.

## **Academic and Non-academic Treatment of Rembétiko**

It is not only that too few academic scholars have researched rembétiko music, but the majority of them have viewed the subject from almost all its possible aspects, apart from the musicological one (musical analysis). Therefore, we have anthropological works, ethnographical works and historical works; but only a few publications talk about the music, such as Pennanen’s work. Furthermore, the problems seem not to end here, for there are important publications such as Stathis Gauntlett’s and Pennanen’s academic theses, Conway Morris’s old (but seminal) article about Greek café music, the proceedings of the third conference of the ICTM Makam Study Group, which are unfortunately out of print and difficult to locate, something that is true for old publications on the subject by Greek authors too, especially in newspapers and magazines.

## **Key Studies in Rebetology**

There are some scholars whose work has contributed much to the evolution of these studies. The initial efforts started with Gail Holst in 1975 and her book *Road to Rembetika*. The book is quite old and we could say that it is a personal view of rembétiko and generally a quite personal and emotional demonstration of the style,

rather than a scientific approach. She uses, though, many simple and small explanations for basic terms, but with very clear and comprehensible writing. The book contains many historical elements which can give a very clear idea of *rembétiko* as it was in the very first years of its existence and how it developed. Although the author lets the reader recognize her emotional connection with this music style, her writing and description about almost all of the matters of the book remains subjective, clear and, most importantly, full of easy comprehensible details. The first critical as well as academic study was made by Stathis Gauntlett in 1985 in his PhD thesis (Oxford University) in which he investigates the terminology and the origins of *rembétiko*.

A unique case is the doctoral thesis and, generally, all the published material of the Finnish scholar Risto Pekka Pennanen. Pennanen touches on several aspects of *rembétiko*. His study is important and relevant to my thesis in the following ways: he did fieldwork in Greece and tried to enlighten and clarify some aspects of *rembétiko*'s theory and performance. The thesis is one of the very few that deals with the Turkish *makams*<sup>37</sup> and compares them with their 'descendants', the Greek popular *dhromi*. He tries to clarify terminology; for instance, he talks about the term *Smirnéiko* and its problematic usage by the Greeks. However, I do take issue with some of Pennanen's points due to some critical mistakes he made, such as typing wrong chords in music scores that have been created by him. Furthermore, he is creating and basing personal theories on such music scores regarding the usage and the way that some popular modes work (1999: 94, Figure 14: the last D chord is wrong; it should have been a Bm chord). The problems seem not to stop there; Pennanen speaks not only about the modes but about the rhythms and the way of performing them too, ending up sometimes with incorrect statements (1999: 104-105, Figure 24: the recording he labels 'C' is mentioned that utilizes the *koftó zeimbékiko*.<sup>38</sup> A better listening of the recording shows that it too utilizes the *palió zeimbékiko*, or *syrianó*, as Pennanen chooses to call it). However, the work of Pennanen is very important, and one of the

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<sup>37</sup> For a clearer understanding of the *makams* see Touma 1971 and Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>38</sup> The *koftó zeimbékiko* is a particular performance technique of the *zeimbékiko* rhythm which three main performance techniques are: *sirianó* or old *zeimbékiko*, *koftó* or new *zeimbékiko* and mixed *zeimbékiko* (see Chapter 6).

very few studies that exist and can be used as a basis for further research, as it raises fundamental issues, very much connected to my project, too.

Despoina Michael's article (1996) seems to be the only academic publication totally devoted to Vasilis Tsitsanis. Although she did not touch on any musicological issues, her article succeeds in giving valuable explanations regarding confusing issues and historical facts, like the reasons and the chronology of the usage of the word *laikó* instead of *rembétiko*. Dafni Tragaki's *Rembétiko Worlds* (2007) is based on her PhD thesis. It deals with the musical situation in the city of Thessaloniki at specific places where *rembétiko* music happenings used to take place. Her ethnomusicological and ethnographical views grant to the studies new aspects and new pieces of information that have never been mentioned before. By assessing the past and by speaking of the two *rembétiko* revivals that occurred in Greece, she moves into 'the field' where she describes her personal experiences with musicians and live shows in Thessaloniki. The analysis of the songs that she was listening to during her study is another important element of the book. She also clearly shows how *rembétiko* was implicated in varying political stances and changing political ideologies. The work by Petrópoulos *Ρεμπέτικα Τραγούδια* [*rembétika traghoúdhia* = *rembétiko* songs] (1996), although very large, contains many mistakes and misleading conclusions. In addition, many people, mostly aficionados, based their studies on Petrópoulos's book, thus they continue this wrongly-based type of work, something which is recognized by the majority of academic researchers nowadays.<sup>39</sup>

Once more, the musicological point of view is remarkable by its absence. The Greeks published works with basic subjects such as: 1) citing Tsitsanis's lyrics or lists of songs, including comments and other type of information on the recordings, such as the catalogue number (Tsitsanis 1980; Maniatis 1994 and 2001; Anastasiou 1995 and 2004; and Alexiou 2001); 2) biographies, photographic material, myths and tales around the lives of popular *rembétiko* figures (Vamvakáris 1978; Loulé-Theodoráki 1997; and Adhamídhou 1998).

However, there are works that completely differ from the aforementioned. Although not written by academics and, once more, most of them do not deal with the music itself, they are objective, rigorous in a unique way and, most importantly, they

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<sup>39</sup> Regarding some comments on Petrópoulos's work see Beaton 1986; Pappas 1999; Pennanen 2004; Holst 2006; and Tragaki 2007.

show that their writers are well aware of academic standards and the development of the research.

Kóstas Vlisídhis, for instance, published three works (2002, 2004 and 2006). Moreover, his work *Ρεμπέτικο Τραγούδι* [rembético traghoúdi = rembético song] consists of translations of three studies by Stathis Gauntlett.<sup>40</sup> The book also contains an interview with Tsitsánis by Gauntlett. In his book (2002) *For a Bibliography of Rembético (1873 – 2001)*, Vlisídhis managed something that seemed to be unachievable in the past. After long research and efforts, he put together 2396 bibliographic references to rembético in a single book; 2262 are from Greek literature and 134 from foreign literature. Alone, this work is a tremendous source for researchers, aficionados and music lovers. Obviously, what Vlisídhis offered to my project was a unique list of perhaps every possible reference to rembético and Tsitsánis, a job that would require a lot of time visiting libraries and personal archives.

Manólis Athanasákis published his study with the support of the journal *Λαϊκό Τραγούδι* entitled *Βασίλης Τσιτσάνης – 1946* (2006). The book deals with one of the most fruitful years of Tsitsánis's career. Apart from the socio-historical background that is given in the beginning of the book, Athanasákis deals with the 1946 songs from several views; that is, discographical, historical and (most importantly) musicological (musical analysis). His comments are important and serious, while the music scores of the songs (which are perhaps the only correct and most detailed available) are used in the analysis of the songs.

The very next chapter (Chapter 3) deals with several aspects of the recordings themselves. The subject is examined from various angles, such as the examination and assessment of the sources available in Greece, in terms of research on historical recordings, the pieces of information that the labels of the records can provide, information of technological as well as historical aspect that can be retrieved from the sound itself, the recording technology and its development, and more. Chapter 3 also includes analyses on statistical data exported from the Tsitsánis Electronic Database which shed light on issues regarding the route of Tsitsánis's recording activity. The historical recordings themselves can be considered as the basic implement for the

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<sup>40</sup> The third one has been written directly in Greek by Gauntlett.



spread of popular musical styles across the world (of course with some exceptions). Ultimately, all of the above are linked to the market and the recording industry which are strongly bound to popular music and thus, they should always be part of research undertaken on it.

## Chapter 3

### The World of Historical Recordings

#### Source Criticism: Some Problems

There is only one academic reference with the name Tsitsánis in its title.<sup>1</sup> This is Michael's article *Tsitsánis and the Birth of the New "Laikó Tragoudi"* (1996).<sup>2</sup> There are of course many references within books and articles to Tsitsánis but these are just a few lines. The bibliography concerning issues such as the Greek laikó modes, the Greek laikó rhythms, the laikó-rembétiko harmony and many more, is limited. A few publications have been made by two or three famous bouzouki players, such as Nikolópoulos (n.d.), but nothing at all has been done at an academic level (apart from Pennanen 1999) in order to throw light on issues which seem to be problematic for the continuation and the development of the studies.

This rarity of exclusively musicological work is what possibly explains the indifference of (especially Greek) musicologists regarding rembétiko. However, some notable exceptions are: the bachelor theses of Anéstis Barbátsis (2008<sup>3</sup>) and of Ghiórgchos Evangélou (2008<sup>4</sup>) that were carried out in the Technological Educational Institution of Epirus in the Faculty of Music Technology and its Department of Laikó and Traditional Music in Árta, Greece. Also worth-mentioning are the bachelor theses of Hrístos Kesikiádhis (2008<sup>5</sup>) and of Pétrós Papás (2009<sup>6</sup>) that were carried out at the University of Macedonia at the Department of Music Science and Art in Thessaloniki,

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<sup>1</sup> Part of this chapter has been published (in Greek) as the article 'The Recording Career of Vasílis Tsitsánis (1936-1983). An Analysis of his Music from Commercial Recordings – Four Major Problematic Issues of the Research', Web-based journal for the laikó song (2011). In addition, another part of this chapter has been submitted and is under review as the article 'Source Criticism in Rembétiko and Laikó Styles [Greek Urban Popular] through the Recording Career of Vasílis Tsitsánis (1936-1983)', *The Journal of Popular Music Studies*.

<sup>2</sup> This work by Michael is been mentioned numerous times within the thesis.

<sup>3</sup> 'Vasílis Tsitsánis – Analysis of the Early Work of the Composer, Tríkala Period 1932-1936'.

<sup>4</sup> 'The Laikó Guitar in Rembétiko Song of the Period 1928-1935 and its Evolution through the Personal Style of Kóstas Dhoúsas, A. Kostís, Ghiórgchos Katsarós, Kóstas Skarvélis, Vangélis Papázoghlu, Stélios Hrisínis, Spíros Peristéris and Manólis Híótis'.

<sup>5</sup> 'Rembétiko Song during the Period of 1922-1956'.

<sup>6</sup> 'Márkos Vamvakáris in his First Discographical Period (1932-1940)'.

Greece. However, there is a major problem with the aforementioned works: due to the fact that they are degree essays they are not broadly available. An extremely important publication for the advancement of research is also the book of Voúlgharis and Vandarákis, *the Urban Song in Greece of the Mid-War. Rebétika of Smyrna and Piraeus* (2007).<sup>7</sup> The lack of research though, is not the only factor posing difficulties. It is also the fact that most of the Greek authors that are examined further below, endeavour to penetrate unknown (to them) fields.<sup>8</sup> Despite these scholars' efforts to contribute to progress in the field, it is more than obvious in their work that they were unaware of basic methodological research principles. Similar points have been discussed by other scholars, too, as the following two examples demonstrate:

For most Greek musicologists, urban memory-based music has been the Low Other that is not worth researching: the analysis of Greek popular music has been largely left to Western ethnomusicologists (Pennanen 1999: 11).

Instead we find a lot of journalist and amateurish writing, sometimes even with scholarly pretensions – not to mention decidedly pseudo-scholarly offerings to a public that cannot in most cases see the difference (Smith 1989: 179).

Further below, I shall defend my arguments by referring to examples from several publications.

Dhionísis Maniátis gathered 24,000 song titles that were recorded in Greece using the 78 rpm technology, from 1886 to 1961 (Maniátis 2006). As mentioned in his introduction, due to the fact that some people refused to provide him with information and open up their archives, 209 records, that is, 418 songs are missing. Obviously, we are dealing with a research of discographical character. In Greece, unfortunately, even the very few samples of research with a discographical content are not scientifically

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<sup>7</sup> This work's importance is attested by the numerous references to it within this thesis, especially in Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>8</sup> Smith (1991), Aulin and Vejleskov (1991: 12-23) and Pennanen (2004: 18; 1995) also write on problematic issues found in the work of many aficionados.

based and are characterized by the lack of a proper, or even total lack of, methodology. Thus, these works are not just faulty they are also dangerous for research that attempts to fulfil academic standards, due to the fact that they contain fallacious published data which might mislead or delay the research, something that has been happening all the time until today. For example, many bachelor theses from Greek universities that I managed to find and study base their songs' dating on these misleading works. Unavoidably, the initial sources of information in my research project were these works. The great amount of time spent on checking the contents of these books could have been spent on other aspects of the research. Maniátis's catalogues are categorized based on the recording company and according to chronology. For each song there are the following ten columns (Table 3.1):

Company
Record Number
Matrix Print
Title
Singers
Composers
Lyricists
Year
Genre
Rhythm

**Table 3.1: The columns in Maniátis (2006)**

Although many problematic points can be noticed in each of the columns, the most major problems can be spotted in the last two. Regarding the genre, even nowadays there are multiple discussions over how genres and musical styles should be named and labelled, many of which can be found in Pennanen's articles (1999, 2004 and 2005). Thus, since it is not yet agreed and scientifically verified, the use of such terms is incongruous. This is basically the main difference between an academic and a non-academic text. The following table (Table 3.2) shows some of the genre column's strange, misleading and vague definitions.

Page	Song Title	Genre mentioned
11	Τικ τακ [Tik tak]	Soft rembético
99	Αγωνία [aghonía = agony]	Soft
387	Τρελή ζωή [trelí zoí = crazy life]	From a film
167	Εθνικός ύμνος [ethnikós ímnos = national anthem]	National

**Table 3.2: Genre definition errors in Maniátis (2006)**

As one can observe, the genre column far from defines the genre of the recorded music, since we get many different interpretations. Being aware of all the musical styles so that one can tell the differences between them seems to be impossible even for a musician and/or musicologist. Unfortunately, one can detect mistakes in the rhythm column, too. Here (Table 3.3), I will provide examples from both Maniátis's projects (1994 and 2006). The 1994 book aspires to list the entire discographical work of Vasilis Tsitsánis. Despite the fact that only three examples will be provided, it should be noted that one has to actually deal with hundreds of such instances when both publications are taken into consideration.

Book, Page	Song title	Rhythm mentioned	Correct rhythm
Maniátis 2006: 238	Αλά Τούρκα χόρεψέ μου [alá tourka hórepsé mou = dance for me ala Turka]	Tsiftetéli	8/8- Sirtós
Maniátis 1994: 120	Η συνοικία μου [i sinikía mou = my neighborhood]	Traghoudháki [Little song]	4/4- Cha cha
Maniátis 1994: 121	Μ' έφαγες μ' έφαγες [méfaghes méfaghes = you 'ate' me (idiomatic)]	Kalamatianós	2/4- Bayo

**Table 3.3: Rhythms definition errors in Maniátis (1994 and 2006)**

Another example from Greek literature is the *Vasilis Tsitsánis: My life, My Work* (1980), edited by Kóstas Hatzidhoulís. The first part of this book (up to page 24) is an interview of Vasilis Tsitsánis with Kóstas Hatzidhoulís. The rest of the book (apart from the comments and several pictures on the last pages) consists of music scores and lyrics of Tsitsánis's songs without mentioning, though, the name of the

person that wrote these scores.<sup>9</sup> Several types of notes and comments can be found under the songs, written (most probably) by the author/editor himself.

### **Examples:**

Page 46, *Γκιουλ Μπαχάρ* [Gioúl Bahár = Eastern female name]. The author writes under the song: ‘recorded in 1950’. The recording date is questionable since research has shown that the most probable recording year is 1951.<sup>10</sup> Here, of course, one is also dealing with another issue, which is the source of the information contained in all the published books of this sort. So far, none of the authors have indicated an ‘initial/primary information source’ with regard to the recording and release dates. Moreover, many of them have not even mentioned their sources at all (about these mysteries around the sources see further below). An initial information source would be a document whose information is indisputable. Such types of documents are the so-called recording sheets as well as the recording lists/catalogues of the recording companies. Apparently, other questionable dates can be found in this specific book.

Page 51, *Τα σήμαντρα* [ta símandra = the bells]. The author mentions under the lyrics: ‘zeimbékiko of 1951’. The problem is obviously the fact that it is not made clear to the reader, exactly what the date refers to, especially when there are three types of dates for each song considered to be crucial in order to make safe findings during research. These are the composing date (something often difficult to ascertain), the recording date and the release date. Thus, another topic comes up for discussion, as further analyzed in the chapter below – not to mention the perception I have heard by many aficionados and rembétiko enthusiasts with whom I have met, that we should not care very much about the year that their books refer to, because (according to them) most of the songs were recorded and issued in the same year and, many times, in the same month. However, my research has revealed that this is a myth, for there are countless songs which do not meet these characteristics.

Page 60, *Είμαστε αλάνια* [ímaste alánia = we are street-urchins] and page 91 *Πω! Πω! Πω! Μαρία* [Po! Po! Po! María = Oh! Maria]. The first song is characterized as hasaposérviko while the second as a fast hasápiko (in terms of their

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<sup>9</sup> It should be mentioned that the musical transcriptions of the songs are inaccurate.

<sup>10</sup> AEPI’s (Hellenic Society for the Protection of Intellectual Property) recording sheets and Columbia’s logistics books give 05-04-1951 as the recording date. For both sources see further below.

dance rhythm used). Both rhythms are 2/4.<sup>11</sup> The first song's tempo is ♩ ≈ 97 while the second song's tempo is ♩ ≈ 106. Research has revealed a problem regarding the terminology of the hasápiko and hasaposérviko rhythms. The perception that exists among Greek musicians and aficionados roughly suggests that 'the hasaposérviko is a fast hasápiko'. Since there is no numeral limit/border to the hasápiko and hasaposérviko tempi, generalizations of any sort are rather deceitful and non-scientific. Above all, the most important fact is that the term hasaposérviko is posterior in comparison with that of hasápiko. This specific issue, as well as the problems that emerge, should be dealt with through the collaborative work of musicians, historians and dancers, since we are dealing with dances. After all, it is perhaps time for this discipline (dance research) to enter further into the sphere of popular musicology. Curiously, even if these terms were appropriately used (according to the suggestions of the common opinion) separating the two songs would still be problematic. The reason, as one can observe, is simply because the one with the faster tempo is characterized as a fast hasápiko while the other with the less fast tempo is characterized as hasaposérviko. In other words, this common belief is used the other way round by Hatzidhoulís.

The problems in Andónis Kóndos's paper, 'Tsitsánis's Alphabet' (in Rígha 2003), are similar to those presented in the preceding paragraphs, that is, dating issues as well as erroneous rhythm definitions. Nevertheless, there are two additions of major importance. Firstly, there is reference to CDs and LPs on the market that contain the songs mentioned, which helps in finding the specific songs more easily. Another important characteristic is that many contemporary recordings of songs are mentioned as well. It is also worth noting that research so far has indicated the existence of few songs (Tsitsánis's compositions) that are not mentioned in the lists of the above books at all. This perhaps signifies the difficulty of locating primary sources of information.

Another issue that is noticed when studying these books is that the titles of many songs do not match the titles found on the actual record labels. Despite this, the existence of several titles referring to the same song is common in popular music. There are cases where the musicians used to refer to songs using a particular word or

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<sup>11</sup> There is an issue regarding the fraction of the hasápiko; some authors, as well as musicians, speak about hasápiko by using the 4/4 fraction instead of 2/4 (see Chapter 6).

short phrase from the lyrics, rather than the actual title of the song. Moreover, the companies used to change a song's title, either in a re-issue or in a new recording of the particular song (Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2).



Figure 3.1: *Se toúto to palióspito* label (Tsitsánis)





Figure 3.2: *To palióspito* label (Tsitsánis)

However, this does not mean that the researcher should not locate and examine primary sources, such as the records themselves. It has also been observed that the very same songs are given with several different titles within the books published by aficionados in Greece. Since I mentioned the record labels, I should stress that mistakes have even been found on these, too. Many labels have the rhythm of the song, next to or under the song's title. In some cases, these rhythms references are incorrect. For example, the label of the song *Μεθυσμένος θα 'ρθω απόψε*<sup>12</sup> [methisménos thártho appose = I will come tonight drunk] writes *τσιφτετέλι* [tsiftetéli] (Figure 3.3). The correct rhythm, however, is 2/2 mambo. The same is true of the label of the song *Αφού δεν μ' αγαπούσες*<sup>13</sup> [afóu dhen maghapóuses = since you didn't love me] which writes *σιρτοτσιφτετέλι* [sirtotsiftetéli] (Figure 3.4). However, more careful listening shows that its rhythm is based on the bayo rhythm.

<sup>12</sup> HMV 7XGA 754 - 7PG 2832, recorded on October 26, 1960.

<sup>13</sup> HMV 7XGA 1617 - 7PG 3226, recorded on November 26, 1962.



Figure 3.3: Label of the song *methisménos tha 'rtho apóψε* (Tsitsánis)

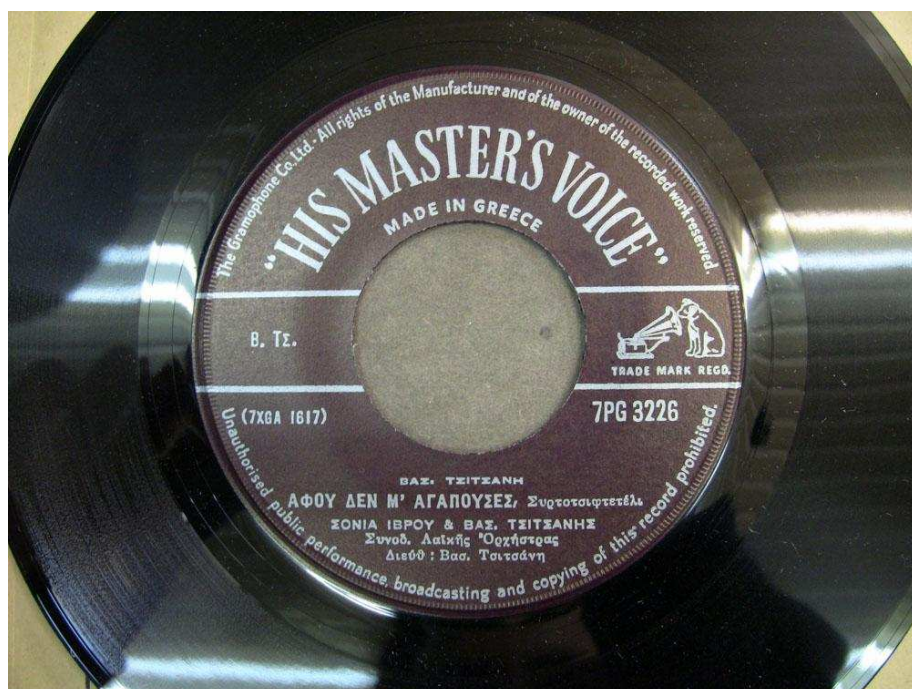


Figure 3.4: Label of the song *afou dhen m' aghapouuses* (Tsitsánis)

Moreover, some lyrics add to this confusing situation. For example, a passage found in the song *Το τσιφτετέλι του Τσιτσάνη*<sup>14</sup> [to tsiftetéli tou Tsitsáni = Tsitsánis's tsiftetéli] says: 'τι τρελό τσιφτετέλι είναι αυτό' [ti treló tsiftetéli íne aftó = what a crazy tsiftetéli is this]. Both the title and the aforementioned lyrics are misleading, for the song is based on a rhythm from Latin America, very close to guaracha (see Chapter 6). From these cases, we can assume that either they (the companies and Tsitsánis) were not aware of basic theoretical issues such as the understanding of the rhythms, or that the word tsiftetéli was 'useful' for the companies' policies. In other words, the companies may have wanted to mislead the audience in order to buy their records. One should not forget that under discussion here are the 1970s and all of its characteristics:<sup>15</sup> big venues (bouzouki clubs), electric bouzoukis, plate smashing, electrically amplified bands<sup>16</sup> (louder volume) and belly dancing (that is, tsiftetéli). Perhaps, the companies wanted people to think that they were buying something that was in vogue, that is, a tsiftetéli song, even though this was not true.

All the publications containing various types of recording catalogues of Vasílis Tsitsánis's recorded work (in some, not only Tsitsánis's) are listed below (Table 3.4). In all of these publications there have been numerous errors of various types, most of which have been mentioned previously.

Shorélis 1977-1981 (four volumes)
Tsitsánis 1980 (edited by Hatzidhoulís)
Maniátis 1994; 2006
Angelikópoulos 1999
Alexίου 2001 and 2003
Hristianópoulos 2001; 2002; 2009
Kóndos in Rígha 2003
Anastasίου 1995; 2004
Pápistas (n.d.)

**Table 3.4: Publications with errors in their songs' catalogues**

<sup>14</sup> HMV, 7XGA 3291 – 7PG 3953, recorded in 1970.

<sup>15</sup> See Pennanen 1999: 69 regarding the post-1950s laikó period.

<sup>16</sup> Electric guitar, electric bass and electric bouzouki.

## Dating the Recordings

A problem of grave importance relates to the recording and release dates of the songs. Each recording contacted at the Columbia factory (and not only) would acquire a code consisting of (in most cases) a combination of Latin letters and numbers, for example, CG 2425 for the Columbia recordings, OGA 1195 for the His Master's Voice, and so forth. This code is known as the matrix code and is connected with the recording date of the song.<sup>17</sup> When entering the trade, the song would acquire one more code of this type related to its release date. This code is usually referred to as a catalogue code. There is great deception and error in the books aspiring to create record tables, many of which have been mentioned above. In all of them (with an exception of Maniátis 2006 which is referred to later on) the date of the recording is accompanied by the catalogue number. In other cases, it is not clear whether the given date is related to the recording or the release of the song. Therefore, the confusion is intensified each time a new publication is released which, albeit aspiring to be a more perfect version of another written by some other author, is in fact reproducing information of earlier publications, and thus perpetuating the problem. The first time a matrix code was found was in the accompanying inserts of Charles Howard's edition *Rembetika 3: Vasilis Tsitsánis, 1936-1940* (JSP records, 5 CDs). Maniátis is the first Greek who uses and cites matrix codes (2006). Oral sources indicate that this was due to Charles Howard's instigation which may well be verified by Maniátis's expression of gratitude to Howard in the preface of his book. In his work, Pennanen reports that Greek researchers made many mistakes, omissions, deceptions and in general actions that are not based on methodologies of an academic type, with regard to discographical works (Pennanen 1999 and 2005). Priceless comments and observations in terms of the lack of reliable sources around *rembétiko's* discography can also be found in Smith's article *The Chronology of Rebétiko – A Reconsideration of the Evidence* (1991). Pennanen numbers the various means that the researcher has at his disposal, through which he is able to create a sound discography. Several of the ways and strategies that Pennanen proposes in order to find out a song's recording

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<sup>17</sup> Research has shown that it can be connected with other things, too, as long as it can be proven by facts. For example, with the name of the sound engineer who was responsible for the recording (see Vernon 1995). It should be also mentioned that Vernon's work is an inspiration for scholars undertaking research with discographical context (see for example Vernon 2003).

date, are based on logic and simple mathematical accounts. Obviously, the most sure and proper way to avert mistakes is the utilization of primary information sources, for example, the company's recording sheets which were usually a piece of paper, where each sound engineer would make notes related to the recording carried out. Curiously, the matrix number was not the only thing to which Greek aficionados did not pay attention. Research has revealed a third numeric type which can also help in the dating of songs. This is the license number which was given by the censorship board.<sup>18</sup> It should not be forgotten that the censorship did not allow songs which had lyrics that were connected to some specific subjects to be recorded (for example, drugs). The songwriter initially had to send the lyrics to the censorship and only if they were approved, the song went to the studio. Given that the matrix and the license number were written on the actual record (on its label) makes it justifiable to wonder whether the authors of the books with discographical references had actually seen one of their primary implements and sources of information or not, that is, the record labels. Figure 3.5 shows a record label where the three types of numeric codes are visible. The matrix code is located at the lower left whereas the catalogue code is on the right. The license number is located above the title (*Ο χωρισμός που μάντεψες* [o horismós pou mándepses = the divorce you foresaw]) as 'αρ. άδ.', which stands for *αριθμός αδείας* [arithmós adhías = license number].

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<sup>18</sup> The censorship law took effect on August 19, 1936.





**Figure 3.5: A record label where the three types of codes are visible**

Unfortunately, the value of the information these documents (primary sources) provide is not yet comprehended, nor appreciated in Greece. Further proof of this is that three out of the eight buildings of the Columbia factory in Athens were destroyed in 2006, having the approval of the Ministry of Culture and of the Main Council of Contemporary Monuments.<sup>19</sup> According to rumours I have heard by various sources such as *rembétiko* aficionados during my visits to Athens, these three buildings were destroyed without taking items out from inside. A more tragic scenario of these rumours is that much of the material was thrown into the garbage (more about these scenarios below). A great amount of every kind of material, such as recording sheets, sales' lists, archives, interviews and tapes were destroyed or stolen, making the job of academic research hard and, sometimes, impossible to carry out.

Regarding the creation of a discography of Greek songs, apart from relating to the order of things, since we deal with a specific event that took place on a particular day and time and therefore it is void of meeting various recording and song release dates. The discography also has the ability to reveal information regarding the

<sup>19</sup> The Council of Contemporary Monuments belongs to the sphere of the Ministry of Culture. On February 21, 2006, the Council characterized the gate and building A as being 'monuments', and buildings B, C, D, E, F and G that they are not (see the official website of the Ministry of Culture, [www.culture.gr](http://www.culture.gr)).

development of the musical style itself. A soundly formed and rational discography has a historical, social, as well as a musicological value and therefore phrases such as, ‘of course, it is not of vital importance whether a song was recorded in 1938 or 1939’<sup>20</sup> reduce its value. The lack of clear chronological references obstructs comprehension and (most importantly) interpretation of some elements of a musicological kind, as for example is the use of new foreign rhythms such as rumba and guaracha, the change in the rhythmic form of the zeimbékiko rhythm, the course and evolution of the tempo of all the rhythms used, evolving production methods and so forth. This is because a correct time schedule of the recordings cannot be created.

### **Mysteries around the Sources in Greece**

The finding of critical historical documents that previous scholars were either not aware of, or they were not able to locate, enables the provision of more accurate recording dates and generally information totally neglected in the past. It is of utmost importance to mention some strange situations that appeared during this ‘quest’ for historical sources, for many times, it became a quest and not research. By describing such situations I try to reveal exactly the extent of the problem of undertaking research on popular music in Greece, to raise some critical questions and, finally, to draw the attention of possible future researchers. Most importantly, these situations show the reason, or at least one of the main reasons, that research in Greece is at an embryonic stage.<sup>21</sup>

As mentioned above, research on recording and release dates began with the publications available in the market. Very soon, the researcher will realize (as I did) the problematic situation created by the writings of these books and will soon suspect that the dates are incorrect and misleading. The most obvious reason is the following: if we assume that there are six publications that contain references to recording and release dates, one will discover that there are songs with up to six different recording/release dates! To put it another way, each one of the authors of these six books gives a different date than the authors of the other publications. This means that

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<sup>20</sup> Angelikópoulos 1999: 98.

<sup>21</sup> Regarding the available resources in Greece at the time that the article was published, see Ratliff (1979).

some of them merely estimated the year. In other cases where fewer different dates are found, it is highly possible that one author merely took his dates from another who had published before him. I managed to verify that by meeting with these authors. The case of Andónis Kóndos is an exception, for he at least states that the dates are taken from older publications (in Spirópoulos 2006: 53). Kóndos says that he based his research on several older works, such as Tásos Sholérís's (1977-1981, four volumes). Strangely, the authors that copied from older publications as vital information as the dates, did not even think to check for their accuracy, since these old books do not reveal their sources. And the problems do not end here; a case where one author gives, for example, 1959 as the recording year of a song and another gives 1960, is frequent but, nevertheless, quite easily solved. However, I confronted cases where a full date is given for a song while another author gives another full date, too. For example, research has revealed an extremely complex situation around the song *Βάστα καρδιά μου*<sup>22</sup> [vásta kardhiá mou = hold on my heart]. Maniátis (1994) writes that the song was recorded on October 13, 1951; however, in his later work (2006), he simply writes 1950 in the recording date column. Kóndos (in Rígha 2003), Pápidas (n.d.) and Alexíou (2003) agree with Maniátis's first date, that is, October 13, 1951.

On the other hand, Howard's notes write that the song was recorded on December 12, 1950. Eventually, the logistics books of Columbia verified Howard's date. Where could the other four have found this 'October 13, 1951'? It is not a simple speculation, that is, merely a year which can be estimated if someone studies the matrix numbers. This, unfortunately, is not the strangest case among the cases of different dating. Let us examine another song entitled *Το πουκάμισο*<sup>23</sup> [to poukámiso = the shirt]. Maniátis (1994) gives the date November 24, 1956 as its recording date. Pápidas (n.d.) gives December 1, 1956, the same as Kóndos and the files of AEPI do. The Hellenic Society for the Protection of Intellectual Property (AEPI) claims to own the actual recording sheets of many of the recordings held at the factory of Columbia in Greece (about which more below). Paradoxically, the logistics books of Columbia write that the song was recorded on October 1, 1956. How is it possible that two

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<sup>22</sup> HMV OGA 1725 - AO 5000.

<sup>23</sup> HMV OGA 2480 - AO 5364 and AO 5367. The existence of two or more catalogue numbers means that the song was issued in more than one record. This, obviously, does not affect its matrix number, that is, its recording date.



official documents do not go well together? I should elaborate on this issue, for it is the key of the whole situation.

In the preceding lines, I have mentioned three extremely critical things: Charles Howard's notes, Columbia's logistics books and AEPI's recording sheets. Charles Howard visited the British Library of Recorded Sound during the 1990s. All information was taken from microfilms of original recording sheets, file cards and handwritten notes made by the sound men. He also photocopied quite a few of the sheets. Moreover, Ghiórgghos Ghramatikós started a discography project in the 1970s. He then passed his file books over to Howard who continued for several years. Howard told me that they only took information from the 78rpm discs that they had actually seen, or from old 78 catalogues.<sup>24</sup> Figure 3.6 shows such a document with Howard's and Ghramatikós's notes.

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<sup>24</sup> I have contacted Charles Howard via email several times, since 2009. I also visited him in Athens three times.

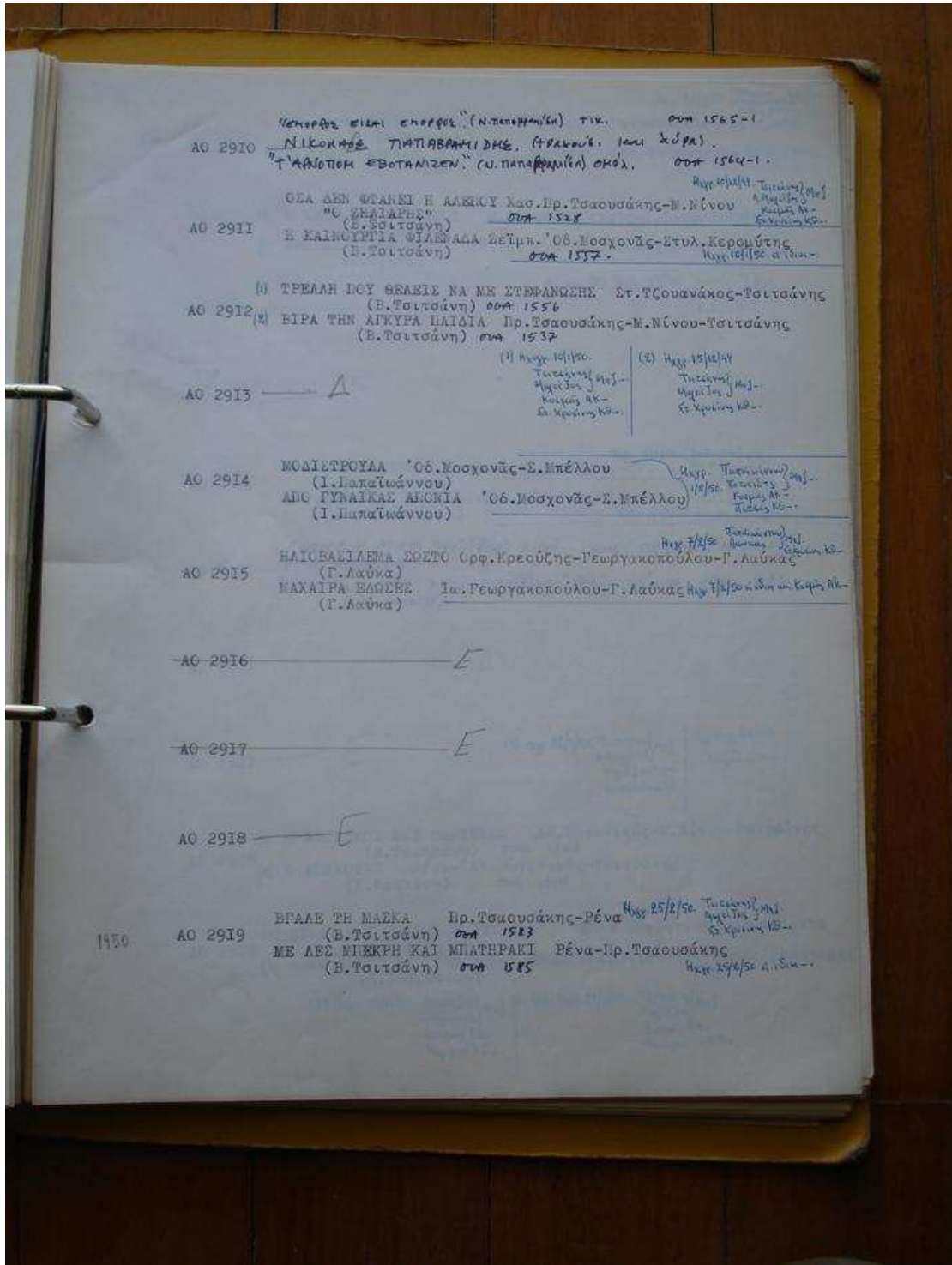


Figure 3.6: Charles Howard's and Ghiórgchos Ghramatikós's notes

The logistics books of Columbia were something that I have never heard about before, until I actually saw and handled them. I had heard rumours that some people may have stolen items from inside the Columbia factory, or that they just found

material in the garbage. All these were rumours until 2010, when with the priceless help of the son of Vasilis Tsitsánis, Kóstas, we located and met with three key people. One of them was Kóstas Matsoukas with whom I met several times in Athens. He informed me that he, along with Ghiórgchos and Dhimítris Ránios, possessed the logistics books of Columbia which are approximately (as they told me) 70-80 in number. Apart from meeting with Matsoukas, I, along with Kóstas Tsitsánis, also met several times with Ghiórgchos Ránios. It should be emphasized that the books contain lists of the recordings of all of the four main labels of the period, that is, Columbia, His Master's Voice, Parlophone and Odeon. I should clarify that all of the companies were using Columbia's factory, also known (all together) as 'The Gramophone CO' (regarding the history of the recording industry in Greece, see Ewbank and Papageorgiou, 1997: 74-80). Matsoukas was not very clear regarding the way they obtained the books, but they discussed with Kóstas Tsitsánis for over a year about taking money from him (Tsitsánis) in order to photocopy the pages that concerned his father's songs. However, apart from approximately 30 pages that Kóstas Matsoukas gave to us, they did not keep their word and, eventually, the books remained in their mere possession.<sup>25</sup>

The value of these books cannot be underestimated, for it is not only that they cover a huge time period, from virtually the very beginning of the recording activity in Greece (around 1920s) until around 1970s;<sup>26</sup> it is also the fact that each page, referring to a single song-recording, contains several pieces of information connected to the song, such as the recording date, the names of the musicians that took part in the recording along with their payments, the names of the songwriter and the lyricist and more. The pages of the logistics books also reveal another element, never previously noticed by scholars. If someone carefully examines the record labels they will notice that in many cases, there are more numbers next to the matrix code. For example, GO 4844-2 or GO 4844-3 and so forth. I found these numbers in the logistics books, too, and after researching the issue, I was surprised to discover that no previous researchers had seemed to understand that the number/s right after the dash

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<sup>25</sup> It should also be added that Matsoukas, apart from these 30 photocopied pages from the books, sent hand-written copies of information concerning 118 more songs.

<sup>26</sup> The information within the books (at least within those I managed to hold and open) is written in pencil.

line show the ‘take/s’ of the recording.<sup>27</sup> In other words, someone can see in the books the following code: GO 4844-1, 2, 3. This means that there were three takes recorded for this song. For some songs all the available takes have been issued, while, for other songs, only a single take was issued. Therefore, there is another completely new aspect revealed which is tightly connected to the recording industry. After all, ‘the most important distinguishing feature of popular music is its close relationship with the mass media’ (Manuel 1990: 4). If more than one take is found in the market, this perhaps signifies that the people involved in the recording (songwriter, musicians, company) liked all of the takes and simply wanted to issue all of them. In the case of finding only a single take in the market, it is highly possible that there was only one take that met the tastes and the needs of these people. Figure 3.7 shows a scanned page from the books. Figure 3.8 shows a record label where this type of matrix code is visible (CG 2738-3).

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<sup>27</sup> It should not be forgotten that we deal with ‘live’ recordings where the band played/recorded together.

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ΑΡΙΘΜΟΣ ΜΗΤΡΑΣ CG 2758 ΗΜΕΡΩΜ. ΕΓΓΡΑΦ. 30/11/50  
 ΔΙΣΚΟΥ DG 6904 ΔΙΘΟΥΣΑ COLUMBIA-Μηχανικός  
 ΤΙΤΛΟΣ ΜΕ ΠΗΡΕ ΤΟ ΞΗΜΕΡΩΜΑ ΣΤΟΥΣ ΔΡΟΜΟΥΣ ΔΙΑΜΕΤΡΟΣ ΔΙΣΚΟΥ  
 ΒΙΔΟΣ ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΟΥ 9/8 ΧΡΩΜΑ ΕΤΙΚΕΤΑΣ

ΟΝΟΜΑΤΕΠΩΝΥΜΟΝ	ΙΔΙΟΤΗΣ	ΠΑΡΑΤΗΡΗΣΕΙΣ
<u>B. Toland</u>	Συγγραφέας Συνθέτης	Λοιθ. Άδειας <u>1291/18596</u>
<u>B. Toland</u>	Έκδοτης Δικαιούχος	
<u>ΕΚΤΕΛΕΣΤΑΙ</u>		
<u>B. Toland</u>	Λοιθ. Όργανισμός	
<u>Leucyia Moly</u>		
<u>B. Toland</u>	<u>μουσική</u>	
<u>Παν. Παλαίος</u>		
<u>Παν. Σουβίνης</u>	<u>κιθάρα</u>	
<u>Ρηγ. Σουβίνης</u>	<u>κίθαρα</u>	
<u>2/12/50</u> <u>MB</u>		

Figure 3.7: A page from the logistics books of Columbia



Figure 3.8: A record label where the '-3' type of matrix code is visible

Turning now to the files of AEPI: The first stages of my research revealed that the Library of Recorded Sound in England – whom I contacted – had the files from the recordings held in Greece. Rod Hamilton from the archive in England responded that about ten years ago, Sotiris Likourópoulos, Head of the archive of AEPI, visited the British Library Sound Archive and went through their archive.<sup>28</sup> He purchased copies of various reels of microfilm on behalf of AEPI which were mainly recording sheets arranged by matrix number from the Athens office of Columbia, dating from the late-1930s to 1940s. Consequently, my next meeting was with Likourópoulos at AEPI's offices in Athens. He showed me the electronic database of AEPI and told me that he intended to help me with the dates of the songs, as well as with anything else he could with regard to information about the recordings.<sup>29</sup> He sent me three Microsoft Office Excel documents, each one concerning each of the major recording companies (HMV, Odeon and Columbia). These documents contained 166 songs titles (in total), along with their matrix and catalogue number and their recording date. Despite my innumerable appeals for letting me see the actual recording sheets, as well as to send me more information from their archive such as recordings from other

<sup>28</sup> I contacted Rod Hamilton via e-mail in July 2009.

<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that Tsitsánis (and consequently his son, Kóstas, as his heir-at-law) as well as I (as a composer) are members of AEPI.

companies, AEPI denied both. In other words, they gave me 166, out of approximately 550 songs credited to Tsitsánis, and they have never let me see the actual source and thus, my source of information (from the part of AEPI) is merely three Excel documents.

Contrary to AEPI, EMI kindly provided their valuable co-operation and help. More specifically, Harris Tsakmatsian, Head of the archive in Greece, sent me a list of the songs credited to Tsitsánis.<sup>30</sup> Although this list contains much vague and, in many cases, already cross-checked mistaken information (such as recording years), it provides some elements which were hard to locate until then. These are the matrix numbers of the songs included in 33rpm LP records, which (the records) do not include these numbers, neither on the actual records, nor in their sleeve notes.<sup>31</sup> Figure 3.9 shows a page from EMI's catalogue.

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<sup>30</sup> I contacted Háris Tsakmatsian in June 2011.

<sup>31</sup> Obviously, these matrix codes are not included in the logistics books, for they concern the 33 rpm recordings.



Τραγούδι	Ιδιότητα	1ος τραγουδιστής	Ταινία	Μήτρα	Έτος
ΙΩΣ ΛΥΡΙΟ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΝΤΑΛΑΡΑΣ ΓΙΩΡΓΟΣ	2121		1984
ΙΩΣ ΛΥΡΙΟ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΚΑΖΑΝΤΖΙΔΗΣ ΣΤΕΛΙΟΣ		7ΧΓΑ 193	1958
ΙΩΣ ΛΥΡΙΟ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΚΑΖΑΝΤΖΙΔΗΣ ΣΤΕΛΙΟΣ		7ΧΓΑ 193	1958
ΙΩΣ ΛΥΡΙΟ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΚΑΖΑΝΤΖΙΔΗΣ ΣΤΕΛΙΟΣ			2001
ΚΑΒΟΥΡΑΚΙΑ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ	1946	7ΧΓΟ 11900	1983
ΚΑΒΟΥΡΑΚΙΑ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ	1946	7ΧΓΟ 11900	1983
ΚΑΒΟΥΡΑΚΙΑ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ	1946	7ΧΓΟ 11900	1983
ΚΑΒΟΥΡΑΚΙΑ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΜΠΙΝΗΣ ΤΑΚΗΣ	1998		1976
ΚΑΒΟΥΡΑΚΙΑ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΜΠΙΝΗΣ ΤΑΚΗΣ	1998		1976
ΚΑΒΟΥΡΑΚΙΑ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΜΠΙΝΗΣ ΤΑΚΗΣ	1998		1976
ΚΑΘΑΡΙΣΩ ΓΙΑ ΣΕΝΑ ΚΑΙ ΓΙΑ ΠΑΡΤΥ	ΑΛΛΗ	ΤΣΑΟΥΣΑΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΣ			1949
ΚΑΘΑΡΙΣΩ ΓΙΑ ΣΕΝΑ ΚΑΙ ΓΙΑ ΠΑΡΤΥ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΤΣΑΟΥΣΑΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΣ			1949
ΚΑΘΑΡΙΣΩ ΓΙΑ ΣΕΝΑ ΚΑΙ ΓΙΑ ΠΑΡΤΥ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΤΣΑΟΥΣΑΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΣ			1949
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΜΗΤΣΙΑΣ ΜΑΝΩΛΗΣ	T 9291	7ΥCG 8628	1983
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΜΗΤΣΙΑΣ ΜΑΝΩΛΗΣ	T 9291	7ΥCG 8628	1983
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΓΑΛΑΝΗ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΑ	1968	7ΧΓΟ 12054	1983
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΓΑΛΑΝΗ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΑ	1968	7ΧΓΟ 12054	1983
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΑ	E 1116	7ΧCG 4247	1973
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΑ	E 1116	7ΧCG 4247	1973
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΑ	E 1116	7ΧCG 4247	1973
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ				1970
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΚΩΧ ΜΑΡΙΖΑ	1567	7ΧΓΟ 7808	1976
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΚΩΧ ΜΑΡΙΖΑ	1567	7ΧΓΟ 7808	1976
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΝΙΝΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΚΑ			1951
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΝΙΝΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΚΑ			1951
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΝΤΑΛΑΡΑΣ ΓΙΩΡΓΟΣ			2003
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΝΤΑΛΑΡΑΣ ΓΙΩΡΓΟΣ			2003
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΝΙΝΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΚΑ			2001
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΝΙΝΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΚΑ			2001
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΝΤΑΛΑΡΑΣ ΓΙΩΡΓΟΣ			2004
ΚΑΘΕ ΒΡΑΔΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΛΥΠΗΜΕΝΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΝΤΑΛΑΡΑΣ ΓΙΩΡΓΟΣ			2004
ΚΑΙ ΧΙΛΙΕΣ ΚΑΡΔΙΕΣ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΣ			1964
ΚΑΙ ΧΙΛΙΕΣ ΚΑΡΔΙΕΣ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΣ			1964
ΚΑΙΚΙ ΜΟΥ ΑΗ-ΝΙΚΟΛΑ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΛΥΔΙΑ ΠΩΤΑ			1962
ΚΑΙΚΙ ΜΟΥ ΑΗ-ΝΙΚΟΛΑ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΛΥΔΙΑ ΠΩΤΑ			1962
ΚΑΙΚΙ ΜΟΥ ΑΗ-ΝΙΚΟΛΑ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΛΥΔΙΑ ΠΩΤΑ			1962
ΚΑΚΙΑ ΠΛΗΓΗ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΡΟΥΜΕΛΙΩΤΗΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΗΣ			1957
ΚΑΛΑΜΠΑΚΙΩΤΙΣΣΑ	ΣΤΙΧΟΥΡΓΟ	ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ	E 1116	7ΧCG 4251	1973
ΚΑΛΑΜΠΑΚΙΩΤΙΣΣΑ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ	E 1116	7ΧCG 4251	1973
ΚΑΛΑΜΠΑΚΙΩΤΙΣΣΑ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΤΣΙΤΣΑΝΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ	E 1116	7ΧCG 4251	1973
ΚΑΛΑΜΠΑΚΙΩΤΙΣΣΑ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ	ΠΑΓΙΟΥΜΤΖΗΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΣ			1939
ΚΑΛΑΜΠΑΚΙΩΤΙΣΣΑ	ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΣ	ΠΑΓΙΟΥΜΤΖΗΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΣ			1939
ΚΑΛΑΜΠΑΚΙΩΤΙΣΣΑ	ΣΥΝΘΕΤΗΣ				1970

Σελίδα 19

Figure 3.9: A page from the list of EMI of Greece

To sum up, there were four major sources which I managed to discover: Howard's notes which concern approximately 323 songs, the logistics books of Columbia concerning 148 songs, AEPI's Excel files which concern 166 songs, and



EMI's list which concerns everything they have in their archive, with regard to the discography of Tsitsánis, containing, however, much mistaken information.<sup>32</sup> It is clear that unless someone manages to obtain complete information for each one of these sources (that is, gather, for example, information from all the pages of the logistics books of Columbia) the job of creating a sound discography seems very hard to accomplish. Moreover, as Pennanen argues:

a record and the recording it contains should be compared with other relevant records and recordings and data received from other source groups, i.e. record company files, record catalogues, record reviews, newspaper advertisements, interviews, photographs and films (2005: 88).

The accuracy of critical information such as the recording dates, the matrix numbers and so forth is an extremely vital matter, as this can help the researcher to create a solid discography from which they can export statistics which, in turn, are also extremely useful for the clearest understanding of several aspects of the recording career of an artist, such as stylistic changes, performance technique alterations and so forth.

## **Historical Recordings and Recording Technology**

Source criticism is a large subject which, of course, is applied not only to recordings and the science of music, but also to other sciences where the sources have to be examined under the concept of inner and outer source criticism.<sup>33</sup> George Brock-Nannestad gives a detailed and interesting description of the recording procedure as well as of the problems that arose from the examination of historical recordings. The researcher has to bear in mind those issues in order to avoid misleading conclusions.

The recording technology available at the period under discussion played a crucial role in the final outcome of the song itself or, to be more accurate, of the sound

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<sup>32</sup> This became obvious after I cross-checked the dates provided by EMI with the historical documents I managed to examine during my research.

<sup>33</sup> See Brock-Nannestad (1984: 925) and Pennanen (2005: 83).

of the song, which is one of the starting points and main implements of the researcher. Pennanen speaks of the problems, as well as to what extent recording technology affected the final form of the song (2005). Two of the most important aspects have to do with the fact that ‘musicians often had to alter their normal playing techniques, instrumentation and even musical style’ and that ‘the non-standardized revolving speeds and the limited recording time affected the recording tempi and length of sections (Millard 1995: 100-101, 261-262)’.<sup>34</sup> I cannot see that the first aspect is true of Vasílis Tsitsánis’s recordings, as well as of *rembétiko* and *laikó* music in general. Firstly, because Evangelía Margharóni speaks of standard/fixed set up inside the recording room, that is, of pre-arranged positions of the musicians in order to achieve the desirable sound. For instance, she remembers the double-bass player and the pianist sitting behind and far from the two main instruments, that is, the bouzouki and the guitar, so that, due to their sound volume, the former would not cover them. This way, they also achieved in playing with their natural/normal technique without having to be afraid if they would cover one another. Moreover, we are dealing with the so-called live recording technique. This means that, due to the early stage of recording technology and of the available equipment, the musicians had to play altogether, as they used to play in venues. After all, the style was meant to be a ‘live’ musical style, initially created in hashish-dens and generally by people of the underworld. ‘For a long time it stayed away from mass acceptance as fringe music addressed to the underworld and closely connected to pot-smoking’ (Ewbank and Papageorgiou 1997: 68). Thus, in the studio, too, at least during its first period, it kept the same aesthetic. In other words, if one compares studio recordings of this period with live recordings of the same periods, they will see that the way the band performs the songs is almost the same.

With the new era of recording technology as well as with the development in the construction of instruments and even the use of new, for the style, instruments, it is highly likely that musicians had to change their playing techniques in order to try the aforementioned newly introduced parameters, that is, new technology and new instruments. For example, the use of the steel-strung guitar (usually called acoustic) instead of the Spanish (after the 1960s) compelled the guitarists to search new playing techniques in order to find the desirable sound of their new instrument. Furthermore,

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<sup>34</sup> Pennanen 2005: 83.

the rapid development of the style along with the development of recording technology compelled the musicians and perhaps the sound engineers too, to find new techniques, orchestrations and arrangements. The course of events should have also forced them to search for new and better positions inside the recording room in order to record and produce the best sound possible. The reason is simple: the balance of the volume and the general sound of the band had changed. Some recordings made in the early 1960s show various problems found in this new age of recording technology. The volume of the instruments was not well-balanced, something that perhaps shows that both the sound engineers and the musicians were actually ‘examining’ the new parameters.<sup>35</sup> From the early-1960s, new rhythms, new scales/modes, new instruments,<sup>36</sup> new playing techniques, new singing styles and advanced recording technology were some of the aspects that changed in laikó music.

Another available source that lets us understand that the playing technique in the early rembétiko was basically the same in the studio and on the music stands, is live recordings where we can clearly hear the musicians playing songs in, more or less, the same way as they did in the studio. A possible explanation for this situation is the fact that rembétiko and early laikó involved small bands.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, they did not have to think of complex and sophisticated arrangements. Obviously, the nature of the style itself played a central role, too. If someone listens carefully to rembétiko-laikó studio and live recordings, as well as to bands playing the music live at venues today, they will see that the style of the music does not require exaggeration in the dynamics. On the contrary, it demands a detached treatment, without fluctuations. To provide a basic model, the music within a song can be likened to being a straight line with slight, almost hard to discern fluctuations. The most notable dynamics can be heard when the

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<sup>35</sup> Song examples: *Μεθυσμένος θα 'ρθω απόψε* [methisménos thá 'rtho apóψε = I will come drunk tonight], HMV 7XGA 754 - 7PG 2832, recorded on October 26, 1960; *Το χαστούκι* [to hastóúki = the slap], HMV 7XGA 948 - 7PG 2911, recorded on March 11, 1961; and *Έλα να κλάψουμε μαζί* [éla na klápsoume mazi = come to weep together], HMV 7XGA 1745 - 7PG 3307, recorded on June 8, 1963. These are some of the songs where an almost non-hearable guitar is notable.

<sup>36</sup> Acoustic steel-strung guitar; bouzouki playing with jack cable (see further below); congas and bongos (tumbadoras); and keyboards.

<sup>37</sup> As heard in the recordings, this period's orchestras usually consisted of the bouzouki, the Spanish guitar and the baghlamás. Baghlamás [μπαγλαμάς] is an accompanying instrument which looks like a miniature bouzouki and produces a rather high-pitched sound

voice comes in, usually right after an instrumental intro, where the band lowers its sound volume in order to help the voice/s to stand out. Obviously, the bands and the arrangements became much more complex and sophisticated later on, roughly after the 1960s. Surely, the development of recording technology affected the music itself as well, thus, it also affected arrangements and orchestrations.

On the other hand, the non-standardized revolving speed, as well as the limited recording time, obviously affected various aspects of the songs, such as the tempi, the length of the song, the structure and the tonality. As Pekka Gronow says in an interview with Risto Pekka Pennanen, ‘a change of four revolutions per minute in playback causes a difference of a half step in pitch’ (Pennanen 2005: 90). This means that the basic implement on which a researcher can build their analyses, that is the recording, provides false and misleading elements and thus, it can mislead them to false assumptions and conclusions. If we also take into consideration the argument of Nannestad that, ‘the record companies of those days may account for the fact that the speed suggested to customers was deliberately chosen at 2rpm to 3rpm greater than the recording speed’ (Brock-Nannestad 1984: 925), we can then understand the real dimension of the situation. A difference in pitch changes the song’s tonality, the song’s tempo and, consequently, the song’s length. Moreover, it can affect the timbre of the voices and the instruments. There are numerous examples of such songs within Tsitsánis’s corpus of recordings.<sup>38</sup> And this is not the end of the problems; due to the fact that many of the original 78 rpm recordings can hardly be located – and even if they could be located many of them are damaged and thus, the sound quality is bad – people, today, use digital archives in mp3 format. This is the easiest and most possible way for someone to find old recordings. There are two basic problems though; firstly, someone who owns a 78 rpm record may lack the technical skills and knowledge required to convert the sound from the record into another format (cassette, wav, mp3).<sup>39</sup> A mistake in the procedure can easily affect the final output of the conversion

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<sup>38</sup> Some indicative examples with problems in the pitch are: *Αμαρτωλή* [amartolí = sinner woman], Columbia CG 2271 - DG 6674, recorded on October 6, 1947; *Ένα ταξίδι είν’ η ζωή* [éna taxídi in i zoí = life is a journey], Columbia CG 4058 - DG 7531, recorded on February 15, 1960; and *Υπάρχει μια φλόγα* [ipárhi miá flógha = a flame exists], HMV 7XGA 1746 - 7PG 3307, recorded on May 9, 1963.

<sup>39</sup> Obviously the same is true of 45 rpm records too. However, their ‘young’ age makes locating them easier.

which will, ultimately, reach the archive of other people.<sup>40</sup> Secondly, many characteristics of the same song can differ from archive to archive. For example, song A is in D tonality, with a tempo ♩ ≈ 80, and comes from the mp3 archive of collector/individual B. The same song A is found in D sharp tonality, with a tempo ♩ ≈ 90 in the mp3 archive of collector C. I should underline the fact that numerous times, I even found three different versions of a single song from three different archives. In other words, I have listened to the same song in three different tonalities and tempi. In such cases, if the finding of the original record is impossible, then understanding which version is the correct one can prove very difficult.

The structure of the songs is something that also needs attention. Due to time limits, songs had to last around three to three and a half minutes. This, obviously, forced the songwriters to form the structure of their songs according to these parameters. This is perhaps one of the reasons for the gradual acceleration that is noted in many songs. Oral stories reveal that the sound engineer used to make signals with his hand to the musicians, wanting to show that they were running out of time. This is verified by the last instrumental part of the song *Αθηναίισα*<sup>41</sup> [athinéisa = Athenian woman] and the oral story existing, which I managed to cross-check by discussing with several people, such as researchers of Tsitsánis's life and his son. It is said that around the end of the last verse, the engineer signalled Tsitsánis that there were some seconds left and so he improvised and finished the song with a 16-second melodic phrase which was not part of the song. Some of the differences found between studio recordings and recordings of live performances of the same songs attest the fact that many times the composer had to adapt the song's structure according to the limitations of the recording time. Some of these differences found in live recordings are: repeated intros or even musically changed (lengthier) intros; altered (slower) tempi; and *taxími* in the beginning or inside the song.

Some examples from Tsitsánis's recordings are given as complementary examples to the writings above. Two are the conclusions drawn from the cases below: firstly, many of the problems described above are true of Tsitsánis's recordings and

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<sup>40</sup> As we saw in the preceding lines, the sound might already be changed from its initial market source, that is, the record.

<sup>41</sup> Columbia CG 2166 - DG 6600, recorded on June 25, 1946.

secondly, through the examples, one can see the impact that recording technology had in different periods.

### **Fade-out**

Some songs end with the ‘fade-out’, so-called by sound engineers. Many problems are found within some reissues of older recordings, where, contrary to the originals which do not end with the fade-out, the contemporary do. Pennanen writes the following about reissues:

In the 1970s during the first stage of the rebetika revival, the editor of several historical reissues, Kostas Hatzidoulis, was in the habit of ending all performances with a fade-out (e.g. EMI Regal 14C 034-70364).<sup>42</sup>

Pennanen continues and says that ‘fade-out has been the standard closure of Western pop songs since the 1960s, and possibly Hatzidoulis wanted to modernise the historic recordings by using this effect’ (2005: 92). I managed to find out the exact reason for this situation. Kóstas Prikópoulos was the sound-engineer of many of these re-issues. In an interview I conducted with him he informed me that the reason that they used the fade-out effect was that many of the records they had in their possession were extremely dirty and damaged.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, and because the stylus jumped, they decided to cut off some parts of the songs. In addition, Pennanen correctly blames the record companies for they ‘have not considered historical popular music worthy of painstaking editorial work. Therefore, instead of an original or restored historical recording there may be a distorted or forged document. Most reissues do not contain even basic discographical data, not to mention commentaries with source references shedding light on the background of the recordings and musicians’ (Pennanen 2005: 90).

Curiously, all these cases did not provoke the suspicion of the aficionados who wrote on rembétiko songs in Greece. Nobody ever wondered and wrote about it, for

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<sup>42</sup> Pennanen 2005: 92.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Kóstas Prikópoulos contacted on May 31, 2012 in Thessaloniki.

instance, why song A ends with fade-out, since this was not common for the ‘recording tradition’ of rembétiko and laikó generally. However, the fade-out technique was used in original recordings too, after the 1960s, perhaps in an imitation of Western pop songs. Table 3.5 shows some examples of original recordings which end with the fade-out technique.

Song title	Recording details	Recording year
Τοπάζια [topázia = Eastern female name]	HMV OGA 2990 - AO 5614 and 7PG 2657	1960
Έλα να κλάψουμε μαζί [éla na klápsoume mazi = come to weep together]	HMV 7XGA 1745 - 7PG 3307	1963
Και χίλιες καρδιές [ke hílies kardhiés = a thousand hearts]	HMV 7XGA 1959 - 7PG 3376	1964
Διπλή ζωή [dhiplí zoi = double life]	HMV 7XGA 1998 - 7PG 3384	1964
Εσύ γλυκιά μου μόνο [esí ghlikιά mou móno = only you my sweet]	HMV 7XGA 1857 - 7PG 3361	1964
Δε ρωτώ ποια είσαι [dhe rotó piá íse = I don't ask about you]	HMV 7XGA 2574 - 7PG 3615	1966
Δηλητήριο στη φλέβα [dhilitírio sti fléva = poison in the vein]	CBS 83406	1978

**Table 3.5: Examples of Tsitsánis’s songs ending with the fade-out technique**

## Panning

The so-called ‘panning’ was another modern technique that was used by sound engineers. In most cases, and due to the fact that this was a newly introduced recording (actually mixing) technique, the engineers tended to exaggerate. There are several cases where half of the instruments of the band play utterly from the left channel, whereas the rest play from the right. Table 3.6 includes some examples of such recordings.

Song title	Recording details	Recording year
Ψιλή βροχή στα μάτια σου [psilí vrohí sta mátia sou = drizzle in your eyes]	HMV 7XGA 2936 - 7PG 3797	1968
Το παιδί απ' το λιμάνι [to pedhí apto limáni = the guy from the port]	HMV 7XGA 2937 - 7PG 3797	1968
Όταν θα σμίξεις μ' αυτόν που θ' αγαπήσεις [ótan tha smíxis maftón pou thaghapísis = when you be together with the one you will love]	HMV 7XGA 3001 - 7PG 3825	1969
Η σκιά μου και γω [I skiá mou ke gho = my shadow and me]	MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5240 - 2J-064 70172	1975
Σταυραετός [stavraetós = golden eagle]	MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5239 - 2J-064 70172	1975

**Table 3.6: Examples of Tsitsánis's songs with the panning technique**

## Reverb

The adding of the reverb effect in the recording/mixing procedure soon became very popular. Clearly, research on the recording procedures of the periods under discussion is very interesting, on the one hand, and very crucial for the continuation of popular music studies, on the other. A thorough research project on the types and the general history of the reverb effect, for instance, could show which of the songs have a natural reverberation, and which a technical, for there are cases where the type of effect seems to be very like a natural effect, for example, arising from the use of a big empty studio room or even a hall. One should take into account that until the first recording studios were built (1936), recording sessions used to take place in the halls of Athens's bigger hotels (Ewbank and Papageorgiou 1997: 74). Table 3.7 shows some Tsitsánis's songs where reverb was used.

Song title	Recording details	Recording year
Απόψε κάνεις μπαμ [apóψε kánis bam = tonight you go off with a bang]	Odeon GO 4785 - GA 7716	1953
Στερνό μου γλυκοχάραμα [sternó mou ghlikohárama = my last sweet dawn]	HMV OGA 2798 - AO 5516	1958
Τα ξένα χέρια [ta xéna héria = the unknown/strange hands]	HMV 7XGA 1607 - 7PG 3216	1962
Όταν θα σμίξεις μ' αυτόν που θ' αγαπήσεις [ótan tha smíxis maftón pou thaghapísis = when you come together with the one you will love]	HMV 7XGA 3001 - 7PG 3825	1969

**Table 3.7: Examples of Tsitsánis's songs with the reverb effect**



### **The electric bouzouki**

This is one of Manólis Hiótis's deeds that changed laikó song forever. Oral stories suggest that this was one of the elements that Hiótis brought with him from the USA (see Chapter 2), imitating the electric guitar that mainly used Fender amplifiers.

Figure 3.10 and Figure 3.11 are the only photos I managed to find, where an amplifier is hardly visible.



**Figure 3.10: Hiótis with his equipment (1)**



**Figure 3.11: Hiótis with his equipment (2)**

It should be mentioned that Vasilis Tsitsánis also used the electric bouzouki, especially on the music stands. Figure 3.12, Figure 3.13, Figure 3.14 and Figure 3.15 show Tsitsánis with his electric bouzouki where the jack-cable, the outer part of the magnet and/or the amplifier, are visible.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Photographs given by Kóstas Tsitsánis.



**Figure 3.12: Tsitsánis with his electric bouzouki (1)**



**Figure 3.13: Tsitsánis with his electric bouzouki (2)**



**Figure 3.14: Tsitsánis with his electric bouzouki (3)**



**Figure 3.15: Tsitsánis with his electric bouzouki (4)**

This new bouzouki sound, as well as the new playing technique that Hiótiis introduced, were – more or less – the first stage of the new electric laikó era as defined by a fusion of Western technology and flamboyance, and a musical context of Eastern origin. Many rembétiko enthusiasts in Greece, lovers of the old acoustic bouzouki style (both as regards its sound and its performance technique) argue that Hiótiis ‘destroyed’, in a sense, the tradition and that he alienated the old, authentic (for them) rembétiko style.<sup>45</sup> The development of the style is not only due to the introduction of the electric sound of the instruments, but also due to Hiótiis’s performance technique which was something very outlandish for the standards of the period. It is true that Hiótiis created an entire new generation of bouzouki players who, from now on, were closer to the western context virtuoso musicians. It is also clear that both Hiótiis’s new bouzouki sound as well as his new very skilled performance technique introduced the new stage of the laikó song.<sup>46</sup> After all, it should always be kept in mind that the development of a musical style is tightly connected to its instruments. Consequently, it is also connected to the development of performance techniques and thus, to the people who are involved in it, that is, the musicians. The issue of whether all this is ‘wrong’ or not, is merely an issue of taste and subjectivity.

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<sup>45</sup> My sources here are discussions with rembétiko lovers as well as discussions I read in forums on the Internet.

<sup>46</sup> About Manólis Hiótiis, see Andónis Kasítas (2009). See also Chapter 8 for a comparison between Tsitsánis’s and Hiótiis’s schools, as well as information about their relationship in establishing the laikó style.

Table 3.8 shows some songs examples from Tsitsánis's recordings that were recorded with the electric bouzouki.

Song title	Recording details	Recording year
Η συνοικία μου [i sinikía mou = my neighborhood]	HMV 7XGA 828 - 7PG 2858	1960
Μεθυσμένος θα 'ρθω απόψε [methisménos thártho apópse = I will come tonight drunk]	HMV 7XGA 754 - 7PG 2832	1960
Μάτια δεκατέσσερα [mátia dhekatéssera = eyes fourteen (idiomatic)]	Columbia 7XGA 2036 - SCDG 3349	1963
Να το προσέχεις το παιδί [na to proséheis to pedhí = take care of the child]	HMV 7XGA 2137 - 7PG 3485	1964

**Table 3.8: Examples of Tsitsánis's songs with an electric bouzouki**

## Recording Innovations

There are some cases with unique and potentially innovating (at least for the period under discussion) elements. One of them is the case of the song *Ο Χρήστος*<sup>47</sup> [o hrístos = Chris] sung by Pródhromos Tsaousákis, recorded on October 29, 1946. If someone listens carefully to Tsaousákis's cadences, they will notice something very interesting. The sound volume (of the voice) is slightly reducing, as if he is turning his head away from the microphone, creating, in a sense, a physical fade out. This is the only time Tsaousákis used this technique.

Another recording technique, most possibly an imitation of foreign recordings, was a second voice sang by the same singer through the use of overdubbing techniques. This, obviously, became possible only after multichannel (or multitrack) recording was introduced (from 1950s onwards). Two representative songs examples are: *Το παιδί απ' το λιμάνι*<sup>48</sup> [to pedhí ap' to limáni = the guy from the port], sung by Stamátis Kókotas, recorded in 1968, and the song *Νοσταλγία*<sup>49</sup> [nostalghía = nostalgia], sung by Dhímitra Ghaláni, recorded in 1975. Obviously, the multichannel possibility allowed not only the singers, but also the rest of the band, and especially the bouzouki players to enrich their playing through overdubbing.

<sup>47</sup> Odeon GO 3666 - GA 7351.

<sup>48</sup> HMV 7XGA 2937 - 7PG 3797.

<sup>49</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5241 - 2J-064 70172.

## A Limitless Range of Sources

An extremely important source regarding historical recordings is the press of the period. Hitherto, I could not find any work with a reference to discography in Greece which had cross-checked the dates it provided with the numerous publications in the press of the period.<sup>50</sup> By referring to the press of the period, I also include the many interviews of Vasilis Tsitsanis which are hard to locate today. Fortunately, Theófilos Anastasiou has gathered almost every interview of Tsitsanis by locating the corresponding newspaper. Although he kindly gave this material to me for examination, I should mention that he was not able to find any printing house interested in publishing this extremely valuable documentation and, thus, it remains unavailable to the public. Rembético enthusiasts in Greece that have published books and articles would have drawn better (and in many cases easier) conclusions as regards the dates they provided, if they had not neglected this source of information. For example, there may be an interview of Tsitsanis that took place in 1970, which refers to songs recorded the very same year and were, then, hits in venues. And since the range of sources is under examination here, it should also be mentioned that ‘much useful information could be derived from multi-track tapes, track sheets, synthesizer patches, diagrams and data relating to the acoustic characteristics of the studio, signal processor settings, choice of microphones and photographs of their placements’ (Warner 2009: 141, n. 38).

Finally, I should also mention the need of the sound source itself. To explain, prior to the era of the rapid spread of information (which admittedly is the era that we are now in), musicologists used to write musical scores in order to illustrate what they analyzed. In other words, the musical score used to take the place of the sound itself, in order to help the reader to construct a sonic image of the song that the writer analyzed. As popular/new musicology gained ground, scholars began to look for new means of transcriptions of music (for example, images from spectrum analyzers – see Brackett 2000: 66-8, for instance). On the other hand, there are few publications which are accompanied by digital means of information, such as a Compact Disc (CD).<sup>51</sup> It is critical to elaborate on this issue: clearly, the easiest way today for someone to listen to a song, due to the aforementioned era of information, is the Internet. As I have

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<sup>50</sup> However, there are works by aficionados that include photographs of papers from newspapers.

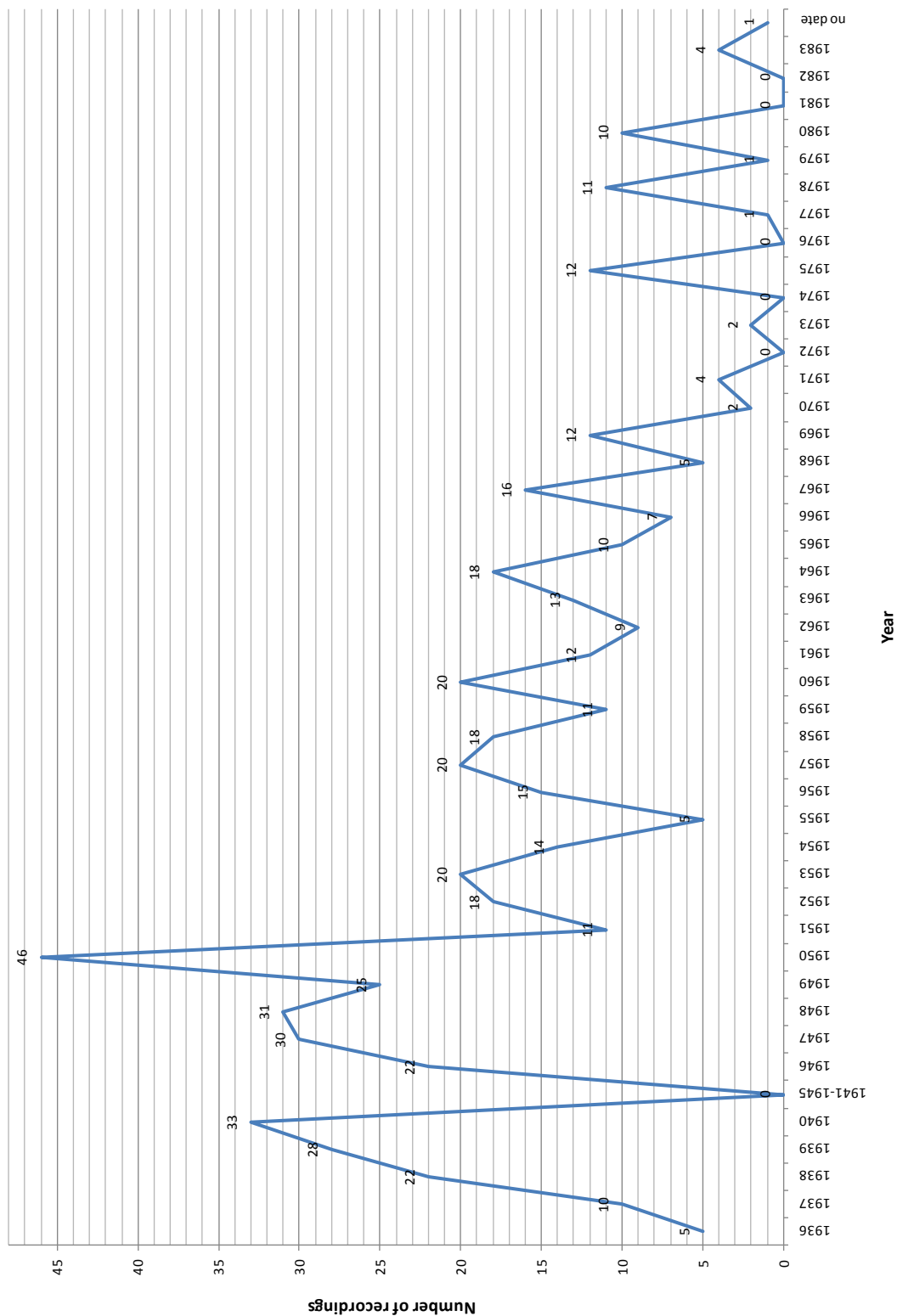
<sup>51</sup> See, for example: Kaliviótis (2002); Tenzer (2006); Kallimopoulou (2009); and Uribe (n.d.).

noticed during my research project, more and more journals (academic and non-academic) choose the path of electronic publication, as this is more functional from several aspects. Therefore, some interesting yet important questions arise: why should the author not include an Internet link for the songs they discuss and analyze? Obviously, under discussion here are songs which are allowed to be used publically and do not apply to the laws of intellectual property. However, one could also argue about the latter, too, for the development and progress of academic research could be considered as being equally important as the notion of intellectual property. Would it not be easier for the readers to have a better idea about the song/s? Why should people bother themselves with the transcriptions of the songs, since it is possible (and far easier even for a musician) to understand a song by simply listening to it? Is there a possibility that (as traditional musicology does) popular/new musicology tends to prefer the visual from the auditory? If yes, why? It seems that Timothy Warner's argument is accurate, that 'while most classical music analysts focus on the score as the primary text, scores of popular music tend to be both rare and largely redundant, since the recording represents a far more complete and accurate 'record' of musical intention' (Warner 2009: 139).

### **Tsitsánis's Recording Career: Basic Statistics**

As the graphs number of recordings by year shows (Figure 3.16), there is a great and almost steady decline in the number of recordings produced.





**Figure 3.16: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by year**

The year 1950 seems to be the most productive while years like 1972, 1974, 1976, 1981 and 1982 have no recording at all. World War 2 is the reason that the



years 1940 – 1945 are missing from the graph because all recording ceased during the war. One of the reasons for the massive production during the early years is Tsitsánis’s collaboration with the famous singer Strátos Piaghioumtzís.<sup>52</sup> This collaboration resulted in 63 recordings (as the leading singer), including some of the most popular songs of the period, achieving a high level of sales, some of which are still performed today.

### 1950: a Key Year for Laikó Song

A notable year was 1950 when Tsitsánis recorded 46 songs, something unprecedented by the standards of the period. Table 3.9 lists some of the best known songwriters of this period and the number of songs that they recorded in 1950. Information has been taken from Maniátis (2006).

Songwriter	Songs
Ghiánis Papaioánu	21
Manólis Hiótis	13
Spíros Peristéris	13
Ghiórgchos Mitsákis	11
Bámbis Bakális	10
Ioánis Tatasópoulos	10
Stávros Tzouanákos	10
Kóstas Kaplánís	9
Apóstolos Hatzihrístos	7
Apóstolos Kaldháras	6
Márkos Vamvakáris	2

**Table 3.9: Number of recordings by other songwriters in 1950**

<sup>52</sup> First recording: *Ο Τσιτσάνης στο Μόντε Κάρλο* [o Tsitsánis sto Mónde Kárho = Tsitsánis at Monte Carl], HMV OGA 657 - AO 2448, recorded in 1937. Last recording: *Τα βλέπω σκοτεινά* [ta vlépo skotiná = I see them dark], Parlophone GO 4732 - B. 74271-I, recorded on November 21, 1952.

There are some interesting details to point out regarding this particular year with regard to Tsitsánis's recordings. Nine lead singers were recorded<sup>53</sup> and five others performed as second voice (without counting Tsitsánis's own vocals). Forty-one of the songs are wholly created by Tsitsánis (that is, both music and lyrics) while three appear to have lyrics by Eftihía Papaghiannopóulou. Thirty-one of these songs are in old zeimbékiko rhythm, twelve of them are in hasápiko rhythm, two are in bálos and one in kalamatianós. Five of these songs were recorded twice. Tsitsánis decided to record some songs twice or even three times. The changes, in most cases, involved the singer, the tempo of the piece, the orchestration and, in some cases, he changed melodic lines and/or the harmony.

The year 1950 is a crucial one for Vasilis Tsitsánis's recording career, as well as the genre's future. It is the year with the greatest number of recordings in Tsitsánis's career. Several incidents that occurred in this specific year are worth noting because they acted as catalysts to the year's recording productivity. They can also be interpreted as heralds of the changes that the genre was about to undergo. Several other events of major importance that had occurred the year before paved the way for the year to come by laying the foundations for a new era, both for the composer and (as evidenced in the recordings) for the rembétiko-laikó musical style as a whole. In 1949, the Civil War officially came to an end. Therefore, a 13-year period of conflict came to an end.<sup>54</sup> The same year, the historical lecture of Manos Hadjidakis about rembétiko took place (1949). Many scholars consider Hadjidakis's lecture as the beginning of rembétiko's broader reception. Furthermore, the last recording on which Márkos Vamvakáris sings a Tsitsánis's song is *Παντρεμένος*<sup>55</sup> [pandreménos = married man]. The same year, the first recording with the singer Maríka Nínou, one of the key singers in Tsitsánis's career from several view points, is made in the song *Για τα μάτια που αγαπώ*<sup>56</sup> [ghiá ta mátia pou ághapó = for the eyes I love]. Concurrently, the partnership between Nínou and Tsitsánis on the music stands begins. These events alone manifest, in a way, the end of an era (Vamvakáris's era,

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<sup>53</sup> Tsaousákis, Nínou, Bélou, Gheorghakopoúλου, Stámou, Evghenikós, Moshonás, Dália and Tzouanános are the names of these singers.

<sup>54</sup> 1936-1940: Metaxás's dictatorship; 1940-1946: World War 2; and 1946-1949: Civil War.

<sup>55</sup> Columbia CG 2534 - DG 6786, recorded on October 27, 1949.

<sup>56</sup> Columbia CG 2535 - DG 6786, recorded on September 31, 1949.

that is, the rembétiko era) and the beginning of a new one (Nínou's era, that is, the laikó era). In 1950 the last recording with the singer Ioána Gheorghakopoúlou (who also stood for the old genre) is made in the song *Σκέψου τη δόλια μάνα μου*<sup>57</sup> [sképsou ti dhólia mána mou = think of my poor mother]. Furthermore, an event of major importance is the first studio collaboration between Vasílis Tsitsánis and Evangelía Margharóni as an accordionist in the song *Κι αν πάθεις και καμιά ζημιά*<sup>58</sup> [ki an páthis ke kamiá zimiá = if you suffer a loss]. Finally, during the same year, Tsitsánis makes his first appearance in a movie, something that became very fashionable from that period onwards. If we also take into consideration the article of the journalist and music-critic Sofía Spanoúdhι about Tsitsánis and laikó music that was published in the next year (1951), one can understand the gravity and the importance of this specific period. Spanoúdhι became, after once being an opponent of rembétiko, a Tsitsánis fan and, thus, a person that finally acknowledged the genre.<sup>59</sup>

All the above are not just signs of the genre's change; in other words, they do not concern the music only. They are also signs of a broader social transformation, mostly due to the aforementioned end of the turmoil in the country, after many years. Greek society had the chance now to 'rest', be re-organized and flourish. The people were now able to go out freely, and to find several means of entertainment, which included taverns, bouzouki clubs and venues and so forth; in other words, places where music had its special role and therefore, it, also, its own chance to flourish. This is possibly the reason for the great amount of recordings of this year, for it was also the recording industry that flourished. Whereas the musicians used to play for a piece of bread (during the years of turmoil), they now found two profitable ways of performing, that is, recording and working on the music stands.

Many distinctive elements can be found if we examine the statistical graphs in connection to Appendix A *Tsitsánis Chronology of Events*. For instance, we can see that Tsitsánis began his military service in 1938 and it ended in 1940. However, the production of the songs did not decrease. According to those who have written on

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<sup>57</sup> Columbia CG 2590 - DG 6814, recorded on January 7, 1950.

<sup>58</sup> Columbia CG 2738 - DG 6886, recorded on October 31, 1950.

<sup>59</sup> The title of Spanoúdhι's article, which shows her ideological change (as regards the acknowledgement of the genre), is *Οι Κόσμοι της Λαϊκής Τέχνης: ο Τσιτσάνης* [the worlds of popular art: Tsitsánis].

Tsitsánis's life,<sup>60</sup> this happened because Tsitsánis used to obtain permission to leave the camp for weekends in order to travel to Athens and record. Under the pressure of time, he often did not succeed in returning by the Monday and he was punished by being locked in the guard house. It has been rumoured, and some of his friends agree,<sup>61</sup> that Tsitsánis used to do this on purpose so that he could spend as much time as he liked working on new songs. He is said to have written his greatest pre-war hit, *Αρχόντισσα*<sup>62</sup> [arhóndisa = mistress] during one of these periods (see Hatzidhoulís 2002).

In the next two chapters (Chapter 4 and 5) the musical analysis part of this thesis commences. They deal with the Greek popular modes which constitute a major chapter in the history of Greek popular music, and in the development of Vasílis Tsitsánis's compositional style. The fact that a thorough analysis and examination has never been carried out makes writing a history of the rembétiko and laikó styles (and Tsitsánis's role within them) complex.

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<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Alexíou (2001 and 2003).

<sup>61</sup> For example, Theófilos Anastasióu, in a conversation we had in March 2010, testified to this piece of information.

<sup>62</sup> Columbia CG 1874 - DG 6440, recorded in December, 1938.

**Part III**  
**The Music**

## Chapter 4

### Introduction to the Greek Laikó Modes and Harmony

#### The Greek Popular Modes: the Root of a Long-Lasting Problem

*Δρόμος* [dhrómos<sup>1</sup>] means road or street (plural *δρόμοι*, dhrómi).<sup>2</sup> The laikó dhrómos [popular mode] is, more or less, a communication code used by Greek musicians. This code, that is the dhrómi, is passed on by oral tradition. It is based however on modal theoretical systems, and more specifically on the system of the Turkish makams. According to Bülent Aksoy, ‘Rauf Yekta listed theoretically the constituents of the makam, which were as follows: 1) a particular octave scale with particular intervals, 2) a tetrachord and a pentachord, 3) a tessitura, which means apart from the 8 pitches, the extensions from the lowest and highest pitches of the octave scale, in other words, all the notes which are found or may be used in a makam scale, 4) entry, 5) the dominant, 6) the finalis, 7) its seyir.’ (Aksoy 1997: 8).

Evidence suggests that there is a possibility that many musicians of the Piraeus (bouzouki-based) school thought that they were actually playing the ‘authentic’ makams, whereas the evidence (that is, the actual recordings) points to the fact that they were creating a different version of them.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to trace the mutual influences that inevitably took place during the centuries of coexistence of Turkish and Greek music (Zannos 1990: 42).

The situation became clearer when chordal harmony was introduced to the style (examined below). During the years of the music of the cafés and the first years of the rembétiko (or the Piraeus bouzouki-based) period,<sup>4</sup> the way that Greek musicians used the makams was similar to the way in which the makams were used in the Ottoman

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<sup>1</sup> I use dhrómos for singular and dhrómi for plural.

<sup>2</sup> Parts of Chapters 4 and 5 have been published as the article ‘The Greek Popular Modes’, *British Postgraduate Musicology*, 11 (2011).

<sup>3</sup> In order to mark the difference between dhrómi and makams, I write the former using the Latin alphabet (Ousák, Hitzáz) while I write the latter in their original form (Uşşák, Hicâz).

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 1 regarding the chronology of the music of the cafés, rembétiko and laikó.

repertoire. Obviously, the turning point should be sought somewhere around this moment, when the refugees were performing their music which was very close to the ‘authentic’ makam style (mainly using fretless instruments), while the Greeks at Piraeus were trying to learn and perform it within their context (ethos, aesthetics and themes of the lyrics). The moment that the bouzouki – a fretted instrument – became the mainland Greeks’ basic and leading instrument, is perhaps the moment when the change of style took effect.<sup>5</sup>

During its formative process a new style somehow detaches itself from its predecessor and, wittingly or unwittingly, emerges as a reaction to the older style. Ordinarily, this reaction to and breaking away from the older style is not clear-cut. In fact the new style usually borrows and/or adapts some element from the older style. After the formative process, the new style becomes crystallized and establishes itself, and its audience begins to recognize the boundaries of it (Byrnside 1975: 219).

In fact, it was unavoidable that confusion like this would occur. If the first *rembétés* (in Piraeus) who created a new repertoire by using the ‘sounds’ from the Ottoman style that they either heard or with which they were already familiar are borne in mind, the changes that occurred can perhaps be better understood. Under discussion here are native Greeks who were affected by the refugees’ music (Ghiórgchos Bátis, for instance), or refugees (Spíros Peristéris) whose style changed from the so-called (as examined in Chapter 1) *Smirnéiko* music style (that is, the *cafés* style) to the *rembétiko* (Piraeus bouzouki-based) style. The major difference was the use of the bouzouki as the *rembétés*’ primary instrument instead of instruments without frets that the refugees used. It seems that the *rembétés* tried to produce the same sound style by using the bouzouki; they tried to fit as many elements as possible of the refugees’ ‘authentic’ makam style into their bouzouki-based style. After all, as Beaton convincingly argues, it is helpful to ‘distinguish two elements which determine the nature and development of a musical tradition: formal structure and melodic structure’

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<sup>5</sup> Obviously the bouzouki was phased in the style which was gradually changing. With ‘the moment of change’ I merely want to emphasize the catalytic role of this particular instrument.

(1980: 1). According to Beaton's theory, the first includes theoretical matters of the musical styles, such as modes or scales, the intervals as they are actually heard and so forth, while the second has to do with the practical matters, such as composition and improvisation.

[...] it is impossible to tell, at a given moment in the history of a musical tradition, the proportions in which the two types of structure have contributed to the establishment of musical norms. In consequence, they are best regarded as maintaining a constant balance and constantly interacting (Beaton, 1980: 1).

To continue with the mainland *rembêtes*, most of them had little schooling, not only musically, but generally.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps this is the most important reason for the theoretical problems that exist today. The most prominent of these problems is the erroneous association drawn between the *laikó dhromi* and the Turkish *makams*. As mentioned above, a crucial difference is that, contrary to the instruments of Greek *laikó* music, Turkish music mostly uses instruments without frets or with movable frets.<sup>7</sup> We are, therefore, dealing with a comparison that is false from the very beginning, since we are discussing musical systems with two very different theoretical backgrounds, the use of micro-tones on the one hand and, on the other, tones and semi-tones only. The observation of Voúlgharis and Vandarákis is extremely important in that 'the above system (of the *makams*) arises as an encoding of the corpus of compositions by literati musicians, extensive and fine in their progression' (2006: 11). However, when talking about *rembétiko*, we discuss an urban-popular musical form. Even if it is the case that we can accept that the *makam* system can be applied to vocal parts of Greek music because there micro-tones are possible, its application to the instrumental part, especially in that of the *bouzouki* (which is the major solo instrument of the genre), is

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<sup>6</sup> It should not be forgotten that this period was a real chaos for the Greek society, due to the Metaxás's dictatorship, Word Wars and so forth (see Chapter 2).

<sup>7</sup> It should always be kept in mind that I am only dealing with urban-popular music, that is, *rembétiko* and *laikó* and not with rural-traditional, also known as *δημοτικά-παραδοσιακά* [*dhimotiká-paradhosiaká*] where the usage of micro-tones was (and still is) something very common (regarding *paradhosiaká* music see Kallimopoulou 2009). Obviously some exceptions can be found in *rembétiko* as well, such as in the case of the violin which makes use of micro-tones.



problematic. In other words, and speaking generally, the makam system could possibly be applied to Greek rural-traditional music, as well as to the music of the cafés, until the moment that the bouzouki was established as the ‘flag’ of the rembetiko style, that is, the descendant, more or less, of the musical style of the cafés. This moment can be roughly defined as the period when Márkos Vamvakáris began to record his music, that is, around 1930. Due to the aforementioned problem regarding the erroneous tendency to draw parallels between the dhrómi and the makams, it cannot be stated for example, that song A is making use of the Ousák dhrómos for, despite the fact that Greek musicians accept, use and (above all) understand each other when using this terminology, it is impossible for the Greek Ousák to be the same as the Ottoman Uşşâk, because of the micro-tones and the commas (see below).

Moreover, the strangest part of this issue is that although Greeks kept the makam names, the names of many dhrómi are mistakenly used, for they do not correspond to the original makams (for example, dhrómos Ousák does not correspond to makam Uşşâk). This problematic use of names has created a bizarre situation where Greek musicians communicate on the music stands by actually using incorrect names to refer to the dhrómi. There are, of course, musicians who have studied makam theory and who are aware of this problem, and that makes it even more complex because they cannot communicate with other un-trained musicians and, therefore, have to make use of the false names even though they know that they do not correspond to Turkish equivalent. For example, the maestro on the music stand might instruct us (the rest of the band) to play a G Ousák. I have two ousáks in my mind: dhrómos Ousák and makam Uşşâk. Although I know that the dhrómos differ from the makam, I too call this dhrómos Ousák. This situation raises a simple yet critical question: is it not enough that the musicians communicate? Should one have to care whether one uses a word, a phrase or a term correctly, since the one to whom they are talking understands them?

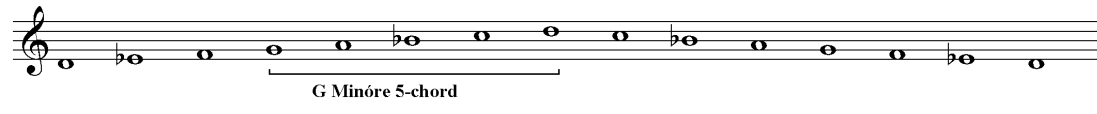
The problem of categorizing the songs according to the dhrómi they are based on is a further issue tackled in my research. For example, when the majority of the musicians refer to, play or teach the song *Το βαπόρι απ' την Περσία* [to vapóri ap' tin Persía = the boat from Persia],<sup>8</sup> they speak of dhrómos Ousák. An examination of the makams, though, shows that the correct makam (or dhrómos, if the terminology was

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<sup>8</sup> MINOS-EMI [COLUMBIA] 7YCG 6314 - 2J 006 70529/II, recorded in 1977.

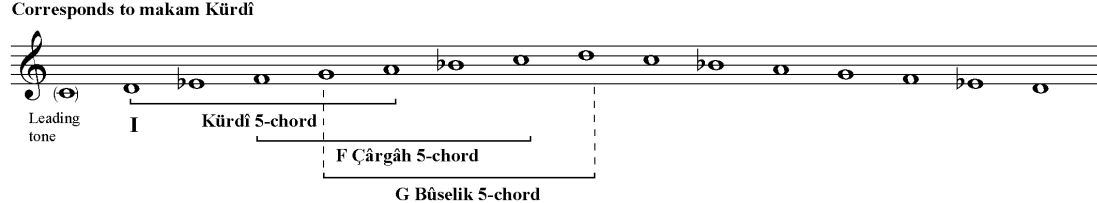
correct) is makam Kürdî (the second staff in Figure 4.1 shows the makam to which dhrómos Ousák corresponds).<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, dhrómos Kiourdí differs from makam Kürdî (see Figure 4.1, fourth staff).<sup>10</sup> As Pennanen points out, ‘the confusion existent in Greek terminology derives from the deficient knowledge of the Ottoman music culture’ (2004: 10).

Dhrómos Ousák



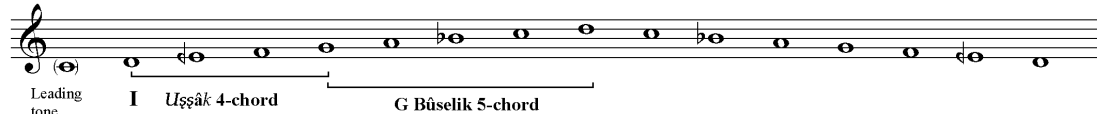
G Minóre 5-chord

Corresponds to makam Kürdî



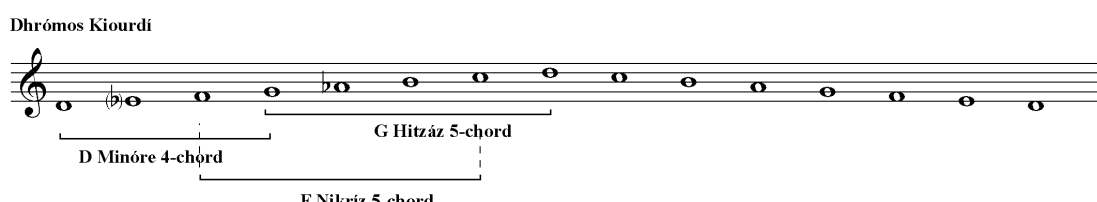
Leading tone I Kürdî 5-chord F Çârgâh 5-chord G Bûselik 5-chord

Makam Uşşâk



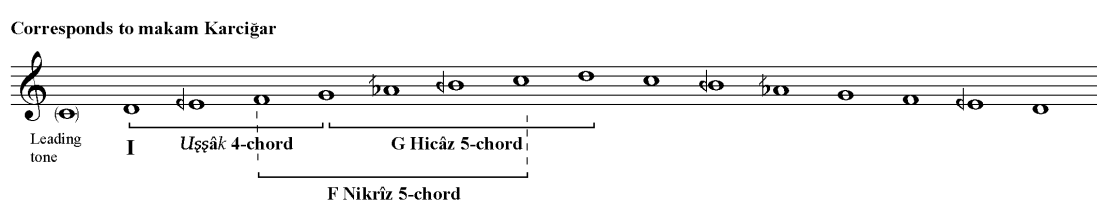
Leading tone I Uşşâk 4-chord G Bûselik 5-chord

Dhrómos Kiourdí



D Minóre 4-chord F Nikríz 5-chord G Hitzáz 5-chord

Corresponds to makam Karcıġar



Leading tone I Uşşâk 4-chord G Hicâz 5-chord F Nikríz 5-chord

**Figure 4.1:** Dhrómos Ousák; makam Kürdî; makam Uşşâk; dhrómos Kiourdí; makam Karcıġar

<sup>9</sup> See Voúlgharis and Vandarákis (2006: 51). Mistakídhis also points out the issue of Kiourdí (2004: 225).

<sup>10</sup> In the modes, the first note in brackets is the leading tone. This is the usual way that modes appear in texts in order to mark the, many times, different behaviour of the leading tone below the tonic-1 (that is, the basic tonic).

The makam form of the dhrómos, that is, the tetrachord/pentachord using the appropriate accidentals is shown in the third staff in Figure 4.1. By adding other makams to the end of each of these tetrachords and pentachords, the way a makam can develop beyond the given tetrachords and pentachords can be shown. Some more special characteristics and issues of the dhrómi are examined further below, when the dhrómi are examined separately. The tetrachord [τετράχορδο = four + string (note, degree)] is the basic unit of the makam theory (Voúlgharis and Vandarákis 2006: 16).<sup>11</sup>

Some examples from my personal experience follow, in order to depict the degree of penetration of certain problems in performance practice and oral tradition. The following examples are part of my fieldwork-participation in rembétiko performance during the years that I have been working as a laikó musician (see Chapter 1).

One night we (the band) played a song which sounded complex and, in terms of its modal construction, strange.<sup>12</sup> Instantly, I asked the bouzouki player whether or not he knew what this particular dhrómos was. His response was ‘it’s a ματζόρε [Matzóre]’.<sup>13</sup> The song was in D tonality, but it used the flat VII major chord, that is, a C (natural) major, instead of the V major, that is, an A major, in its cadences. Basically, the melody in the introduction sounded like this (Figure 4.2):



Figure 4.2: Introduction of *min kánis ónira trelá*

<sup>11</sup> Regarding the important role of the tetrachord, as well as of other small collections of degrees (trichord and pentachord) see Zannos (1990: 44-6).

<sup>12</sup> The song is entitled *Μην κάνεις όνειρα τρελά* [min kánis ónira trelá = don't dream of crazy dreams]. It has been recorded by several artists and is a popular song today.

<sup>13</sup> Matzóre dhrómos is very close to the Western major scale. It, along with the other dhrómi, is examined and analyzed in the next chapter.

If one was to present this particular mode as a scale, it would be as follows (Figure 4.3):

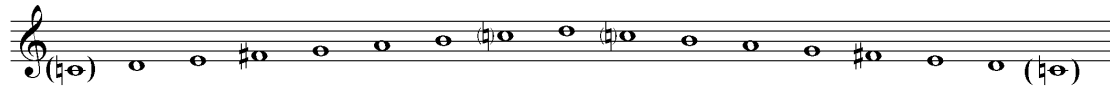


Figure 4.3: Supposed scale of the mode of *min kánis ónira trelá*

I should underline that the flat VII major chord in the Matzóre dhrómos is very rare in Greek songs. Everything became clearer only when I confirmed that this particular song is one of the songs from the so-called Indocracy period (see Chapter 2), that is, a Hindi movie song recorded with Greek lyrics and a Greek style popular orchestra. In other words, during the night at the venue, we were playing a song based on a Hindi rāga (another Eastern modal system). After the first response of the bouzouki player, I continued: ‘this is a Matzóre? What about the C major (chord)? Do you know other songs in Matzóre dhrómos that use this chord?’ Although many bouzouki players are familiar with the basic chordal harmony used in every dhrómos, searching for proper chords or wondering about the correctness of them is something not in their tradition. The final response of the fellow bouzouki player was something like: ‘come on! Why are you bothering yourself with such things?’

Another indicative example consists in considering the way that bouzouki players inform the rest of the band about the song they are about to begin playing. In many cases, at venues with live music, and during the so-called ‘laikó part’ of the programme which is a two to three hour dancing program, some bands prefer to improvise the order of the songs and not make use of a carefully planned program.<sup>14</sup> In almost every venue where I have worked or gone as a customer, the bouzouki player was the one responsible for determining the order of the laikó part. Due to the need for quick changes with virtually no gap between the songs, the bouzouki player has to be as succinct as possible when telling the rest of the band what is about to follow. Thus, he indicates only the song’s tonality, its dhrómos and its rhythm. So, he

<sup>14</sup> Since the dancing part of the programme performed in rembétiko and laikó venues was mentioned, I should highlight that one must understand rembétiko and (even more) laikó as also a dance culture.

will say for example: ‘(let’s go) D Minóre zeimbékiko’.<sup>15</sup> With the term ‘Minóre’, he is actually referring to the very first chord of the song and not to the actual dhrómos on which the song is based. Therefore, he may play a song based on any of the following dhrómi: a D Ousák, a D Minóre Armonikó, a D Minóre or a D Kiourdí (all of these dhrómi use a minor chord as the tonic). The rest of the band will have to follow him either by identifying which song it is (if they know it), or by recognising the song’s modal structure, that is, understanding what dhrómos it is based on. This process is often called by Greek musicians *παίζω με το αυτί* [pézo me to aftí = playing by ear]. They basically mean that one should rely on their experience and musical skills rather than on a musical score. In a sense, it is a matter of musical instinct and alertness on the part of the musicians (see Lilliestam 1996 regarding ‘playing by ear’). Basically, the word ‘Minóre’, or the word ‘Matzóre’, is used to indicate the first chord of the following song, which, in turn, varies according to the dhrómos on which the song is actually based. Interestingly enough, regardless of the prevalent terminology which is based on makam names, the bouzouki player’s instructions are based on a rather Western concept and not a modal one.

Another confusing issue is the fact that Greek laikó musicians think of the dhrómi as being scales of eight notes, that is, octachords. They teach them in this way and they also communicate on the music stands in this way. A glance at the few books published by bouzouki players verifies this interesting point. All the dhrómi are presented as being scales (see below). However, the main element of the makam system is that it emphasizes the utilization of the tetrachord and the pentachord rather than the octachord.<sup>16</sup> The importance of the tetrachord and pentachord is true for Byzantine music as well.<sup>17</sup> Obviously, the way Greek musicians treat the dhrómi (as octachords) reveals a tendency towards Western musical thinking and not towards Eastern musical thinking.

Although significant differences between the two systems exist (the dhrómi and the makams), they still have one thing in common. This is the general concept under which both systems work. Dhrómos and ‘makam is an entity whose qualities cannot easily be described and represented in an exhaustive way’ (Aksoy 1997: 23).

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<sup>15</sup> Minóre is a dhrómos very close to the Western minor scales. Zeimbékiko is a 9/4 laikó rhythm.

<sup>16</sup> This does not mean that makam theory does not include and use the octachord.

<sup>17</sup> With the term ‘Byzantine music’, Greeks refer to Greek orthodox ecclesiastic chanting.

Furthermore, dhrómi and ‘makam-s are also inexhaustible in the sense that in most cases they cannot be represented in all their characteristics in one and the same melody’ (ibid). There are many examples where the cadences (of dhrómi and makams) are identical or at least very similar; dominant notes that create a particular ‘sound’ are also similar; furthermore, many instances which are called *έλξεις* [élxi (singular), élxis (plural) = gravitations] in Byzantine music can be observed in both the system of the dhrómi and the system of the makams. The élxi is a central/dominant note which draws/pulls/attracts peripheral notes towards itself.<sup>18</sup> A characteristic example could be the case of dhrómos Ousák where two idiomatic behaviours can be observed: 1) the instability of the second degree of the scale, which sometimes sounds flat and sometimes natural, depending on whether the melody is ascending or descending; 2) the other idiom is observed in the sixth degree which tends to gravitate towards the seventh in ascending melodies that revolve around the tonal note, in our case D.<sup>19</sup> Figure 4.4 shows a typical ‘opening’ melody of a taxími based on dhrómos Ousák. Since we are dealing with melodies which are played ‘senza tempo’ (the taxímia), I preferred to use semibreves.

Instability of the 2nd and the 6th degrees



Figure 4.4: Idioms of the Ousák dhrómos

The few attempts by scholars to write on the topic have clashed with the oral tradition of the musicians, and instead of solving the problem, have created two ‘camps’, one of which follows the rules of the music stand, and the other the proposals of the scholars. Therefore, well-organized and in-depth research is urgently needed in order to at least prevent the continuation of this problem.

Generally, two kinds of publications exist: a few practice-based books, written by bouzouki players that cite the dhrómi in the form of Western scales and modes

<sup>18</sup> Every makam and dhrómos has its own élxis.

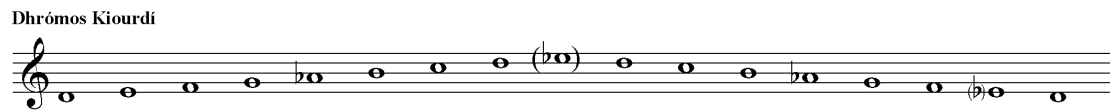
<sup>19</sup> Both idioms are also met in makam theory.

accompanied by a few lines of commentary (Paghiátis 1987 and 1992; Nikolópoulos n.d.). The two major issues with these publications are that they lack in-depth research, and that there are many mistakes with regard to the names and the structure of the dhrómi (regarding the nomenclature problem see further below). For instance, Paghiátis gives dhrómos Kiourdí as follows (Figure 4.5):



**Figure 4.5: Dhrómos Kiourdí as given by Paghiátis (1992: 57)**

On the other hand, Nikolópoulos's Kiourdí is different (Figure 4.6).<sup>20</sup> It should be mentioned that Nikolópoulos does not include any comments at all.



**Figure 4.6: Dhrómos Kiourdí as given by Nikolópoulos (n.d.: 34)**

Turning now to the other category, it consists in the main, as a body of books written by scholars who are clearly aware of the subject. However, apart from Dhímítris Mistakídhis's publication (2004), they deal with the Turkish makams, rather than with the Greek dhrómi; however, these publications do provide models that can be applied to and help analyze the dhrómi. The study made by Evghénios Voúlgharis and Vasilis Vandarákis (2006) is very special; after citing and analyzing the makams, they transcribe songs from the café and the rembétiko periods (1922-1940) according to the Ottoman form of the makams (see below regarding the problems that can occur

<sup>20</sup> Roderick Beaton, similarly to my comparison between Greek dhrómi and makams, he compares the Byzantine modes with the makams and points out several problems, too (1980: 7).

in these kinds of transcriptions).<sup>21</sup> Mistakídhis (2004) presents the Greek dhrómi in a similar way to that of Paghiátis and Nikolópoulos. However, he sheds light on many problematic issues such as the incorrect (or correct for the musicians) use of the names of the makams in Greek popular music. Furthermore, he mentions many idiomatic characteristics of the dhrómi, such as combinations with other dhrómi, basic chordal harmony and more. Kiriákos Kalaitzídhis (1996) analyzes the Ottoman makams in a way similar to Voúlgharis and Vandarákis (2006), although not to such an extent. Finally, the attempt made by Mários Mavroidhís (1999) can be considered as being the cornerstone of all research made on the modes. Not only does he examine the makams, giving important details and critical comments, but he also deals with Byzantine music theory and its modes, the *ήχοι* (íhi), showing the close connection between these two systems (Byzantine and makams).<sup>22</sup>

I hereby suggest that the deeper understanding of Greek popular modes should involve the study of all elements combined in their construction as a system. These elements emanate from the makam system, the Byzantine system and the Western tonal system and harmony in an interactive way. Each of these systems has been created to serve a particular repertoire and, most importantly, have been created according to, and out of, the repertoire they serve. When a characteristic of theirs cannot find its proper place in laikó music, it has to be changed or excluded. For example, the musical notation of Byzantine music would be difficult for Greek laikó musicians to read because very few of them have studied it.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, it is rather difficult to use this notation in order to transcribe laikó songs. Figure 4.7 is an example of a laikó song transcription using the Byzantine notation.

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<sup>21</sup> The title of the book contains the term which was discussed in the Introduction (Chapter 1), that is, ‘Smirnéiko’.

<sup>22</sup> *Ηχος*, íhos (plural *ήχοι*, íhi) are the Byzantine modes. The word íhos literally means sound or tune. A very detailed examination of the relationship between the Byzantine modes and the makams can be found in Zannos (1990).

<sup>23</sup> A similar point is also made in Voúlgharis and Vandarákis (2006: 11).



## Η ΠΑΝΑΓΙΑ

Ἦχος  $\int$  Πα  $\rho z$   
 $\frac{\rho}{q}$

Απ. Καλδάρης

Ο που ου πι κρα και ορ φα α νια και  
 φτω χο λο για με τα μα τια α βου ρκω  
 ω με να βρι σκε ται η η Πα να για

**Figure 4.7:** *I panaghiá* transcription using the Byzantine notation (song by Apóstolos Kaldháras)

Due to the aforementioned difficulty of the Byzantine notation, I too use the system that the scholars who undertook a study of the dhrómi and/or the makams have used. This system is based on staff notation, notes and accidentals.<sup>24</sup> However, there are other theoretical norms in Byzantine music that can be used and can be comprehended by Greek musicians and foreign scholars, such as the so-called in Byzantine theory, idioms (see below). The aforementioned three systems, that is, the makam, Byzantine and Western are examined separately below.

<sup>24</sup> It should be clarified that the accidental of the dhrómi in all examples are given as a key signature in the beginning, no matter if these key signatures are Western or Eastern. For instance, D Hitzáz dhrómos' key signature employs both flats and sharps.

## The Makam Tradition

Today, the prevailing system is the one developed by Raouf Yekta (1922), Suphi Ezgi (1933-1953) and Sadreddin Arel. Its roots lie in the medieval Persian and Arabic traditions and especially in that of the “systematic school” represented by Safi al-Din, Qutb al-Din and further elaborated by musicians such as Abdulkadir Meragi and al-Ladiqi (Zannos 1990: 48-9).

Initially, some fundamental elements of the theory of the makams must be mentioned. All musical examples are given in D tonality. Examples from other authors are given as they appear in their texts. Since the old/traditional bouzouki (the three-string one) is tuned in D (D-A-D) the bouzouki players always prefer to speak of the dhrómi by giving examples using this particular tonality. The examples in the makam system, however, are given in their traditional form, taking, though, note C as the basis (which is named, Rast). It should be clarified that one can consider any note as the basis of a mode, as long as they keep the correct intervals amongst the notes.<sup>25</sup> In other words, one can define/rename any note to Rast, that is, the basis (see Figure 4.8), or, to rephrase it, one can choose the pitch they prefer for their Rast note. Voúlgharis and Vandarákis give three parameters that can play a vital role in choosing a pitch: 1) the instrument that is about to play a piece; 2) the extent of the melody of a piece; 3) the extent and capabilities of the voice that is about to sing the piece (2006: 19). It should also be mentioned that the Byzantine and Ottoman musical styles ‘make full use of the flexibility of the voice as a melodic instrument. Thus, the interval sizes identified by music theory are constantly varied in practice by small inflections that are conscious and refined means of expression’ (Zannos 1990: 51).

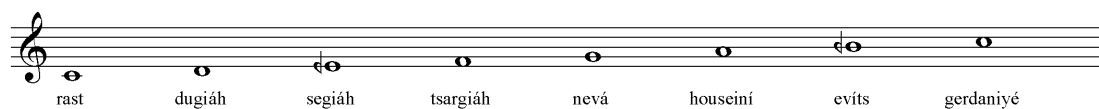
Interesting are some points found in Bülent Aksou’s introduction of the ‘Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the ICTM Maqām Study Group’ regarding the re-introduced theory of the makams:

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<sup>25</sup> See Voúlgharis and Vandarákis (2006: 17-9) for the reasons of choosing note C as the basis.

It is of no surprise that the whole procedure of the new attitude was provided with Western concepts. Thus the theory as re-introduced by Ezgi and Arel: 1) took the C major key of Western music for the fundamental scale of Turkish music and presented it as a Turkish makam which they called “*çargâh*”, which was in fact the Pythagorean scale, 2) fixed the number of pitches within an octave at 25, passing over others, 3) explained the makam structures by juxtaposing Greek tetrachords and pentachords, 4) classified the makam-s according to the transpositions of major and minor scales, 5) borrowed Western terms such as dominant, subtonic, leading-note, etc. to designate the function of the degrees within the makam scales, ignoring the traditional concept of the *seyir* (melodic progression). (Aksoy 1997: 8).

According to Voúlgharis and Vandarákis, there are two main scales used in makam theory and generally in the musical traditions of the Mediterranean and from which all the makams are constructed. These two scales are: 1) the *μαλακή διατονική* [malakí dhiatonikí = soft diatonic], and 2) the *σκληρή διατονική* [sklirí dhiatoniki = harsh diatonic (Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9).<sup>26</sup> ‘In the harsh diatonic scale, which is constructed by *mízon* and *imitónio* intervals, the *imitónio* is not equal with the half of the tone, as in Western music, but smaller’ (Voúlgharis and Vandarákis 2006: 17).<sup>27</sup> Each note/degree of these two scales has its own name. Today, the names of the makams derive from the name of their first degree/note.<sup>28</sup>

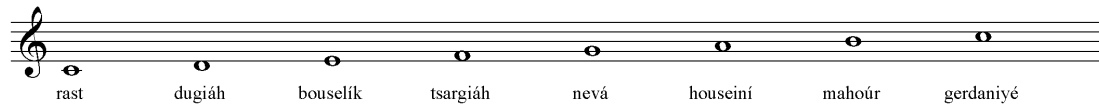


**Figure 4.8: Soft diatonic scale**

<sup>26</sup> See Voúlgharis and Vandarákis (2006: 16-7).

<sup>27</sup> As it is explained below, *mízon* interval is the tone, and *imitónio* the semi-tone.

<sup>28</sup> For a thorough examination of the history of the makams and many other elements that concern them see Elsner and Pennanen (1997).



**Figure 4.9: Harsh diatonic scale**

In Ottoman music, one tone is divided into nine commas (Table 4.1).<sup>29</sup>

There are a number of instances in which musicians recognize certain notes as deviating from the norm by the interval of “a comma”. This term, *kūmā* in Arabic, is from ancient Greek music theory. As used in this context, the term “comma” is not meant to signify an interval of any specific size and is thus never defined in terms of frequency ratios, string length, or cents (Scott 1993: 41).

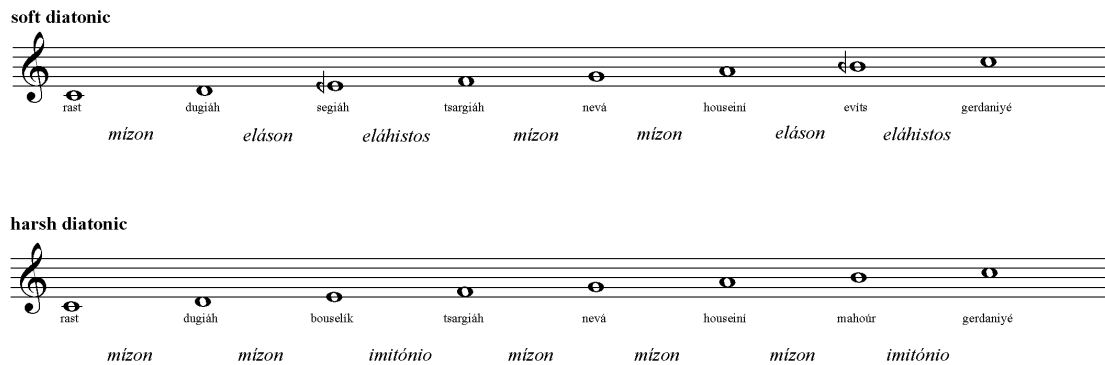
♭ = one comma flat
♭ = four commas flat
♭ = five commas flat
♯ = one comma sharp
♯ = four commas sharp
♯ = five comma sharp
♮ = natural

**Table 4.1: The values of the accidentals in makams**

As one can see, the two differences of the two scales are in the third and seventh degrees. From the above, four kinds of intervals are made which are usually called in Byzantine theory as well as by Greek musicians who are aware of the makam theory

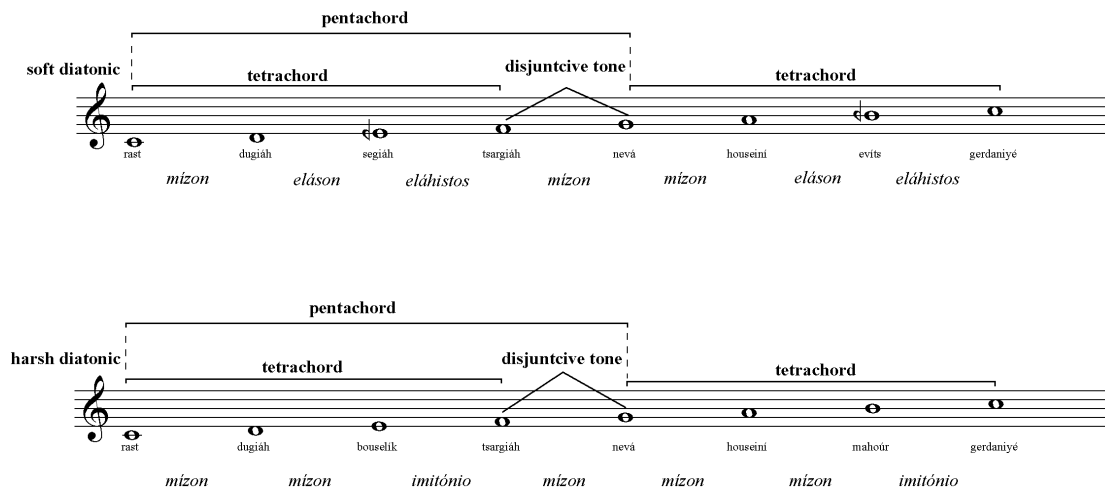
<sup>29</sup> Comma is the measurement unit of the intervals of the modes.

τόνοι [(=plural; *τόνος* = singular) *tónos* = tone]: 1) *μείζων* [*mízon* = major] 2) *ελάσσων* [*eláson* = minor] 3) *ελάχιστος* [*eláhistos* = minimal] and 4) *ημιτόνιο* [*imitónio* = semitone].<sup>30</sup> Figure 4.10 shows the interval constructed within the two scales.



**Figure 4.10: The construction of the intervals in the soft and harsh diatonic scales**

The above two scales could be also considered as a structure which consists of two identical tetrachords that are ‘bounded’ by a *mízon* tone in the middle which is called *διαζευκτικός* [*dhiazeftikós* = disjunctive] in Byzantine theory (see Figure 4.11).



**Figure 4.11: The construction of the two scales (soft and harsh diatonic)**

<sup>30</sup> See Hrisanthos n.d.: 21.

The tetrachord, that is, four successive tones, is one of the fundamental constituents of the theory of the makams. Voúlgharis's and Vandarákis's argument is of major importance: 'the fundamental significance of these structures does not only derive from theoretical analyses but mainly from the compositional technique and the development of the phrases' (2006: 16).

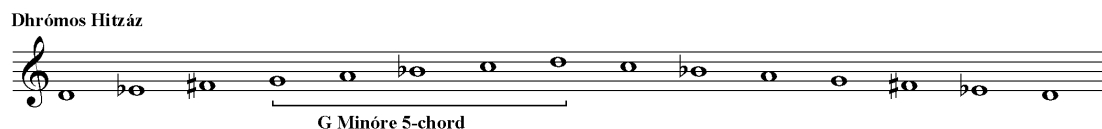
### The Byzantine Tradition

The elements of Byzantine music that were deemed necessary to be used in rembétiko theory are: the idioms (*ιδιωματισμοί*, *idhiomatismí*), the dominant notes (*δεσπόζοντες φθόγγοι*, *dhespózontes fthóngi*) and the cadences (*καταλήξεις*, *katalíxis*). The idioms are idiosyncratic behaviours or simply specific movements of certain notes within particular modes. For instance, in the Ousák and Hitzáz dhrómi, it is highly likely that an ascending movement in the Rast or Matzóre pentachords below the tonal note (in our case D) and towards it will be found (G-A-B-C-D is G Rast/Matzóre pentachord. See Figure 4.12).<sup>31</sup> This should be considered an idiom of Ousák/Hitzáz rather than a modulation to the Rast/Matzóre dhrómos (see Figure 4.13 for dhrómos Hitzáz). As Manuel correctly argues 'it is also significant that modulation – involving either change of scale type or transposition of tonic, or both – is a central feature in Turkish performance practice, whether of art music, gypsy urban popular music, or many makam-informed folk styles' (Manuel 1989: 76).



**Figure 4.12: The Rast idiom of the dhrómi Ousák and Hitzáz**

<sup>31</sup> Rast is another makam/dhrómos. It is often used by Greek musicians as a synonym for the Matzóre dhrómos.



**Figure 4.13: Dhrómos Hitzáz**<sup>32</sup>

The dominant notes, as described by Hrisanthos from Mádhita in his book are the notes that ‘the íhos enjoys more to go in for’ (n.d.: 134). In other words, the dominant notes are the notes that are heard more than other notes and thus create a particular ‘feeling/sense’, ethos, aesthetic and general sound style for every popular mode (see Figure 4.14 for examples of dominant notes).

Finally, in Byzantine music, cadences in each mode (íhos) are specific and different from those in other modes. This is the same as in the dhrómi (see Figure 4.14). I have never heard of a term used for the cadences from Greek laikó musicians and this is the reason why I borrowed the names of the cadences from Byzantine theory (as I remarked earlier, there is no written theory for Greek rembétiko-laikó music). Therefore, I call ‘interim cadences’ those cadences which occur during the pieces and ‘final cadences’ those which occur at the end, just as they do in Byzantine music. I should point out that while the main concern of the Byzantine cadences is the lyrics, the main concern in the cadences used in Greek dhrómi is the music. More clearly, Byzantine interim cadences are divided into two categories, the *ατελείς* [atelís = incomplete] – where there is a cadence or simply a pause in the music, but where a sentence in the lyrics has not yet finished (in other words, when a comma or a semicolon is reached) – and the *εντελείς* [endelís = ending at a full stop], where the sentence is finished along with the melodic line (within the hymn). However, when we discuss Byzantine music, we are talking about a strictly vocal music. This accounts for the emphasis on the lyrics. Figure 4.14 shows the cadences and the dominant notes with the accompanying chords in dhrómos Ousák.

<sup>32</sup> It should be noted that dhrómos Hitzáz, contrary to dhrómos Ousák examined before, does correspond to makam Hicâz.

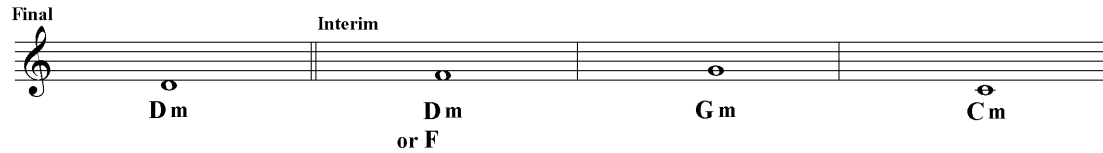


Figure 4.14: Cadences and dominant notes with accompanying chords in Ousák dhrómos

## The Western Tradition

[...] a recipient culture may adapt foreign elements in distinctly idiosyncratic ways that substantially alter their function, context, and meaning. The uses of harmony, for example, in Greek, Balkan, and Turkish popular musics could not be called functional in the Western sense, since the chordal vocabularities derive not from European common practice but from the tonal resources of the modes used (Manuel 1990: 20-1).



[...] rather than by Westernisation alone, musical change in Greece can be more readily analysed through the concept of modernization. According to Bruno Nettl (1985: 20), Westernisation may be described as the substitution of central features of non-Western music for their Western analogues, thereby sacrificing essential facets of the tradition. [...] Modernisation, on the other hand, is the incidental movement of a system or its components in the direction of Western music and musical life without requiring major changes in those aspects of the non-Western tradition that are central and essential. Western elements are viewed in the culture as ways of continuing the tradition rather than changing it. (Pennanen 1999: 7-8).<sup>33</sup>

The introduction of characteristics from Western music, or from what (according to the above quotations) appears to be Western music, was perhaps the most important reason for the transformation of the ‘authentic’, makam-based style (that is, the music of the refugees), to a new one, the *rembétiko* (Piraeus style). More specifically, the role that chordal harmony played in the development of Greek popular music was of major importance.<sup>34</sup> Manuel writes that ‘from the 1940s on, particularly under the influence of Vassilis Tsitsanis, European influence increased, with even more emphasis on harmony’ (1989: 83). It is true that, after World War 2, the songs recorded by Tsitsánis were more sophisticated in terms of both their virtuosity and their harmonic structure. Nevertheless, it is his ‘classical period’ (1940s – 1950s) that seems to justify claims such as the one about the conversion from the *rembétiko* to the *laikó* style; and the establishment of specific chordal progressions is clearly part of Tsitsánis’s work. For example, a characteristic chordal sequence found in many Tsitsánis’s songs and especially in his so-called *kandádha* style songs (see Chapter 1) is, in a sense, an altered version of the cycle of fifths: I+ // IV+ // III+ (V+ of the relative minor) // VI- (relative minor). However, the establishment of and the

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<sup>33</sup> See also Bruno Nettl’s statement (1985: 156) regarding Westernization and modernization in the Middle East.

<sup>34</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the development of chordal harmony in Greek popular music see Pennanen (1999: 67-118). See also Manuel (1989).

gravity given to harmony by Tsitsánis does not mean that he was not a makam expert. The best proof of this is the way he utilizes the dhrómi in his taxímia.<sup>35</sup>

As the years passed, the usable dhrómi began to reduce. From a range of options – that is, the usable makams/dhrómi of the refugees – the final group of later-rembétiko and early-laikó era contained five to six dhrómi. Particularly under the influence of Tsitsánis’s ‘classical period’ (1940s – 1950s), the two most preferred dhrómi became dhrómos Matzóre and Minóre along with their combinations, such as dhrómos Rast and Niavénd. The other dhrómi used were dhrómos Hitzáz, Housám and Ousák, again with their combinations. In essence, it was harmony that played a vital role in the effacement of the traditional use of the makams. Therefore, the falsification of the makams brought by the refugees occurred in two stages: firstly because of the use of a fretted instrument, that is the bouzouki, as the new repertoire’s leading instrument (around 1930), instead of instruments without frets – not to mention the other fretted instruments such as the Spanish guitar and the baghlamás. However, in this period still, and before chordal harmony became a ‘must’, the new dhrómi concept was very close to its ancestors. Although microtones were not utilized to the same extent, the concept was still a modal one – until the second stage took place, that is, the introduction and establishment of chordal harmony.<sup>36</sup> From now on, the style’s concept changed from modal to chordal.<sup>37</sup>

I managed to verify, in a sense, this swift towards harmonizing the songs when I visited for the first time Tsitsánis’s house in Glyfada, Athens (in December, 2008). His son, Kóstas, took me to the room where he used to work. Surprisingly, in there, I saw three or four baghlamás and a small Spanish guitar. No bouzouki, at all! Kóstas informed me that his bouzoukis are in different places, such as Tsitsánis museum in Tríkala. He also informed me of something astonishing: Tsitsánis loved and many times preferred to compose and rehearse songs with this small guitar, and not with the bouzouki. Ultimately, this preference towards the guitar was verified after listening to a rarer album that Kóstas granted to me. It is called *Βράδια Αγαπημένα* [vrádhia

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<sup>35</sup> See Table 7.5 in Chapter 7 regarding some interesting taxímia cases of Tsitsánis.

<sup>36</sup> This establishment of chordal harmony can be defined around the early ‘classical period’ of Tsitsánis, that is, the early post-war era (1946).

<sup>37</sup> Regarding this falsification see also Beaton (1980: 9).

aghapiména = beloved nights].<sup>38</sup> Apart from some unpublished recordings, the two CDs also contain some home-recordings, unpublished songs, made by Tsitsánis alone. Tsitsánis sings and accompanies himself playing the guitar (playing chords and singing the introductions and call-and-responses)! The following figure (Figure 4.15) is a photograph of Tsitsánis's guitar.



**Figure 4.15: Vasilis Tsitsánis's guitar (the author, February 2012)**

However, one should always bear in mind the fact that the aural competencies were certainly different in the rembétiko and early laikó era (that is, until around 1950s). Today, the songs tend to use a more strict and vertical harmony, that is, utilize more chords in order to produce a ‘Western correct’ sound. In contrary, back then, the early stages of harmonization did not employ vertical harmonizations of the songs but ‘horizontal’. As Pennanen convincingly argues:

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<sup>38</sup> MBI Music Box International, PAN 117/118

In rebetika and laika performance practice, chords are not always based exclusively on scale degrees. Instead, melodies are built around tonal centres and melodic formulae, which leads to a harmonic logic (what I will call “traditional” harmonization) different from the Western one (Pennanen 1999: 77).

In other words, the guitarists used to let the melody ‘move’ and only utilize some very basic chords, despite whether or not they would perfectly suit the melody. Therefore, one could consider this period (the early stages of harmonization) as the interval between the purely modal concept and the chordal one.

Let us look at an example which demonstrates this falsification of the dhrómi. Dhrómos Hitzaskiár could have remained very ‘traditional’, that is, close to makam Hicâzkâr, without the usage of harmony (see Figure 4.16).

The figure contains two musical staves. The top staff is titled "Dhrómos Hitzaskiár" and shows a melodic line starting with a leading note (F#). Below the staff, brackets indicate three chords: "D Hitzáz 4-chord" (under the first two notes), "G Nikríz 5-chord" (under the next three notes), and "A Hitzáz 4-chord" (under the final three notes). The bottom staff is titled "Makam Hicâzkâr" and shows a similar melodic line starting with a leading note (F). Below it, brackets indicate two chords: "Hicâz 5-chord" (under the first three notes) and "Hicâz 4-chord" (under the final three notes).

**Figure 4.16: Dhrómos Hitzaskiár and makam Hicâzkâr**

When it came to be harmonized, the guitarists (for they were the people who played the harmony-providing instruments) had to find ‘proper’ chords for this particular dhrómos. There are plenty of examples where the guitarists play a flat VII minor chord in a cadence of a song based on Hitzaskiár dhrómos (see Figure 4.17 as well as Chapter 5). Thus, considering D as the main tonality, they play a C (natural) chord; however, a D Hitzaskiár utilizes a C sharp note. If the guitarists chose to do something different, like playing the notes of the melody in the cadence along with

the bouzouki without a chord, the dhrómos style of these songs would have remained more ‘traditional’ (see staff ‘modal-based guitarist’ of Figure 4.17).<sup>39</sup>

F# Hitzaskiár dhrómos

Leading note I

Columbia CG 2066 - DG 6546  
Hasápiko  
F# Hitzaskiár  
Time: 00.11

♩ = c. 53

Bouzouki

Hasápiko Guitar

F#7 Bm

B Chord B\_V Chord

Bouzouki

Hasápiko Guitar

F# Em F#

B B\_V Chord

Modal-based

F# F#

B B\_V Chord

Detailed description: The figure shows three systems of musical notation. The first system is a single staff with a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. It contains a sequence of notes: F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4. Below the staff, the first note is labeled 'Leading note' and the interval between the first and second notes is labeled 'I'. The second system consists of three staves. The top staff is for Bouzouki, the middle for Hasápiko Guitar, and the bottom for Modal-based. The Bouzouki staff has a treble clef, key signature of one sharp, and a 2/4 time signature. It shows a sequence of chords and notes: B (Chord), B\_V (Chord), Bm, and Bm. The Hasápiko Guitar staff shows chords F#7 and Bm. The Modal-based staff shows notes F# and B. The third system also consists of three staves. The Bouzouki staff shows notes with triplets. The Hasápiko Guitar staff shows chords F#, Em, and F#. The Modal-based staff shows notes F# and B. The Bouzouki staff in the third system has a treble clef, key signature of one sharp, and a 2/4 time signature. It shows a sequence of notes: F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The Hasápiko Guitar staff shows chords F#, Em, and F#. The Modal-based staff shows notes F# and B.

**Figure 4.17: Example of the falsification of Hitzaskiár dhrómos (Tsitsánis song: *se zilévo se ponó* – CD Track 1)**

It should be noted that the recording’s revolutions per minute seem to be changed (see Chapter 3). The song’s tonality most possibly is G and not F sharp because it was (and still is) almost impossible for the bouzouki players to choose such a tonality. A good proof for this is perhaps the last measure where a C sharp note below the staff is played, something which is not possible for the six-string bouzouki (tuned in D-A-D). Moreover, I chose not to score the bass notes of the guitar, since these notes are part

<sup>39</sup> In the transcriptions, ‘B’ or ‘Bass’ refers to a single bass note and ‘B\_V’ refers to the fifth note of the chord (see Chapter 6 for more explanations).

of the ‘playing freedom’ of the laikó musicians, as regards the rhythms’ interpretations.<sup>40</sup>

Continuing with the falsification of the dhrómi, once chordal harmony was introduced, it was unavoidable not to falsify the old makam-based dhrómi, simply because there cannot exist an authentic dhrómos, without the utilization (or, in some cases, simply implying) a Western-style dhrómos-scale. For instance, the song *H sklirokardhi*<sup>41</sup> [i sklirokardhi = the stone-heart woman] is in dhrómos Segiáh (see Figure 4.18).

**Dhrómos Segiáh**

**Makam Segâh**

**Figure 4.18: Dhrómos Segiáh and makam Segâh**

This song (i sklirokardhi) is in B flat tonality. By utilizing a V degree major chord in its cadences, it implies the B flat Matzóre dhrómos. Judging by the structure of the dhrómos, a V degree major chord cannot exist, at least theoretically, due to the II sharp note. However, theory did not prevent the guitarist from playing the V degree major chord (see Figure 4.19).

<sup>40</sup> In terms of this playing freedom, as well as regarding the rhythms and the way the guitar accompanies the songs, see Chapters 6 and 7.

<sup>41</sup> HMV OGA 1041 - AO 2637, recorded on April 25, 1940.

His Master's Voice OGA 1041 - AO 2637  
Tsifetéli in 9-beat  
Bb Segiáh  
Time: 00.13

♩ = c. 98

Bouzouki

idiom 1

idiom 2

Tsifetéli 9-beat

B<sup>b</sup> F B<sup>b</sup>

Bass Chord Chord Bass\_V Chord Bass Chord Chord Bass Chord Chord

B.

idiom 1

Ts. 9-beat

B<sup>b</sup> F B<sup>b</sup>

**Figure 4.19: Example of the falsification of Segiáh dhrómos (Tsitsánis song: *i sklirókardhi* – CD Track 2)**

The F major chord played by the guitarist conflicts with the C sharp note of the dhrómos. There are plenty of examples of such songs (see also *Βρε μάγκα σπάσε*<sup>42</sup> [vre mánga spáse = hey dude go away] and *Μαύρα τα βλέπω κι άραχνα*<sup>43</sup> [mávra ta vlépo ki árahna = I see them dark and dismal]). One can also notice two basic idioms-gravitations of dhrómos Segiáh (idiom one and two in Figure 4.19): the first one is about the fourth note of the mode which gravitates to the fifth note (dominant for this dhrómos) in lines where the melody revolves around the fifth. The other idiom concerns the second note and its behaviour above the octave, where, in some cases, it loses its sharp when the melody revolves around the tonic (that is, the first degree) but does not go over the second. In terms of these chords (which may be deemed ‘unsuitable’) found in some dhrómi, one should bear in mind the fact that many times the guitarists may have simply made a mistake or explored new options. This could have been caused by several factors such as lack of rehearsal and preparation or just the will to experiment (see Chapter 6 regarding matters concerning the night’s work of the musicians).

<sup>42</sup> HMV OGA 2060 - AO 5150, recorded on November 28, 1953.

<sup>43</sup> Columbia CG 3073 - DG 7041, recorded in 1952.

On the other hand, there are cases where the musicality and skills of the musicians (and particularly the guitarists) is more than obvious. One should always bear in mind that many refugees were extremely skilled and educated musicians (for example, Spíros Peristéris, who was appointed artistic director of Columbia in Greece). The fact that many of them were aware of various musical styles (due to the variety of the musical life of Asia Minor which was analyzed in Chapter 1) granted them the ability of using elements from them into *rembétiko*. For example, there are cases where the guitarists used chords in reverse, such as *Με γυναίκες μην τραβιέσαι*<sup>44</sup> [me ghinékes min traviése = don't mess up with women]. In all the verses, the guitarist plays the G minor chord with the B flat in the bass.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the cases with innovative (for the standards of the period) modulations and chord sequences are numerous and particularly interesting. For example, *Αργοσβήνεις μόνη*<sup>46</sup> [arghosvínis moni = you languish alone] is a well-known song amongst Greek *laikó* musicians for its arrangement, structure, rich harmonization and movement through the tonalities (see Figure 4.20).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Columbia CG 2167 - DG 6600, recorded on June 28, 1946.

<sup>45</sup> See also song *Μαγκιώρα* [mangióra = buster woman], Odeon GO 3758 - GA 7391, recorded on March 1, 1947.

<sup>46</sup> Columbia CG 2259 - DG 6683, recorded on July 8, 1947.

<sup>47</sup> Worth-mentioning is that Figure 4.20 shows how a typical *laikó* score of the music stands looks like. This type of transcription, as well as the score itself, is often called by Greek *laikó* musicians *οδηγός* [odhighós = guide], and it is mainly used by the accompanying instrumentalists, such as the guitaris and the pianist.



Columbia CG 2259 - DG 6683  
E Minóre Armonikó / Minóre

### Αργοσβήνεις μόνη

4/4 - Bolero

♩ = 123

Intro  
accordion

Em Em Em Em C B B B Am B B B

B Chord B,V B B,III B,V

11 Canto

11 Am Am Em Em Em Em Em Em Am Em C

21 Orchestra

21 B B E Am Em Em Am Em Em

31 Refrain

31 Em Em B7 B7 B7 B7 Em Em Em E Am

41

41 Am Em Em Em B7 B7 Em Em E E (A) Dm

51 Fine Orchestra accordion

51 Dm (E) Am Am Am Em Em Em Em Em

61

61 Em Am Em C B B Am Em Em

Figure 4.20: Arghosvínis móni transcription – CD Track 3 (Tsitsánis)

Some more song-examples of special chordal sequences are: *Κατερίνα Θεσσαλονικιά*<sup>48</sup> [katerína thesalonikiá = Catherine from Thessaloniki];<sup>49</sup> *Εσύ μου πήρες τη χαρά*<sup>50</sup> [esí mou píres ti hará = you took the joy from me]; *Δνο φορές σε πίστεψα*<sup>51</sup> [dhió forés se pístepsa = I believed you twice]; and *Το απόβραδο*<sup>52</sup> [to apóvrado = the early evening].

Chordal harmony is one of the fundamental, most complex and profound characteristics of non-Western musical traditions, because it reveals how and to what extent musicians adapt to Western influences and contribute to musical syncretism. Furthermore, the impact that other aspects of the Western tradition had on non-Western musical cultures, apart from harmony, such as technology, instruments construction and more, were catalytic with regard to these styles' development. As Bruno Nettl cogently argues:

Urbanization, the interaction of various culture groups, Western technology in music and elsewhere, secularization of musical culture—all of this came about because of the impact of Western culture, and so the music that might best symbolize this state of society would almost have to include Western and native elements side by side (Nettl 1985: 85).

Ultimately, if we also consider the fact that many Greek islands were under Italian rule for many years, it becomes clear that the 'importation' of Western elements was unavoidable. Worth mentioning in this regard is the case of Márkos Vamvakáris, the man who played a critical role in the creation of the Piraeus (bouzouki-based) rembétiko style. He was from the island of Σύρος [Síros = Syra or Syros]. Venetians, Greeks and Turks lived on the island. Venetians declared Catholicism the dominant religion in 1204. Turks ruled the island from 1579 but gave many privileges to the citizens of Síros, one of them being their religious freedom.

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<sup>48</sup> HMV OGA 1265 - AO 2761, recorded on October 6, 1947.

<sup>49</sup> The sequence VI- // IV- // I+ as well as the way that the melody shifts in this song from the Matzóre to the Sousinák dhrómos is noteworthy and rare.

<sup>50</sup> Odeon LG 1039 - GA 7774, recorded on April 9, 1954.

<sup>51</sup> Columbia 7XCG 1919 - SCDG 3311, recorded on July 13, 1963.

<sup>52</sup> HMV OGA 2873 - AO 5562, recorded on June 2, 1959.

The population of the island rose from around 4,000 people at the beginning of the Greek Revolution in circa 1821 to 14,000 in 1828, and finally reached 22,000 around 1889. Moreover, a high school was built as early as in 1833, and a theatre as early as 1864. Manuel adds that ‘Syra, for example, with its important port of Hermoupolis, hosted an opera house from the 1820s’ (1989: 7). This suggests a mixture of Italian-style songs, Turkish makam-based music, Greek folk music, opera, Catholic religious music and so forth. Although Vamvakáris left the island at the age of 12, it is obvious that every sound which he remembered may well have influenced his bouzouki music during his life in Piraeus.<sup>53</sup> Finally, if we add the ‘μάγκας world’ (mángas = street-urchin, thug, toughie) that clearly affected his way of living as well as his songs (see Vamvakáris’s hashish songs), it becomes clear that the musical style he introduced was a mix of cultural traditions based in different and varied soundscapes.

### **The Special Role of the Rāga System**

The Indocracy period (see Chapter 2) had an important impact on the development of Greek popular music, and thus in the development of the dhrómi (from around 1960 onwards). Due to the nature of the rāgas, that is, of a very close relation to the makams, we cannot be sure if a Greek song of that period has been affected by a Hindi rāga or by a makam.<sup>54</sup> However, there are cases where a song of this period, although obviously utilizing a particular makam, does so in a different way than this particular makam was used in the past.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, it is difficult to observe whether we have a simple development of the dhrómi, even affected by the rāgas, or a strict imitation and utilization of the rāgas.

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<sup>53</sup> Regarding Vamvakáris’s songwriting technique see also Politis (2005a: 2-3).

<sup>54</sup> I have contacted David Courtney who is specialized in Hindi music (contacted via email in May 2011). He agreed on the same thing, that is, the fact that it is rather difficult to say that a song from that period is clearly utilizing a rāga or a makam.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, songs: *Ο κουμπάρος ο Τσιτσάνης* [o koumbáros o Tsitsánis = Tsitsánis the best-man], HMV 7XGA 1821 - 7PG 3335, recorded on September 10, 1963 (a dhrómos very close to rāga Khammaj); *Φαρμακωμένα χείλη* [farmakoména hili = poisoned lips], HMV 7XGA 25357 - PG 3586, recorded on May 31, 1966; and *Πονάω και μ’ αρέσει* [ponáo ke m’ arési = I pain and I like it], HMV 7XGA 2399 - 7PG 3540, recorded on December 11, 1965. The last two are very close to rāga Bhairav.

Pennanen argues that ‘the frequent sudden shifts between parallel major and minor tonalities that became common in Greek popular music of the 1960s originate from the melodic models of Indian film songs in rāga Mīśra Pīlū. The peculiarity of this rāga is the unstable third degree (cf. Nimbus NI 5365).<sup>56</sup> It is true that those sudden shifts between major and minor chords/tonalities, which usually occur on the first degree-chord (I- to I+), are signs of Hindi song influence. However, one must bear in mind that there are countless songs recorded years before the Indocracy period that make use of the same shift (see below). Pennanen continues by saying that ‘the most influential model song for Greek composer of the new style was the 3/4 (or 6/4) time (Indian dādrā tāla) “Dunya men hum” by Naushad Ali in Mīśra Pīlū from the film Mother India’ (1999: 72). The Greek copyrighted song is entitled *Δε με πόνεσε κανείς*<sup>57</sup> [dhe me pónese kanís = nobody felt sorry about me] and it is credited to Bámbis Bakális, initially sung by Strátos Dhionisíou. Since then, it has been recorded several times by other artists, too. Pennanen continues by providing an excerpt from the song *Μ’ έχουν γελάσει δυο μαύρα μάτια*<sup>58</sup> [m’ éhoun ghelási dhió mávra mátia = two black eyes have fooled me] by Vasílis Tsitsánis (1999: 73). Once again, the argument is correct, that is, the fact that the 3/4 time appeared during this period. However, there are two major issues: if someone compares the first example, that is, ‘Dunya men hum’, with the Greek copyrighted one and the excerpt of Tsitsánis’s song, they will see that, although all of them are in 3/4 time, there are great differences between the interpretation of the rhythm. The Greek copyrighted version of the first one (that is, *dhe me pónese kanís*) uses the Greek *τσάμικος* [tsámikos] rhythm, which is a rural-traditional rhythm found in several places in Greece, especially in Peloponnesus and Stereá regions. On the other hand, Tsitsánis’s song (which is not a copyrighted song, but a Tsitsánis’s composition, obviously affected by Hindi music) makes use of 3/4 in a way similar to a Western waltz. Nevertheless, Hindi influence is in evidence in this period and in any case it reveals one of the most characteristic aspects of Greek popular music: the susceptible, changeable and easy

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<sup>56</sup> Pennanen 1999: 72.

<sup>57</sup> HMV 7PG 2831, recorded most probably in 1960.

<sup>58</sup> HMV 7XGA 1142 - 7PG 3004; Pennanen gives 1960 as the recording year of the song. However, the recording sheets show that the song has been recorded on July 11, 1961.

nature of its adoptions. Of course, all these matters tell us that there is a need for further research on what impact the newly imported *rāgas* had.

### **Other Musical Styles that Affected the Modes**

Many Greek musicians travelled to the USA.<sup>59</sup> Clearly, the Blues and the Afro-Cuban (Latin American) popular song affected Greek popular music in several aspects: rhythms, singing, arrangements, performance techniques and modes. Regarding songs obviously affected by the Jazz-Blues tradition, see *Μάμπο με τρελές πενιές* [mambo me trelés peniés = mambo with crazy strokes of the pick], Melody MA 84 - MG 53, recorded on October 21, 1955. The rhythmic performance as well as some lines in the melody link to the music of the Blues and Jazz. Ultimately, the final chord in the final cadence (A6 major) also attests to great affection for the aforementioned traditions. See also *Δυο φορές σε πίστεψα* [dhió forés se pístepsa = I believed you twice], Columbia 7XCG 1919 - SCDG 3311, recorded on July 13, 1963. One can notice some unusual (for the Greek standards of the period) chords (extended chords: ninth and eleventh) played by the accordion, the origin of which are clearly once again Blues and Jazz.

Moreover, there are cases that, although fewer in number, show the existence of musical elements from musical styles such as the Spanish and the Gypsy music culture.<sup>60</sup> For instance, there are innumerable cases where the Andalusian cadence or at least a chord sequence obviously affected by the Andalusian cadence is found, what Manuel calls Phrygian tonality/chordal sequence (1989: 71-3).<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, one should not forget the Italian popular song influence and the so-called by Tsitsánis *καντάδα* [kandádha = serenade] style which holds a dominant position within his work and perhaps this is one of the signs of the modernization and the Westernization of his

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<sup>59</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>60</sup> Regarding the Gypsy affection see, for example, song: *Φαρίντα* [farínda = female name], HMV OGA 2929 - AO 5585, recorded on October 29, 1959.

<sup>61</sup> See, for example, songs: *Αντιλαλούνε τα βουνά* [andilaloúne ta vouná = the mountains echo], HMV OGA 1788 - AO 5009, recorded on September 1, 1951; *Η θεατρίνα* [I theatrína = the actress], Columbia CG 2486 - DG 6759, recorded on January 7, 1949; and *Μόρτισσα* [mortise = rake], Odeon GO 3759 - GA 7391, recorded on March 1, 1947.

style.<sup>62</sup> Finally, there are cases where the so-called pentatonic scales are noted: *Διπλή ζωή*<sup>63</sup> [dhiplí zoí = double life]; *Κορίτσι μου όλα για σένα*<sup>64</sup> [korítsi mou óla ghiá séna = my girl everything is for you]; and *Μετρήστε τις πληγές*<sup>65</sup> [metrístē tis plighés = count the wounds] are some song examples.

The most outstanding case, however, is the, for most of the time, strange and special combinations of the aforementioned styles which produced syncretic styles.<sup>66</sup> These, what one might call ‘multicultural’ songs, show the tendency of the era towards experimentation, something that is still more obvious in today’s Greek popular style.

All these characteristics of *rembétiko* and *laikó* styles are examined and analyzed in the following chapter (Chapter 5), the main exemplars of which are the musical scores. These scores have been created in order to shed more light on the theoretical matters analyzed above, and depict some of the most noteworthy cases found within the work of Vasilis Tsitsanis, which (these theoretical matters) of course concern the vital issue of the *laikó dhrómi* and their use and development within Greek popular music.

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<sup>62</sup> Regarding the *candádha* songs style see Chapter 1.

<sup>63</sup> HMV 7XGA 1998 - 7PG 3384, recorded on May 28, 1964.

<sup>64</sup> HMV 7XGA 2730 - 7PG 3679, recorded in 1967.

<sup>65</sup> HMV 7XGA 2722 - 7PG 3679, recorded in 1967.

<sup>66</sup> See Pennanen 1999: 72-5.

## Chapter 5

### Modes and Harmony in the Songs of Vasilis Tsitsanis: Selected Examples

#### **Minóre: the Problem of a Vague Term**

It is crucial to clarify the use of the term ‘minóre’ within laikó music. Once again, things became messy due to reasons that were discussed at the beginning of Chapter 4, such as the issue of putting together a musical style that utilizes micro-tones to fretted instruments, the unwillingness of Greek laikó musicians to study basic theoretical issues of the music of the refugees, and so forth. Greek laikó musicians separate the Minóre dhrómos into two main categories, based on whether it utilizes a chromatically raised seventh degree or not. Thus, they usually refer to *φυσική μινόρε* [fisiki minóre = natural minor] as the one that has a natural seventh degree (that is, D – E – F – G – A – B flat – C – D’),<sup>1</sup> and *αρμονική μινόρε* [armonikí minóre = harmonic minor] as the one that has a chromatically raised seventh degree (that is, D – E – F – G – A – B flat – C sharp – D’). There are, however, some problematic issues regarding this nomenclature, for unavoidably, these scales/modes (that is, the Minóres) did not derive from the Western classical music tradition, but from the makams. On the other hand, there are songs, especially within Tsitsanis’s repertoire, whose use of Minóre Armonikó seems clearly closer to Western tradition, rather than to Eastern.

It is very rare to find a song based totally on one of the two Minóres, without utilizing elements from the other. Therefore, in the database in the column ‘Main dhrómos’ I usually write this Minóre version (that is, either Minóre or Minóre Armonikó) that has a larger proportion in the piece, or generally the one which ‘sense’ and ‘feeling’ ‘wins’ over the other’s. For instance, it is very common for laikó songs to use the upper tetrachord as it is used in the Minóre Natural, that is (in D tonality), A // B flat // C // D’ notes, but, on the other hand, use a C sharp note as the leading tone in the lower pentachord (C# – D // E // F // G // A notes) in the cadences.

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<sup>1</sup> Usually, in Greek laikó music as well as in Byzantine theory, an accent next to a note merely shows that this note is the top of the scale. For example, in D tonality, the D note without the accent is the tonic (lower part of the scale) whereas the D’ is the eighth note of the scale (higher part of the scale).

Figure 5.1 shows the two main Minóre variations (staff one and two). Staff three shows dhrómos Niavénd which is similar to dhrómos Minóre Armonikó having though its fourth degree raised. The last staff of the figure shows the most common combination of the two Minóres.

**Dhrómos Minóre Natural**

**Dhrómos Minóre Armonikó**

**Dhrómos Niavénd**

**A very common-popular combination**

**Figure 5.1: Minóre Natural, Minóre Armonikó, Niavénd and a popular combination**

Very interesting is the fact that it is most rare to find a song having the notes of the upper tetrachord played one after the other, that is, A, B flat, C natural, D'. Under discussion here is the case where the two Minóres are mixed. Usually, the melody reaches C (upper tetrachord) many times with a chromatic movement from A, that is, A, B flat, B natural, C, and then falls back to A. The tetrachord is not completed directly but indirectly, that is, with an interval bigger than the second, either from B (either flat or natural) to D', or from A to D'. On the other hand, in its cadences, either



interim or final, these songs tend to use the lower tetrachord of Minóre Armonikó, thus, utilize a raised seventh (C sharp), below the tonic (D note). Ultimately, the melodic movement is not only responsible for determining the type of Minóre used. The harmony is also a serious factor that can confuse things for the concerned analyst. For instance, there may be a melody set only in the lower pentachord, that is, D to A, which is identical for both Minóres. Therefore, one cannot suggest that this particular melody belongs in the sphere of Armonikó, nor of Natural. Thus, a fifth major chord could play the determining role in this case, for it includes a seventh raised note and thus, this particular melody would incline towards that of the Armonikó.

The next figures show to which makams these dhrómi correspond, in order to show the extent of this confusing situation. Figure 5.2 represents dhrómos Minóre Armonikó and its correspondent, makam Nihâvend.

Dhrómos Minóre Armonikó

Corresponds to

Makam Nihâvend

**Figure 5.2: Dhrómos Minóre Armonikó and makam Nihâvend**

On the other hand, dhrómos Niavénd (the name obviously taken from makam Nihâvend) corresponds to makam Neveser (Figure 5.3).

Dhrómos Niavénd

Makam Neveser

**Figure 5.3: Dhrómos Niavénd and makam Neveser**

As a matter of fact, many songs based on dhrómos Minóre Armonikó make use of the raised fourth degree (in our case G sharp). This is a very common idiomatic movement of the fourth and thus, many times, dhrómi Minóre Armonikó and Niavénd are considered to be one single dhrómos. However, there are songs that are wholly based on dhrómos Niavénd, that is, they have the fourth raised within the entire song, and this is the basic reason for the separation of these two dhrómi.

Some cases where all these three dhrómi (Minóre Natural, Armonikó and Niavénd) co-exist in the same song follow: *Γειτόνισσα*<sup>2</sup> [ghitónisa = neighbour]: the moment is very important when the intro comes to end and changes from Armonikó to Natural Minóre by falling to the A natural note. *Βασίλω*<sup>3</sup> [vasílo = female name]; the cadence utilizes the seventh sharp note (fifth major chord) instead of seventh natural as it is in the Minóre Natural dhrómos. Thus, one can think that the cadence utilizes the cadence of the Armonikó Minóre or that the Minóre Natural utilizes the seventh sharp in its lower pentachord for the cadence.

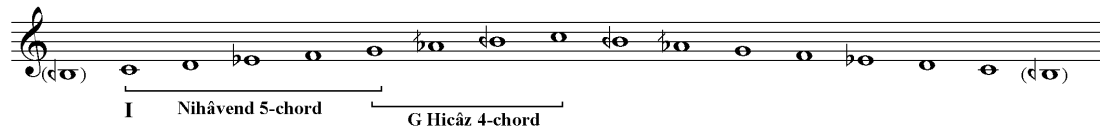
The problems regarding terminology do not end here, for most of the early rembétiko songs that utilize what would be called Minóre Natural by many Greek musicians, do so clearly in a way that makam Hüseyinî does. Furthermore, in cases where the co-existence of many dhrómi/makams that are very similar is noted (such as Minóre Natural, Minóre Armonikó, Hüseyinî, Niavénd, Nihâvend, Bûselik and so forth), even more confusion arises. The reason is simple, yet very serious: once Greek

<sup>2</sup> Parlophone GO 2640 - B. 21897, recorded in late 1936.

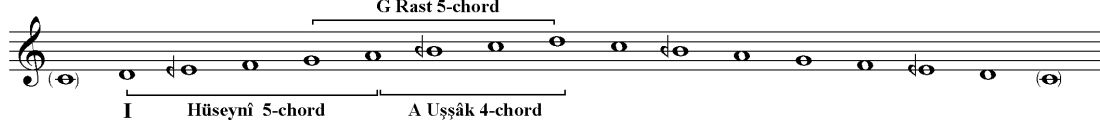
<sup>3</sup> Odeon GO 3061 - GA 7139, recorded in August, 1938.

musicians tried to put elements from the makam system into their dhrómi, they did so in a way that kept the idioms and the basic characteristics of the makams, such as the dominant notes and the gravitations. They could not succeed, though, in reproducing the intervals, for their main instrument was the fretted bouzouki. Therefore, if we also take into consideration the lack of basic theoretical background on the part of the Greek musicians involved, a song may utilize the gravitations and the dominant notes of Hüseynî makam, but, nevertheless, is a clear Minóre Natural scale (at least theoretically, based on laikó theory). Since they were unaware of how to separate the (most of the times numerous) versions of the makams, they chose the easiest way to merely divide all the minors (or, more correctly, everything that looked like a minor scale) into two: natural and harmonic. Figure 5.4 shows three makams which are similar with regard to their intervals and whose characteristics are found within rembétiko and laikó musical styles.

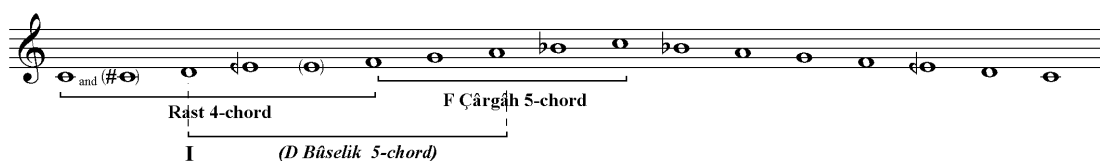
#### Makam Nihâvend



#### Makam Hüseynî



#### Makam Bûselik



**Figure 5.4: Makams Nihâvend, Hüseynî and Bûselik<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>4</sup> Very close to makam Hüseynî are also makams Uşşâk (see beginning of the chapter) and Muhayyer. The latter's intervals are identical to those of Hüseynî; Muhayyer's behaviour, though, is more descending than ascending.

There are many rembético and early laikó songs that make use of these makam's idioms (since they cannot use their exact intervals). Some songs of this sort are mentioned in this chapter, along with the makam they seem to be close. In other words, the T.E.D. may just allocate Minóre to a song's dhrómos characterization, but this Minóre may derive from or be very close to a makam's idioms. The search, examination and comparison of the dhrómi of every song to the original makams seemed unachievable for this project. Some examples of songs that directly link to the original form of the makams are: *Μαριώ και μανάβης*<sup>5</sup> [marió ke manávis = Mary and greengrocer]; *Μαντήλι χρυσοκεντημένο*<sup>6</sup> [mandíli hrisokendiméno = golden-embroidery neckerchief]; and *Όλα για όλα τα έχω παίξει*<sup>7</sup> [óla ghiá óla ta ého péxi = I played everything].

Continuing with some special characteristics, many of which concern both Minóres, worth mentioning is the ending phrase of the introduction of the song *Τι θέλεις από μένα*<sup>8</sup> [ti thélis apó ména = what do you want from me]. This is a classical rembético/laikó shape, found in numerous songs (Figure 5.5).<sup>9</sup>

His Master's Voice OGA 761 - AO 2484  
Hasápiko  
D Minóre Armonikó  
Time: 00.28

♩ = c. 60

Bouzouki

Hasápiko

Bass Chord Bass\_V Chord

**Figure 5.5: *Ti thélis apó ména* transcription – CD Track 4 (Tsitsánis)**

Generally, the use of triplets is very common, especially in hasápiko songs. This particular note sequence, put in triplets, is one of the most common cadences in

<sup>5</sup> Columbia CG 1533 - DG 6305, recorded in February 1937.

<sup>6</sup> Odeon GO 2607 - GA 1990, recorded in circa October 1936.

<sup>7</sup> HMV 7XGA 3009 - 7PG 3837, recorded in 1969.

<sup>8</sup> HMV OGA 761 - AO 2484, recorded in 1938.

<sup>9</sup> For explanations on the rhythmic patterns of the transcriptions see Chapters 6 and 7.

Minóre hasápiko songs. The cadence is completed with the standard I-V-I note shape in eights.

The song *Φιλότιμο δεν έχεις πιά*<sup>10</sup> [filótimo dhen éhis piá = you don't have any more earnestness] includes a chromatic movement found in Minóre cadences (Figure 5.6).

Parlophone GO 4786 - B. 74279-I  
Old zeimbékiko  
E - Minóre Armonikó  
Time: 01.03

**Final Cadence**

♩ = c. 71

Bouzouki

Old zeimbékiko

Em Em B Em

Bass Chord Chord Bass\_V Chord Bass Chord Bass Chord Bass Chord Chord

**Interim cadence**

Bouzouki

Old zeimbékiko

.....melody

Em

**Figure 5.6:** *Filótimo dhen éhis piá* transcription – CD Track 5 (Tsitsánis)

Once again, the final cadence ends with the standard I-V-I shape in eights. It should be mentioned that this particular cadence type is met in zeimbékiko as well as in hasápiko songs.

The relationship of the relative Minóre and Matzóre scales is the same as in Western music. The song *Θέλω να είναι Κυριακή*<sup>11</sup> [thélo na íne kiriakí = I want it to be Sunday] uses a melodic shape found in Minóre and Ousák dhrómi that leads to the relative Matzóre dhrómos (Figure 5.7).

<sup>10</sup> Parlophone GO 4786 - B. 74279-I, recorded on March 13, 1953.

<sup>11</sup> HMV 7XGA 947 - 7PG 2911, recorded on March 11, 1961.

His Master's Voice TXGA 947 - 7PG 2911  
 Mixed zeimbékiko-2  
 B Minóre Natural // Armonikó  
 Time: 01.13

♩ = c. 55

*Minóre to Matzóre*

Bouzouki

καί γά-θη - κες γά-ρά μου bouzouki

Mixed zeimbékiko-2

B Chord Chord B\_V Chord B Chord Chord B\_V Chord Chord

**Figure 5.7: *Thélo na íne kiriakí* transcription – CD Track 6 (Tsitsánis)**

This issue of the co-existence of Minóre and Matzóre in the same song should be elaborated. There are many songs that give the sense of a modulation from one dhrómos to the other (Minóre to Matzóre or the other way around). The concept of the modulation results from the Western theory of the function of harmony. The dhrómi, however, combine the concepts of both West and East, that is, the harmony, the basic principles found in minor and major scales and so forth, as well as the idioms of the makams. Thus, a modulation is not always the case in the dhrómi. A short phrase in the relative Matzóre, cannot be considered as a modulation. However, there are cases where Western theory can take effect. For example, the basic thing that I consider important to hear in order to say that there is a Matzóre dhrómos inside a Minóre song is the fifth major chord of the Matzóre. On the other hand, there are cases that are easier to clarify, where, for instance, part of the song (for example, the intro) plays in Minóre and another part (chorus) plays in Matzóre. Some examples of cases where the two dhrómi co-exist follow: the song *Ματσαράγκα*<sup>12</sup> [matsaránga = cheat], apart from the aforementioned modulation, also includes another very interesting element found in rembétiko/laikó. This is the raised third found in the intro. Many times, an ascending movement towards the fourth degree/note of the dhrómos replaces its natural third with a sharp third. This can be considered an idiom of the Minóre dhrómos. The third sharp note in such lines plays the role of the leading note towards the fourth (Figure 5.8).

<sup>12</sup> HMV OGA 1000 - AO 2667, recorded in circa January, 1940.

HMV OGA 1000 - AO 2667  
New zeimbékiko  
D Minóre Armonikó // Minóre

Minóre  
to  
Matzóre

♩ = 106

**Intro**

Melody

*bouzouki*

New zeimbékiko

G m D m G m D m

Chord B Chord Chord B Chord Chord

3

M.

New z.

B Ch Ch B Ch B Ch Ch B Ch Ch

5

**Canto**

M.

Εί - πες πως σου έ - κα - να α - πό - ψε μα - τσα - ρά - γκα (κα) τά - λα - βες τη μη - χα - νή που σου 'στη - σα ρε μά - γκα τη

New z.

D m A D m F C F

7

M.

μή - χα - νη που σου 'στη - σα στου Ά - λει - ρα τη μάν - τρα

New z.

F A D m

Figure 5.8: *Matsaránga* transcription – CD Track 7 (Tsitsánis)

Some other examples of songs that include phrases (other extensive and other short) in the relative Matzóre dhrómos are: *Λαρισινή*<sup>13</sup> [larisiní = woman from Larissa]; *Γιατί με ξύπνησες πρωί*<sup>14</sup> [ghiatí me xípnises proí = why did you awake me so early]; *Με πρόδωσες με σκότωσες*<sup>15</sup> [me pródhoses me skótoses = you betrayed me you killed me].

<sup>13</sup> HMV OGA 1056 - AO 2647, recorded on circa June 10, 1940.

<sup>14</sup> HMV OGA 1367 - AO 2814, recorded on June 4, 1948.

<sup>15</sup> Columbia CG 3491 - DG 7254, recorded on October 30, 1956.

One can notice some special cases of Minóre songs within Tsitsánis's corpus of recordings. These cases concern some interesting and rare combinations of dhrómi. For example, the song *To xefándωμα*<sup>16</sup> [to xefándoma = the big-time party] and its beginning utilize notes which refer to the Ousák dhrómos (Figure 5.9).

Columbia CG 2428 - DG 6735  
Old zeimbékiko  
B Minóre armonikó (Minóre)

The figure shows a musical score for the song 'To xefándωμα'. It consists of five staves. The top staff is for Bouzouki and Voice, with a tempo marking of ♩ = 86 and an 'Intro' section. The second staff is for the Old zeimbékiko rhythmic pattern, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature, and a chord progression of Bm. The third staff is for Bz. & V. (Bouzouki and Voice), with a key signature of one sharp and a 2/4 time signature, and a chord progression of D, F#Bm, F#, Bm. The fourth staff is for O. z. (Old zeimbékiko), with a key signature of one sharp and a 2/4 time signature, and a chord progression of D, F#Bm, F#, Bm.

Figure 5.9: *To xefándωμα* transcription – CD Track 8 (Tsitsánis)

Another special case is the song *Για μια γυναίκα χάθηκα*<sup>17</sup> [ghiá miá ghinéka háthika = I was destroyed for a woman] (Figure 5.10). This is one of the few times that dhrómos Kiourdí is combined with the Minóre, instead of the Ousák which is one of the most popular combinations (Ousák and Kiourdí) even today.

<sup>16</sup> Columbia CG 2428 - DG 6735, recorded on August 11, 1948.

<sup>17</sup> HMV OGA 1743 - AO 2984, recorded on March 15, 1951.



HMV OGA 1743 - AO 2984  
 Aptáliko zeimbékiko monó  
 B Minóre-Houseiní // Kiourdí (Kartsighár)

♩ = 96

Melody

Aptáliko zeimbékiko

M.

Apt. Z.

Figure 5.10: *Ghiá miá ghinéka háthika* transcription – CD Track 9 (Tsitsánis)

The most popular combination of the Minóre is with dhrómos Hitzáz (see further below regarding Hitzáz). There is, however, a very simple explanation for this, if one considers the fact that a Hitzáz tetrachord already co-exists with the Minóre Armonikó dhrómos (Figure 5.11).

Dhrómos Minóre Armonikó

Dhrómos Hitzáz

D Hitzáz 4-chord

G Minóre 5-chord

Figure 5.11: The construction of dhrómi Hitzáz and Minóre Armonikó

Some examples of songs belonging in this category are: *Σε τούτο το παλιόσπιτο*<sup>18</sup> [se toúto to palióspito = in this old/poor house]; *Κλαμένη ήρθες μια βραδιά*<sup>19</sup> [klaméni írthes miá vradhiá = you came one night weeping]; *Στρώσε μου να κοιμηθώ*<sup>20</sup> [stróse

<sup>18</sup> Columbia CG 2799 - DG 6900, recorded on April 5, 1951.

<sup>19</sup> Columbia CG 2487 - DG 6761, recorded on January 7, 1949.

<sup>20</sup> HMV OGA 1670 - AO 2964, recorded on September 12, 1950.

μού na kimithó = make the bed for me to sleep]; and *Με πήρε το ξημέρωμα στους δρόμους*<sup>21</sup> [me píre to ximéroma stous dhrómous = the dawn found me in the streets].

Another common phenomenon is the swift from Minóre to Matzóre, based on the same tonality. The song *Απ' τη μάνα μου διωγμένος*<sup>22</sup> [ap' ti mána móu dhioghménos = rejected by my mother] is one of those cases (Figure 5.12).

Odeon GO 4050 - GA 7475  
Old zeimbékiko  
D Equal Mix: Matzóre - Minóre Armonikó  
Time: 00.14

♩ = c. 80

The figure shows a musical score for the song "Ap' ti mana mou dhioghmenos". It consists of five staves. The top staff is for the Voice, with lyrics in Greek: "α' τη μάνα μου διαγ - μέ - νος κλα' α - γά - πι ορ - φα - νός". Below the voice staff is the Old zeimbékiko staff, which includes chord markings: Dm, A, A, Dm, A, Dm. Below this are three staves for V., Bz., and Old z. The V. staff has lyrics: "έ - κα - να τους δρό - μους ζη - λου - τό πα - λά - τι μου ω". The Bz. staff has trills (tr) and the Old z. staff has chord markings: Dm, A, D, D, A. The score is in 3/4 time and features a modulation from D minor to D major.

Figure 5.12: *Ap' ti mána móu dhioghménos* transcription – CD Track 10 (Tsitsánis)

The unique element of this modulation is that it occurs unprepared, that is, without any particular chordal sequence which would show that a modulation is about to happen. Other song examples from the same category are: *Γύρνα μόνος μες στη νύχτα*<sup>23</sup> [ghírna mónos mes sti níhta = stroll alone in the night]; *Το προί με τη δροσούλα*<sup>24</sup> [to proí me ti dhrosoúla = in the morning with the dew]; and *Βόλτα μέσα στην Ελλάδα*<sup>25</sup> [vólta mesa stin eládha = stroll in Greece].

<sup>21</sup> Columbia CG 2758 - DG 6904, recorded on November 30, 1950.

<sup>22</sup> Odeon GO 4050 - GA 7475, recorded on November 23, 1948.

<sup>23</sup> Columbia CG 2199 - DG 6619, recorded on November 18, 1946.

<sup>24</sup> Columbia CG 2161 - DG 6598, recorded on June 15, 1946.

<sup>25</sup> Odeon GO 4655 - GA 7670, recorded on April 16, 1952.

A general idiom, deriving from the makams as well as from Byzantine music is the raised fourth degree. This links, as mentioned earlier, to dhrómos Niavénd but it also works as a gravitation, not only in Minóres, but in other dhrómi, too. In melodic lines where the phrase revolves around the fifth degree, it (the fifth) tends to pull the peripheral notes, that is, the fourth and the sixth. The song *Εσύ που με ξεμνάλισες*<sup>26</sup> [esí pou me xemiálises = you that you enchant me] contains a melodic phrase with this idiom (Figure 5.13).

Columbia CG 2866 - DG 6940  
Old zeimbékiko  
D Minóre  
Time: 00.17

♩ = 68

Voice

ε - σύ που με ξε - μνά - λι - σες

Dm

Old zeimb.

**Figure 5.13: *Esí pou me xemiálises* transcription – CD Track 11 (Tsitsánis)**

Other songs with the same characteristic are: *Γειτόνισσα*<sup>27</sup> [ghitónisa = neighbour]; and *Το τρελοκόριτσο*<sup>28</sup> [to trelokóritso = the crazy girl].

A similar case concerns the seventh degree, too. The seventh tends to pull the sixth in melodies that revolve around the former. The song *Μοντέρνες και μαγκίτισες Αθηναίσες*<sup>29</sup> [mondérnes ke mangítises athinéises = modern and cool Athenian women] is one of these cases (Figure 5.14).

<sup>26</sup> Columbia CG 2866 - DG 6940, recorded on October 13, 1951.

<sup>27</sup> Parlophone GO 2640 - B. 21897, recorded in late 1936.

<sup>28</sup> Odeon GO 2906 - GA 7095, recorded on February 10, 1938,

<sup>29</sup> CBS 83406, recorded in 1978.

CBS 83406  
New zeimbékiko  
E Minóre / Minóre Armonikó  
Time: 00.14

♩ = 81

Voice

μον - τέρ - ves και μαγ - κί - τι - σες      οι πραγ - κι - πο - α - λή - τι - σες

New zeimb.

Em      Am      Em      E      Am

Figure 5.14: *Mondérnes ke mangítises athinéises* transcription – CD Track 12 (Tsitsánis)

Usually, this particular melodic shape is accompanied by a first degree major chord which changes from its original minor form. This happens because in most cases these types of melodic shapes lead to the fourth degree/chord (like a modulation to the subdominant).

Finally, Figure 5.15, according to the database's findings, shows the chords used in each one of the two Minóre types, as well as in dhrómos Niavénd (only the chords written below the notes are used).

Dhrómos Minóre Natural

C      Dm      Em      F      Gm      Am      B $\flat$       C      Dm

Dhrómos Minóre Armonikó

Dm      F      Gm      A      B $\flat$       Dm

Dhrómos Niavénd

Dm      F      G $\sharp$ dim      A      B $\flat$       Dm

Figure 5.15: Chords used in Minóre Natural, Minóre Armonikó and Niavénd

### Dhrómos Matzóre [*Ματζόρε* – Major]

The problem found in the term ‘matzóre’ (from Western major) is similar to that of the ‘minóre’. However, things look clearer and easier to comprehend in this case, because there are not so many makams and dhrómi close to this particular dhrómos, in contrast to the Minóre case. Some Greeks tend to equal dhrómos Matzóre with makam Rast. The analysis of Tsitsánis’s music, however, led me to separate dhrómos Matzóre from dhrómos Rast. Figure 5.16 shows dhrómos Matzóre, dhrómos Rast and makam Rast.

Dhrómos Matzóre

The difference of dhrómos Rast (7th degree flat in descending)

Makam Rast

Detailed description of Figure 5.16: The figure consists of three musical staves. The first staff, titled 'Dhrómos Matzóre', shows a scale with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Brackets indicate four chords: 'E Minóre 5-chord' (G4, A4, B4, C5, E4), 'A Rast 4-chord' (A4, B4, C5, E4), 'D Rast 4-chord' (D4, E4, F#4, A4), and 'F# Ousák 5-chord' (F#4, G4, A4, B4, D4). The second staff, titled 'The difference of dhrómos Rast (7th degree flat in descending)', shows the same scale but with a flat on the 7th degree (F4) in the descending sequence. The third staff, titled 'Makam Rast', shows a scale with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Brackets indicate three chords: 'I' (G4, A4, B4, C5), 'Rast 5-chord' (A4, B4, C5, E4), and 'Rast 4-chord' (D4, E4, F4, A4).

Figure 5.16: Dhrómos Matzóre, dhrómos Rast, makam Rast

As one can observe in the above figure, dhrómos Rast tends to lower its seventh degree in descending melodies. The reason for this separation between dhrómos Matzóre and dhrómos Rast (contrary to the aforementioned tendency of some Greek musicians) is simply the fact that a great part of Tsitsánis compositions (as well as other songwriters, too) is wholly based on what I chose to call dhrómos Matzóre. In other words, these songs do not utilize the lower VII degree, found in descending melodies, but they wholly utilize the Western type major scale. A separation of that kind was considered to be critical in order to point out the difference in the VII degree

of such songs. Moreover, there were some other elements which suggested this separation, such as the difference between the dominant notes used in songs totally based on Matzóre with those based on Rast.

Some idiomatic characteristics of dhrómos Matzóre follow. Despite the aforementioned separation of the two dhrómi, many of the idioms presented below are true for both dhrómi, showing, in this way, the close relationship between them, as well as (importantly) the way the Western major scale was Hellenized in order to suit to laikó standards and needs. After all, this is one more sign of the syncretic music produced in Greece during the rembétiko and laikó era, when these two musical traditions (Western and Eastern) were mixed together.

In many cases, the fifth degree pulls the fourth in melodies where the fifth is a dominant note. The song *O Takatzífas*<sup>30</sup> [o takatzífas = male name] is one example that depicts this idiom (Figure 5.17).<sup>31</sup>

MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5238 - 2J-064 70172  
Tsiiftéti in 9-beat  
Bb matzóre  
Time: 00.31

♩ = 126

9-beat  
Tsiiftéti

B Chord Chord B\_V Chord B Chord Chord B\_V Chord Chord

**Figure 5.17: O takatzífas transcription – CD Track 13 (Tsitsánis)**

In the song *Φίνα θα την περνάμε*<sup>32</sup> [fina tha tin pernáme = we will be cool] one can notice the idiomatic behaviour of the peripheral of some dominant notes. The A flat, C and E flat notes – which is the triad of the first degree chord – pull the notes next to them (Figure 5.18).

<sup>30</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5238 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975.

<sup>31</sup> See also song *Μαζί σου εγώ που τα 'μπλεξα* [mazi sou eghó pou tá 'blexa = I mixed with you], Odeon GO 3423 - GA 7254, recorded in early 1940.

<sup>32</sup> Columbia CG 2068 - DG 6547, recorded in June 1940.

Columbia CG 2068 - DG 6547  
 Hasápiko  
 Ab matzóre (pitching problem)  
 Time: 00.12

♩ = 90

Bouzouki

Hasápiko

B Chord B\_V Chord

B.

Hs.

B B\_V Chord

**Figure 5.18:** *Fína tha tin pernáme* transcription – CD Track 14 (Tsitsánis)

As can be noticed in Figure 5.16, there is a minóre pentachord starting on the second degree of the matzóre. A line, sometimes short and sometimes extended, based on this minóre pentachord is a very usual phenomenon in Matzóre songs. There are cases where the second degree minor chord comes ‘unprepared’, that is, without listening to the sixth degree major chord (which functions as the fifth of the second), whereas there are cases when it does sound and thus, the sense of a complete kind of modulation is given. In any case, the passages in this minóre pentachord should be considered as an idiom of the Matzóre dhrómos, rather than a modulation to the second degree Minóre dhrómos. An example is the song *M’ énan pikró anastenaghmó*<sup>33</sup> [m’ énan pikró anastenaghmó = with a bitter sigh] (Figure 5.19).

<sup>33</sup> His Master's Voice OGA 1129 - AO 2695, recorded on October 27/28, 1940.

His Master's Voice OGA 1129 - AO 2695  
 Hasápiko  
 G matzóre - Segiáh

♩ = 40

Intro

Melody

*bouzouki*

Hasápiko

G G C E

B Chord B\_V Chord

M.

Hs.

Am D G D

M.

Canto

ό - τι κι,αν πο δεν σε ξεχ - νώ και μπροσ στην πόρ - τα σου περ - νώ

Hs.

G G G C E Am

B B\_V Chord

Figure 5.19: *M' énan pikró anastenagh mó* transcription – CD Track 15 (Tsitsánis)

It should be mentioned that this particular chordal sequence, that is, I+ // IV+ // VI+ (V+ of the II-) // II-, is, on the one hand, a very common phenomenon within Tsitsánis's repertoire and, on the other, clearly shows the influence of Western music within laikó musical style. Another song example is *Μεσ στην Αθήνα*<sup>34</sup> [mes stin athína = inside Athens]. In post-war recordings, the sequence of the I+ // II- in Matzóre songs is a 'must' in Tsitsanis's songs. Moreover, it is from now on in most cases with preparation, that is, with the VI major chord before the II minor. A special case is the song *Τσαρκίτσα*<sup>35</sup> [tsarkítsa = little stroll]. Interestingly, the voice sings the F natural note in order to modulate to A minor (Figure 5.20). Furthermore, it is perhaps the only time in a Matzóre song that the V major chord is not played at all.

<sup>34</sup> HMV OGA 1708 - AO 2977, recorded on November 14, 1950.

<sup>35</sup> CBS 83406, recorded in 1978.



CBS 83406  
Hasápiko  
G Matzóre  
Time: 00.29

♩ = 123

Voice

μα κτε - χο πλά - ι τη μικ - ρή  
που ήρ - θε ζού - λα να με βρει

για μια τσαρ -

Hasápiko

G G G G

B Chord B\_V\_ Chord

V.

κί - τσα πά - ρε μας στην βάρ - κα σου στη βάρ - κα σου βαρ - κά - ρη

Hs.

E Am Am C G G G

Figure 5.20: *Tsarkítsa* transcription – CD Track 16 (Tsitsánis)

Other song examples with this sequence are: *Ο παντρεμένος*<sup>36</sup> [o pandreménos = the married man]; *Στερνό μου γλυκοχάραμα*<sup>37</sup> [sternó móu ghlikohárama = my last twilight]; *Γιορτάζεις σήμερα*<sup>38</sup> [ghiortázis símera = you celebrate today]; and *Ψιλή βροχή στα μάτια σου*<sup>39</sup> [psilí vrohí sta mátia sou = raindrops in your eyes].

Similarly to the case described above, there is another Minóre pentachord within the Matzóre dhrómos which starts on the sixth degree. The scale that is constructed from the sixth degree is no other than what is known in Western music as the relative minor. Once again, there are cases that this VI minor chord comes prepared, that is, after the III major chord which functions as the fifth of the sixth, and some other where it comes unprepared. An example is the song *Ακόμα και στην κόλαση*<sup>40</sup> [akóma ke stin kólasi = even in hell] (Figure 5.21).

<sup>36</sup> Odeon GO 4239 - GA 7509, recorded on October 27, 1949.

<sup>37</sup> HMV OGA 2798 - AO 5516, recorded on November 20, 1958.

<sup>38</sup> Columbia CG 3702 - DG 7351, recorded on November 16, 1957.

<sup>39</sup> HMV 7XGA 2936 - 7PG 3797, recorded in 1968.

<sup>40</sup> Columbia CG 3689 - DG 7350, recorded on November 5, 1957.

Columbia CG 3689 - DG 7350  
 Old zeimbékiko  
 C matzóre  
 Time: 00.37

♩ = 61

Voice

Old zeimb.

V.

Old z.

V.

Old z.

οι - συ - γγε - νεις - με - βρι - ζου - vs κι, αι, ξε - νοι - μ'α - δι - κού - - - vs

α - κό - μα και στην κό - λα - ση μο - νία - χος θέ - λο - να μαι

δε - θέ - λο - ού - τε νία - γα - πό - ού - τε να μ'α - γα - πά - - - vs

Chord Chord B\_V Chord B Chord Chord B Chord Chord

Chord E A m E A m

Chord G F G C

Figure 5.21: *Akóma ke stin kólasi* transcription – CD Track 17 (Tsitsánis)

Other song examples are: *Καταραμένη ξενιτιά*<sup>41</sup> [kataraméni xenitiá = cursed foreign lands]; and *Το ποτάμι*<sup>42</sup> [to potámi = the river]. Worth noting is the fact that in this song (to potámi), both the minor and major third degree chords are used, something that is special and strange, and perhaps signifies the modernization of laikó style.

Let us examine now some cases that concern the cadences in Matzóre dhrómos. The song *Ο μάγκας κάνει δυο δουλειές*<sup>43</sup> [o mángas káni dhió dhouliés = the crafty person has two jobs] includes a classical melodic shape in Matzóre cadences (Figure 5.22).

<sup>41</sup> His Master's Voice OGA 2705 - AO 5483, recorded on May 22, 1958.

<sup>42</sup> Columbia 7XCG 1176 - SCDG 3025, recorded in 1961.

<sup>43</sup> HMV 7XGA 3538 - 7PG 8050, recorded in 1971.

His Master's Voice 7XGA 3538 - 7PG 8050  
 New zeimbékiko  
 G Matzóre // Rast  
 Time: 00.56

♩ = 69

Canto

Melody

σά - να - το - λή και δύ - ση *bouzouki*

cadence shape

3

New zeimb.

D A m D G D G G

B Chord Chord B\_V Chord B Chord Chord B Chord Chord

Figure 5.22: *O mángas káni dhió dhouliés* transcription – CD Track 18 (Tsitsánis)

Another interesting case with regard to cadences is the song *Μια λεβέντισσα κοπέλα*<sup>44</sup> [miá levéndisa kopéla = a feisty girl] (Figure 5.23).

His Master's Voice 7XGA 3010 - 7PG 3824  
 Old zeimbékiko  
 G Matzóre // Rast  
 Time: 00.32

♩ = 68

Voice

το μα - γα - ζί ξε - σή - κω - σε κιορ - θά κο - φτά μας δή - λω - σε

Old zeimb.

C D D G

B Chord Chord B\_V Chord B Chord Chord B Chord Chord

Figure 5.23: *Μια λεβέντισσα κοπέλα* transcription – CD Track 19 (Tsitsánis)

The melody in the voice ends with the third degree of the dhrómos, a characteristic that represents the bonds between the dhrómi and the makams, since this particular cadence (in the third degree) shows the existence of a modal concept in this particular song (makam Rast occasionally uses the same melodic model/cadence, too).

A special, as well as interesting, case is the song *Βράσε τη ρούμπα τα σουίγκ*<sup>45</sup> [vráse ti roúmba ta souíγκ = hang rumba and swing] (Figure 5.24).

<sup>44</sup> HMV 7XGA 3010 - 7PG 3824, recorded in 1969.

<sup>45</sup> Odeon GO 3673 - GA 7354, recorded on October 31, 1946.

Odeon GO 3673 - GA 7354  
 Hasápiko  
 E Matzóre  
 ♩ = 59

Intro

Bouzouki

Hasápiko

E F#m G#m A B7 E

B Chord B Chord B Chord B Chord B Chord B\_V Chord B Chord B\_V Chord

**Figure 5.24:** *Vrásē ti roumba ta souing* transcription – CD Track 20 (Tsitsánis)

This is one of the few times (if not the only time) that the sequence of the following chords appears in the Matzóre dhrómos: I+ // II- // III- // IV+ // V+. In other words, one by one, all the chords from the first to the fifth degree are played in order to lead to the common cadence of the Matzóre. This case is also special if one studies the music of Mikis Theodorakis, one of Greece's most popular composers. Theodorakis often uses this sequence in his music, something that gives birth to questions regarding the influence of rembétiko music on contemporary composers who, unquestionably, based their composition style on rembétiko standards. Figure 5.25 is a photograph of Tsitsánis and Theodorakis, who, according to Tsitsánis's son, were good friends.



**Figure 5.25:** Vasilis Tsitsánis and Mikis Theodorakis (photograph given by Kóstas Tsitsánis)

Finally, Figure 5.26 represents the chords used in dhrómos Matzóre.

Dhrómos Matzóre

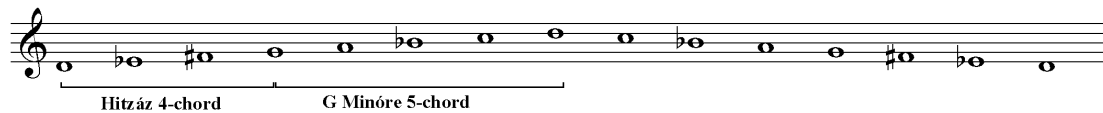


Figure 5.26: Chords used in dhrómos Matzóre

### Dhrómos Hitzáz [Χιτζάζ – Hicâz]

Surprisingly, and at the same time curiously, dhrómos Hitzáz holds, along with dhrómos Matzóre, the second place in Tsitsánis's choices. Perhaps, the explanation for this is the fact that dhrómos Hitzáz (or, more correctly, a mode very close to the urban dhrómos Hitzáz) was already part of the rural-traditional repertoire.<sup>46</sup> Dhrómos Hitzáz is very popular within rembétiko and laikó songwriters, even today. This is one of the dhrómi that corresponds to its namesake makam, that is, makam Hicâz (Figure 5.27).

Dhrómos Hitzáz



Makam Hicâz

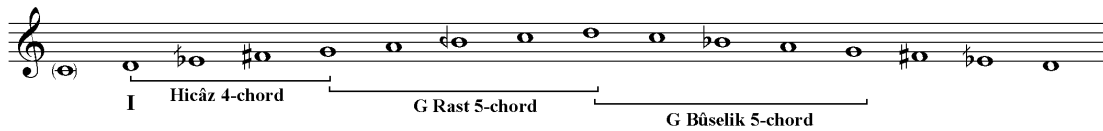


Figure 5.27: Dhrómos Hitzáz and makam Hicâz

<sup>46</sup> See, for example, song: *O amáranthos* [o amárandos = the amaranth], a song in 3/4 tsámikos rhythm originated in Stereá region.

Figure 5.28 shows a very common idiom of dhrómos Hitzáz which is the combination of the Hitzáz tetrachord with the Matzóre pentachord, either below or above the former's tetrachord.



**Figure 5.28: The matzóre pentachord idiom in dhrómos Hitzáz**

This idiomatic movement derives from the original form of makam Hicâz. As shown in Figure 5.28, in its ascending movement, makam Hicâz creates a G Rast pentachord (G to D, below the tonal). The ‘reconstructed’ version of the makam in its dhrómos form, ‘preferred’ to create the scale with a flat in the sixth degree (B flat) and use the upper pentachord (G to D’) without the flat (that is, as a Rast or Matzóre pentachord) as an idiomatic movement. An example of this popular combination is the song *O ouranós éχει μαυρίσει*<sup>47</sup> [o ouranós éhi mavrísí = the sky has darkened] (Figure 5.29).

<sup>47</sup> HMV OGA 1800 - AO 5028, recorded on October 13, 1951.

His Master's Voice OGA 1800 - AO 5028  
 Old zeimbékiko  
 C Hitzáz  
 Time: 00.33

♩ = 67

Accordion

Old zeimbékiko  
 Rhythmic pattern

Bass Chord Chord Bass Chord Bass Chord Chord Bass Chord Chord

Voice

ε - χει, ο ου - ρα - νός μου - ρί - σει και η μπό - - - ρα δε θ'αρ - γή σει

Ac.

Old z.

F G m F m C B<sup>b</sup>m C

Figure 5.29: *O ouranós éhi mavrísí* transcription – CD Track 21 (Tsitsánis)

Other examples are: *Μπράβο μουζούκι μου*<sup>48</sup> [bravo bouzouki mou = bravo my bouzouki]; *Για τα μάτια π' αγαπώ*<sup>49</sup> [ghía ta mátia p' aghapó = for the eyes that I love]; *Παίξτε μουζούκια*<sup>50</sup> [péxte bouzoukía = play bouzoukis]; and *Έλα όπως είσαι*<sup>51</sup> [éla ópos íse = come as you are].

This 'instability' of the upper tetrachord, not only of dhrómos Hitzáz but of other dhrómi too, creates idiomatic gravitations. The sixth degree, for example, sounds sometimes natural, and sometimes flat, depending on the movement of the melody. For instance, in the song *Προξενεύουν το Σταμάτη*<sup>52</sup> [proxenévoun to stamáti = they want to get Stamatis married], which is in F Hitzáz, when the melody is ascending, the D note is natural, whereas the melody is descending, D is with a flat (Figure 5.30).

<sup>48</sup> Columbia CG 2779 - DG 6924, recorded on December 16, 1950.

<sup>49</sup> Columbia CG 2535 - DG 6786, recorded on October 31, 1949.

<sup>50</sup> Odeon GO 4835 - GA 7737 and GA 7740, recorded on August 24, 1953.

<sup>51</sup> Odeon GO 4912 - GA 7765, recorded on February 10, 1954.

<sup>52</sup> Odeon GO 3421 - GA 7248, recorded in early 1940.

Odeon GO 3421 - GA 7248  
Karsilamás  
F Hitzáz  
Time: 00.14  
♩ = 160

Melody  
*bouzouki*

Karsilamás  
Rhythmic pattern  
Bass Chord Bass Chord Bass Chord Chord Bass Chord Chord

Canto  
V.  
προ - ξε - νεύ - ουν το Στα - μά - τη στις Βα - σί - λως το γι - νά - τι

Krs.  
B<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup>m

Figure 5.30: *Proxenévoun to stamáti* transcription – CD Track 22 (Tsitsánis)

The same idiom is also obvious in the song *Εξεκίνησα ένα βράδυ*<sup>53</sup> [exekínisa éna vrádhī = I set off one night]. The song is in C Hitzáz. When the melody reaches note B flat, the A is natural, and then, when the melody descends, note A is with a flat.

Continuing with some special characteristics of dhrómos Hitzáz, worth mentioning is the case of the VII degree minor chord which, almost always, functions as the preparation chord for the cadence in the I degree major chord. Similarly to the case examined before regarding the preparation of the II minor chord of dhrómos Matzóre, the VII minor chord of dhrómos Hitzáz, many times, comes prepared by the IV major chord of the dhrómos. The song *Ο νοικοκύρης*<sup>54</sup> [o nikokíris = the family man] is a song where the IV major chord sounds before the VII minor (Figure 5.31).

<sup>53</sup> Columbia CG 2984 - DG 6998, recorded in 1952.

<sup>54</sup> HMV OGA 1629 - AO 2939, recorded on June 7, 1950.



His Master's Voice OGA 1629 - AO 2939  
 Hasápiko  
 E Hitzáz  
 Time: 00.21

♩ = 68

Intro Canto

Melody

accordin

το σύ - ζο θα το κό - ψο τσι -

Hasápiko

Dm E Dm E Dm E Am

B Chord B\_III Chord B Chord B\_V Chord B\_III B Chord Chord B B Chord B\_V Chord

M.

7

γά - ρο και κρα - σί και κου - μπα - ρά θα φέ - ρο στο σπí - τι μας χρο - σή

Hs.

7

A Dm Dm Am E F E

B Chord B\_III Chord

Figure 5.31: *O nikokiris* transcription – CD Track 23 (Tsitsánis)

Other songs with the same characteristic are: *Παίξε Χρήστο το μουζούκι*<sup>55</sup> [péxe hrísto to bouzouki = Chris play the bouzouki]; and *Πεθαίνω για το δίκιο μου*<sup>56</sup> [pethéno ghiá to dhíkio mou = I die for my right].

Turning now to some special (and rare) cases, the song *Μαχαρανή*<sup>57</sup> [maharaní = Maharanee] contains an interesting innovation for the norms of Hitzáz chordal sequences (Figure 5.32).

<sup>55</sup> HMV OGA 1523 - AO 2890, recorded on December 6, 1949.

<sup>56</sup> Columbia CG 3691 - DG 7393, recorded on November 5, 1957.

<sup>57</sup> HMV OGA 2981 - AO 5608, recorded on January 26, 1960.

His Master's Voice OGA 2981 - AO 5608  
 Tsiftetéli  
 D Hitzáz  
 Time: 00.23

♩ = 118

Bouzouki

Tsiftetéli

Bass Chord Chord B\_V Chord

B.

accordion

bouzouki

Ts.

Figure 5.32: *Maharani* transcription – CD Track 24 (Tsitsánis)

The A minor (fifth degree minor) is very rare, found a few times in the Hitzáz songs of Tsitsánis. The G follows (fourth degree), which has become a major in order to lead to C minor (seventh degree), a case which has been mentioned above.

Finally, Figure 5.33 shows the chords used in dhrómos Hitzáz.

Dhrómos Hitzáz

D Eb Gm Cm D

Figure 5.33: Chords used in dhrómos Hitzáz

### Dhrómos Hitzaskiár [*Χιτζασκιάρ – Hicâzkâr*]

Dhrómos Hitzaskiár is very close to dhrómos Hitzáz. Many idioms and characteristics are similar between these two dhrómi. Figure 5.34 represents dhrómos Hitzaskiár and makam Hicâzkâr.

**Dhrómos Hitzaskiár**

Leading note I D Hitzáz 4-chord G Nikríz 5-chord A Hitzáz 4-chord

**Makam Hicâzkâr**

Leading note I Hicâz 5-chord Nikríz 5-chord Hicâz 4-chord

**Figure 5.34: Dhrómos Hitzaskiár and makam Hicâzkâr**

By adding a sharp to note G (fourth degree), the so-called by *rembêtes Πειραιώτικος* [pireótikos = from Piraeus] dhrómos is made. Figure 5.35 represents dhrómos Pireótikos and its correspondent, makam Zengüleli Sûznak.

**Dhrómos Pireótikos**

Leading note I D Pireótikos 5-chord A Hitzáz 4-chord

**Makam Zengüleli Sûznak**

I Pireótikos 5-chord Hicâz 4-chord

**Figure 5.35: Dhrómos Pireótikos and makam Zengüleli Sûznak**

It should be mentioned that Tsitsánis never used dhrómos Pireótikos, except for the song *mavromáta* (see further below), which is not totally based on Pireótikos, but there are elements of the dhrómos. Tsitsánis also recorded three *taxímia* which utilize dhrómos Pireótikos in 1980.

Occasionally, Hitzaskiár revokes the flat from its second degree above the octave. The song *Θα βρω μια άλλη με καρδιά*<sup>58</sup> [tha vro miá áli me kardhiá = I'll find another one with a heart] contains this idiomatic behaviour (Figure 5.36).

His Master's Voice OGA 1057 - AO 2666  
Hasápiko  
G Hitzaskiár // Hitzáz

♩ = 54

Intro

Bouzouki

Hasápiko

B. Chord B\_V Chord

B.

Hs. Cm G Fm G

B B\_V Chord

The figure shows a musical transcription for the song 'Tha vro miá áli me kardhiá'. It consists of four staves. The top staff is for Bouzouki, starting with an 'Intro' section. The second staff is for Hasápiko, with chords Cm, G, Cm, and G. The third staff is for B., and the fourth staff is for Hs., with chords Cm, G, Fm, and G. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 54. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2/4.

**Figure 5.36:** *Tha vro miá áli me kardhiá* transcription – CD Track 25 (Tsitsánis)

Noteworthy is the D flat that appears in measure seven in the above transcription. This is a very common gravitation in both Hitzáz and Hitzaskiár dhrómi. In melodic shapes like this, the fourth degree pulls the fifth (D flat in this case). Both idioms above, that is, the second natural above the octave and the gravitation of the fifth from the fourth are found in the song *Πικρός (θα) είναι ο πόνος μου*<sup>59</sup> [pikrós (tha) ine o pónos mou = my pain (will be) is bitter] (Figure 5.37).

<sup>58</sup> HMV OGA 1057 - AO 2666, recorded on June 11, 1940.

<sup>59</sup> Odeon GO 2613 - GA 1990, recorded in circa October 1936.

Odeon GO 2613 - GA 1990  
New zeimbékiko  
E Hitzáz // Hitzaskiár

♩ = 103

Intro

Bouzouki

New zeimbékiko  
Rhythmic pattern

B Chord Chord B\_V Chord B Chord Chord B Chord Chord

B.

New z.

The image shows a musical transcription for the song 'Pikrós (tha) ine o pónos mou'. It features three systems of notation. The first system is for the Bouzouki, showing a melodic line in 9/8 time with a tempo of 103. The second system is for the New zeimbékiko Rhythmic pattern, showing a sequence of chords: B Chord, Chord, B\_V Chord, B Chord, Chord, B Chord, Chord. The third system is for the New z. (New zeimbékiko), showing a melodic line in 9/8 time with a tempo of 103. The transcription is labeled as 'Intro' and includes a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Figure 5.37: *Pikrós (tha) ine o pónos mou* transcription – CD Track 26 (Tsitsánis)

Initially, it is noteworthy the way this melody finishes in measure two. This particular shape, V (sixteen) // I // V // I (eights), is considered a classical cadence in zeimbékiko songs.

As has been already mentioned within this and the previous chapter, the introduction of harmony can be seen to have complicated the dhrómi and their recognition within the compositions. The co-existence of dhrómi Hitzáz and Hitzaskiár is a good example of this mix and its results. The critical issue for the understanding of the use of the dhrómi is whether the person who analyzes the songs does so by taking into account the movement of the melody alone<sup>60</sup> or the combination of the melody and the harmony. For instance, if one observes the last transcription's melodic movement in the first measure (Figure 5.37), it will be seen that the melody is clearly based on dhrómos Hitzaskiár. However, the D minor chord that sounds in the fifth beat cannot belong to the sphere of Hitzaskiár due to the D natural note (VII natural and not VII sharp as in Hitzaskiár). This is perhaps the difference between the theoretical structure of the dhrómi and that of the makams. There are plenty of examples of such cases: *Φάνταζες σαν πριγκηπέσσα*<sup>61</sup> [fándazes san pringipésa = you looked like a princess]; *Στη ζωή μου έχω τόσο πληγωθεί*<sup>62</sup> [sti

<sup>60</sup> Makams do not employ harmony.

<sup>61</sup> Odeon GO 3588 - GA 7322, recorded in circa October, 1940.

<sup>62</sup> Columbia CG 2670 - DG 6855, recorded on June 13, 1950.

zoí mou ého τόσο plighothí = I have been hurt in my life]; and *Βγάλε τη μάσκα*<sup>63</sup> [vghále ti máska = take off the mask].

On the other hand, there are cases that show that the guitarist was at least aware of the dhrómi and the makams, as, for example, in the song *Δυο χρόνια σ'αγαπώ*<sup>64</sup> [dhió hrónia s' aghapó = I have been loving you for two years]. The chords used by the guitarist attest this claim, for he does not use the natural seventh minor chord (C minor) at all. Instead, he chooses to play either the major fifth or the major second which do not 'falsify' the sound of Hitzaskiár.

In terms of the mixtures of dhrómi similar to Hitzaskiár, the song *Για σένα ξενυχτώ*<sup>65</sup> [ghía séna xenihtó = I stay awake at night for you] is a very special case (Figure 5.38). The intro starts with the upper tetrachord. If there was not the C minor chord in the third bar, then the melody could have been considered as belonging in the sphere of Hitzaskiár. Moreover, there is a movement which sounds like a modulation to G Minóre utilizing the D7 major chord when the voice sings the C natural (something that can be regarded as an idiom), while the cadence sounds as if it is in Matzóre (V major chord).

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<sup>63</sup> HMV OGA 1583 - AO 2919, recorded on February 25, 1950.

<sup>64</sup> Odeon GO 3062 - GA 7139, recorded on June 14, 1938.

<sup>65</sup> Columbia CG 1670 - DG 6344, recorded in December, 1937.

Columbia CG 1670 - DG 6344  
 Hasápiko  
 D Hítzaskiár [Hítzáz // Sousinák // Matzóre]  
 Time: 00.48

$\text{♩} = 61$

Intro Hítzaskiár - Hítzáz Canto

Melody

Hasápiko

M.

Hs.

M.

Hs.

Chords: D, Gm, Cm, B Chord, B\_V Chord

Lyrics: ε - γώ για, σέ - να κά - θε βρά - δυ ζε - νυχ - τώ, με την κι - θά - ρα μου γλυ - κά σου τρα - γου - δώ, σεις νύχ - τας, το σκο - τά - δι μύ - vos μου γουρ - νό, έ - τσι νο - μί - ζω πως θα πα - ρη - γο - ρη - θώ

Figure 5.38: *Ghiá séna xenihó* transcription – CD Track 27 (Tsitsánis)

The next lines show some very common cadence techniques. The most popular of them, with regard to hasápiko songs, is the I-V-I note shape played in eights. For example, the song *Μαυρομάτα (Περαία και Μοσχάτο)*<sup>66</sup> [mavromáta (peréa ke mosháto = black-eyed woman (Piraeus and Moshato)] (Figure 5.39).

<sup>66</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5235 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975.

MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5235 - 2J-064 70172  
 Hasápiko  
 D Hítzaskiár // Hítzáz // Pireótikos  
 Time: 00.17

♩ = 83

Baghlamás

Hasápiko

D Gm D D E<sup>b</sup> D

B Chord B\_V Chord B B\_V Chord

**Figure 5.39:** *Mavromáta* transcription – CD Track 28 (Tsitsánis)

Other song examples are: *Ο μάγκας του γλυκού νερού*<sup>67</sup> [o mángas tou ghlikou nerou = the sweet water's buster]; and *Της μπαμπέσας το γλυκό φιλί*<sup>68</sup> [tis babésas to ghlikó filí = the sneaky woman's sweet kiss].

Another note/chord progression of the cadences is the I-II-I sequence. For example, the song *Το 'χω ρίξει στο ξενύχτι*<sup>69</sup> [to 'ho ríxi sto xeníhti = I started sitting up all night] (Figure 5.40).

His Master's Voice OGA 2061 - AO 5150  
 Hasápiko  
 G Hítzáz  
 Time: 00.11

♩ = 97

Accordion

Hasápiko

Cm G A<sup>b</sup> Fm A<sup>b</sup> G A<sup>b</sup> G

B Chord B\_V Chord B Chord B Chord Chord Chord Chord Chord

**Figure 5.40:** *To 'ho ríxi sto xeníhti* transcription – CD Track 29 (Tsitsánis)

Other song examples containing the same melodic shape in the cadences are: *Τα βλέπω σκοτεινά*<sup>70</sup> [ta vlépo skotiná = I see them dark]; *Όταν θα σμίξεις μ' αυτόν που θ'*

<sup>67</sup> Parlophone GO 4092 - B. 74151, recorded on February 21, 1949.

<sup>68</sup> Odeon GO 3850 - GA 7416, recorded on October 31, 1947.

<sup>69</sup> HMV OGA 2061 - AO 5150, recorded in November 1953.

<sup>70</sup> Parlophone GO 4732 - B. 74271-I, recorded on November 22, 1952.



αγαπήσεις<sup>71</sup> [ótan tha smíxis m' afton pou th' aghapísis = when you get together with the one you'll love]; and *H gynáika ótan fýγει*<sup>72</sup> [i ghinéka ótan fíghi = when the woman leaves].

Finally, Figure 5.41 shows the chords used in dhrómos Hitzaskiár.

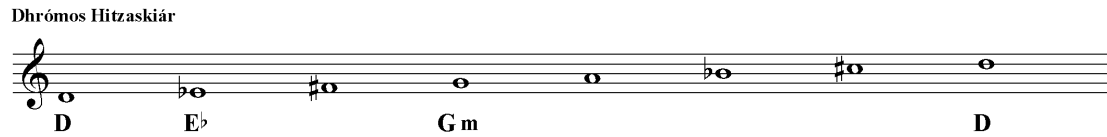


Figure 5.41: Chords used in dhrómos Hitzaskiár

### Dhrómos Ousák [*Ουσάκ - Uşşak*]

Dhrómos Ousák is one of the most popular dhrómi in laikó style. Tsitsánis recorded 53 songs in dhrómos Ousák. Moreover, there are five songs that include elements of Ousák without it being the predominant dhrómos. Many of Ousák's most common characteristics have already been examined in the previous chapter. The following lines contain some song examples illustrating some of the dhrómos' idioms.

Regarding the instability of the second and the sixth degrees, one good example which attests to this is the song *Μελαχροινή κοπέλα*<sup>73</sup> [melahriní kopéla = brunette girl] and its very first line (Figure 5.42).

Odeon GO 3309 - GA 7222  
Karsilamás  
E Ousák  
♩ = 144

Intro

Bouzouki

The image shows a musical transcription for the song 'Melahriní kopéla'. It features two staves: the top staff is for Bouzouki and the bottom staff is for Karsilamás. The Bouzouki part is in 9/8 time and starts with an 'Intro' section. The Karsilamás part is in 9/8 time and has a steady rhythm. Chords are indicated below the Karsilamás staff: Em, Am, and B\_V.

Karsilamás

B Chord Chord B\_V Chord B Chord Chord B\_V Chord Chord B\_V

Figure 5.42: *Melahriní kopéla* transcription – CD Track 30 (Tsitsánis)

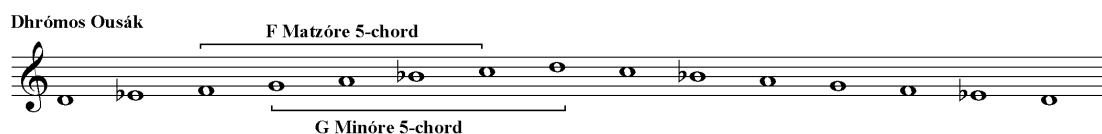
<sup>71</sup> HMV 7XGA 3001 - 7PG 3825, recorded in 1969.

<sup>72</sup> HMV 7XGA 2787 - 7PG 3729, recorded in 1967.

<sup>73</sup> Odeon GO 3309 - GA 7222, recorded on June 7, 1939.

One can see the way notes C and F sound sometimes natural (that is, in their Ousák position) and sometimes raised by a semitone. There are plenty of songs that include this instability. For example: *Εσύ γλυκιά μου μόνο*<sup>74</sup> [esí ghlikιά móu móno = only you my sweetie]; and *Δηλητήριο στη φλέβα*<sup>75</sup> [dhilitírio sti fléva = poison in vein]. This issue regarding the instability of the second degree is examined by Zannos: ‘the key problem of the diatonic species is a very old one: the position of the degree segah (vou). [...] Today, some schools prefer a higher position, some a lower one; [...] Normally, musicians use both degrees, changing from one to the other according to the needs of the melody’ (1990: 52-3).<sup>76</sup>

Another very popular idiom of dhrómos Ousák is its combination with the Matzóre dhrómos on the third degree of the former. If one observes the scale of dhrómos Ousák, one can see that there is a Matzóre pentachord starting on the third degree (Figure 5.43).



**Figure 5.43: Matzóre pentachord in Ousák**

In the case where the flat from the second degree is revoked, we get a whole Matzóre scale from the third degree (F to F'). The song *Αλά Τούρκα χόρεψέ μου*<sup>77</sup> [alá Toúrka hórepsé móu = dance for me ala Turka] is an example that shows this movement in the third degree Matzóre pentachord (Figure 5.44). Moreover, it is noteworthy that this particular song includes the previous idiom, too, that is, the instability of the second degree.

<sup>74</sup> HMV 7XGA 1857 - 7PG 3361, recorded on February 4, 1964.

<sup>75</sup> CBS 83406, recorded in 1978.

<sup>76</sup> Regarding the intonation in Arab music, see (Scott 1993).

<sup>77</sup> HMV OGA 2580 - AO 5417, recorded on August 20, 1957.

His Master's Voice OGA 2580 - AO 5417  
Sirtós  
D Ousák  
Time: 00.11

♩ = 186

Bouzouki

Guitar (Sirtós pattern)  
Bass Chord Chord

V.  
ντύ-σου, α-πό - ψε και στο - λι - σου σαν χα-νού - μισ - σα σο - στή

Bz.

Sr.  
F F F F

Figure 5.44: *Ala tourka hórepse mou* transcription – CD Track 31 (Tsitsánis)

One can observe that Ousák uses the same melodic shape (measure four) to move from dhrómos Ousák to dhrómos Matzóre in the third degree, as in dhrómos Minóre that has been examined before. Other song examples are: *Μαζί μου δεν ταιριάζεις*<sup>78</sup> [Mazí mou dhen teriázis = we don't suit each other]; and *Ανάθεμα στην ομορφιά σου*<sup>79</sup> [anáthema stin omorfíá sou = damn your beauty].

Continuing to Ousák's characteristics, another common phenomenon is a movement and temporary establishment on the fifth degree. The chord played on this beat, that is, a V minor, gives the sense of the connection of either two Ousák pentachords, or of an Ousák and a Minóre, one from D to A notes, and the other from A to E' notes. Obviously, what the second (upper) pentachord will look like depends on whether the melody contains a flat sixth or a natural sixth degree (see Figure 5.45). It should be mentioned that this particular sound became more popular after the 1960s, not only within Tsitsánis's repertoire, but within laikó style in general. The song *Τι κι αν ζούσαμε μαζί*<sup>80</sup> [ti ki an zóusame mazí = what's the point of us living

<sup>78</sup> Columbia CG 2191 - DG 6617, recorded on November 9, 1946.

<sup>79</sup> HMV 7XGA 2138 - 7PG 3445, recorded on October 29, 1964.

<sup>80</sup> HMV 7XGA 2573 - 7PG 3615, recorded on September 13, 1966.

together] is an example of this temporary establishment on the fifth degree (Figure 5.45).

His Master's Voice 7XGA 2573 - 7PG 3615  
 Bayo  
 E Ousák  
 Time: 00.21

♩ = 102

Voice

τι κλαν ζού - σα - με μα - ζί μαύ - ρες ή - ταν οι καρ - δίες μας

Guitar (Bayo pattern)

Bass Chord Bass Chord

V.

υ - πο - φέ - ρα - με κι οι δυο λί - γες ή - ταν οι χα - ρές μας

Gtr.

Figure 5.45: *Ti ki an zousame mazi* transcription – CD Track 32 (Tsitsánis)

Other song examples are: *Μακριά μου εσύ δεν κάνεις*<sup>81</sup> [makriá mou esí dhen kánis = you can't live away from me]; *Αγαπώ και πονώ (δυστυχώς)*<sup>82</sup> [agharó ke ponó (dhistihós) = I love and I suffer (unfortunately)]; and *Εσύ γλυκιά μου μόνο*<sup>83</sup> [esí ghlikiá mou móno = only you my sweetie].

Another extremely popular combination is the combination between dhrómi Ousák and Kiourdí.<sup>84</sup> The song *Περιπλανώμενη ζωή*<sup>85</sup> [periplanómeni zoí = drifter life] is an example of this combination (Figure 5.46).

<sup>81</sup> HMV 7XGA 1958 - 7PG 3376, recorded on March 31, 1964.

<sup>82</sup> HMV 7XGA 2204 - 7PG 3506, recorded on February 18, 1965.

<sup>83</sup> HMV 7XGA 1857 - 7PG 3361, recorded on February 4, 1964.

<sup>84</sup> With Kiourdí I refer to what Greek laikó musicians mean when they use the term Kiourdí. The issue of wrong terminology used on their part is examined at the beginning of Chapter 4.

<sup>85</sup> Melody MG 25, recorded on June 3, 1954.

Melody MG 25  
Old zeimbékiko  
A Ousák // Kiourdí  
Time: 00.19

♩ = 62

Voice

πε - ρι - πλα - νό - με - νη ζο - - - ή πε -

Old zeimbékiko

C m

V.

ρι - πλα - νό - με - νό - - - κο - - - ρμί

Old z.

A m A m

Figure 5.46: *Periplanómeni zoí* transcription – CD Track 33 (Tsitsánis)

The melodies in Kiourdí within an Ousák song are accompanied by a third degree minor chord. A very usual as well as traditional behaviour of melodies in Kiourdí (which also derives from makam tradition) is the glide from the fifth note to its lower position, that is, the flat fifth. One can also observe (in *periplanómeni zoí*) that another popular idiom of Ousák is still present, which is the instability of the second degree. Other songs that make use of this combination are: *Ίσως αύριο*<sup>86</sup> [*isos ávrio* = perhaps tomorrow]; and *Για να σε κάνω άνθρωπο*<sup>87</sup> [*ghiá na se káno ánthropo* = in order to make you a good person].

Finally, Figure 5.47 shows the chords used in *dhrómos Ousák*.

Dhrómos Ousák

D m E b F G m C m D m

Figure 5.47: Chords used in *dhrómos Ousák*

<sup>86</sup> HMV OGA 2717 - AO 5497, recorded on June 3, 1958.

<sup>87</sup> Odeon GO 5028 - GA 7809, recorded on November 24, 1954.

## Dhrómi Houzám and Segiáh [Χουζόμ – Hüzzâm and Σεγκιάχ – Segâh]

Dhrómi Houzám and Segiáh are usually confused by Greek laikó musicians. It is very common to call every song Houzám that utilizes a lower tetrachord as shown in Figure 5.48, Staff 1.<sup>88</sup>

Dhrómos Houzám

Makam Hüzzâm

The figure consists of two musical staves. The top staff, titled 'Dhrómos Houzám', shows a scale starting on D4. Brackets below the staff identify three chordal structures: 'D Houzám 4-chord' (D4, E4, F#4, G4), 'A Hitzáz 4-chord' (A4, B4, C5, D5), and 'G Nikriz 5-chord' (G4, A4, B4, C5, D5). The bottom staff, titled 'Makam Hüzzâm', shows a scale starting on D4. Brackets below the staff identify two chordal structures: 'Hüzzâm 5-chord' (D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4) and 'Hicâz 5-chord' (D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4).

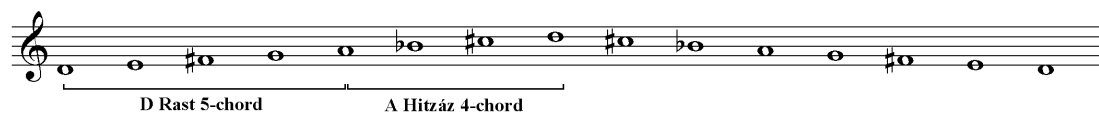
**Figure 5.48: Dhrómos Houzám and makam Hüzzâm**

Possibly, the reason for this confusion is the fact that both Houzám and Segiáh involve the same lower tetrachord (see Figure 5.50).

Things become very confusing when a third dhrómos is taken into consideration. This is dhrómos Suzinák. Many times, Suzinák's cadences occur in the third degree. By doing so, a sense of either a Houzám or a Segiáh melody is created, for the two latter also have cadences in the third. Moreover, the upper tetrachord of dhrómos Suzinák and dhrómos Houzám are the same, and thus, another problem arises, for one cannot say for sure if a melody that sounds in this particular tetrachord belongs in either dhrómi – not to mention that some melodies may even sound like Hitzaskiár, too. Figure 5.49 represents dhrómos Suzinák and makam Sûzinák.

<sup>88</sup> For an in-depth examination and analysis of dhrómos Houzám see Pennanen's 'the development, interpretation, and change of dromos Houzám in Greek rebetika music' (1999: 23-65).

## Dhrómos Souzinák



## Makam Súzinák

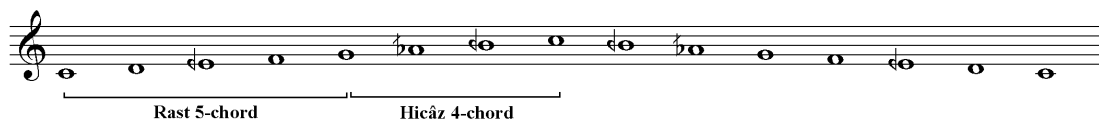


Figure 5.49: Dhrómos Souzinák and makam Súzinák

Finally, Figure 5.50 represents the chords used in dhrómi Houzám, Segiáh and Suzinák.

## Dhrómos Houzám



## Dhrómos Segiáh



## Dhrómos Souzinák



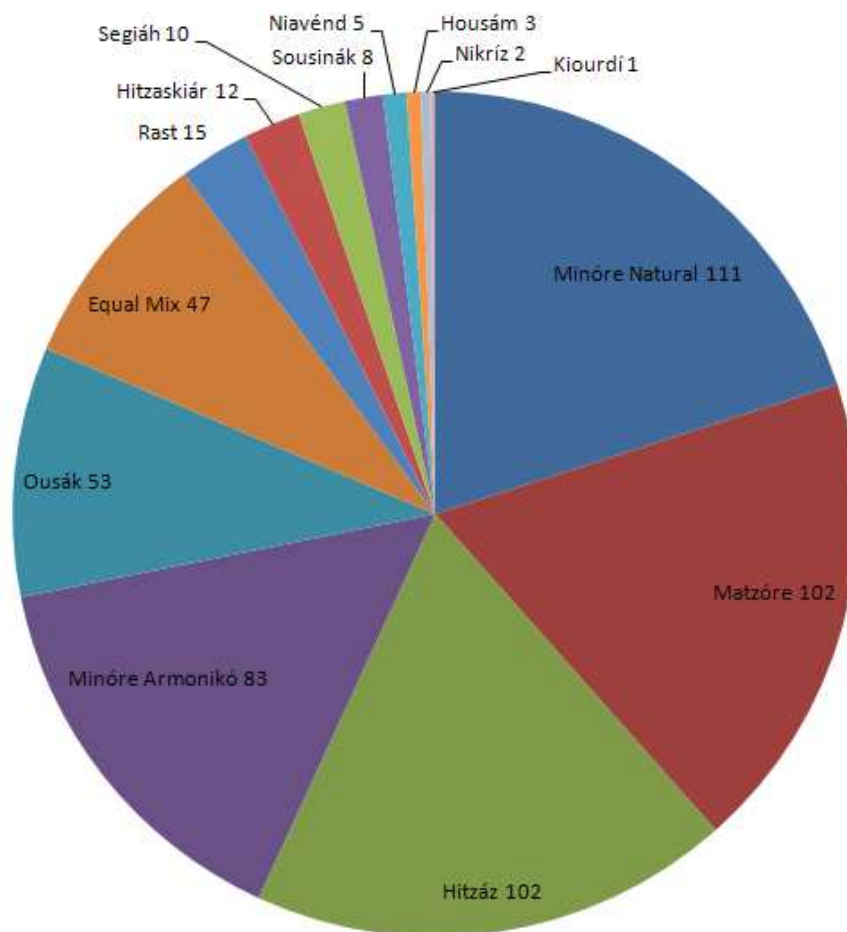
Figure 5.50: Chords in dhrómi Houzám, Segiáh and Souzinák

### Statistics: Number of Recordings by Dhrómos

The statistics (Table 5.1 and Figure 5.51) verify, ultimately, all the claims about Tsitsánis's work and the shift towards harmonization and Westernization.

<b>Dhrómos</b>	<b>Number of recordings</b>
Minóre Natural	111
Matzóre	102
Hitzáz	102
Minóre Armonikó	83
Ousák	53
Equal Mix	47
Rast	15
Hitzaskiár	12
Segiáh	10
Sousinák	8
Niavénd	5
Housám	3
Nikríz	2
Kiourdí	1

**Table 5.1: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by dhrómos**



**Figure 5.51: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by dhrómos**



Dhrómos Minóre and Matzóre hold the two dominant places with regard to how many songs used them as their leading dhrómi. If one takes into consideration the fact that 45 songs in Minóre Armonikó, 28 in Minóre Natural and 27 in Matzóre (100 in total) are in hasápiko rhythm, then the realistic importance of the so-called *kandádha* songs of Tsitsánis will be clear. In other words, 100 songs out of the 296 that utilize these three dhrómi, that is, one-third, are in Tsitsánis's new song style, which is one of the most serious reasons for the style's development and broader admission (regarding the *kandádha* see Chapter 1).

The following chapters (6 and 7) deal with the popular rhythms that constitute a problem similar to that analyzed in this and the previous chapter, that of laikó dhrómi. This problem is once more closely connected to the limited existence of musicological studies, as well as to the confusing oral tradition of Greek laikó musicians. In the case of research that deals to a great extent with the musicological aspect of a work and more specifically with its analysis, the problems of laikó dhrómi and rhythms (that is, the problems of a huge amount of elements of the music itself) are in fact extremely arduous. Something that needs to be clarified is that, according to my research findings, the examination of rhythms, especially in cultures such as the one under examination where rhythm is synonymous to dance, cannot be covered in all of its perspectives unless dance research is involved.

## Chapter 6

### Greek Laikó Rhythms in the Songs of Vasilis Tsitsánis: Presentation and Analysis from Selected Examples

#### General Comments on the Rhythmic Patterns

The first section of this chapter includes some general guidelines and comments on the rhythmic patterns. These will help and prepare the reader to understand how they should use these patterns, and what they aspire to depict.

It should be clarified that the patterns that follow are typical ways of performing the laikó rhythms. In many cases, and mostly because we are dealing with a popular musical style which is mainly based on oral tradition, the musicians tend to improvise and, therefore, they choose various ways of interpreting the rhythms. For instance, in most cases of the zeimbékiko, the baghlamás plays the part of a rhythmical instrument by playing the chords in eights. However, occasionally, it can be heard playing melodic lines and even parts of intros, as for example in songs *Αγαπώ μια παντρεμένη*<sup>1</sup> [agharó miá pandreméni = I love a married woman] and *Καταραμένη ξενιτιά*<sup>2</sup> [kataraméni xenitiá = cursed foreign lands]. The only indispensable instrument is the guitar. Apart from that (and, of course the bouzouki), all the others are subordinate instruments and do not always take part in the band. My greatest concern here is to demonstrate, especially to someone unfamiliar with Greek rhythms, the ways of their interpretations by showing the beats or, as they are often called by Greek musicians, *τα χτυπήματα* [ta htipímata = the hits], writing either bass notes or chords. Another aim is to illustrate how the musicians that took part in the recordings performed these rhythms. It is worth noting that the patterns were created by me after listening and examining each and every available commercial recording by Vasilis Tsitsánis.

At this point, I should highlight the importance of the role of the guitar within the entire genre. The *μπασοκίθαρο* [basokítharo = bass guitar], as it is often called by Greek musicians, can be considered as the backbone of the entire genre, especially with regard to the way the rhythms were modeled and formed. The guitar, apart from

<sup>1</sup> Odeon GO 3420 - GA 7254, recorded on December 4, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> HMV OGA 2705 - AO 5483, recorded on May 22, 1958.

its harmony-providing role, makes use of melodic lines played in its bass section (see further below).<sup>3</sup> These are the called by Greek musicians, *μπασογραμμές* [basoghramés = básō (bass) + ghramés (lines)]. After all, the smallest, yet adequate band type that can fully interpret the style of the genre consists of the bouzouki (melody) and the Spanish bass-guitar (rhythm). Also very popular were the so-called by rembétiko enthusiasts *κιθαρόνια* [kitharónia = little guitars] which look like Flamenco guitars, requinto guitars or the ukulele, a small guitar originating in Hawaii. However, the type that prevailed was that of the Spanish, classical guitar. The strings used by the guitarists, also used today, were metallic (something unusual for a Spanish guitar).<sup>4</sup> However, as Hristos Spourdhalákis informs us, the alloy of the old metal was far different than today's, something that has a great impact on the timbre (2006: 31). It should also be mentioned that we are discussing rembétiko recordings where the guitar had an accompanying role rather than a soloist role. This segregation is critical because many café (refugees) and early rembétiko (Piraeus bouzouki-based) songwriters used the guitar as a solo instrument, not just an accompanying instrument.<sup>5</sup>

The reason I created patterns for foreign rhythms as well, although I could have just referred to already published literature on this topic, is that these rhythms were adopted by Greek rembétiko-laikó musicians and have been changed in order to match Greek standards ('laikized'). Obviously the reason why Greek musicians used and still use these particular names is not that the rhythm is exactly the same as in Latin genres or any other music, but because it is very similar.

Although the bibliography lacks references to Greek laikó rhythms, Ghiórgchos Metalinós (1999) and Leftéris Pávlou (2006) give good general idea of many laikó and traditional Greek rhythms. However, the most valuable information has been

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<sup>3</sup> Anéstis Barbátsis's (2008) and Ghiórgchos Evangélous's (2008) bachelor theses involve a stylistic analysis of the orchestra types and especially of the Spanish guitar's performance techniques.

<sup>4</sup> There is a Spanish-like guitar in Italy which is also used with metallic strings, known as 'chitarra battente'.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, songs: *Ούζο χασίς* [ouzo hasish] by Spíros Peristéris, Odeon GA 1791 - GO 2119, recorded in 1934; and *Ο Αμερικάνος* [o amerikános = the American] by Iákovos Mondanáris, Perlophone B 21823 - 101602, recorded in 1935. I should also mention the work of Ghiórgchos Katsarós (1888-1997 [he lived for 109 years!]) who used the guitar as the soloist instrument in his songs perhaps more than any other.

taken from interviews, consultations, discussions with Greek percussionists (such as Leftéris Pávlou and Strátos Samiótis – see also ‘Acknowledgements’) and, above all, from personal experience (as a rembétiko-laikó musician). Obviously, this chapter examines the most popular rhythms (traditional or not) within the genre. This means that it does not deal with rhythms with a small number of recordings.

A ‘B’ or ‘Bass’ in the rhythmic patterns refers to a single bass note – the first degree of the chord played in that particular beat. The ‘Bass\_V’ (or ‘B\_V’) refers to the fifth degree/note of the chord. The second, smaller staff under the larger one shows an altered version of this particular instrument’s performance technique. Of course, one should bear in mind that many times the final result can be a combination of two or more versions. Finally, the ‘Guitar’ implies all guitar types that may take part in a recording (Spanish, steel-strung acoustic, electric and so forth). The Spanish guitar (and some types of the kitharónia) was exclusively used until 1970s, when the steel-strung acoustic guitar also took a place in Greek laikó bands, without the former vanishing.

Following these guidelines is the presentation of the laikó rhythms themselves. The analysis of the rhythms along with references to numerous selected song-examples constructs a detailed image of how the rhythms used within rembétiko and laikó styles evolved and are still evolving.

### **Ζεϊμπέκικο [Zeimbékiko (Turkish: Zeybek)]**

The zeimbékiko dance rhythm holds a prominent position amongst Vasilis Tsitsánis’s recorded output.<sup>6</sup> As evidenced in Greek discography, the zeimbékiko was also the most beloved rhythm of every songwriter of the rembétiko and the laikó era. The fact that 285 of Vasilis Tsitsánis’s 554 commercial recordings (that is, 51.8 per cent) are in the zeimbékiko family is of the utmost importance, with regard to the analysis and

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<sup>6</sup> The ‘zeimbékiko’ section of this chapter, along with some other small parts from other chapters (working as introductory comments) were submitted and are under review as the article ‘The Zeimbékiko Rhythm in Vasilis Tsitsánis’s Recording Career (1936-1983)’, *Journal of Music Research Online*.

assessment of this specific rhythm.<sup>7</sup> The zeimbékiko dance rhythm is considered to be one of the most representative characteristics of the cultural identity of modern Greeks. It is an example of how acculturation can happen between cultures (Ottoman-Turkish and Greek).<sup>8</sup> It can also depict to what extent cultures can ‘inter-loan’ and then ‘inter-return’ elements of theirs, creating in the end a situation where nobody can tell which one gave birth to these elements. The route of the zeimbékiko, from once being an expression of the underworld and of the ‘cosmos’ of the *rembétis* to today’s urban popular dance of every Greek, is something that needs attention and examination from several perspectives. The transportation of this rhythm from the hashish-dens to luxury venues can be credited (to a great degree) to Vasilis Tsitsánis. Therefore, the sociological perspective from which one can examine this issue is of value and importance. However, as already highlighted before, popular musicology in Greece has not shown its will to produce fruits as yet. Perhaps it is now the time for another, equally important transportation to happen; one from the luxury venue to academia.

### **Παλιό Ζεϊμπέκικο [palió = old zeimbékiko]**

When a piece is labelled ‘old zeimbékiko’, Greek musicians will be heard to play the following rhythmic pattern (Figure 6.1):<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> With the term ‘zeimbékiko family’, apart from the three major types, I also refer to *karsilamás*, *tsiftetéli* in 9-beat and *aptáliko* zeimbékiko rhythms.

<sup>8</sup> See also Politis (2005a).

<sup>9</sup> Others, such as Risto Pekka Pennanen (1999: 105) and Peter Manuel (1990: 130-1) choose to call it *Συριανό* [Sirianó = from Syros island]. See also Holst about the zeimbékiko in Syros and about Vamvakáris who was born and lived there until he moved to Piraeus when he became 12 years old (2006: 41).

**Old zeimbékiko**

The figure shows the rhythmic pattern for Old zeimbékiko across four staves. The time signature is 9/4. The notation uses rectangles to represent chords and bass notes, and arrows to indicate bass movements. The staves are labeled as follows:

- Guitar (Staff 1):** Bass, Chord, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord.
- Guitar (Staff 2):** Bass, Chord, Chord, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord.
- Baghlamás (Staff 3):** Chord.
- Double Bass or El. Bass (Staff 4):** Bass, -, -, -, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass.
- Double Bass or El. Bass (Staff 5):** Bass, -, -, Bass, Bass.

Labels 'Bass\_V' are placed below the staff lines, indicating bass movements between notes.

**Figure 6.1: Old zeimbékiko rhythmic pattern**

The rhythmic structure of the old zeimbékiko consists of a pair of identical 4/4s, plus an extra quarter-note at the end. Otherwise, we can simply think of the structure as being  $4/4 + 5/4$ . The alternative version of the guitar (second staff) reveals a tendency of the ‘old school’ guitarists to fill in the rhythm with eights, rather than playing strict ‘hits’. This is obvious in almost every recording until approximately the end of the 1950s, when richer instrumentations and more sophisticated and prefixed arrangements replaced the ‘playing freedom’ of the old musicians, which (the playing freedom) is definitely worth a thesis. However, the tendency of embellishment has been never absent on the part of the accompanying instruments. One of the most popular embellishment techniques of the guitarists were the bass-lines created by movements from one bass note to another. Figure 6.2 shows an example of this bass-line technique in a rather ‘classical’ chordal progression (see below).

**Figure 6.2: Guitar bass-line technique in old zeimbékiko**

I refer to this progression as being classical because it is true that in many cases, especially in the café style period, that the songs give a sense of being arrangements rather than compositions, especially in Western contexts; although Lilliestam refers to this compositional technique as something that makes use of conventional formulas which vary depending on the cultural background of everyone and which are always the starting point of the music-making procedure (1996: 203-5). Regarding the café tunes, indeed, there were countless traditional tunes which seemed to be part of a big ‘storehouse’ from where musicians (with a rather high skill in re-arranging the notes and the notes’ values) tended to pick them up and create songs for recording.<sup>10</sup> However, ‘composing or arranging is like making food. A composition is no new invention. You have to take the ingredients that are there, mix them, dare to try new things and trust your imagination and feeling (Göteborgs-Posten, 28 December 1992)’.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See also Morris (1980: 82-3) and Pennanen (1995: 141).

<sup>11</sup> In Lilliestam (1996: 203).

Continuing now to Figure 6.2's explanations, the 'modal based' staff of the score indicates how this particular progression would have been interpreted by a guitarist of the café era, showing the modal background of their music, since there was almost no employment of chordal harmony. The third, smaller staff indicates something quite special that is found in *rembétiko* as well as in the *laikó* musical style. This is the changed tunings that many musicians, especially the *bouzouki* players, used to use.<sup>12</sup> As far as the *bouzouki* is concerned, these tunings are also known as *ντουζένια* [*ntouzénia* (plural), *ntouzéni* (singular)] which is an expression met in the slang of the *rembétiko* people and simply refers to the then several tunings. As evidenced in many recordings, this technique was also used (and is still used) by guitarists too, because it (the technique) can offer the usage of open strings. Thus, the third staff in Figure 6.2 implies that the guitarist may tune the E bass string a tone lower and make it a D. Obviously, the changed tuning can also be applied on the first staff.

Figure 6.3 shows a very popular cadence technique/formula (interim and final) of the guitar, especially of the 'old school'.

**Figure 6.3: Guitar cadence technique in old zeimbékiko**

Perhaps this is another element that links the music of the cafés with the *rembétiko* style of Piraeus. In most cases, the accompaniment of the refugees' songs was essentially a sort of a bass continuo played by instruments such as the *ud*, the lute and

<sup>12</sup> This is a common phenomenon found in several other traditions such as Rock and Blues (see Lilliestam 1996: 203).



the Spanish guitar on their bass strings.<sup>13</sup> In the case of the zeimbékiko, early recordings show that this ‘bass technique’ effectively looked as in Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.5. The second measure is a cadence measure which illustrates the similarity between the bass technique of the music of the cafés and the rembétiko. Where there are two notes in a single beat, it means that the guitarist plays either the top or the lower one. Similarly to old zeimbékiko’s bass technique, Figure 6.5 illustrates a similar technique used in the new zeimbékiko which, just like the old one, reveals the strong bonds between the Ottoman-Turkish musical culture and the café and rembétiko styles. Obviously, in many cases the guitarists used a combination of the two versions, that is, the V-I (first staff) or the octave technique (second staff). Moreover, we shall always bear in mind the changed tuning option, as shown in Figure 6.2.

**Figure 6.4: Bass technique of the music of the cafés (old zeimbékiko)**

<sup>13</sup> Peter Manuel wrote on the role of the refugees as well as the early recordings of rembétiko (1990: 129). Risto Pekka Pennanen also discussed several matters of these techniques at several places within his thesis (for example, 1999: 68).

**Figure 6.5: Bass technique in new zeimbékiko type**

If we now compare these figures with Figure 6.1 (old zeimbékiko's general pattern) we will understand how the harmony replaced the modal concept of the accompaniment. A representative example would be the case of a very popular song entitled *Γιατί φουμάρω κοκαΐνη* [ghiatí founáro kokaíni = why I smoke cocaine] by Panaghiótis Toúndas, originally recorded either by Maríka Polítisa<sup>14</sup> or by Róza Eskenázi,<sup>15</sup> both, possibly, in 1932. The song can also be found with other titles such as *Μ' έμπλεξε ένας μόρτης* [m' émblexe énas mórtis = an urchin got me in this] and *Ο κοκαϊνοπότης* [o kokainopótis = the cocaine-drinker], since it has been recorded many times by numerous singers, old and contemporary. In both original recordings no harmony is involved. On the other hand, every following recording involves chordal progressions. At this point, it is of crucial importance to mention the multicultural nature of Greece, especially in the early rembétiko period. Research on some particular key singers who collaborated with Tsitsánis and other songwriters led me to some astonishing findings. One of these cases is the case of the singer Stéla Haskíl who was a Sephardic Jew, that is, a Jew from the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>16</sup> After some rather rough research on Sephardic musical style, I found a song that sounds very much like the song examined in the preceding lines. The song is included in the CD 'Jewish-Spanish Songs from Thessaloniki' (by David Saltiel, 1997) and it is entitled

<sup>14</sup> Columbia WG 376 - DG 279.

<sup>15</sup> Odeon GO 1793 - GA 1624.

<sup>16</sup> Many major cities, such as Thessaloniki, were (and still are) well-known for the multinational constitution of their populations.

La cigarrera<sup>17</sup> [the tobacco girl]. It is very interesting that both songs are in the tsiftetéli rhythm. Whereas we have the accompaniment of the Spanish guitar playing in octaves in the Greek version, we have a tambourine ‘keeping’ the rhythmic 4/4 structure in the Jewish-Spanish one. Moreover, the modal structure of both songs sounds pretty much the same, and ultimately, even the lyrical context is very similar. Nevertheless, the issue of ‘inter-borrowing’ amongst cultures needs a more in-depth examination. Unfortunately, I was not able to find out the recording date and originating information regarding the Sephardic version in order to see which is the oldest.

There is also one more song example which seems to depict the musical situation of the period. The song is entitled *Βάλε με στην αγκαλιά σου* [vále me stin angaliá sou = put me in your arms] by Vangélis Papázoglou. There are three recordings of this song. They all seem, as evidence shows, to have been recorded in 1934. I must stress that this was a usual phenomenon; many songwriters used to record a song twice and even three times. The three singers that sang the song were Róza Eskenázi,<sup>18</sup> Stelákis Perpiniádis<sup>19</sup> and Maríka Kanaropóulu.<sup>20</sup> The peculiar characteristic of this particular song is the fact that two of the recordings involved chordal harmony, whereas the third one (Perpiniádis’s) did not. In this third version, the guitarist either doubles the solo instruments by playing the melodic lines with them, or, he accompanies using the bass technique (octave or V-I) I analyzed before. These three recordings raise some important questions: was the songwriter undecided about what style he should apply to the song? Given that there are other songs with the same characteristic, is there a possibility of this being something fashionable at this period? That is, recording in both ways? Ultimately, the most important question in my mind would be something like: was, by any chance, that period really in disarray or in a state of musical flux? Given that there were so many new parameters, as regards music in general, would this be something that may have thrown some people off their calculations? Some examples: the recording procedure was something

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<sup>17</sup> Track number six, in the CD by David Saltiel ‘Jewish-Spanish Songs of Thessaloniki’. Oriente Musik, LC 3592 (1998).

<sup>18</sup> HMV AO 2206 - OGA 168.

<sup>19</sup> Columbia DG 6033 - CG 1014.

<sup>20</sup> Odeon GA 1821 - GO 2171.

quite new (we are dealing with 1920s – 1930s) and thus, the entire concept of the ‘music industry’ was something new. The rapid mix of styles, instruments, musicians, customs and human idiosyncrasies would also have created a mess. Greece was undergoing modernization as well as the Westernization process, while the refugees had just brought with them an almost utterly Eastern cultural background (see Pennanen 1999). Not to mention, of course, the political scene of the period: world wars, Greek-Turkish war, Greek Junta and so forth. Perhaps, the market and the companies, as well as the musicians, wanted to try some things out first, to experiment with the audience’s tastes and preferences.

Returning now to the performance techniques, it must be said that it is almost impossible for someone to listen to the old school’s technique today, even by musicians known as being purely *rembétiko* musicians. The harmony has clearly surpassed the modal-based accompaniment. However, elements of the old school technique are still alive in today’s performance practices as, for example, are the so-called ‘*tutti*’ (in the Greek context), where the guitarist, from time to time, changes his chordal based accompaniment and doubles the bouzouki or the voice by playing their melodic lines, something that was very common in old recordings (regarding these ‘*tutti*’ see also page 216).

It is not only the performance techniques that changed, but also the tempi of the songs. However, let us take this story from its beginning. Figure 6.6 examines the development of tempo in old *zeimbékikos* within Vasilis Tsitsanis’s recording career. It explicitly shows the transformation of the rhythm from *allegro* to *andante*. I should clarify that I have calculated the tempo of each of the recordings in order to create the most accurate representation I could. Thus, Figure 6.6 (and all other figures that contain tempo values) represents every song’s tempo value in chronological order (according to their recording date). It seems like the old *zeimbékiko* was a rather *moderato* and even *allegro* rhythm (pre-war). This situation changes from the first post-war period onwards.

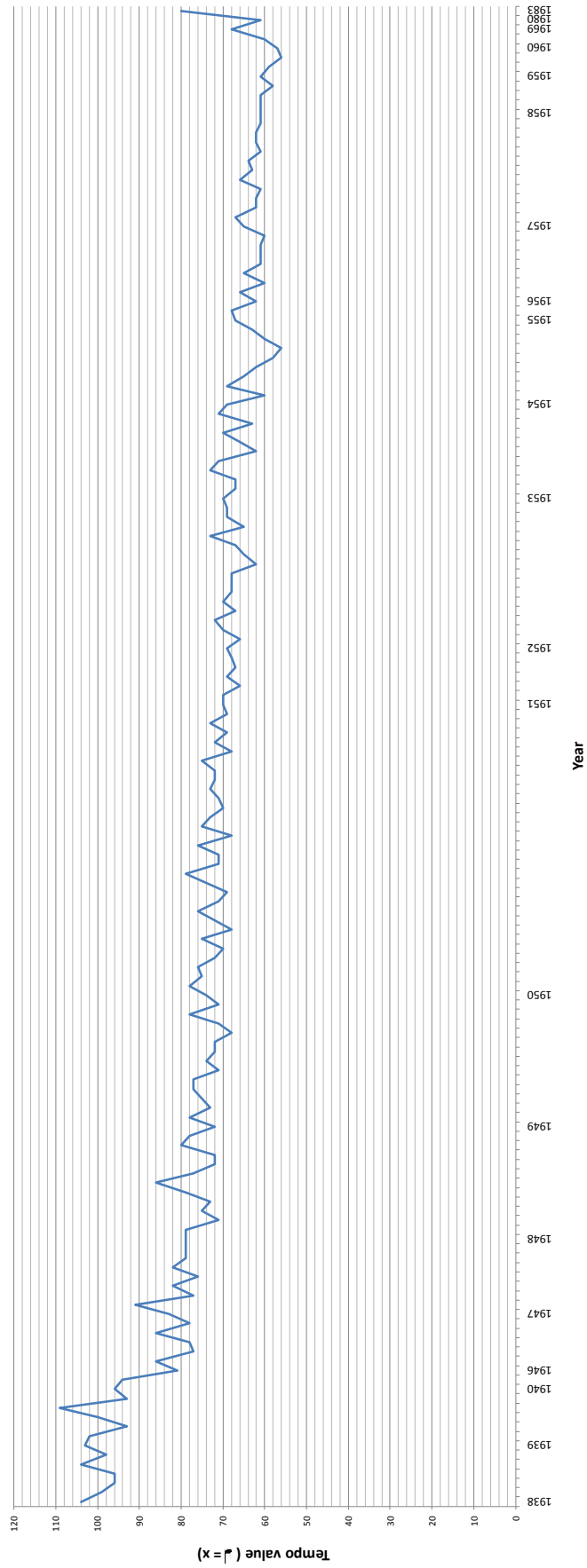


Figure 6.6: The development of tempo in old zeimbékiko (Tsitsánis's recordings)

Today, whenever an orchestra means to make a song sound ‘heavier’, more ‘serious’, more grandiose and add a larger volume in order to give the impression of something pompous, they usually make use of the old zeimbékiko style, combined with quite a slow tempo.<sup>21</sup> To put it another way, the role and the use of the rhythm have been almost reversed. It must be noted that it is hard to find a new song today based on the old style, for it is the new type that prevails.

We should not forget that a piece’s tempo was not standard during the recording. Usually, due to the fact that recording technology ‘demanded’ the band to record together, what is known as ‘live recording’, the tempo tended to accelerate as the recording reached its finale.<sup>22</sup>

There are 160 recordings of Vasilis Tsitsanis in old zeimbékiko. 14 of these were recorded in the period between 1936 and 1940, that is, from the beginning of Vasilis Tsitsanis’s recording career until the cessation of recordings due to World War 2. 114 were recorded from 1946 to 1955, namely when the recording factory was back in business after the end of the war and until 1955, when the first release of a 45 rpm record took place. 29 songs were recorded between 1956 and 1966, that is, when the regime of the colonels and the military junta took place. Finally, three songs were recorded between 1967 and 1983. The following graph (Figure 6.7) shows the course of the number of recordings in old zeimbékiko based on the recording year.

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<sup>21</sup> Pennanen chooses to call these songs ‘heavy zeimbékikos’, which is the translation of the Greek phrase used even today, that is, *βαριά ζεϊμπέκικα* [variá zeimbékika] (Pennanen 1999: 114).

<sup>22</sup> Regarding the impact of recording technology, see Chapter 3.

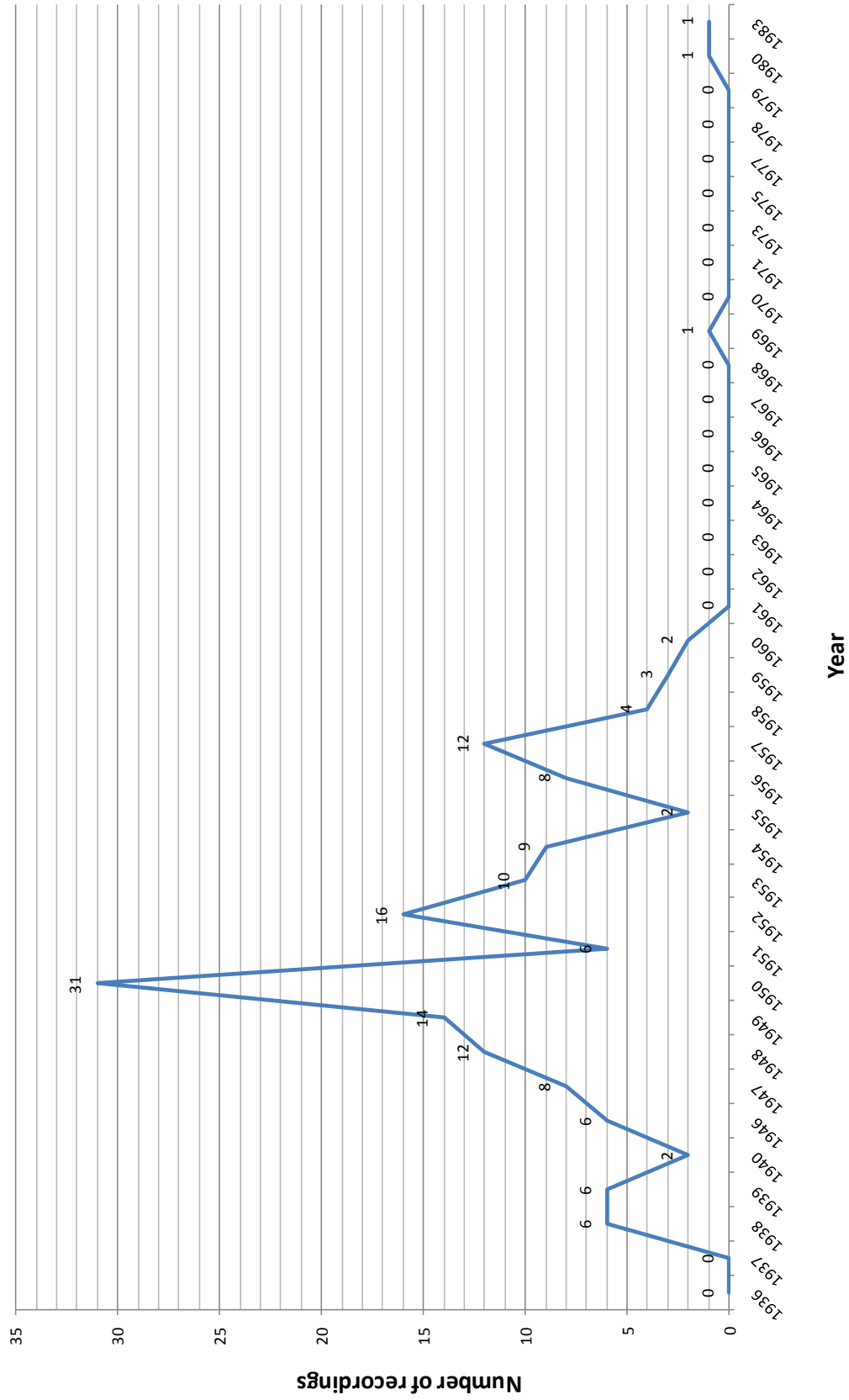


Figure 6.7: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings in old zeimbékiko by year

From 1938 until 1960, that is, for sixteen years (without taking into account the six years of cessation due to World War 2), the old zeimbékiko is present in every year. Moreover, in comparison with the total number of recordings, it seems that it holds a dominant place. The rhythm reaches its apogee in 1950 when 31 songs (out of 46) are in old zeimbékiko, something that shows the preference of the composer towards the traditional rembétiko rhythms. It also shows that he ‘built’ his so-called ‘classical repertoire’ using traditional rhythms as his basic tools. Therefore, one has to look to the other ‘ingredients’ of his music in order to see the changes that he introduced; namely the lyrics (see Chapter 8) and the formulation of his melodies. One substance of the latter has already been mentioned, the kandádhás. From 1961 until Tsitsánis’s death, the old zeimbékiko appears only in the following three years: 1969, 1980 and 1983.

The 1980 song is entitled *Της κοινωνίας η διαφορά*<sup>23</sup> [tis kinonías i dhiaforá = the dissimilarity of society] and was initially included in the LP *Τα ρεμπέτικα της κατοχής* [ta rembétika tis katohís = the rembétiko songs of the period of the occupation], sung by George Dalaras. However, as the evidence shows, this was an older song that had never been recorded. Since I have mentioned this popular singer, it should be noted that Vasilis Tsitsánis’s relationship with George Dalaras is in need of much closer investigation. There are various reasons for their relationship being important and interesting for research: Dalaras is often credited for making many old songs popular to a broader audience, due to his popularity (in Greece and abroad). Moreover, there is much audiovisual material with these two artists rehearsing and talking.<sup>24</sup> Finally, Dalaras gave a concert-tribute to Tsitsánis (in 2004) at the famous music hall *Μέγαρο Μουσικής Αθηνών* [mégharo mousikís athinón] in Athens. Apart from the historical-sociological significance of the event, that is, of taking a musical style from once being a synonym with the underworld and the hashish-den to a Western style concert hall, there are numerous issues which demand the examination from a musicological and artistic perspective, such as the use of a big orchestra, the use of a group of bouzouki players instead of the traditional soloist and the employment of sophisticated arrangements. However, perhaps the most distinctive and new element, for the genre, is the fact that this particular concert was a directed

<sup>23</sup> Minos, 7XGO 10302 - MSM 391 / 480056, recorded in 1980.

<sup>24</sup> See Dalaras 2004.



theatrical-musical performance, involving artistic aspects which were never used, such as a stage director and a stage designer.

The 1983 song is *Πριγκηπομαστούρηδες* [pringipomastourídhēs = aristocratic dope-heads].<sup>25</sup> Another older version of this song (which is a live performance) was recorded in 1978. This effacement of the old zeimbékiko can be interpreted as a sign of the changing preferences of the genre as regards the rhythms used. The corollary of these changes would be the decline in the popularity of the traditional popular rhythms, here, of the old zeimbékiko.

### **Καινούριο Ζεϊμπέκικο [kenoúrio = new zeimbékiko]**

Some musicians and scholars have said in discussions I had with them (and this is also a general common belief) that the old zeimbékiko, as the name implies, is the performing style of the zeimbékiko that was used by the musicians of the first recording period of the genre, that is, the 1920s - 1930s.<sup>26</sup> However, the research has shown that the new performing style, that is, the new zeimbékiko, was used in early Tsitsánis's (and generally early rembétiko) recordings, too.<sup>27</sup> This contrasts with the perceptions of rembétiko enthusiasts who assert that the new zeimbékiko style is the transformation and, in a way, the development of the old one. However, the fact that almost all of the early recordings in new zeimbékiko were recorded in a fast tempo, may hide the key to unlocking the mystery. To explain, the fast new zeimbékiko (which is a 9/4 rhythm) is very close to the tsiftetéli rhythm (which is a 4/4 rhythm), with the difference lying in the ninth beat of the zeimbékiko. In this way, allegro

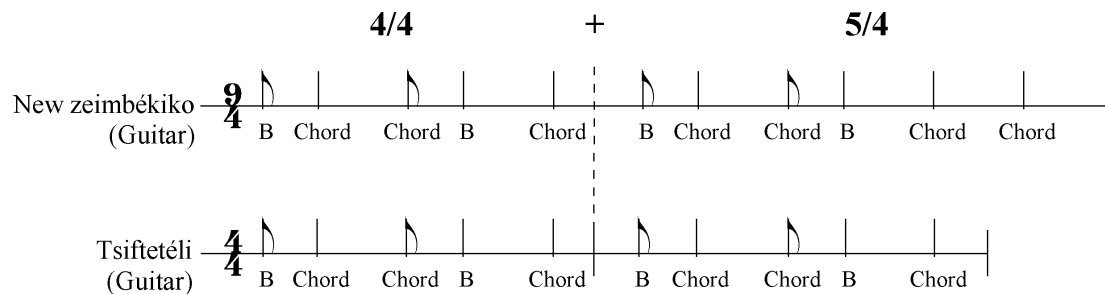
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<sup>25</sup> Venus-Tzina, SV 75.

<sup>26</sup> For example, Stávros Kromídhās (guitarist) in a discussion we had in April 2010 also supported this theory.

<sup>27</sup> See, for instance, songs: *Σ' έναν ντεκέ σκαρώσανε* (s' énan deké skarósane = they hatched up into a dive), Odeon, GO 2430 - GA 1929, recorded in January or February, 1936; and *Τώρα γυρνάς στις γειτονιές* (tóra ghirnás stis ghitoníēs = you now stroll in the neighbourhoods), HMV, OGA 920 - AO 2600, recorded in 1939.

songs in new zeimbékiko give the feeling of the tsiftetéli rhythm (Figure 6.8. See also Figure 6.23).<sup>28</sup>



**Figure 6.8: Comparison between the new zeimbékiko and the tsiftetéli rhythms**

If we bear in mind what I have already mentioned, that is, the fact that the zeimbékiko rhythm consists of two 4/4s plus a single quarter at the end, we will then understand that this pair of 4/4s is the same as having two bars of tsiftetéli. If we now consider the average tempo of the tsiftetéli, which is a moderato to allegro rhythm, we will see that a fast new zeimbékiko is similar to a tsiftetéli, with the only difference being the ninth beat of the former. After discussing with some percussionist friends, my conclusion is that there is no common term which is followed by all of them as a general rule. For instance, one of them responded that during his career, he refers to these fast zeimbékikos as nine-beat tsiftetélis [εννιάρη (eniári) τσιφτετέλι (εννιά = nine)] rather than fast zeimbékikos. In addition, Leftéris Pávlou calls it ‘zeimbékiko that reminds you of tsiftetéli’ (2006: 50). One can assume, then, that old musicians used to refer to this particular rhythm in a similar way, and this perhaps can be an explanation as regards the nomenclature issue. Moreover, other musicians responded that they never even thought about this special connection between the zeimbékiko and the tsiftetéli, thus, they never thought of a term for these rhythms, that is, whether they should refer to them as fast zeimbékikos or nine-beat tsiftetélis.

Today’s wrongly based perceptions perhaps signify a problem regarding the naming of these two rhythms. Apart from the almost non-existence of research around

<sup>28</sup> Song examples: *O φλώρος* [o flóros = the oriole], HMV OGA 2579 - AO 5413 and AO 5415, recorded on July 11, 1957; and *Μου πήραν και τα ρέστα μου* [μού píran ke ta résta móu = they took my change too (idiomatic)], MINOS-EMI (Columbia) 7YCG 5242 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975.

these matters in Greece, the lack of knowledge on the part of the musicians can also be credited for these problematic situations. The several perceptions that exist among them may play a serious role. For example, they may perform a song in old zeimbékiko, only because they know that this specific song was recorded before the 1950s – 1960s. In fact, it is very possible that they have never listened to the first, original recording. The contemporary recordings of the same songs have played a special role in this situation, too. These have been made either by the composers themselves, in an attempt to modernize the songs, or by contemporary singers. In many cases, the contemporary recordings surpass the older. A very interesting example, relevant to the above situation, which is drawn from my personal experience, is the song *Μαζί μου δεν ταιριάζεις*<sup>29</sup> [mazi móu dhen teriázis = you don't fit me]. I have listened to it in numerous places, as well as been instructed to perform it on the music stand according to the old zeimbékiko style. However, the original recording was made in the new one. Most possibly, the reason that the band (actually, the elder musicians are usually those in command on the music stands) decided to perform it in this style was the fact that they roughly knew that this was an old recording and thus, they presumed that the band should perform it in the old style. There are various problems, such as those described in the preceding paragraph, that need examination from both sociological and musicological aspects.

Similarly to the old zeimbékiko, there is an additional name for the new one. This is the *κοφτό* [koftó = abrupt]. A rhythmic pattern for the new zeimbékiko type may look like the one that follows (Figure 6.9). In many cases, it seems that the baglamás plays a key role in the way a song sounds. As we can see in both the old and the new zeimbékikos, by playing the eighth notes it gives a sense of ‘movement’ and ‘continuance’ in the rhythm, whereas, by playing a strict new zeimbékiko, it signifies a rather stricter, more vertical and solid performance. A similar case is the guitar (that I examined before in the old zeimbékiko) which fills the rhythm by playing the eighth notes.

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<sup>29</sup> Columbia CG 2191 - DG 6617, recorded on November 9, 1946.

**New zeimbékiko**

The figure displays a musical score for 'New zeimbékiko' in 9/4 time, organized into three main sections: Guitar, Baglamás, and Double Bass or El. Bass. Each section contains two staves.

- Guitar:** The top staff shows a sequence of notes with stems pointing up, labeled 'B Chord', 'Chord', 'B Chord', 'Chord', 'B Chord', 'Chord', 'B Chord', 'Chord', 'B Chord', 'Chord'. The bottom staff of this section is labeled 'Bass\_V' and contains vertical tick marks.
- Baglamás:** The top staff shows a series of horizontal bars representing chords, labeled 'Chords'. The bottom staff shows notes with stems pointing up, also labeled 'Chords'.
- Double Bass or El. Bass:** The top staff shows notes with stems pointing up, labeled 'Bass', with some notes having a slash through them. The bottom staff is labeled 'Bass\_V' and contains vertical tick marks.

Each section begins with a 9/4 time signature. The 'Bass\_V' labels appear on the bottom staves of the Guitar and Double Bass sections.

**Figure 6.9: New zeimbékiko rhythmic pattern**

Figure 6.10 shows the tempo's development in the new zeimbékiko recordings. The decline in the tempo of the songs recorded from approximately 1954 until mid-1967 is more than obvious.

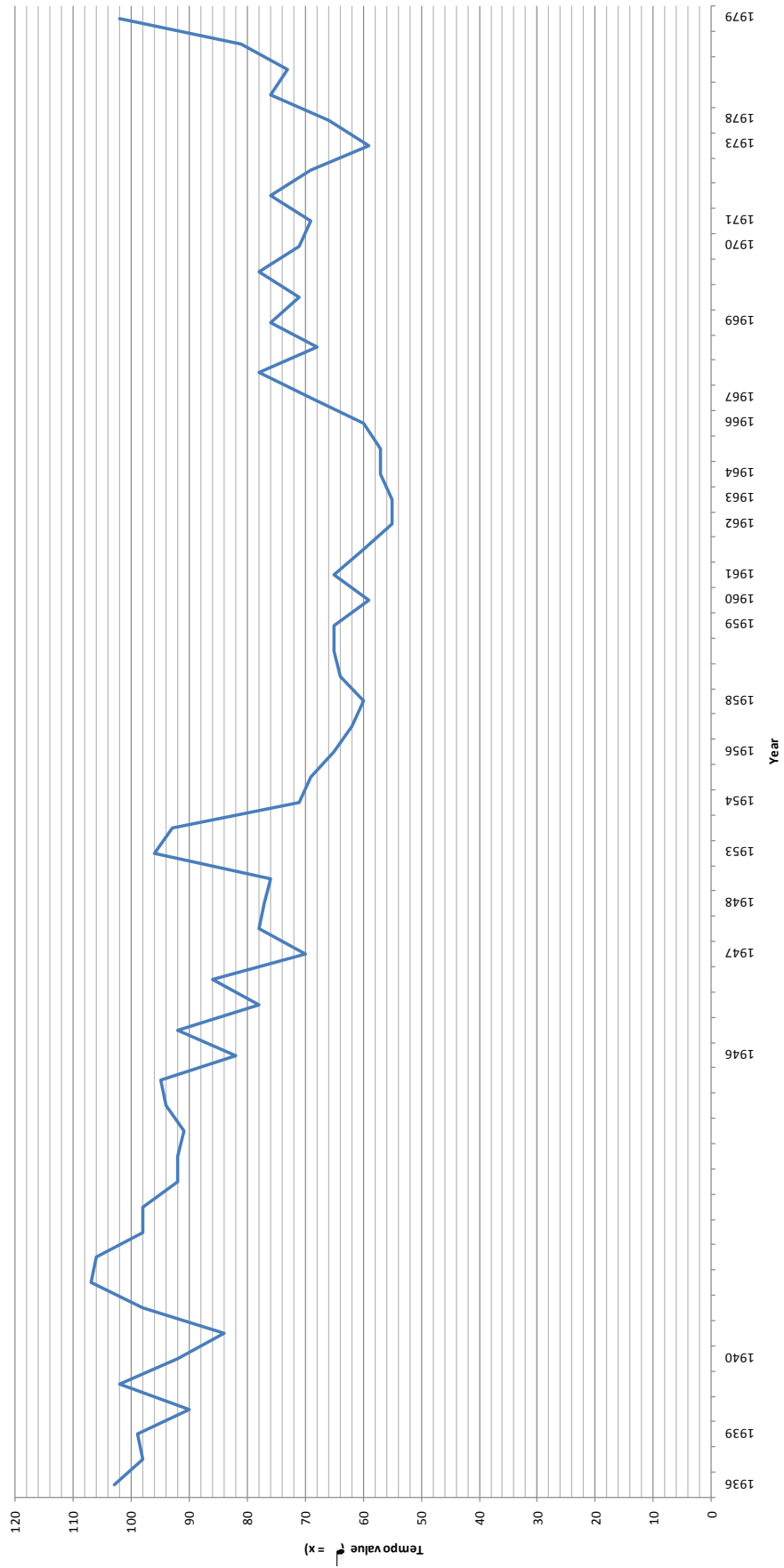








Figure 6.10: The development of tempo in new zeimbékiko (Tsitsánis's recordings)

As revealed in the previous graph, the tempo in new zeimbékiko tends to become slower, as the years pass. However, as mentioned above, the notable period is 1956-1967. The key element for the understanding of this retardation of the tempo is perhaps the new singing style that was introduced in the genre by some rising singer-stars of this period. Singers like Manólis Angelópoulos, Strátos Dhionisióu and Póli Pánou are known for their melismatic and full-of-embellishment voices. After all, this is the period when the establishment of the singer-star began to supersede the, until then, songwriter's status. This new singing style needed a new songwriting style which would consist of more complicated vocal phrases and thus, 'demand' a slower tempo in order to give space to the voices to 'unfold' and make use of their accented vibrato and legato. Generally, from this period on, the notion of the team gives its place to the notion of the unit, where new performance techniques needed more skilled musicians to utilize them. The idea of the virtuoso (whether singer or instrumentalist) is clearly the central reference point of the new laikó period.

Notable are some contemporary recordings of old songs, made either by Tsitsánis himself or by other artists. In these recordings, many musical constituents of the original recording have been changed in the contemporary one. The following table (Table 6.1) includes some examples of songs originally recorded in old or new zeimbékiko style and the changes that occurred in their modern versions.

Song title	First recording	Rhythm	Tempo	Second recording	Rhythm	Tempo
Μες στην πολλή σκοτούρα μου [mes stin polí skotoúra mou = in my great trouble]	HMV OGA 851 – AO 2540, 1939 Jan./Feb.	Old zeimbékiko	 ≈ 100	COLUMBIA 7XCG 1187 – SCDG 3023, 1961-07-24	Old zeimbékiko	 ≈ 56
Στρόσε μου να κοιμηθώ [stróse mou na kimithó = make the bed for me to sleep]	HMV OGA 1670 – AO 2964, 1950-09-12	Old zeimbékiko	 ≈ 71	HMV 7XGA 949 – 7PG 2917, 1961-03-01	Mixed zeimbékiko-2	 ≈ 69
Αντιλάουνε τα βουνά [andilalóune ta vouná = the mountains echo]	HMV OGA 1788 – AO 5009, 1951-09-01	Old zeimbékiko	 ≈ 69	HMV EXT 7EGG 2578, 1961-12-05	New zeimbékiko	 ≈ 63

**Table 6.1: Changes found in contemporary recordings of zeimbékiko songs (Tsitsánis)**

59 songs were recorded in new zeimbékiko. The following graph (Figure 6.11) shows the course of the number of the recordings in new zeimbékiko by year.

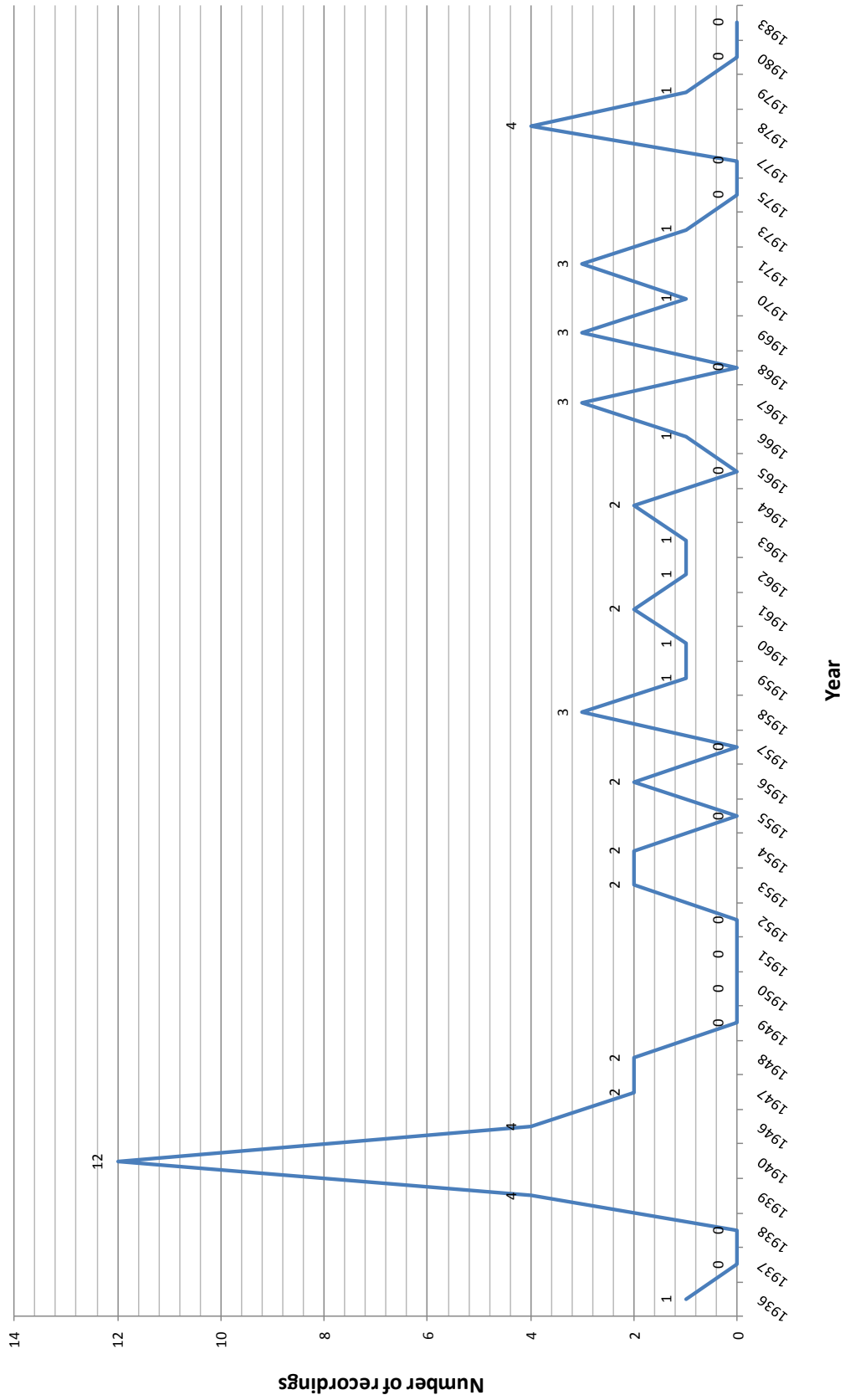


Figure 6.11: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by year in new zeimbékiko



As mentioned above, this performance type was already present in the first years of Tsitsánis's recording career. 1940 stands out as the year with the most recordings of this type. Despite the fact that the old zeimbékiko prevails during the composer's first years, not only over the new zeimbékiko, but also over all rhythms, the new zeimbékiko is the only one that is virtually never absent from his discography. While the old zeimbékiko does not exist after 1960, with the only exceptions being three recordings, one in 1969, one in 1980 and one in 1983, the new zeimbékiko, on the other hand, seems to be preferred more often, even though it numbers very few recordings. There were, of course, years when the new zeimbékiko was not used at all, with the largest interval being from 1949 until 1952. Its presence, however, is evident and frequent until 1979. 1940 is the year when the new zeimbékiko surpasses the old genre greatly, as regards the number of recordings. In contrast with the old zeimbékiko that numbers only three recordings, the new zeimbékiko numbers twelve. Until 1957, the new zeimbékiko is in an inferior position as opposed to the old. However, from 1958 onwards, when both types number the same amount of recordings, it becomes quite clear which of the two is meant to carry on. The years 1970, 1971, 1973 and 1979 are also interesting. The overall number of recordings is very small; however, the new zeimbékiko is still in a prominent position as in the year 1970 when it is the only recording made. In 1971 it numbers three out of a total of four songs, in 1973 it numbers one out of the two songs that were recorded and finally, in 1979 it becomes, once again, the only song that was recorded.

### **Μπερδεμένο Ζεϊμπέκικο [berdheméno = mixed zeimbékiko]**

After the examination of the corpus of the songs of Vasilis Tsitsánis, 31 zeimbékiko recordings have shown up for which a categorization based on one of the two known types (old or new) was thought to be inappropriate. Due to the non-existence of this style in the books about Greek laikó rhythms as well as the fact that I have never heard a musician talking about this particular style, I call it 'mixed zeimbékiko'. There are, however, many cases where I have heard or worked with musicians who tend to play very closely to this performing style, that is, the mixed zeimbékiko, only because they are familiar with old recordings such as those we are dealing with.

One type of this mixed zeimbékiko is clear on recordings in which the orchestra sometimes plays in the old style and sometimes in the new (during the same song). From time to time, the orchestra gives the sense of the accidental choice of the interpretation style, whereas sometimes it gives the sense of it being conscious, of pre-arranged and pre-agreed parts where the musicians play together either in the old or in the new style. This is the mixed zeimbékiko number one (m.z.1).

On other pieces, the guitar, along with the other accompanying instruments (where they exist), plays in the new zeimbékiko style while the double bass (which had only recently begun to take part in the orchestras) plays in the old zeimbékiko style. In most cases the recordings give the impression of a lack of preparation and rehearsal on the part of the musicians, something that has been confirmed by Evangelía Margharóni during her interview. This is the mixed zeimbékiko number two (m.z.2). Thus, the category of mixed zeimbékiko can be divided into two sub-categories. Worth noticing, yet also strange in this issue, is that none of the scholars, who published books about Greek popular music, including references to the rhythms as well, wrote about this special category of the zeimbékiko. This category-type was possibly created by accident; the statistics, however, instruct that a further examination and analysis is required. The table below (Table 6.2) shows some examples of songs in mixed zeimbékiko:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Matrix</b>	<b>Catalogue</b>	<b>Recording date</b>	<b>M.z. category</b>
Ως πότε πια τέτοια ζωή [os póte pia tétia zoí = for how long such a life]	OGA 1266	AO 2761	October 6, 1947	m.z.1
Ως πότε ο μάγκας σου [os póte o mángas sou = for how long your buster]	GO 4857	B. 74296	October 30, 1953	m.z.1
Ίσως αύριο [ísos ávrío = maybe tomorrow]	OGA 2717	AO 5497	June 3, 1958	m.z.2
Θέλω να είναι Κυριακή [thélo na íne kiriakí = I want it to be Sunday]	7XGA 947	7PG 2911	March 11, 1961	m.z.2

**Table 6.2: Examples of Tsitsánis's songs in mixed zeimbékiko**

I have chosen to analyze two songs as examples, considering them as representative illustrations of this unexamined zeimbékiko performance technique. The first is

entitled *Είμαι αγόρι και δεν κάνει*<sup>30</sup> [íme aghóri ke dhen káni = it isn't right because I'm a boy]. The song belongs in the first category, where the orchestra plays either in the old or new type. This is also the reason that the creation of a rhythmic pattern was not necessary. Before analyzing the following figure (Figure 6.12), I should clarify an issue regarding the terminology used. By using the term 'tutti' (known from classical music), Greek musicians may indicate that they play all together the same melodic line. The meaning, thus, is the same as in Western music. However, by 'tutti', they may also refer to a part that is played only by part of the orchestra, usually by the main accompanying instruments, that is, the guitar and the double bass. In terms of the first song examined, I should initially say that a further development of such an illustration, which can be derived after taking full advantage of the capabilities of technology, can produce much more detailed representations of a song.<sup>31</sup> For example, with the appropriate computer software today we can examine the vibrato of the singers in the rembétiko recordings. Moreover, we can examine the dynamics of the instruments that took part in the recording.

I chose this song primarily because it can be considered as being the definition of a complex zeimbékiko that combines various characteristics. First of all, the song begins with a *taxími*, a characteristic of Tsitsánis mostly found in his old recordings (especially in the pre-war years of 1936-1940), now brought back again in 1958. Evidence suggests clearly that the band did not 'decide' what zeimbékiko type it would use until the second verse onwards. The first intro is in old zeimbékiko while the second is divided: the first ten seconds are in new, whereas the remaining six are in old. The first verse is very complex. A better term would be the term used by many Greek musicians, which is *βρώμικος ήχος* [vrómikos íhos], that is, 'dirty sound'. It gives the sense that the bouzouki tries to 'establish' the new type, but the guitar is not following: it plays either in the old or 'tutti'. The first time that the new type becomes clear is in the first refrain and there is when the song, due to its fast tempo ( $\downarrow \approx 123$ ), gives the sense of a nine-beat tsiftetéli. From that point on, except from the second part of the second intro that I have already mentioned above, the song is in new zeimbékiko. However, before the finale, it gives another 'modern' characteristic

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<sup>30</sup> Columbia CG 3726 - DG 7394, recorded on January 23, 1958.

<sup>31</sup> Regarding the exploitation of computer software and generally of technology see 'Singer Identification in Rembetiko Music' (Holzapfel and Stylianou, n.d.).

found in the genre from this period onwards. Modern productions wanted the refrain to be played twice in the end, having either a small instrumental part, or half intro before it, and this is what happens in this particular song as well.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> In terms of the development in the structure of the songs see also Chapter 8.

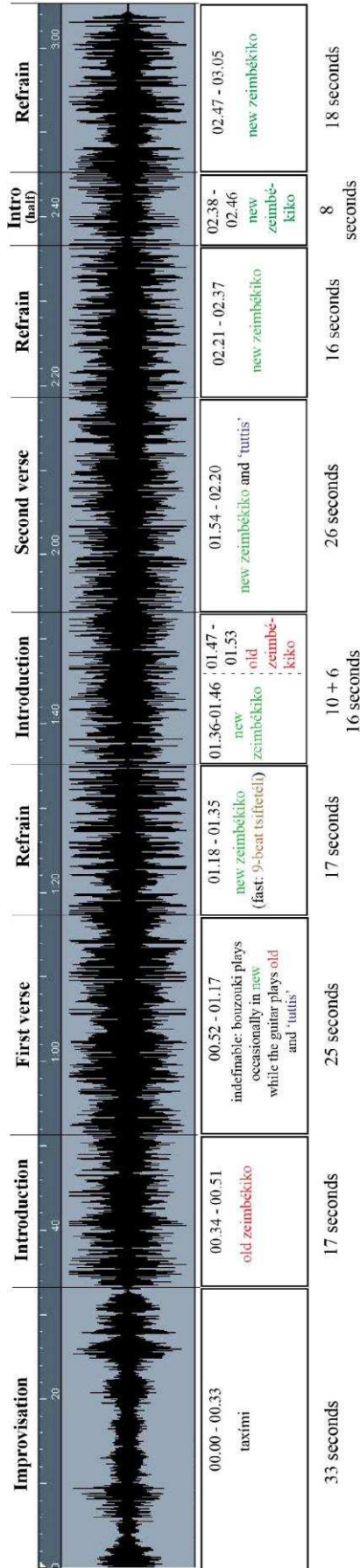


Figure 6.12: 'Ime aghóri ke dhen káni' rhythmic development (Tsitsánis song)

My second analysis focuses on the song entitled *To μπριγιάν*<sup>33</sup> [to brighián = the brilliantine]. The song belongs in the second type of mixed zeimbékiko. However, the reason I chose it is that it seems to be well prepared and rehearsed (that is, the ensemble sounds tight), despite the fact that songs in this category, as I said, generally give the sense of a lack of preparation, due to the different hits by the double bass.<sup>34</sup> As shown in Figure 6.13, a different ‘hit’ by the double bass can ‘ruin’ the structure of the rhythm as well as create a confused, ‘dirty’ sound. If we also take into consideration the fact of the rapid adding of many new (for the genre) instruments, such as the drums and percussion, we can imagine the ‘bizarre’ situation and the ‘weird’ sound that was produced, until the new instruments would find a ‘correct’, well-suited performance technique. The fact that this particular song, in contrast to the majority of the songs in this category, gives the sense of a well rehearsed song (although the double bass still plays in between the hits of the new zeimbékiko) may imply that this particular mixed type had become an establishment in this period. I can also suspect that the double bass players were trying to form and establish a technique of playing Greek laikó rhythms. We should not forget that these particular rhythms could possibly have been completely unknown to them, due to the nature of the instrument (the double bass) and the repertoires of various musical styles, other than laikó, that they used to play. This can be also the reason that the recordings of the early ‘bass period’ (early 1960s) of other new and foreign (for the genre) rhythms that became part of the repertoire, such as the guaracha and the rumba, sounded better, or, at least, more standard and ‘tight’ than the zeimbékikos. It is quite possible that the double bass players were trained in Jazz or Latin American or even in Classical music and, thus, they found these foreign rhythms (guaracha and rumba), although ‘laikized’, closer to the essence of their own music or, simply, easier to perform – to ‘put them into their instruments’.

On the other hand, and according to Margharóni’s comments to me, one has to try to imagine this period: these people (the musicians) used to work on the music

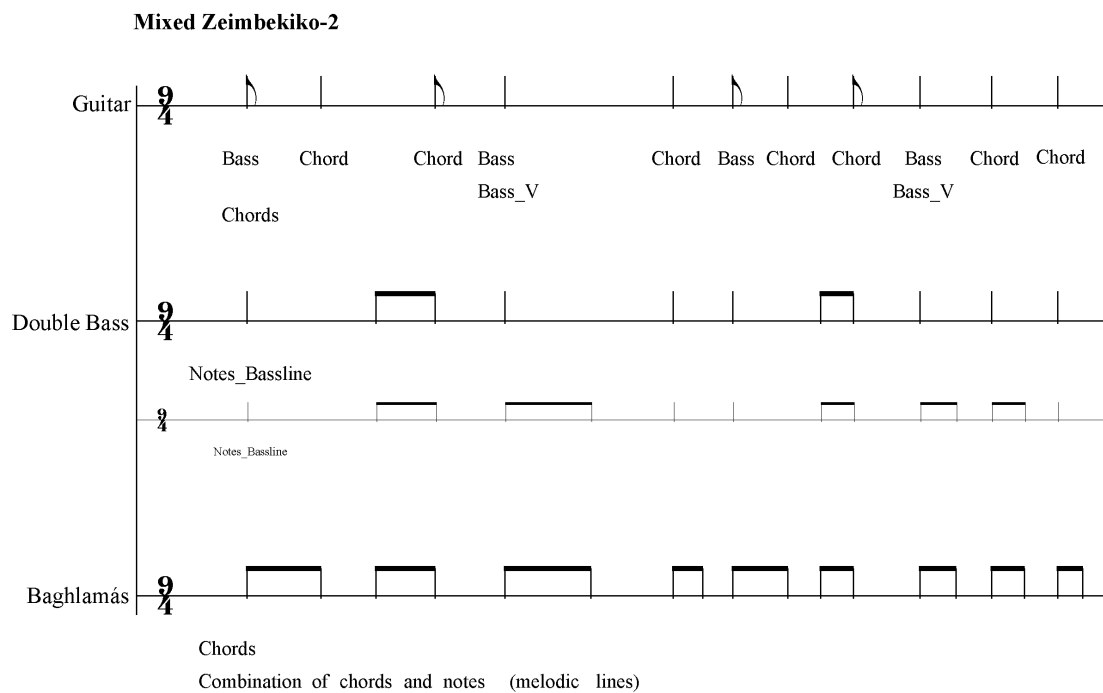
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<sup>33</sup> HMV 7XGA 12717 - PG 3067, recorded on December 9, 1961.

<sup>34</sup> For an example of non well-prepared mixed zeimbékiko-2 songs, see *Σκίσε τ’ ανώνυμο γράμμα* [skíse t’ anónimo ghráma = tear the anonymous letter], HMV 7XGA 831 - 7PG 2858, recorded on January 5, 1960.

stands for many hours and until very late at night (or more correctly, until early in the morning) and, consequently, they had to rest during the day. It would have been quite hard for them to find free time for rehearsals and recording sessions. Margharóni, as well as Kóstas Papadhópoulos who took part as a bouzouki player in many of Tsitsánis's recordings, and whom I also interviewed,<sup>35</sup> stated that many times that songwriters used to take their bands from their work venues straight to the studio in the morning. Bearing in mind all the above, the 'erratic' sound of the mixed zeimbékikos was probably the least adverse effect of the musicians circumstances.

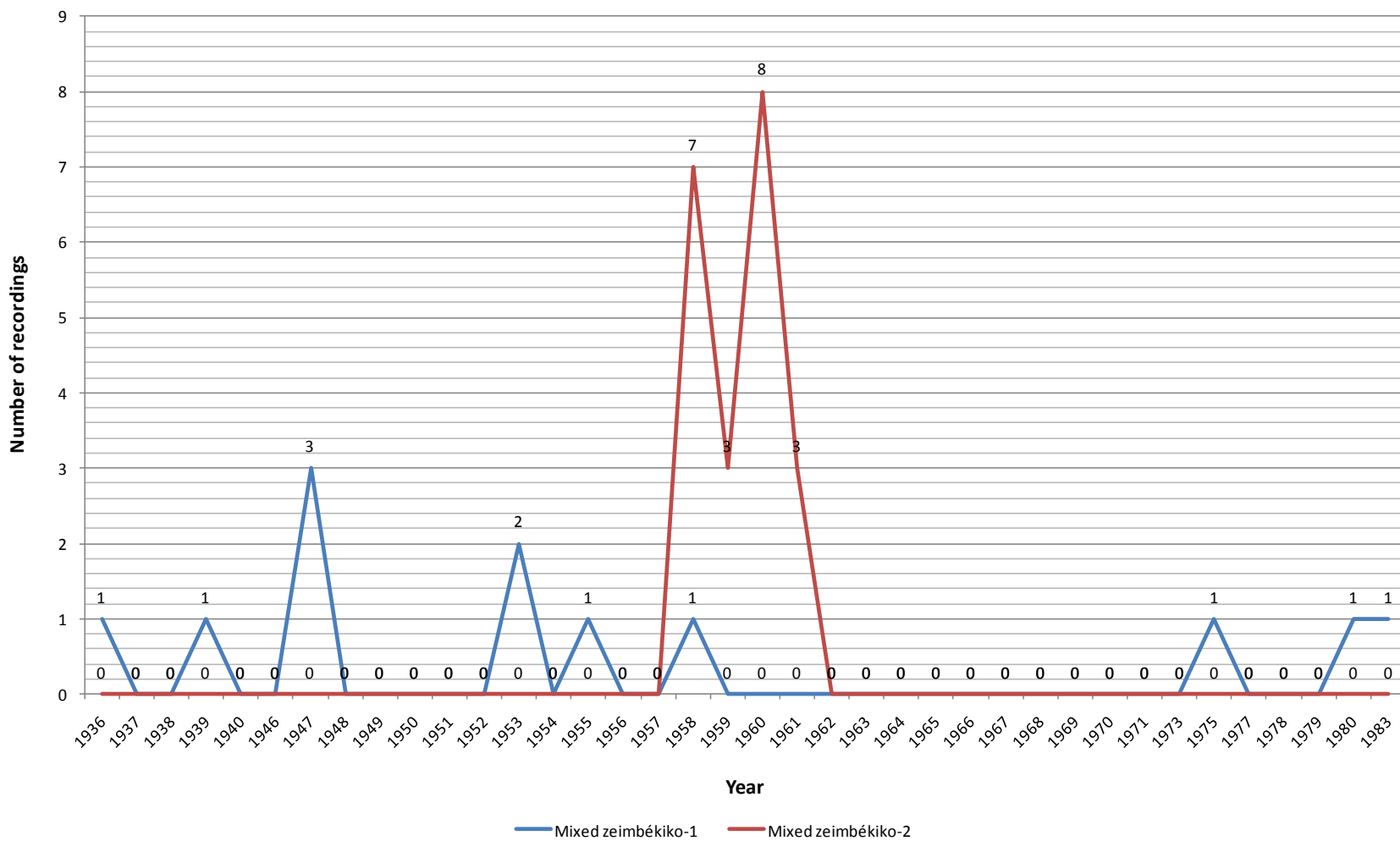
Returning now to the analysis of the mixed zeimbékiko, Figure 6.13 shows a typical performance technique of mixed zeimbékiko-2. Following (Figure 6.14) is a graph that shows the number of recordings made in both types of mixed-zeimbékiko.



**Figure 6.13: Mixed zeimbékiko-2 rhythmic pattern**

<sup>35</sup> The interview with Papadhópoulos was contacted in June 2010.

Figure 6.14: Number of Tsitsanis's recordings by year in mixed zeimbékiko

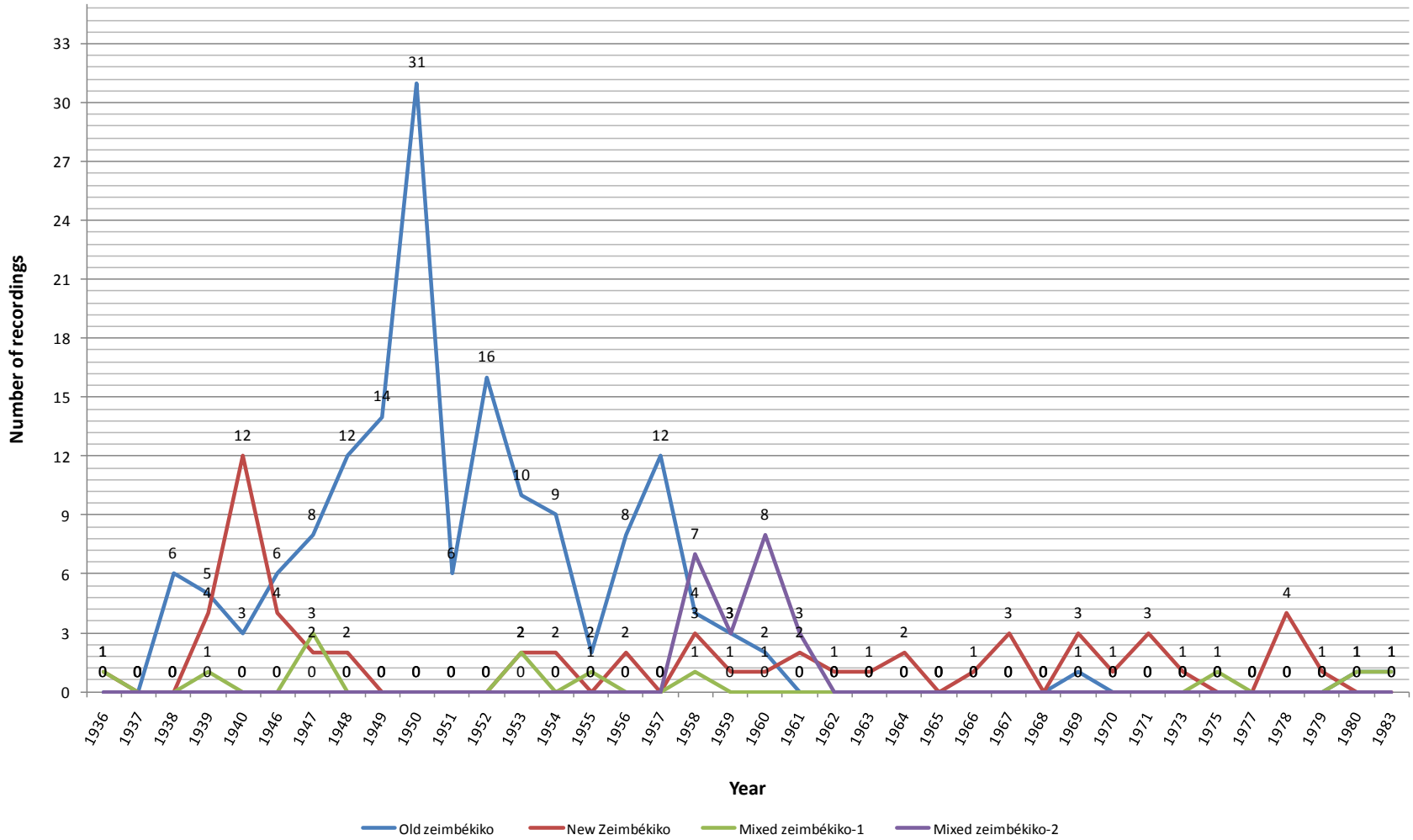




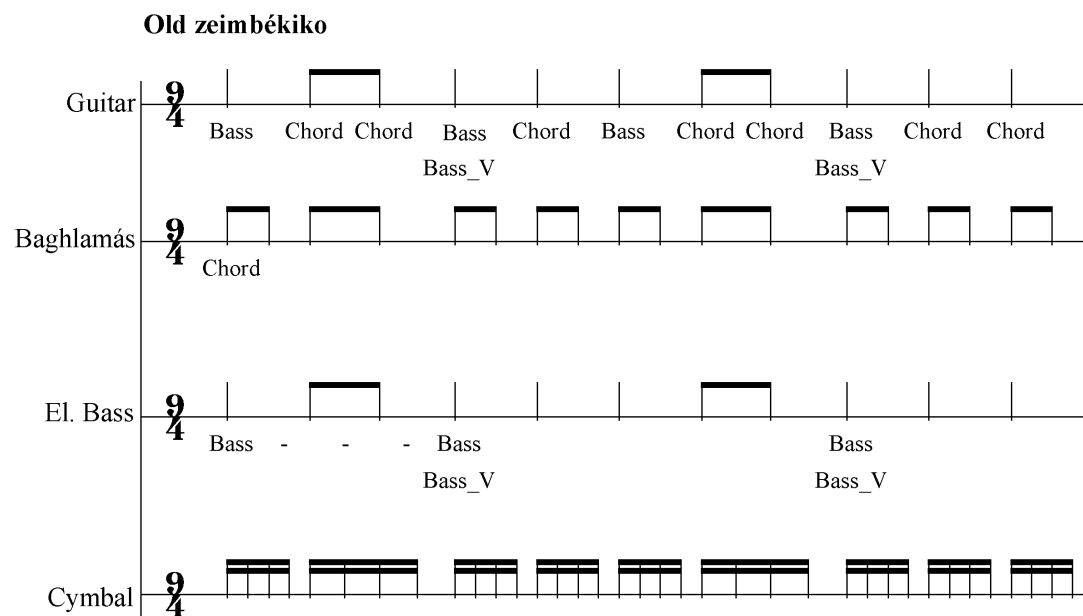
My analysis of the statistics show that 31 songs are based on the aforementioned rhythmic type (Figure 6.15 and Table 7.1: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by rhythm' in the next chapter). It is clear that the mixed zeimbékiko-1, although numbering fewer recordings than the second, appears more frequently. In fact, it should not be considered as something special and different than the two known types (the old and the new), because it is merely a combination of them. Provided that the guitarist alone was responsible for the rhythmic form of the song, due to the fact that it was only he who had a rhythmical role in the band (before the introduction of new instruments), it is rather possible that the output of the recording, from its rhythmical side, was left to the guitarist's imagination. It is highly likely that he decided to play a few bars in new and others in old zeimbékiko, according to his musical instincts. However, the exact reason/s which made him (the guitarist) not play these particular songs in only one zeimbékiko style (as they did in the majority of the zeimbékiko recordings) is something which needs further research. In any case, other factors must not be forgotten, such as the sociological side of music and the technology, which, often, play a vital role in forming and changing fundamental characteristics of the music (or more correctly, of the sound). After all, a changed guitar technique, which will then account for a changed interpretation of a rhythm, can be simply due to the introduction of the steel-strung acoustic guitar in the genre, which could have happened for a reason as unimportant as, for example, watching a film, when the 'candidate' guitarist watched a guitarist in the film playing the steel-strung guitar, and he simply liked the sound.

Things seem clearer in mixed zeimbékiko-2. It shows up in 1958 and it disappears in 1961. Figure 6.15 clears things up, as regards the discographical route of the zeimbékiko performance styles.

Figure 6.15: Number of Tsitsanis's recordings in all zeimbékiko types



It is rather obvious that zeimbékiko rhythm, in general, went out of fashion after the 1960s, at least for Vasílis Tsitsánis.<sup>36</sup> We have a complete disappearance of the old type, which returns again in 1969 in the song entitled *Μία λεβέντισσα κοπέλα*<sup>37</sup> [miá levéndisa kopéla = a dashing girl], very much changed, though: two bouzoukis, drums, steel-strung acoustic guitar and electric bass are some of the new elements. In fact, it is very interesting that the entire band plays such a strict old zeimbékiko, considering the year (1969) and the newly introduced instruments. Also, worth noting is the drummer's part in the verses. His technique style (sixteens on the cymbal) is very rare, at least for Tsitsánis's recordings (Figure 6.16).



**Figure 6.16: Rare performance technique of the percussionist in *miá levéndisa kopéla* (Tsitsánis)**

As evidenced in the discography, the modernization procedure under which Greek popular genre found itself during this period, favours the newly 'imported' foreign rhythms, such as the guaracha (the first Tsitsánis's recording is in 1960), the rumba (in 1963) and the bayo (in 1961), which are examined further below within this chapter.

<sup>36</sup> A rough research on the recordings of other songwriters of this period revealed that the decline of the zeimbékiko was a general phenomenon.

<sup>37</sup> HMV, 7XGA 3010 - 7PG 3824, recorded in 1969.

**Καρσιλαμάς [karsilamás]**

Karsí means *αντίκρυ* [opposite, face to face] in Turkish [karşı]. The name of the rhythm most probably derives from the fact that the dancers dance one opposite the other. Tsitsánis recorded 27 songs based on karsilamás rhythm, which can be considered as belonging in the zeimbékiko family. However, one can find variations of karsilamás amongst the wide range of genres of the Hellenic world (from rural traditional to urban popular). One can listen to a Greek musician referring to this group of rhythms as *εννιάρη* [eniári (eniá = nine)], owing to their time signature, that is number nine. Its structure within Tsitsánis and generally laikó repertoire can be considered as being 2+2+2+3. A typical rhythmic pattern for the karsilamás rhythm is shown in Figure 6.17.

**Karsilamás**

The musical score is organized into four main sections, each with three staves:

- Guitar:**
  - Staff 1: Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord. Includes Bass\_V and Bass\_V annotations.
  - Staff 2: Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord. Includes Bass\_V and Bass\_V annotations.
  - Staff 3: Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord. Includes Bass\_V and Bass\_V annotations.
- (for faster tempi):**
  - Staff 1: Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord. Includes Bass\_V and Bass\_V annotations.
  - Staff 2: Bass, Chord, Chord, Bass, Chord, Chord, Chord. Includes Bass\_V and Bass\_V annotations.
- Double Bass or El. Bass:**
  - Staff 1: Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass\_V.
  - Staff 2: Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass\_V.
  - Staff 3: Bass\_V, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass\_V.
- Congas or Bongos (tumbadoras):**
  - Staff 1: Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Treble, Treble, Treble.
  - Staff 2: Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Treble.
  - Staff 3: Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Treble.
  - Staff 4: Bass, Treble, Bass, Treble, Treble, Bass, Treble, Treble, Bass, Treble, Treble, Treble.
- Baghlamás or Piano (Treble):**
  - Staff 1: Chords.

**Figure 6.17: Karsilamás rhythmic pattern**

Three different approaches to the interpretation of karsilamás rhythm are noted here. The character of the first approach is closer to, what is known in Greece, *παρὰδοσιακή μουσική* [paradhosiakí mousikí], that is, folk-traditional music.<sup>38</sup> For instance, the

<sup>38</sup> See Kallimopoulou 2009.




song *Για κοίτα κόσμε ένα κορμί*<sup>39</sup> [ghía kíta kósme éna kormí = people look out what a body] is the best example in Tsitsánis's repertoire for the traditional approach. The best proof for this is the *νταούλι* [daoúli = tabor] instrument that gives the four basic 'hits' of the rhythm, that is, ♩ ♪ ♩ ♪, and the allegro tempo of the song (see Figure 6.17, third and fourth versions of the guitar staff, and first staff of the percussion). This performance technique of the daoúli as well as the entire aesthetic of this approach is commonly met in mainland Greece and is especially common in the Macedonia region (Pávlou 2006: 53, n. 7). The traditional approach is also called by laikó musicians *πεταχτός καρσιλαμάς* [petahtós karsilamás = brisk karsilamás] (Pávlou ibid). The character of the second could be labelled the rembétiko-laikó version of the rhythm, due to the different orchestra of the laikó style, that is, bouzouki, baghlamás and so forth. For example, in the song *Προξενεύουν το Σταμάτη*<sup>40</sup> [proxenévoun to Stamáti = they mediate Stamátis], it is the solo instrument (bouzouki) and the baghlamás that give the sense of the laikó, rather than the traditional approach, although the melodic movements are drawn from the rural-traditional repertoire. The third more modern approach seems to be a mixture of Greek musical elements and various others introduced in the Greek commercial (and not only) music around the 1960s, such as Hindi, Afro-Cuban and so forth. Apparently, it takes more than the performance technique of the instruments alone to change a rhythm's aesthetic. From this period onwards, a mix of several other elements, such as foreign – for the style – modes/scales and instruments, along with some innovating and generally new rhythmic interpretations were observed. For example, the tumbadoras (also known as congas and bongos) that 'keep' the 9/8 rhythm, and the keyboard soloist part in the intro of the song *Δείρε με και μάλωσέ με*<sup>41</sup> [dhíre me ke málosé me = hit me and scold me] are some of these new elements.

Finally, in terms of the wide range of tempi noted in karsilamás songs, it is often connected with the aforementioned issue of the differing aesthetics. Table 6.3 includes some characteristic examples.

<sup>39</sup> Columbia CG 3419 - DG 7218, recorded on May 17, 1956.

<sup>40</sup> Odeon GO 3421 - GA 7248, recorded in circa early 1940.

<sup>41</sup> HMV 7XGA 2669- 7PG 3660, recorded in 1967.

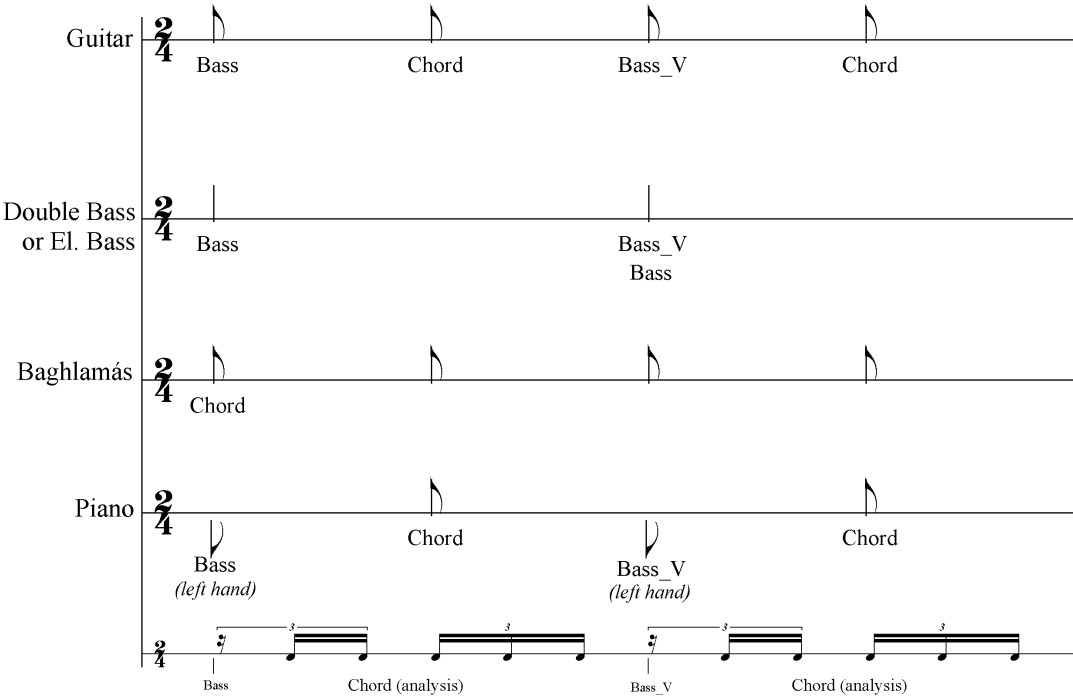
Title	Matrix Code	Catalogue Code	Tempo
Τα καβουράκια [ta kavourákia = the monkey-wrenches]	GO 4641	GA 7663	 ≈ 93
Το βαπόρι απ' την Περσία [to vapóri ap' tin persía = the boat from Persia]	7YCG 6314	2J 006 70529/II	 ≈ 157
Για κοίτα κόσμε ένα κορμί [ghiá kíta kósme éna kormí = people look out a body]	CG 3419	DG 7218	 ≈ 275

**Table 6.3:** Examples that show the range of tempi noted in karsilamás (Tsitsánis)

### Χασάπικο [hasápiko = the butchers' dance]

Vasílis Tsitsánis recorded 146 songs in hasápiko rhythm, which holds the second place in his preferences with regard to the rhythms used. Its rhythm is 2/4. In some cases, either in slower songs, or in hasápikos that sound like the Blues style (see further below), the rhythm sounds more like a 4/4. A typical rhythmic pattern for the hasápiko rhythm is shown in Figure 6.18.

**Hasápiko**



The figure displays a musical score for the Hasápiko rhythm in 2/4 time, organized into four staves:

- Guitar:** Shows a sequence of four notes: Bass, Chord, Bass\_V, and Chord.
- Double Bass or El. Bass:** Shows a sequence of two notes: Bass and Bass\_V Bass.
- Baglamás:** Shows a sequence of four notes, all labeled as Chord.
- Piano:** Shows a sequence of four notes: Bass (left hand), Chord, Bass\_V (left hand), and Chord. Below this staff, a detailed rhythmic pattern is shown with triplets and slurs, labeled as Bass, Chord (analysis), Bass\_V, and Chord (analysis).

**Figure 6.18:** Hasápiko rhythmic pattern

From interviews and discussions with fellow musicians, I understood that many of them think of the rhythm more as 4/4 than as 2/4. I also noticed that this happens very commonly when the band plays a contemporary song based on hasápiko, or when they play an old song with a contemporary interpretation. Usually, this ‘contemporary interpretation’ includes an accompaniment in triplets, such as the one shown in the last staff of Figure 6.18.

Research has revealed a problem regarding the terminology of the hasápiko and hasaposérviko rhythm. In this case, historical questions are also being posed and this is something that the present research cannot cover. Generally, when a hasápiko song reaches a fast tempo and is played in a more scherzoso and effervescent way, then, this is usually called ‘hasaposérviko’ in Greece [hasápiko + sérviko (= Serbian)]. Outside Greece, this dance rhythm is known as ‘sirtáki’ from the Greek movie *Zorba the Greek* (1964) and the song composed by Mikis Theodorakis and danced by Anthony Quinn. However, it does not constitute a traditional Greek dance (Vavritas 2004: 141). In general, views such as ‘the fast hasápiko is hasaposérviko’<sup>42</sup> are not pronounced under the scientific framework of a doctoral thesis and thus, cannot be used. One should not forget the fact that there are innumerable versions close to the laikó hasápiko in several places of the Hellenic world, such as the traditional dance *πανουχωρίτικος* [panouhorítikos = of the upper country] found in the islands of North-East Aegean.

An important issue has to do with the fact that many contemporary recordings of the older songs are altered, with regard to their tempo. For instance, a song in hasápiko has been initially recorded with a tempo of ♩ ≈ 80 while in its newer recording the tempo became ♩ ≈ 120. Similar to this (and some times inverted) is the phenomenon noted between a studio recording and a live performance of the same song. One of the most representative examples within Tsitsánis’s repertoire is the song *Χατζή μπαξές*<sup>43</sup> [hatzí baxés = the Peréa region outside Thessaloniki]. The song was originally recorded with a tempo ♩ ≈ 72. It is not only the fact that today the song is a synonym to the fast dancing found in big luxury-bouzouki clubs in Greece, with all its accompanying aspects (such as plate smashing) – therefore, characterized by its

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<sup>42</sup> This is, more or less, the common belief in Greece (amongst musicians and rembétiko lovers) around the hasápiko issue (see also Chapter 3).

<sup>43</sup> Columbia CG 2162 - DG 6598, recorded on June 15, 1946.



current fast tempo. It is also the fact that Tsitsánis himself used to play it in a faster tempo than the studio recording tempo at the venues where he worked.<sup>44</sup> Noteworthy is the label of the song *Η γυναίκα όταν φύγει*<sup>45</sup> [i ghinéka ótan fighi = when the woman leaves] which has the word ‘hasaposérviko’ [χασαποσέρβικο] next to the song’s title (Figure 6.19).



Figure 6.19: Label of the song *i ghinéka ótan fighi* (Tsitsánis)

At this point, one should bear in mind the musical style’s change in the course of time, due to historical events that played a dramatic role in shaping the style’s aesthetics, colour, ethics and, most of all, use/function. In Tsitsánis’s recordings, the tempo ranges from  $\text{♩} = 40$ <sup>46</sup> to  $\text{♩} = 155$ .<sup>47</sup> Figure 6.20 shows the development of the tempo of hasápiko songs.

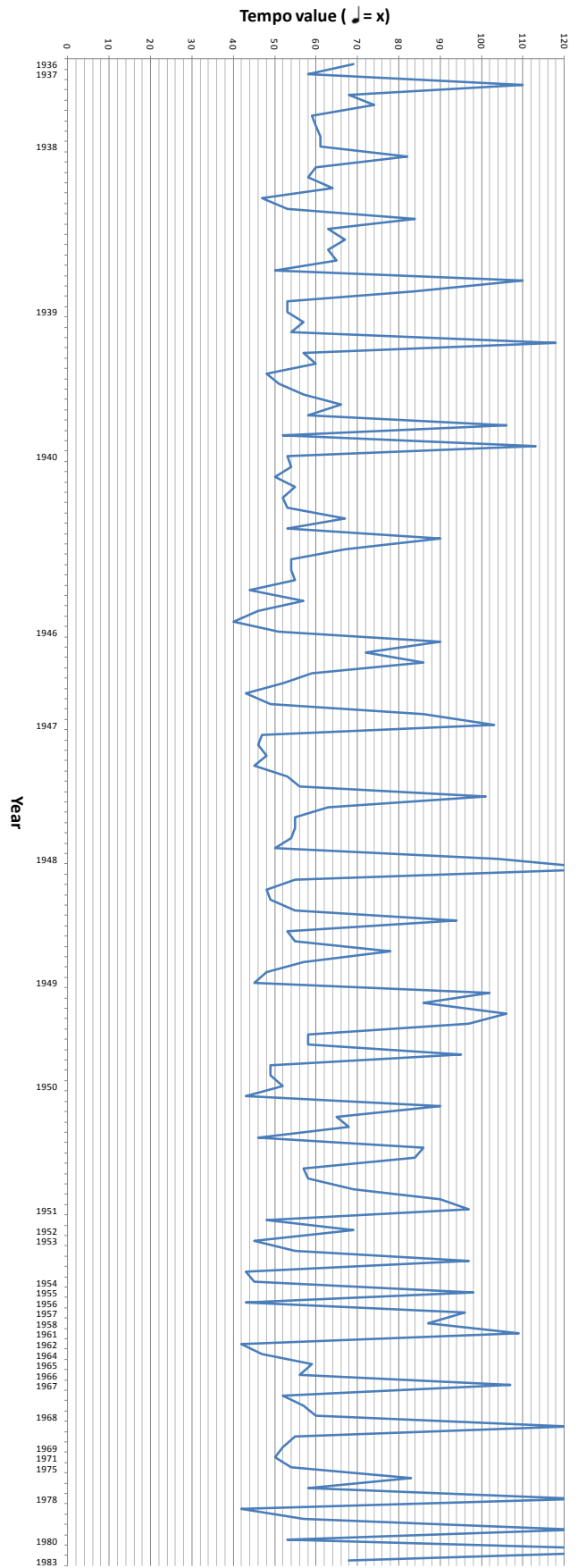
<sup>44</sup> See, for example, CD 1 in Hatzidhoulís 2005, which is a live recording from the bouat ‘Themélio’ in 1979. The tempo of the song ranges from  $\text{♩} \approx 100$  to  $\text{♩} \approx 120$ .

<sup>45</sup> HMV 7XGA 2787 - 7PG 3729, recorded in 1967.

<sup>46</sup> Song: *Μ’έναν πικρό αναστεναγμό* [m’ énan pikró anastenagh mó = with a bitter sigh], HMV OGA 1129 - AO 2695, recorded on October 27/28, 1940.

<sup>47</sup> Song: *Νέο μινόρε* [néo minóre = new minor] (the second-fast part of the song), Columbia 7XCG 1419 - SCDG 3129, recorded one March 27, 1962.

Figure 6.20: The development of tempo in hasäpiko (Tsitšänis's recordings)



As one can see, the tempo is fluctuating, that is, there are both fast and slow *hasápikos* during the recording career of Tsitsánis, and the tempo does not follow a specific descending or ascending route.

Although simple in form and structure, with few options for alterations in its ‘hits’ by the accompanying instruments – especially with regard to the early recording period where only the guitar and occasionally the *baghlamás* had this role – there are cases where either an altered version or a mix of colours and styles from other genres can be observed. For example, there is a very special performance technique on the part of the guitarist in the song *Δεν με στεφανώνεσαι*<sup>48</sup> [dhen me stefanónese = you don’t marry me], especially if one considers the early period of its recording (June 15, 1946). The guitarist preferred to use a rather ‘foreign’ technique for the *hasápiko*’s common performance technique. Instead of playing the classical ‘bass – chord – bass\_V – chord’ type, he used ‘bass\_III – chord – chord – chord’ and occasionally ‘bass\_III – chord x 7’. One should bear in mind, however, that the guitarist is Kóstas Karípis, a refugee songwriter and guitarist who came to the mainland in 1922 after the Greek-Turkish war and its aftermath (see Chapter 1), and well-known for his creativity, skills and musicality. According to the recording sheets as well as the Columbia logistics books, Karípis was one of the most sought after guitarists, not only by Tsitsánis, but by many other songwriters, too. Figure 6.21 represents this innovative performance technique of the *hasápiko* by Karípis.

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<sup>48</sup> HMV OGA 1153 - AO 2704.

His Master's Voice OGA 1153 - AO 2704  
 Hasápiko  
 Time: 00.26

Voice

Τι σε μέ-λει,ε - σέ - να κί,αν γυρ - νό το κορ - μί μου,α - κό - μα κί,αν που -

Guitar

E<sup>b</sup> D E<sup>b</sup>

Vc.

7

λώ πέν - τε χρό - νια εσύ με τυ - ραν - νάζ

Gtr.

7

D C m G m

**Figure 6.21: Innovative performance technique of the hasápiko by Kóstas Karípis (Tsitsánis song: *dhen me stefanónese* – CD Track 34)**

Finally, Figure 6.22 represents the rhythmic pattern of the Blues-style hasápiko rhythm.

**Hasapiko (Blues)**

The figure shows a musical score for 'Hasapiko (Blues)' with four staves. The top staff is for Guitar, with notes and labels: Bass, Chord, Bass\_V, Chord. The second staff is for Double Bass or El. Bass, with notes and labels: Bass walking bass, B\_III, B\_V, B\_V. The third staff is for Baglamás, with notes and labels: Chord. The bottom staff is for Drums Percussion, with notes and labels: three triplets of eighth notes, each marked with a '3' and an accent (>).

**Figure 6.22: Blues-style hasápiko rhythmic pattern**

The basic characteristics of the interpretation of this particular rhythm are two, and they define, in a sense, the style of the rhythm. Either the triplets give the sense of the Blues, or the walking bass. Usually, the triplets are played by the solo instruments; to rephrase, it is the melodic structure itself that consists of triplets and thus, it is they that grant this particular aesthetic and make this hasápiko interpretation differ from the classical one. Moreover, the triplets can also be heard from the percussionists, usually played on the ‘high-hat’ cymbal.

### **Τσιφτετέλι [tsiftetéli = belly dance (Çiftetelli)] and Μπολέρο (ανατολίτικο; οριεντάλ) [bolero (anatolítiko = oriental)]**

The tsiftetéli rhythm is also known outside Greece as the belly dance. Tsitsánis recorded eleven songs in tsiftetéli, four in tsiftetéli in nine beat, one in bayo-tsiftetéli and one in tsiftetéli variation and guaracha. The reason that the tsiftetéli is examined together with the bolero is because, in many cases, these two rhythms tended (and occasionally still do) to sound close to one another. It is true that there is confusion

with regard to the bolero's name. The rhythm is also given other names such as oriental, which relates it to the East. However, this is a rhythm from Latin America. This confusing situation perhaps reveals the strong bonds between the rhythm and the melody, especially in popular traditions. One cannot split them and examine the rhythm or the melody separately. In other words, it might have been the melodies of such songs that referred to Eastern traditions and therefore, the term oriental became equal of the term bolero, for, on the one hand, the rhythm's interpretation was affected by the Latin American tradition yet, on the other hand, the melodies were purely Eastern. Ultimately, as Ed Uribe stated during an Internet-based consultation lesson I had with him, 'the accompanying rhythm is one factor, as are the rhythms of the melodies, the vocal phrasing and the playing of the melodic passages between the vocals'.<sup>49</sup> Figure 6.23 represents the rhythmic pattern of the tsiftetéli, while Figure 6.24 the pattern of the bolero.

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<sup>49</sup> The consultation lesson via Internet with Ed Uribe was carried out in January 2012. The lesson had to do with the Latin American element found in laikó music due to Uribe's expertise in Afro-Cuban and Latin rhythms (see also Uribe n.d.).

**Tsiftetéli**

The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of six systems of staves:

- Guitar:**
  - Staff 1: Bass, Chord, Chord, Bass\_V, Chord
  - Staff 2: Bass, Chord, Chord, Bass\_V Bass, Bass\_V Bass, Chord
- Bongos Congas or Toubeléki:**
  - Staff 1: Bass, Treble, Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., Bass, Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr.
  - Staff 2: Bass, Treble, Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., Tr., .
  - Staff 3: Bass, Treble, Treble, Bass, Treble
- Tambourine:**
  - Staff 1: Bass, Treble, -, -, -, -, Bass, Treble
- Baglamás:**
  - Staff 1: Chords
  - Staff 2: Chords
- Piano:**
  - Staff 1: Bass (left hand), Chord, Chord, Bass\_V Bass (left hand), Chord
- Double Bass or El. Bass:**
  - Staff 1: Bass
  - Staff 2: Bass\_V Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass\_V Bass, Bass
  - Staff 3: Bass\_V Bass, Bass, Bass, Bass\_V Bass\_V, Bass\_V Bass\_VII, Bass

Figure 6.23: Tsiftetéli rhythmic pattern

**Bolero**

(Same as above)

**Figure 6.24: Bolero rhythmic pattern**

The mix of these two rhythms produced syncretic types of songs, where one cannot tell for sure if the song is based on either of the two (tsiftetéli or bolero). For many people in Greece (especially musicians) the bolero-tsiftetéli rhythm is considered to be a Tsitsánis creation, both with regard to the rhythm's interpretation, and the structure of the melodies.<sup>50</sup> Also noted, are some further cases where the mix of other rhythms with the tsiftetéli and bolero can be heard. Some song examples are: *Αράπικο λουλούδι* [arápiko louloudhi = Eastern flower]:<sup>51</sup> the rhythm, especially in the

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, *Γκιούλ Μπαχάρ* [Gioúl bahár = Eastern female name], Columbia CG 2800 - DG 6900 and DG 6909, recorded on April 5, 1951. In an interview with him, Strátos Samiótis, a Greek professional percussionist, said that the sound of this specific rhythmic type immediately brings Tsitsánis to mind (interviewed in January, 2011).

<sup>51</sup> Odeon GO 3812 - GA 7399, recorded on October 18, 1947.



beginning, sounds like a very slow bayo. The main difference is that the guitar plays a chord on the third beat instead of a bass note;<sup>52</sup> the song *Τοπάζια* [Topázia = topaz]:<sup>53</sup> the guitar plays tsiftetéli. The double bass, along with the toubeléki plays something close to bolero;<sup>54</sup> the song *Η σκιά μου και γω* [i skiá mou ke gho - my shadow and me]:<sup>55</sup> this one, according to Ed Uribe, is based on bolero and bolero cha (the Latin types) more than any other song of Tsitsánis.

### **Greek Rural-Traditional Rhythms**

Apart from the purely rembétiko rhythms, that is, zeimbékiko, hasápiko and bolero-tsiftetéli, Tsitsánis (and many other songwriters) also used some of the rural-traditional rhythms, apparently ‘laikized’, that is, recorded with a laikó orchestra.<sup>56</sup> Specifically, he recorded eight songs in kalamatianós rhythm, six in bálos, five in sirtós, three in reversed kalamatianós, two in tsámikos, one in sirtós in three, one in sirtós in two and one in zonarádiko (twenty-seven songs in total). Research reveals that some of them are adaptations of older traditional songs, made by Tsitsánis (for these adaptations, see the T.E.D.). The rhythmic patterns, as well as some noteworthy cases of the most popular of these rural-traditional rhythms follow.

### **Καλαματιανός [kalamatianós (Kalamáta = city in Peloponnesus)**

Today, kalamatianós is one of the most popular traditional group-dances in Greece. As Irene Loutzaki points out, kalamatianós is ‘a dance assuming the status of a national symbol, a dominant dance idiom based on the Peloponnesian dance idiom and diffused (thanks to the national education system) across all of Greece’ (2001: 131). The dance is in 7/8 time, which can be broken into 3+4 (3+2+2). Kalamatianós

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<sup>52</sup> Regarding the bayo rhythm see further below.

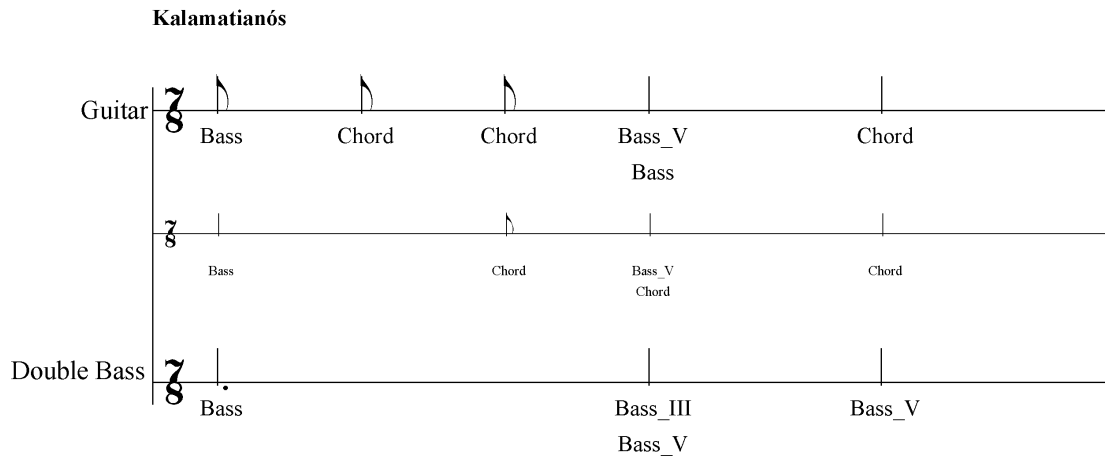
<sup>53</sup> HMV OGA 2990 - AO 5614 and 7PG 2657, recorded on February 11, 1960.

<sup>54</sup> Toubeléki or toubeléri is a percussion instrument that looks like a small drum.

<sup>55</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5240 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975.

<sup>56</sup> There are, however, instances where Tsitsánis used a traditional or a semi-traditional orchestra, such as in the case of the song *Σύρε μάνα πες στον Γιάννη* [síre mána pes ston ghiáni = go mother tell John], HMV OGA 2498 - AO 5377, recorded on January 15, 1957.

(also known as *sirtós kalamatianós*) is danced in a circle or half-circle and is spread (with variations) throughout the Balkans. A typical performance technique of the *laikó kalamatianós*, based on Tsitsánis's recordings, is shown in Figure 6.25.



**Figure 6.25: Kalamatianós rhythmic pattern**

A common variation of *kalamatianós* is named by Leftéris Pávlu *ανάποδο καλαματιανό* [anápodho kalamatianó = reversed *kalamatianós*] or *Λάζικος*<sup>57</sup> *καρσιλαμάς* [lázikos karsilamás].<sup>58</sup> The difference from *kalamatianós* is the fact that this reversed type (as its name implies) is broken into 4+3 (2+2+3). Figure 6.26 represents a typical performance technique of the *laikó* reversed *kalamatianós*.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The *λαζοί* [lazi] was a race that lived in the coastline regions of the Black Sea.

<sup>58</sup> Pávlu 2006: 41.

<sup>59</sup> In Greek: *καλαματιανός* – *καλαματιανή* – *καλαματιανό* [kalamatinós (masculine) – kalamatianí (feminine) – kalamatianó (neutral)].

**Reversed kalamatianós**

Guitar 7/8 Bass Chord Bass Chord Bass Chord Chord Bass\_V

Double bass or El. Bass 7/8 Bass Bass Bass Bass\_V

Bongos, Congas or Toubeleki 7/8 Bass Treble Treble Bass Treble Treble Bass Treble Treble

7/8 Treble Treble Treble Treble Bass Treble Treble

**Figure 6.26: Reversed kalamatianós rhythmic pattern**

## Μπάλος [bálos]

Bálos is the most popular dance rhythm across the Aegean islands, found with various names and variations. Interestingly, its laikó performance technique is close to what Greek musicians call rumba (laikó rumba), which is examined further below. Figure 6.27 represents the bálos rhythmic pattern.

**Balos**

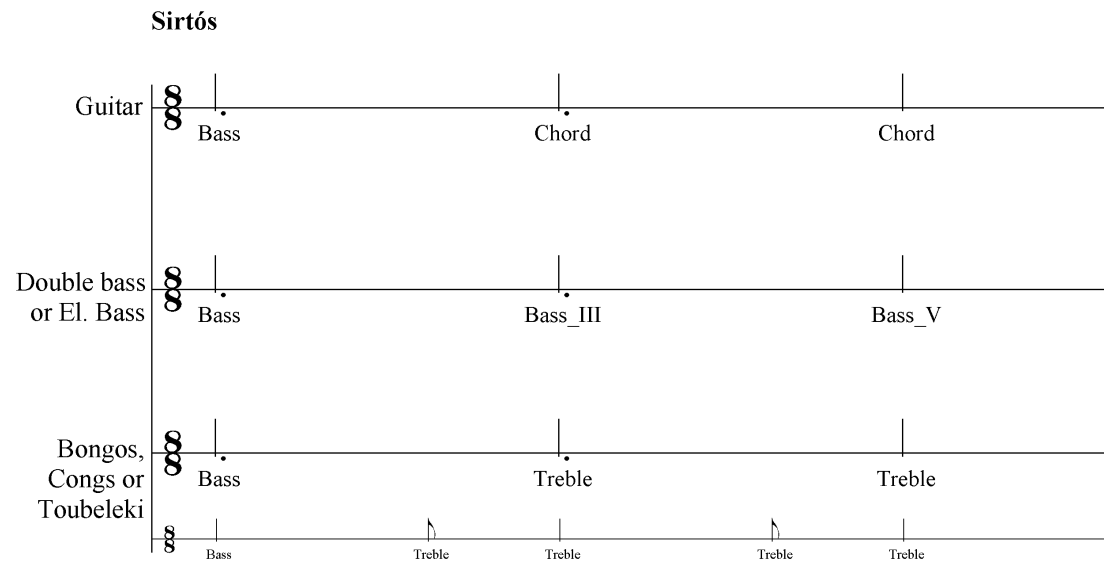
Guitar 2/4 Chord Bass Chord Chord Chord Bass\_V

2/4 Bass Chord Chord Bass\_V Chord

**Figure 6.27: Bálos rhythmic pattern**

## Συρτός [sirtós = drawn along]

Sirtós is another popular traditional dance, found in numerous places across the Hellenic world (see Pávlou 2006: 37). It is in 8/8 metre, broken into 3+3+2. Figure 6.28 represents a typical rhythmic pattern.



**Figure 6.28:** Sirtós rhythmic pattern

## The Latin American Influence

The ‘borrowings’ from Latin and the North American cultures have already been examined in Chapter 4. A presentation of rhythms used from the aforementioned traditions, as well as some comments regarding the way these rhythms have been ‘laikized’, follow.

Today, the ‘laikized’ rumba is one of the most popular rhythms in Greek laikó music. Yet, Greek musicians misleadingly use the term rumba in order to refer to this rhythmic pattern (Figure 6.29):

**Rumba**

The musical score is organized as follows:

- System 1 (Top two staves):**
  - Staff 1 (Guitar):** 2/4 time signature. Contains two measures of chords. The first measure has a bass line and a chord. The second measure has a bass line labeled 'Bass\_V' and a chord.
  - Staff 2 (Guitar):** 2/4 time signature. Contains two measures. The first measure has a bass line and a chord. The second measure has a chord.
- System 2 (Bottom two staves):**
  - Staff 3 (Double bass or El. Bass):** 2/4 time signature. Contains two measures. The first measure has a bass note. The second measure has a bass note labeled 'Bass\_III'.
  - Staff 4 (Double bass or El. Bass):** 2/4 time signature. Contains two measures. The first measure has a bass note. The second measure has a bass note labeled 'Bass\_V'.
- System 3 (Bottom two staves):**
  - Staff 5 (Bongos, Congs or Toubeleki):** 2/4 time signature. Contains two measures. The first measure has bass and treble patterns. The second measure has bass and treble patterns.
  - Staff 6 (Bongos, Congs or Toubeleki):** 2/4 time signature. Contains two measures. The first measure has bass and treble patterns. The second measure has bass and treble patterns.

**Figure 6.29: Laikized rumba rhythmic pattern**

At the same time, people (the clientele of the bouzouki clubs) often confuse the term rumba (as used by musicians), with the tsiftetéli dance (to be more precise, people confuse the rhythm and, obviously, not the term). The reason for this is the fact that a ‘rumba series’ is an inseparable part of the programme of today’s bouzouki clubs. Strangely, the people on the *πίστα* [*písta* = dancing floor] dance this rhythm sometimes as a tsiftetéli, and sometimes as a traditional sirtós. The situation that exists in these bouzouki clubs is, obviously, the reason for this situation, for the dance itself is the central purpose of these venues. Since dance became the alpha and omega, many songs were arranged in order to serve the needs of the dancers. For instance, I too used to refer to this rhythm using the term rumba, when playing on the music stands. However, when I listened to the original recordings, I realized that their original rhythm and general performance style was completely different. A vital addition was the drums and percussion, which were not used in the original

recordings. Apparently, the drums are the backbone of this rumba rhythm and the purely dance-type programme of the bouzouki clubs in general.

Another rhythm similar to rumba is the so-called bayo by Greek musicians. This is a rhythm that is very close to rhythms such as the traditional *bálos* and *sirtós*.<sup>60</sup> Figure 6.30 represents the ‘laikized’ bayo’s rhythmic pattern.

**Bayo**

The figure shows the rhythmic pattern for the 'laikized' bayo in 2/4 time, divided into three sections: Guitar, Double bass or El. Bass, and Congas or Bongos. Each section consists of two staves.

- Guitar:**
  - Staff 1: Bass (quarter note), Chord (half note), Bass (quarter note), Chord (half note). The second measure is further labeled with Bass\_V and Chord.
  - Staff 2: Bass (quarter note), Chord (half note), Chords (quarter note), Chords (quarter note).
- Double bass or El. Bass:**
  - Staff 1: Bass (quarter note), Bass\_V (quarter note).
  - Staff 2: Bass (quarter note), Bass\_V (quarter note), Bass\_VII (quarter note), Bass\_V (quarter note).
- Congas or Bongos:**
  - Staff 1: Bass (quarter note), Treble (half note), Bass (quarter note), Treble (half note). The second measure is further labeled with Treble.
  - Staff 2: Bass (quarter note), Treble (half note), Treble (quarter note), Treble (quarter note).
  - Staff 3: Bass (quarter note), Treble (half note), Bass (quarter note), Treble (quarter note), Treble (quarter note).

**Figure 6.30: Laikized bayo rhythmic pattern**

Continuing with the ‘laikized’ Latin American rhythms, Greek musicians also use another term, which is the ‘bayorumba’. As the word implies, it is a mix of the two

<sup>60</sup> In fact, the dance style of all these three rhythms is almost identical. One should, however, bear in mind the essential dissociation of the rural-traditional dance style with the way it was re-formed as an urban-popular one.

rhythms, and this is basically the reason for the non-existence of a set rhythmic pattern.

Finally, another Latin American term existing within the terminology of Greek musicians is the ‘guaracha’. One can also listen to a musician referring to this particular rhythm using the term ‘akouarátsa’. Figure 6.31 represents the Greek version of the guaracha’s rhythmic pattern.

**Guaracha**

The figure displays a musical score for the 'Guaracha' rhythm in 2/4 time. It is organized into four main sections: Guitar, Bongos or Congas, Tambourine or Maracas, and Double bass or El. Bass. Each section contains four staves, each starting with a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic symbols such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, along with chord symbols and dynamic markings like accents (>). The Guitar part features chords and bass notes. The Bongos or Congas part shows treble and bass patterns. The Tambourine or Maracas part uses accents to indicate rhythmic hits. The Double bass or El. Bass part provides a harmonic foundation with specific chord symbols like Bass\_V, Bass\_III, Bass\_VII, and Bass\_V.

**Guitar**

2/4 Bass Chord Chord Chord

2/4 Bass Chord Bass\_V Bass Chord Chord

2/4 Bass Chord Bass Bass\_V Chord

**Bongos or Congas**

2/4 Bass Treble Treble

2/4 Bass Treble Bass Treble

2/4 Treble Bass+Treble Treble

2/4 Treble Bass+Treble Treble

**Tambourine or Maracas**

2/4 > >

**Double bass or El. Bass**

2/4 Bass Bass\_V Bass\_V Bass\_VII Bass\_V

2/4 Bass Bass\_V

**Figure 6.31: Laikized guaracha rhythmic pattern**

## Chapter 7

### **The Greek Laikó Rhythms in Vasilis Tsitsánis's Work: Comments and Statistics**

The greatest part of Vasilis Tsitsánis's work is based on the core rembétiko rhythms, that is, the zeimbékiko and the hasápiko.<sup>61</sup> Tsitsánis recorded in 46 rhythms. Owing to the fact that the very same musicians took part in the recordings of the other songwriters too, this is a characteristic that will help the reader acquire a general image not only of Tsitsánis's songs, but of Greek laikó music in general, especially in terms of the interpretation of rhythms.

Several general graphs are cited in order to create a primary, yet general image of the course of the rhythms in Tsitsánis's recording career. It should be noted that some other graphs found within the thesis, such as the number of recordings by year (Chapter 3) should always be combined with these graphs, as well as with the writings across the entire thesis. The table number of songs by rhythm (Table 7.1) clearly verifies the argument that Tsitsánis based his work on traditional rembétiko rhythms.

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<sup>61</sup> Part of this chapter has been presented as the paper 'The Greek Laikó (Popular) Rhythms: Some Problematic Issues'. Athens Institute for Education and Research. 2nd Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts, 2011.



Rhythm	Number of Songs
9/4 - Old Zeimbékiko	160
2/4 - Hasápiko	146
9/4 - New Zeimbékiko	59
9/8 - Karsilamás	24
9/4 - Mixed zeimbékiko-2	21
2/4 - Bayo	14
2/4 - Guaracha	11
4/4 - Tsiftetéli	11
4/4 - Bolero	11
9/4 - Mixed zeimbékiko-1	12
7/8 - Kalamatianós (or Sirtós)	8
5/8	7
2/4 - Bálos	6
2/4 - Rumba	6
4/4 - Hasápiko (Blues)	6
8/8 - Sirtós	5
2/4 - Bayorumba	5
Taxími	4
9/4 - Tsiftetéli in 9-beat	4
6/8 - Dādrā	3
7/8 - Reversed kalamatianó	3
3/4 - Tsámikos	2
9/4 - Aptáliko zeimbékiko	2
4/4 - Tsiftetéli-Bolero (mix)	2
4/4 - Taxími & 2/4 - Hasápiko	1
6/8 - Dādrā & 5/8	1
4/4	1
6/8 - Sirtós sta tria (Epirus)	1
4/4 & 5/8	1
3/4 - Taxími & 2/4 - Hasápiko	1
9/4 - Zeimbékiko variations	1
4/4 - Argentinean tango-cha-cha (mix)	1
2/4 - Bayo & 4/4 - Tsiftetéli	1
4/4 - Bolero (var.)	1
4/4 - Tsiftetéli (var.) & 2/4 - Guaracha	1
9/4 - Aptáliko monó & 9/4 Aptáliko dhipló	1
Problem, Afro-Cuban, Latin	1
2/2 - Tumbao-Salsa	1
4/4 - Traditional (Epirus)	1
6/8 - Zonarádhiko (Thrace-var.)	1
2/2 - Cha Cha	1
2/4 - Bálos & 2/4 - Rumba	1
2/4 - Hasápiko & 2/4 - Roumba	1
3/4 - Ballad	1
8/8 - Malfuf-tumbao (mix)	1
9/4 - Aptáliko zeimbékiko dhipló	1

**Table 7.1: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by rhythm**

This table also shows that Tsitsánis experimented with several rhythms that were not popular among rembétiko-laikó songwriters. Some examples are: *Καρδιά*

*παραπονιάρα*<sup>62</sup> [kardhiá paraponiára = grumbler heart] and *Και χίλιες καρδιές*<sup>63</sup> [ke hílies kardhiés = a thousand hearts], both being in tsámikos rhythm, a rural-traditional rhythm that used to be performed mainly in Stereá and the Moriás (= Peloponnesus) regions. *Σύρε μάνα πες του Γιάννη*<sup>64</sup> [sire mána pes toú ghiáni = go mother tell John] is based on another traditional rhythm from Epirus region which can be found with the names *χορός στα δύο* [horós sta dhío = dance in two<sup>65</sup>] or *Παγωνήσιος* [paghonísios = from the Pagoni region]. This particular song is an arrangement of an older traditional song by Tsitsánis. *Στέλλα μωρ' Στέλλα*<sup>66</sup> [stéla mor' stéla = Stella oh Stella] is once again an arrangement by Tsitsánis based on an Epirus style traditional song. This dance is called in Epirus *χορός στα τρία* [horós sta tría = dance in three] (see also Pávλου 2006: 30).

The rhythms used from the 1960s onwards constitute a major, special chapter. They are either foreign rhythms or a mixture of rhythms of a Greek and foreign origin. Many of these rhythms are now the basis for modern Greek popular song. In essence, foreign elements existed long before the 1960's. They were assimilated in a way and are considered to be part of the rembétiko and laikó culture. For example, it is worth referring to the song *Αραπίνες*<sup>67</sup> [arapínes = women from the East]. Its rhythm is named by Greek musicians and rembétiko enthusiasts as bolero or oriental (Eastern). Apparently – and perhaps due to continuous use – the word bolero equated with the word oriental! In other words, a Latin rhythm became a synonym for an Eastern term.<sup>68</sup> The (erroneous, most of the time) labels employed by musicians nowadays is actually a part of the problematic terminology of such rhythms (similarly to the cases of the modes, as analyzed in Chapters 4 and 5). A concrete example would be the way in which many songs are currently performed, based on the rumba rhythm (or more properly, on what is nowadays called and considered to be rumba),

<sup>62</sup> HMV OGA 2499 - AO 5377, recorded on January 15, 1957.

<sup>63</sup> HMV 7XGA 1959 - 7PG 3376, recorded on March 31, 1964.

<sup>64</sup> HMV OGA 2498 - AO 5377, recorded on January 15, 1957.

<sup>65</sup> Due to its rhythm, that is 2/4. The same is true of the dance in three (3/4).

<sup>66</sup> Odeon GO 3761 - GA 7378, recorded on March 1, 1947.

<sup>67</sup> Odeon GO 3665 - GA 7351, recorded on October 29, 1946.

<sup>68</sup> Worth noting is the chapter in Athanasákis's book regarding the bolero (2006: 90). It should be also mentioned that it is the aficionados and not the musicians that mainly use the term 'oriental' when referring to bolero songs.

while their initial recording was not according to this rhythm. Of course, this is not always the case, because popular music (especially via discography) always tends to evolve and, thus, change; it is nevertheless an existing and increasing problem. Most of the time however, this occurs due to the lack of orchestras similar to those that once recorded the particular songs. Since we are dealing with rhythms that were based on percussion and drums, it is rather difficult nowadays to find large orchestras performing this type of music live (except from the big bouzouki clubs). Thus, they do not approach even slightly the way in which music was performed at the time. It was therefore due to functional reasons that the variations in the interpretation of rhythms such as guaracha, rumba and bayo (rhythms that are quite similar) have nearly disappeared.<sup>69</sup> This of course, sounds reasonable when taking into consideration that the main instruments that defined the rhythm (namely the drums and percussion) are now absent from orchestras, and instruments such as the guitar or the piano have to perform and interpret these rhythms instead.<sup>70</sup> It should not be forgotten, however, that the percussionists created a mixture of rhythms, mostly for experimentation. This in turn gives birth to further problems regarding the terminology of rhythms. Furthermore, there are many instances of differences between the interpretation of a song in the studio recording and the interpretation at a live performance, even when it is performed by the same musicians that took part in the recording. I have seen videos of old live recordings of Tsitsánis where the musicians perform some of the songs with alterations in the rhythms. This, of course, is one of the main characteristics of popular song. Typical examples of songs with mixed rhythms are the following (Table 7.2):

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<sup>69</sup> I am talking about the ‘laikized’ versions of the aforementioned rhythms and not about their original, Latin American forms. This ‘laikization’ of the Latin rhythms is examined further below.

<sup>70</sup> Some presentations of the Greek laikó rhythms can be found in the books: Metalinós (1999); Pávlou (2006).

Song title	Recording information	Rhythm mixture
Το χαστούκι [to hastoúki = the slap]	HMV 7XGA 948 - 7PG 2911	4/4 - Bolero Son and Bolero Cha (mix)
Σ' ανοίγω πόρτες κι αγκαλιές [s' anígho pórtēs ki angaliés = I open doors and arms for you]	HMV 7XGA 3012 - 7PG 3838	Bolero and tsiftetéli
Το τσιφτετέλι του Τσιτσάνη [to tsiftetéli tou tsitsáni = Tsitsánis's tsiftetéli]	HMV 7XGA 3291 - 7PG 3853	Tsiftetéli and guaracha

**Table 7.2: Examples of songs with mixed rhythms within Tsitsánis's recordings**

If the rhythms and the production per year are viewed carefully (Table 7.3 and Table 7.4) it will be observed that the output decreases as the years go by, but, on the other hand, the choice of rhythms evolves. The amount of recorded songs, however, keeps the number of these rhythms in small quantities. This means that Tsitsánis might have used many more of these new rhythms if he had continued to record the amount of songs he did in earlier years. In the following tables, the order of the rhythms depends on their songs' quantity. The rhythm found on the left, that is the old zeimbékiko, has the most songs.

Year	9/4 - Old Zeimbékiko	2/4 - Hasápiko	9/4 - New Zeimbékiko	9/8 - Karsilamás	9/4 - Mixed zeimbékiko-2	2/4 - Bayo	2/4 - Guaracha	4/4 - Tsiftetéli	4/4 - Boléro	9/4 - Mixed zeimbékiko-1	7/8 - Kalamatianos (or Sirtós)	5/8	2/4 - Bállos	2/4 - Rumba	4/4 - Hasápiko (Blues)	8/8 - Sirtós	2/4 - Bayorumba	Taxími
1936		1	1							1	1	1						
1937			7								1		2					
1938		6	15															
1939		5	15	4	1					1								
1940		3	17	12	1													
1946		6	9	4					2									
1947		8	13	2					3	3								
1948		12	12	2					1		2		1					
1949		14	10					1										
1950		31	12								1		2					
1951		6	2						2									
1952		16	1		1													
1953		10	4	2	1					2						1		
1954		9	1	2					2									
1955		2	1							1	1							
1956		8	1	2	2				1	1								
1957		12	1		1				1		1						1	
1958		4	1	3		7				1					1	1		
1959		3		1	1	3			1								1	
1960		2		1		8		1	2		1				1	1		
1961			1	2		3	2								1			
1962			1	1	1		4		1						1			
1963				1	1		5	3						1	1			
1964			1	2			1	4	1			1		2			2	
1965			1		1			2	1			1		1				
1966			1	1			2											
1967			3	3	3			1	1			1		1			2	
1968			3		1										1			
1969	1		1	3	1							3		1				
1970				1														
1971			1	3														
1973				1	1													
1975			3	1	1							1				1		
1977					1													
1978			4	4	2				1									
1979					1													
1980	1		2		2					1								2
1983	1		1		1					1								
no date																		2

**Table 7.3: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by rhythm and year (A)**

Year	9/4 - Aptálíko zeimbékíko	4/4 - Tsiftetéli- Boléro (mix)	2/2 - Cha Cha	2/2 - Tumbao- Salsa	2/4 - Bálos & 2/4 - Rumba	2/4 - Bayo & 4/4 - Tsiftetéli	2/4 - Hasápíko & 2/4 - Roúmba	3/4 - Ballad	3/4 - Taximi & 2/4 - Hasápíko	4/4	4/4 - Argentinean tango & cha cha (mix)	4/4 - Boléro (var.)	4/4 - Taximi & 2/4 - Hasápíko	4/4 - Traditional (Epirus)	4/4 - Tsiftetéli (var.) & 2/4 - Guaracha	4/4 & 5/8	6/8 - Dádrá & 5/8	6/8 - Sirtós sta tría (Epirus)
1936																		
1937																		
1938																		
1939	1																	
1940																		
1946																		
1947													1					
1948											1							1
1949																		
1950																		
1951	1																	
1952																		
1953																		
1954																		
1955																		
1956																		
1957														1				
1958																		
1959																		
1960			1	1									1					
1961																		
1962									1									
1963																		
1964											1						1	
1965																		
1966																		
1967																		
1968																		
1969		1			1													
1970															1			
1971																		
1973																		
1975		1																
1977																		
1978																		
1979																		
1980																		
1983																1		
no date																		

**Table 7.4: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by rhythm and year (B)**

At first glance, there are two obvious things: first of all the fact that Tsitsánis mostly used the traditional rembétiko rhythms, that is, zeimbékíko and hasápíko, and secondly, that as the years pass, there are less recorded songs being produced. However, there are some points in the tables that are of great importance, although they are less obvious. I will highlight some of these beginning with the utilization of a transformed hasápíko which I call '4/4 blues style hasápíko'.<sup>71</sup> As one can see, Tsitsánis recorded six songs in this rhythm.<sup>72</sup> He recorded one in each of the years 1958, 1960, 1961, 1962 and 1963. This was the beginning of a new era for the laikó music. One of its most remarkable characteristics is the use of new rhythms taken from other music traditions such as Cuban-Latin, Hindi, Jazz-Blues and so forth. The new hasápíko style is one of these rhythms.

The original hasápíko rhythm was never missing until 1959. The year with the most hasápíko songs was 1940 with 17 recordings. The same is true for the old

<sup>71</sup> The name is due to the rhythm's sound relevance to Blues music.

<sup>72</sup> This is the way this particular rhythm appears in the electronic database, that is, *hasápíko (Blues)*.

zeimbékiko rhythm as well. It was not missing from 1938 until 1960. The old zeimbékiko, the backbone of the rembétiko and laikó music tradition, is something that deserves attention. Although the new style zeimbékiko was played since the first recording year, one can see that the majority of the recordings were in the old style. In 1950 Tsitsánis recorded 31 songs in old zeimbékiko. The majority of songs in old zeimbékiko were recorded before 1960. From 1961 to 1983, the new style took the place of the old and left the old zeimbékiko with only five recordings out of one hundred seventy-seven, that is, 2.8 per cent. For the new zeimbékiko style, there is a more normal increase in the quantity. 51 out of 80 songs recorded before 1960, that is, 63.7 per cent. Tsitsánis sporadically recorded three more songs in old zeimbékiko rhythm, one in 1969, one in 1980 and one in 1983, but his preference for the new style is clear.

If one examines the period between the years 1958 and 1969 they will notice that the next step after the ‘birth of the new laikó song’ (Michael 1996) is in between these years. The new imported rhythms that Tsitsánis used in this period are: bayo, guaracha, rumba, blues hasápiko, dādrā, cha-cha, bayo-rumba and tumbao-salsa. If we take into consideration the Greek rhythms that are now established or used for the first time such as the tsiftetéli, the 5/8 and the reversed kalamatianós, we will see that the once poor style composed of almost only the zeimbékiko family rhythms and the hasápiko, now became a multifaceted style with combinations and sounds of several cultures. Rhythms like the 5/8 (initially used by Tsitsánis in 1964) and the 6/8 (initially used in 1961) were not popular within rembétiko songwriters.

The year 1936 is quite remarkable for the fact that Tsitsánis recorded only five songs. Each one is in a different rhythm: one in hasápiko, one in new zeimbékiko, one in mixed zeimbékiko, one in kalamatianós and one in bálos. Curiously, he did not record a song in old zeimbékiko until 1938. A closer study of the facts shows that the evolution in the songs’ style that Tsitsánis recorded is due to two main reasons: the demands of the market and the available singer in each period. These two elements can be ramified and examined in a more analytical way. The demands of the market changed from time to time according to several factors. For instance, the introduction of new rhythms from foreign markets, such as Afro-Cuban and Latin (due to Hiótis’s trips to the USA), forced Tsitsánis to write and record songs in these styles as well. Moreover, the rise to stardom of the singer Stélios Kazantzídhis left Tsitsánis with no

other choice than to use him as the lead singer of his songs (from 1956 to 1963). However, rumours and stories from some people (mainly rembétiko enthusiasts) indicate that the great and astonishing career of Kazantzídhis was due to Tsitsánis's help and support by using him for recordings when, at the same time, Pródhromos Tsaousákis was the first line singer for many songwriters of the same period (Alexíou 2003: 262).<sup>73</sup>

The *taxími* (see page 31) has a special position within Tsitsánis's recordings. He recorded three *taxímia* in 1980. He recorded one more for which I was not able to obtain recording date. He also recorded *taxímia* in combination with particular rhythms. He recorded one *taxími* with *karsilamás* rhythm in 1956 and two in 1980; a *taxími* in 4/4 time with *hasápiko* rhythm in 1946; one in 3/4 time with *hasápiko* in 1962; and a free-style *taxími* with a *zeimbékiko* in 1980. Apart from these *taxímia* recordings, one should not forget that Tsitsánis, in many recordings, used to play a short *taxími* before the actual song. This technique was used more in his pre-war recordings and began to disappear in later years. The next table (Table 7.5) includes some interesting cases of recordings of songs which include a *taxími*.

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<sup>73</sup> Stélios Kazantzídhis was a singer. He is one of the few artists in Greece that have been worshipped. Some facts that show the extent of this worship are the creation of hundreds of clubs in his name by fans of his singing. In fact, people love and admire him for various reasons such as his personality and not only for his singing. Moreover, the sales that Kazantzídhis achieved cannot be compared to other's singers' sales. He is perhaps the reference point between the old-school music stands with the composer in the middle who was also (in most cases) a bouzouki player and a singer, and the new-style music stands with a singer-star in the middle and (later on) even in front of the band.

Title	Recording information	Notes
Τα χώματα της ξενιτιάς [ta hómata tis xenitiás = the lands of the foreign lands]	Odeon GO 4704 - GA 7689, recorded on February 9, 1952	Taxími by the clarinet
Της μαστούρας ο σκοπός [tis mastourás o skorós = the melody of the high-trip]	Columbia CG 2160 - DG 6599, recorded on June 15, 1946	Very interesting combination of dhrómi
Για κοίτα κόσμε ένα κορμί [ghia kíta kósme éna kormí = people look out what a body]	Columbia CG 3419 - DG 7218, recorded on May 17, 1956	The taxími is played inside the song
Ταξίμι και χορός απτάλικος [taxími ke horós aptálikos = taxim and aptalikos rhythm]	Ocora C559010 HM65, recorded on February 16, 1980	Very interesting is the fact that Tsitsánis firstly gives the tempo of 3/4 and then starts the taxími without accompaniment
Ταξίμι χετζάς Πειραιώτικο-Αλέγκρο 9-8 [Taxími hitzáz Pireótiko = Taxími in hitzáz Pireótiko-Allegro 9-8]	Venus-Tzina SV 35, recorded on February 16, 1980	In 03' 58'' Tsitsánis leaves the bouzouki, takes the baghlamás and continues the taxími

**Table 7.5: Interesting cases of taxími in the songs of Tsitsánis**

A table showing the leading rhythm of each year follows (Table 7.6).<sup>74</sup> Once again, the domination of hasápiko and zeimbékiko rhythms is confirmed. Moreover, the change from the old-style zeimbékiko to the mixed and the new (from the year 1958) as well as the appearance and frequent use of modern and foreign rhythms, such as the bayo and guaracha, is obvious.

<sup>74</sup> The number in the parenthesis indicates the number of songs in the particular rhythm recorded in each year.



Year	Rhythm (number of recordings)	Total
1936	Hasápiko, new zeimbékiko, mixed zeimbékiko, kalamatianó and bálo (1)	5
1937	Hasápiko (7)	10
1938	Hasápiko (15)	21
1939	Hasápiko (15)	28
1940	Hasápiko (17)	34
1946	Hasápiko (8)	20
1947	Hasápiko (14)	33
1948	Hasápiko (14)	33
1949	Old zeimbékiko (14)	23
1950	Old zeimbékiko (30)	44
1951	Old zeimbékiko (8)	12
1952	Old zeimbékiko (16)	19
1953	Old zeimbékiko (9)	18
1954	Old zeimbékiko (8)	13
1955	Old zeimbékiko (2)	5
1956	Old zeimbékiko (8)	15
1957	Old zeimbékiko (13)	21
1958	Mixed zeimbékiko (9)	19
1959	Mixed zeimbékiko (4)	12
1960	Mixed zeimbékiko (6)	16
1961	New zeimbékiko and mixed zeimbékiko (3)	14
1962	Baghió (4)	9
1963	Baghió (5)	11
1964	Akouarátza (5)	17
1965	New zeimbékiko, tsiftetéli and akouarátza (2)	12
1966	Baghió (2)	7
1967	Hasápiko (4)	13
1968	Hasápiko (3)	7
1969	5/8 (3)	11
1970	New zeimbékiko and tsiftetéli (1)	2
1971	New zeimbékiko (3)	4
1972	No recording	0
1973	New zeimbékiko and karsilamá (1)	2
1974	No recording	0
1975	Hasápiko and new zeimbékiko (3)	12
1976	No recording	0
1977	Karsilámás (1)	1
1978	Hasápiko and new zeimbékiko (4)	11
1979	New zeimbékiko (1)	1
1980	Taxími and taxími & karsilámás (2)	8
1981	No recording	0
1982	No recording	0
1983	Old zeimbékiko, hasápiko, mixed zeimbékiko and karsilámás (1)	4
No date	Taxími (2)	3

**Table 7.6: Dominant rhythms in each recording year for Tsitsánis songs**

The years 1975 and 1978 are notable for the quantity of recordings issued. Although Tsitsánis's recordings seemed to reduce dramatically after 1970 until the end of his recording career, there was a sudden recording explosion in these two years. He recorded 12 songs in 1975 and 11 in 1978.<sup>75</sup> The number of recordings in 1975 was due to the creation of a new LP (33 rpm) record entitled *Σκοπευτήριο* [skopeftírio = shooting ground] with 12 completely new recordings. In 1978, he recorded another new LP (33 rpm) record entitled *12 Νέες Λαϊκές Δημιουργίες* [12 nées laikés dhimiourghíes = 12 new laikó creations]. In fact, the title is deceptive because one of these 12 songs was recorded for the first time in 1960. This is *Την τελευταία μου ζαριά*<sup>76</sup> [tin teleftéa móu zariá = my last throw of the dice]. There are two important factors about these two records: the first is the title that Tsitsánis chose for the second LP. After all, it verifies the claims of Despina Michael in her article 'Tsitsánis and the Birth of the New "Laikó Tragoudi"' (1996). Michael argues that Tsitsánis deliberately used to use this term to describe his music, that is, the word laikó. He wanted to separate his music from the underground and mistrustful *rembétiko* played in the hashish dens. The second important point is the fact that both LPs included a song with a political subject. In 1970 he included *Της γερακίνας γιός*<sup>77</sup> [tis gherakínas ghiós = the haggard woman's son], and in 1978 *Μπλόκος*<sup>78</sup> [blókos = dragnet]. With both songs' lyrics Tsitsánis confirmed the claims for his left-wing (*αριστερός* [aristerós]) beliefs.<sup>79</sup>

The tables below (Table 7.7, Table 7.8, Table 7.9 and Table 7.10) give an understanding of the reasons for the choices of the singers in terms of the rhythms. They also help the analyst to give possible explanations regarding Tsitsánis's thoughts in terms of choosing the right singer for the right song. Table 7.7 and Table 7.8 represent the number of recordings by singer. They function as yardsticks for the next tables (Table 7.9 and Table 7.10) which show the number of recordings by rhythm and singer.

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<sup>75</sup> From 1970 onwards, the number of recordings did not exceed the four songs except from the year 1980 when he recorded eight songs.

<sup>76</sup> Columbia CG 4179 - DG 7583, recorded on June 21, 1960.

<sup>77</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5234 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975.

<sup>78</sup> CBS 83406, recorded in 1978.

<sup>79</sup> See Chapter 8. In terms of the 'discourse of the Greek left on rebetiko' see Zaimakis (2009).

Year	Paghioumtzis Strátos	Tsaousákis Pródhromos	Tsitsánis Vasilis	Bélou Sotiria	Instrumental	Angelópoulos Manólis	Ninou Marika	Pánu Póli	Gheorghakopóulu loána	Gréi Kéti	Kazantzídis Stélios	Lidhia Ghiota	Perdhikópoulos Dhimitris	Ghavalás Pános	Bithikósis Ghrighóris
1936															
1937	1												6		
1938	8				1								6		
1939	22				3										
1940	20								1						
1946	7	6			1				3						
1947	5	5		3					4						
1948		5		11	1				4						
1949		11		4			4		1						
1950		22		3			5		1						
1951		3					4								
1952	1	4		2											
1953		2		7											
1954			1	2			4								
1955								1							
1956					1					5	3	1		1	1
1957								2		1	8	2			2
1958								4		1	3	2			2
1959						2				1		2			
1960				1		5		1		2					2
1961								3		3				1	
1962					2			1		1					3
1963						4		1			2	1		3	
1964						2						2			3
1965						2						2		3	
1966			1			1									1
1967			8			1						1			
1968			3												
1969			7												
1970			2												
1971			2												
1973			1					1							
1975			5												
1977			1												
1978			8												
1979			1												
1980					8										
1983			4												
no date					2										

Table 7.7: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by singer and year (A)

Year	Hrisáfi 'Ana	Hristou Dhimitris	'Imvriou Sónia	Káki Elyfra	Kalfopoúlu Soula	Kambánis Stávros	Kanarídis Manólis	Karwali- Abatzí Sofia	Kí(e)romitis Stélios	Kókotas Stamátis	Korónis	Labíri Eléni	Lambráki Haroúla	Láoura	Linda Méri	Makrís Ilias	Maráki Kéti	Mavromiháli s Kóstas	Menidhiáti s Hristos
1936				2				2											
1937																			
1938																			
1939																			
1940									2										
1946									1										
1947																			
1948					1							1							
1949					1														
1950																			
1951																			
1952		2										1							
1953	3									2		1			1				
1954															4				
1955	2																		
1956																			
1957																			
1958						4													
1959						2	1						2						
1960						1									1			4	
1961																			
1962			1																
1963																			1
1964	1																		1
1965																			2
1966																			
1967													3						
1968									2										
1969												2				1			2
1970																			
1971																			
1973																			
1975																			
1977																			
1978																1			
1979																			
1980																			
1983																			
no date																			

Table 7.8: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by singer and year (B)

Singer	9/4 - Old Zembékkiko	2/4 - Hasáiko	9/4 - New Zembékkiko	9/8 - Karsilamás	9/4 - Mixed zembékkiko-2	2/4 - Bayo	2/4 - Guaracha	4/4 - Tsiftetéli	4/4 - Bolero	9/4 - Mixed zembékkiko-1	Kalamati andis (or Sirtós)	5/8	2/4 - Bákos	2/4 - Rumba	4/4 - Hasápiko (Blues)	6/8 - Sirtós	2/4 - Bayourumba	Taximi	9/4 - Tsiftetéli in 9-beat	6/8 - Dádrá	7/8 - Riversad kalamatiand	3/4 - Tsámkos
Paghlioumizis Strátos	14	33	12	2						1												
Tsacousákis Pródromos	41	12	1							3												
Tsitsánis Vasílis	2	13	11	8				1		1		3		1		1		1				
Béλου Sotíria	17	8	4					1		1	1					1						
Instrumental	1	7		3						1								4				
Angelópoulos Manólis			1	1	4	1	3	1						2						1	2	
Ninou Marika	8	7							2													
Pánou Póli	2	4	2		2	2					1				1							
Gheorghakopoulou Ioána	2	7	3							1			1									
Gréti Kéti	4	1		2	1			1	1						2					1		
Kazantzídis Stélios	12			1	2	1																
Lídaia Ghíota	1		1		2	1		2				2	2	1	1	2						
Perdhikópoulos Dhimitris	2	7									1											
Ghavalás Pános	1	1	1			5	3															
Bithikótis Ghirghóris	1		3		1		1			1	1									1		
Perpiniádis Stelákis		10							1													
Stavropóulu Dézi		6	3																	1		
Hasáli Stéla	6	2							2													
Abatzí Rita		1																				
Anaghnotákis Pétros	1																					
Angelíhou Anthi				1				1														
Binis Tákis	3			1																		
Daíras Ghíorghos	1																					
Dália Réna	1								1													
Dianá											1											1
Dhionisiou Strátos		1	3		1										1							
Dhrosinós Ghavíll		1																				
Evghenikós Thanásis	3																					
Fotíou Manólis								1														
Ghaláni Dhímitra																					1	
Gháspari 'Eli										1												
Ghíli Maria		1																				
Harmandá Lísa	2																					
Hasapákis Mihail	1		2																			
Hatzianoniou Ghíorghos			1			2								1						1		
Hatzíhristos Apóstolos	1	4																				
Hrisáfi 'Ana	3		1							1						1						
Hrisíou Dhimitrís	2																					
'Imvros Sónia						1																
Káki Elvíra			1								1											
Kallipóulu Soula	1	1																				
Kambánis Stávros	4				2											1						
Kanarkós Manólis					1																	
Karveli-Abatzí Sofia		1												1								
Kleíjromitis Stélios			3																			
Kókotas Stamátis		1																				
Korónis			2																			
Labri Eléni		2		1																		
Lambráki Haroúla	1	1	1	1										1								1
Láoura	1								1													
Linda Meni	3	1							1													
Makrís Iías			1																			
Maráki Kéti	1																					
Mavromihális Kóstas					3				1													
Menidiádis Hristos				1			1	1														
Mitáki Gheorghía										1												
Mosholiou Víki		1																			2	
Moshonás Othíséas	1	1									1		2									
Moustákas Andónis																					1	
Nikolaídis Apóstolos			1					1													1	
Papadhópoulos Ghíorghos	2																					
Pasaláti Soula	1																					
Polimérís Fotís		1							2													
Repánis Andónis				1	1	1															1	
Río Bámbe																						
Roumeliótis Dhimitrís	2	1		1	1						1											
Sinaldis Theodhósie								1						1								
Sofroniou 'Eli	1	1																				
Soughioutzís Stélios	1																					
Stákas Tzon								1														
Stámou Réna	3	4																				
Tzouanákis Stávros	2	2	1																			
Vamvakáris Márkos	3	2																				
Vasilíou Sotíria																						1
Vourtsi Mártha			1																			
Zaghorónis Spiros	2																					

Table 7.9: Number of Tsitsánis's recordings by singer and rhythm (A)

Singer	3/4 - Aptáiko zeimbékiko	4/4 - Tsifiteli:	2/2 - Cha	2/2 - Tombao	2/4 - Balos	2/4 - Bayo	2/4 - Hasápiko & 2/4 - Roumba	3/4 - Ballad	3/4 - Taximí & 2/4 - Hasápiko	4/4 - Argentinean tangó-cacha	4/4 - Bolo	4/4 - Taximí & 2/4 - Hasápiko	4/4 - Traditiona (Epitaf)	4/4 - Tsifiteli (ver.) & 2/4 - Guaracha	6/8 - Daská	6/8 - Sirtos (Epitaf)	6/8 - Zourekhiko (Thrace-ver.)	8/8 - Mantou lumbo (mix)	9/4 - Aptáiko monó & 9/4 Aptáiko dhiplo	9/4 - Aptáiko zeimbékiko dhiplo	9/4 - Zeimbékiko variations	Problem, Afro-Cuban, Latin
Paghourmizis Stálios	1																					
Tsouvakio Dhrómos	1																			1		
Tsitánis Vasilis		1																				
Béou Solón																						
Instrumental																						
Angelópoulos Manólis									1		1	1										1
Ninou Maska																						
Panou Póli																						
Gheorghakopoulou Iodina																						
Gréi Kéi					1																	
Kassariádis Stálios																						
Lidha Ghóta																						
Perdhikópoulos Dhímítris																						
Gharádis Péros																						
Bithikósas Gheghónis													1								1	
Perpiniádis Steláks																						
Stavropoulou Dézi																						
Hasá Stálos																						
Abatzí Rita																						
Anaghnostáks Péros																						
Angelíkou Aurlí																						
Binis Takis																						
Daláras Ghórhghos																						
Dáka Réna																						
Dhaná													1									
Dhioníou Stálios																						
Dhioníou Ghaurí																						
Evgheníós Thanásis																						
Fotíou Manólis																						
Gharádis Dhímítris																						
Chakopí Tí		1																				1
Gréi María																						
Harmánis Lílha																						
Hasápiko Miháil																						
Hatzianóniou Ghórhghos																						
Hatzivíthos Apóstolos																						
Hrási Ános																						
Hríkou Dhímítris																						
Imríou Sónra																						
Káki Elíra																						
Kalíppoulou Soula																						
Kambánis Stávros																						
Karandíou Manólis																						
Karhéli-Abatzí Sofia																						
Kleíjromílis Stélos																						
Kákos Stamátis																						
Korónis																						
Labíri Eléni																						
Lambráki Harólia																						
Láoura																						
Lída Méri																						
Makrís Iías																						
Maskí Kéi																						
Mavromiháris Kóstas																						
Mendhíllis Hrístos																						
Mitíki Gheghas																						
Moshofíou Víki																						
Moshónis Odhseás																						
Moustádis Andónis																						
Nikolaídis Apóstolos																						
Papaadhópoulos Ghórhghos																						
Pasaráki Soula																						
Potiméris Fotis																						
Repánis Andónis																						
Río Biémha																						
Roumelídis Dhímítris																						
Sinalhás Theodhósias																						
Sofroníou Tí																						
Souphahíthos Stélos																						
Stákas Tron																						
Stávrou Réna																						
Tavarakós Stávros																						
Varmakáris Míkios																						
Vasilíou Solón																						
Voufíris Mártha																						
Zacharíou Solón																						

Table 7.10: Number of Tsitánis’s recordings by singer and rhythm (B)

There appear to be unwritten rules within the ranks of Greek musicians (just as evidence suggests there are within all musicians’ ranks) regarding the categorization of songs. For instance, songs in zeimbékiko rhythm are considered more serious, many times called by Greek musicians *βαριά* [variá (plural), varí (singular) = heavy], where a virtuoso singer and/or soloist (most of the time a bouzouki player) can show their skills, either by playing a very skilled intro, or either by singing very difficult passages or performing with very artistic melismas. Moreover, in many cases, the dhrómos that a song is based on can indicate the song’s style and aesthetics. For example, dhrómos Ousák, which is a very serious and heavy dhrómos, is mainly used for zeimbékiko and rather rarely used for hasápiko. Table 7.11 shows some examples of this type of song based on zeimbékiko rhythm.

Title	Matrix code	Catalogue code	Worth-noticing
Γεννήθηκα για να πονώ [ghenithika ghiá na ponó = I was born to suffer]	GO 4924	B 74306-I	Bouzouki; accordion; voice
Δεν σ' άκουσα μανούλα μου [dhen s' ákousa manóúla mou = mother I didn't listen to you]	7XGA 1379	7PG 3115	Voice; general feeling
Ζητιάνος [zitiános = the beggar]	OGA 1191	AO 2722	General feeling
Η δικτατορία [I dhiktatórisa = the dictator]	OGA 2404	AO 5329	Bouzouki; voice
Θέλω να είναι Κυριακή [ thélo na íne kiriakí = I want to be Sunday]	7XGA 947	7PG 2911	Voice; bouzouki
Σκίσε τ' ανώνυμο γράμμα [skíse t' anónimo to ghráma = tear the anonymous letter]	7XGA 831	7PG 2858	Bouzouki; accordion
Τα νιάτα τα μπερμπάντικα [ta niáta ta berbándika = philanderer youth]	GO 4626	GA 7657	General feeling
Της κοινωνίας η διαφορά [tis kinonías I dhiaforá = the dissimilarity of the society]	7XGO 10302	MSM 391 / 480056	General feeling; voice
Το κόκκινο μαντήλι [to kókino mandíli = the red scarf]	OGA 2566	AO 5417	Bouzoukia
Το πουκάμισο [to poukámiso = the shirt]	OGA 2480	AO 5364	General feeling; bouzouki; accordion; voice

**Table 7.11: Examples of ‘heavy’ zeimbékiko songs (Tsitsánis)**

On the other hand, hasápiko rhythm needs completely different treatment, both from the orchestra and, especially, from the singer. In many cases, due to its fast tempo, the voice has to be airy and light, with more attention to the accentuation of the lyrics.<sup>80</sup> In many cases, hasápiko songs ‘use’ the lyrics in a completely different way to the zeimbékiko. In most hasápikos, almost every single note of the melodic line carries a single syllable, while most zeimbékiko songs utilize more melismatic phrases, where a single syllable continues for more than one note. Furthermore, in hasápiko songs, due to their style, the utilization of a second melodic line by a second singer (in most cases in parallel thirds with the first) is easier to create than in a zeimbékiko song (see Tsitsánis’s *kandádha* style songs – Chapters 1 and 4). There are of course exceptions

<sup>80</sup> A special exception is the case of the singer Strátos Paghioumtzis. The combination of the hasápiko with his heavy, loud and sort of tenor-like voice produced many and successful (with regard to their sales) songs. However, one should not forget that the hasápiko rhythm was not played as fast as it was played later on (see Chapter 6).

with hasápiko songs that have a heavier air and need more virtuoso skills on the part of the singer(s). In many cases, various aspects of the music depend on the period when the songs were written. For instance, the melismatic phrases of the voices and the virtuoso performance techniques of the bouzouki players are elements of the new era that began around 1960. Table 7.12 shows some examples of songs in hasápiko rhythm where a lighter or more scherzoso style is obvious.

Title	Matrix code	Catalogue code	Worth noticing
Απόψε στις ακρογιαλιές [apóψε stis akroghialiés = tonight at the coasts]	7XGA 2808	7PG 3748	Scherzoso style
Βάρκα γιαλό [várko ghialó = boat coast]	CG 2165	DG 6599	Simplicity, voices
Βόλτα μέσα στην Ελλάδα [vólta méssa stin eládfa = stroll in Greece]	GO 4655	GA 7670	Style, voices
Για τα μάτια π' αγαπώ [ghía ta mátia p' aghapó = for the eyes that I love]	CG 2535	DG 6786	Style, voices
Είμαι παιδάκι με ψυχή και ζηλεμένο [íme pedháki me psihí ke zileμένο = I am a kid with soul and enviable]	GO 2818	GA 7068	Simplicity, voices
Η καρδιά σου θα γίνει χρυσή [i kardhiá sou tha ghíni hrisí = your heart will become gold]	CG 2625	DG 6819	Scherzoso style

**Table 7.12: Examples of 'light' songs in hasápiko (Tsitsánis)**

Based on the above evidence, one can make reasonable conjectures regarding the preferences of the songwriter. For instance, if one considers the two singers with the most recordings, that is Paghioumtzís with 64 and Tsaousákis with 57, it can be seen that Paghioumtzís sang 29 songs in zeimbékiko (old, new and aptáliko) rhythm (that is 45.3 per cent of the total) and 33 in hasápiko (that is 51.5 per cent of the total). On the other hand, Tsaousákis sang 46 songs in zeimbékiko (old, new and mixed) rhythm (that is 80.7 per cent of the total) and 11 in hasápiko (19.2 per cent of the total). According to these data, two thoughts can be borne in mind: firstly that Tsitsánis thought of Paghioumtzís's voice as being more appropriate for hasápiko style songs, while he preferred Tsaousákis's voice for the zeimbékiko songs and, secondly, that the composer clearly did not want these two singers to sing other rhythms than the aforementioned. Paghioumtzís sang two songs in a rhythm other than those, that is, in karsilamás. However, if one thinks that the karsilamás also belongs in the zeimbékiko family then one will understand that there is no other

rhythm sung by Paghioumtzís. The same is also true of Tsaousákis. Tsitsánis used him only for zeimbékiko and hasápiko rhythms. There are more examples of similar cases, such as Kazantzídhis and Angelópoulos. It should be mentioned that I am comparing singers that were active during the same time period. Kazantzídhis sang 13 songs in zeimbékiko while Angelópoulos seemed to be more appropriate for contemporary foreign rhythms, such as the guaracha and the rumba.

Together with the end of the analysis of the laikó rhythms, the analysis of the musical part of Tsitsánis's discographical work also ends. The next chapter (Chapter 8) gathers all the pieces of Tsitsánis's puzzle so far identified and tries to put them back together. By gathering these pieces together, the chapter aspires to demonstrate the most complete image possible of Tsitsánis's musical, as well as socio-cultural, significance. One should not forget that the construction of the musical identity of a songwriter does not only belong to him, for its changes, occasionally, depend on several other factors, outside the songwriter's sphere of actions. The best proof for this argument is the fact that even after the death of the songwriters their songs still continue to evolve. In other words, what a young person listens to today, and they connect to Vasílis Tsitsánis's music, is not the same as another person listening to it in 1950, for example. Furthermore, a Tsitsánis's song means something to a 60 year old Greek, while it means something completely different to a teenager. The music evolves and nobody will ever be sure if Tsitsánis himself would approve of the way his music is performed today. After all, the message that music passes is the key to the unlocking of a songwriter's intentions. Undoubtedly, rembétiko and laikó have evolved and changed, as my thesis demonstrates, along with the messages they now convey to their audience.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> See also in Middleton *Popular Music as a Message* (1990: 172).



**Part IV**  
**Conclusions**

## Chapter 8

### Conclusions

#### **Re-evaluation of Tsitsánis's Significance**

Vasílis Tsitsánis's recording career (1936 – 1983) reveals information not only concerning the music itself (from the particularities of his own songwriting style to the genre in its entirety), but also concerning multifarious sociological aspects of Greek culture. This first in-depth analysis of his musical works and compositional style deals with important and far-reaching claims about his work and aspires to provide a better understanding of complex and longstanding issues that have been troubling musicians and musicologists for many years, such as the development of the harmony, the role of the singers, the re-determination of the role of the bouzouki, and so forth. This project, therefore, makes its original contribution by offering an analysis of Vasílis Tsitsánis's recorded output that provides a key to the unlocking of a number of musical, historical and socio-cultural issues pertaining to Tsitsánis's role in the development of Greek laikó music, the first urban musical product of modern Greece. Because of the previous neglect in academia of rebetological and laikological issues, this thesis represents the first academic study to collate and synthesize a large quantity of information about Greek popular music.

The two core tools of the project are: 1) the electronic database of Vasílis Tsitsánis recordings (T.E.D.) which includes all the recordings made by him along with a great deal of information about them; and 2) the transcription and analysis of selected recordings throughout his career (charting structural, instrumental, textural, timbral, rhythmic, harmonic and modal changes). By analyzing Tsitsánis's music, this thesis succeeds in revealing at numerous points the boundaries of rembétiko and the newer laikó style, and disclosing the particular characteristics that form the new musical style. It can be argued that the project not only contributes to the understanding of Greek popular music (something important per se judging by the embryonic stage of Greek popular musicology), but also offers findings concerning other musical cultures, such Turkish, Afro-Cuban, Blues, Latin, Italian, Hindi and so forth. It functions, therefore, as a bridge for all these cultures that have been mixed together in the Greek peninsula on various occasions, and which have been examined and analyzed within this thesis. Vasílis Tsitsánis's project helps Greek laikology to

gain its place within popular musicological studies for, on the one hand, it deals with an extremely rich musical culture (involving synthesis with other musical cultures) and, on the other hand, it reveals information that aids the researchers, musicians, and audiences to understand and evaluate the socio-cultural history of a wide geographic area (the Mediterranean).

What the previous chapters have indisputably revealed is that Vasílis Tsitsánis based his songwriting style on the traditional *rembétiko* standards that many other songwriters used before and after him. However, no matter whether the changes that Tsitsánis introduced are judged to be of low or high importance (something that is subjective), the style (that is *rembétiko*) led to a different, new age. Some of the ‘highlights’ of the new style that Tsitsánis himself always wanted to refer to as *laikó*, rather than as *rembétiko* (without meaning that the word *laikó* was not used before Tsitsánis) follow, along with a summary and (in some cases) a re-evaluation. Clearly, through the path that he showed, along with many other *laikó* songwriters of the same period (such as Papaioánu, Hiótis, Kaldháras, Mitsákis and Hatzihrístos), they succeeded in taking the style out of the underworld, and delivered it to every social strata, making it, more or less, an inseparable part of Greek identity and culture, not only within the country’s borders, but all over the world. From now on, sounds like the sound of the bouzouki and of the rhythmic style of the *hasápiko* would be identifications of modern Greek culture. Some of the constituents found in this freshly regenerated musical style were clearly changes introduced by Tsitsánis, as the findings within this thesis reveal.

## **The Lyrics**

The issue of the themes of the lyrics was too large for me to do justice to in the space available here. It would have meant dealing inadequately with critical matters issues such as the *dhrómi* and the rhythms. The focus of this thesis has been on music, and an examination of the lyrics would fill a second thesis. However, I make reference to the subject here (in the conclusion) because, first, the lyrics should be mentioned as a ‘highlight’ of Tsitsánis’s new style, and secondly, I wish to underline their significance and, in so doing, suggest a potential area for future research.

The topics found in the lyrics constitute one of the most important changes in Tsitsánis's music, compared to the almost constant preference of the songwriters until then towards words that had to do with prison, drugs, assassinations and so forth. In other words, the lyrical theme, due to which the whole style had been characterized as marginal and directly connected to the underworld, had now changed. Apparently, this is not the case for the entire *rembétiko* song repertoire that existed before Tsitsánis, for there were countless songs that had to do with love, passion, women and so forth. To see it as an image, one can consider the low-life theme as being at the top of the pyramid of *rembétiko*'s lyrical preferences, while the themes about love are at the second level of this pyramid. With Tsitsánis's lyrical work the second level takes the place of the first and the first is given an even lower level at the pyramid of his lyrical preferences. One can now find plenty of song examples that contain social messages: songs about poverty, exile, migration, the civil war, travelling, anecdotes, songs that describe the life of the working proletariat, and so forth. There are, obviously, many references to the low-life themes, but these are dramatically fewer than before. Moreover, it is not only a matter of the changed themes but also of the changed writing technique. Tsitsánis used a far more sophisticated writing technique than the previous *rembétés*. Some important song examples illustrating several lyrical techniques of Tsitsánis are presented below.<sup>1</sup>

Worth noting are those cases that perhaps reveal a habit of Tsitsánis: he used to have a female singer to sing a song when its lyrics were the words of a man to a woman (he also did that the other way around). Two song examples are: *Γειτόνισσα*<sup>2</sup> [*ghitónisa* = neighbour lady]; and *Φίλος και γυναίκα*<sup>3</sup> [*filos ke ghinéka* = friend and woman].

Although he never took a political position openly, and he even rejected Andreas Papandreou's proposal for taking part in the elections with the P.A.S.O.K. Party (the party that has been governing Greece for approximately 20 years, since 1981), Vasilis Tsitsánis did make his political views public, through his lyrics. The

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<sup>1</sup> Anastasiou (1995 and 2004) and Hristianópoulos (2009) contain very good analyzes of Tsitsánis's lyrical work.

<sup>2</sup> Parlophone GO 2640 - B. 21897, recorded in late 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Columbia CG 3582 - DG 7304, recorded on March 19, 1957.

next table (Table 8.1) includes some songs that have been connected to some political circumstances.

Title	Recording information
Κάποια μάνα αναστενάζει [kária mána anastenázi = a mother sighs]	Parlophone GO 3796 - B. 74100-I, recorded on May 31, 1947
Η γερακίνα [i gherakína = the haggard]	Columbia CG 2424 - DG 6729, recorded on July 14, 1948
Πω πω ζημιιά που πάθαμε [po po zimiá pou páthame = oh my, what a damage we had]	CBS 7815, recorded in circa October, 1979.
Της γερακίνας γιος [tis gherakínas ghiós = the haggard woman's son]	MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5234 - 2J- 064 70172, recorded in 1975
Νοσταλγία [nostalgía = nostalgia]	MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5241 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975

**Table 8.1: Tsitsánis's songs connected to political circumstances**

As previously mentioned above, Tsitsánis's repertoire also does include songs with lyrics that refer to low-life themes. One of them is drugs. Some examples are: *Σε λαχτάρησα αργιλέ μου*<sup>4</sup> [se lahtárisa arghilé mou = I desired you my nargileh]; *Το βαπόρι απ' την Περσία*<sup>5</sup> [to vapóri ap' tin Persía = the boat from Persia]; and *Δηλητήριο στη φλέβα*<sup>6</sup> [dhilitírio sti fléva = poison in vein]. This is one of the most important signs that show that Tsitsánis did not come from somewhere else but from the same class of the rembétes. He came from the heart of rembétiko, but he succeeded in developing his own musical style, taking with him the entire genre in a new direction.

Finally, another interesting 'lyrical habit' of Tsitsánis was the use of proverbs. I can say that his case is the only one I am aware of, for I have never listened to Greek proverbs set to music by any other songwriter. Some song examples are: *Όσα δεν φτάνει η αλεπού*<sup>7</sup> [ósa dhen ftáni i alepou = everything that the fox can't reach]; *Στερνή μου γνώση να σε είχα πρώτα*<sup>8</sup> [sterní mou ghnósi na se íha próta = my late

<sup>4</sup> Venus-Tzina SV 75, recorded in 1983.

<sup>5</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 6314 - 2J 006 70529/II, recorded in 1977.

<sup>6</sup> CBS 83406, recorded in 1978.

<sup>7</sup> HMV OGA 1528 - AO 2911, recorded on December 10, 1949.

<sup>8</sup> Parlophone GO 4828 - B. 74287-II, recorded on July 10, 1953.

knowledge I wish I had you earlier]; and *Η αχλάδα έχει πίσω την ουρά της*<sup>9</sup> [i ahláda éhi píso tin ourá tis = the big pear has its tale at the back].

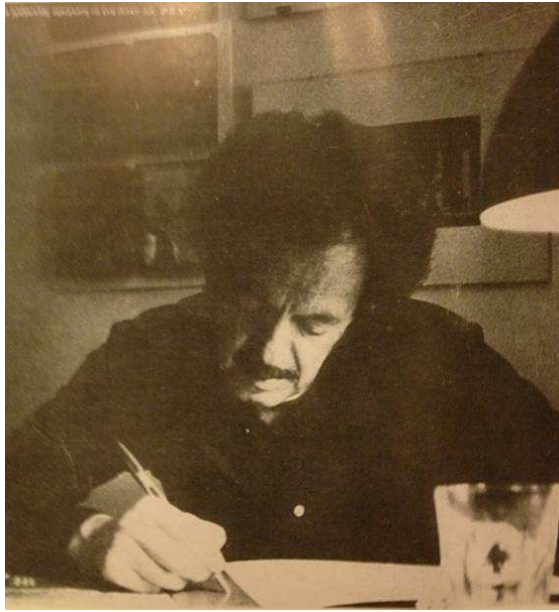
### **The Re-determination of the Role of the Bouzouki**

Greek laikó musicians usually – and generally – speak of two main bouzouki schools: the Tsitsánis’s school and the Hiótiis’s school. Although many skilled bouzouki players existed before Tsitsánis, especially within the ranks of the refugees, Tsitsánis is credited with the re-determination of the role of the bouzouki and, consequently, of the whole style itself. Especially when compared to the case of Piraeus rembétiko bouzouki players, the technique of Tsitsánis was far different from that which existed till then. The simple movements of the melodies found, for example, in Vamvakáris’s songs were substituted by the more complex lines of Tsitsánis. There are three major sources that testify and, indeed, justify his skilled technique: 1) Tsitsánis described in some of his interviews that he used to literally bleed due to many hours of practice, a practice, though, that was based on songwriting and not on today’s practice of musicians, that is, of playing exercises. 2) Many of his friends, rembétiko aficionados who have published books and articles, include in their texts stories regarding a habit of Tsitsánis: he used to throw off many melodies that he had created and from which many others songwriters would have made a number of songs, in order to make only one which would satisfy his desires. By doing so, they say, he used to spend days in his work room at home, making his fingers bleed.<sup>10</sup> 3) Information given to me by Kóstas Tsitsánis verifies the same situation. He told me that his father used to spend countless hours in his work room, that is, in the basement of their house in Glyfada. Many times, Tsitsánis made the rest of the family wonder, because he did not appear in the main house for lunch. The following photograph (Figure 8.1) is a gift from Kóstas Tsitsánis, showing his father inside his working room during songwriting.

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<sup>9</sup> HMV OGA 1727 - AO 2984, recorded on December 16, 1950.

<sup>10</sup> If one sees a bouzouki or photographs of bouzoukis of this period, they will observe that the space between the strings and the fingerboard (what it is often called by Greek musicians *μανίκι* [maníki = sleeve]) is much bigger than today’s instruments. Thus, a long-lasting practice would cause pain to the player’s fingers and, in cases of exaggerations, even bleeding.



**Figure 8.1: Vasilis Tsitsánis during work**

The facets of the new performance technique of Tsitsánis did not concern merely the instrument, for it also affected other constituents of the style such as the accompanying technique of the rest of the band and, later, the sound engineers who would search for different ways to record him. It consequently affected the next generations of musicians and especially bouzouki players who now had a reference point with regard to the virtuosity they wanted to build. In fact, especially if one also takes into consideration the second bouzouki school (the school of Manólis Hiótis), one can see that a higher level of virtuosity in musical instruments (especially in those that are the ‘flagships’ of the style, such as the bouzouki in *rembétiko* and *laikó*) is a major reason for the development of a style. In other words, a musical genre can evolve through the virtuosity that new artists put in the style. After all, there might not be a better proof of this than Hiótis’s entirely new song style in his Latin American-influenced era, which has been examined and analyzed within this thesis. First, he listened to something new, that is, Latin and Blues (in the USA), and then, he took advantage of his high-level virtuosity to import these new elements into his songwriting technique. By doing so, a new era for the style began.

## The Shift towards the West

There are many references within this thesis to the impact of the newly introduced elements of Tsitsánis, which led *rembétiko* towards Westernization and wider acceptance. The most important of these characteristics are: 1) the *kandádha* song style, about which there are several references within the thesis; 2) the new role given to as well as new combinations of the voices (for example, using movements in parallel thirds all over the song); and 3) the richer chordal harmony introduced in his early post-war repertoire, basically caused by the more complex and sophisticated melodies of his songs. Unquestionably, many of the new parameters introduced by Tsitsánis became the foundations of the *laikó* song and are each examined below.

## The Foundations for the Future

Some key songs of Vasilis Tsitsánis follow, along with explanatory comments, in order to point out interesting cases, vital for the development of the style. These songs attest to Tsitsánis's musical significance, for they set the foundations for the future of the genre.

*Η σκιά μου και γω*<sup>11</sup> [i skiá móu ke gho = my shadow and me]: this song belongs in the Tsitsánis bolero category. Under discussion here is the special case of bolero songs, which were examined in Chapter 6. This particular bolero can be considered as one of the composer's most modern ideas as regards the chordal progressions and the rhythm's interpretation. After all, he had Dhímitra Ghaláni to sing this song, a young singer whose name was integrally connected to the *νέο κύμα* [néo kíma = new wave] musical style, a style that can be considered as being in between the *laikó* of the period under discussion (1970s) and the so-called *έντεχνο* [éntehno = artistic] song. To put it another way, the selection of Ghaláni shows that there should always be a link connecting *laikó* style to the style-branches that followed it – not to mention the fact that most of these post-*laikó* styles have, in turn, their roots in *laikó*.

*Ο αισθηματίας*<sup>12</sup> [o esthimatías = the sentimentalist] is a song that illustrates the Westernized additions of Tsitsánis into the style. Apart from the movement of the

<sup>11</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5240 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975.

<sup>12</sup> Odeon LG 1018 - GA 7753, recorded in December, 1953.



melody which sounds far distant from the older makam-based melodies, the key point here is the existence of two soloist guitars that play the intro, along with the accordion. In other words, this is a sign that, even as early as 1953, the style can exist without the existence of its flag, that is, the bouzouki.

*Πολιορκία*<sup>13</sup> [poliorkía = the siege] does not sound like any other song of Tsitsánis (I could even say like any other song of this period made by any other songwriter). The most obvious characteristic of this particular song, compared to other songs, is the arrangement, which is not based on some older, rembetiko-laikó classical, already existing formula. Moreover, there is no rhythmic pattern that can match this song's performance. Ultimately, there is something of a link to the music of Theodorakis, which is strengthened by the voice of Ghrighóris Bithikótsis (1922-2005) who is the singer in this song.<sup>14</sup> This particular singer, with some new songs of Tsitsánis that he recorded, along with some re-recordings of older songs of the same songwriter, marked the new era of laikó song (mainly the electric era). Bithikótsis was the flagship singer of the laikó style music of Mikis Theodorakis. The following figure (Figure 8.2) is a photograph of Tsitsánis and Bithikótsis (the two in the middle).

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<sup>13</sup> HMV 7XGA 1807 - 7PG 3362, recorded on February 4, 1964.

<sup>14</sup> There is a well-known statement-saying of Mikis Theodorakis that he 'would like to be considered as a plain student of Tsitsánis'. Unfortunately, although this statement is very famous and can be found in numerous books and articles by several authors, none of them indicates the original source, that is, where has Theodorakis initially stated this.



**Figure 8.2: Vasilis Tsitsánis and Ghrighóris Bithikótsis (in the middle; photograph given by Kóstas Tsitsánis)**

*Το τσιφτετέλι του Τσιτσάνη*<sup>15</sup> [to tsiftetéli tou Tsitsáni = Tsitsanis's tsifteteli] might be described in a rather exaggerated way, as an instrumental piece that contains a short section with lyrics. The song lasts about three minutes. Apart from a section that lasts from 01'.33'' until 02'. 11'', that is, for 38 seconds, it does not contain singing. This paradigm is the single exception within Tsitsánis's entire repertoire – not to mention that there is no other song by anyone else with the same attributes that has ever come to my attention. Thus, this song is another sign of Tsitsánis's innovative songwriting and imagination.

*Το φίλντισι κομπολογάκι μου*<sup>16</sup> [to fildisi kombologhákí mou = the chaplet of ivory] links in its rhythm, as well as its general aesthetic, to the music of contemporary Greek composers, and especially to the case of Mános Loízos's (1937-1982) music, who is considered in Greece as one of the leaders of the new wave and the artistic styles, having composed, however, many laikó songs, too.

<sup>15</sup> HMV 7XGA 3291 - 7PG 3953, recorded in 1970.

<sup>16</sup> MINOS-EMI (COLUMBIA) 7YCG 5237 - 2J-064 70172, recorded in 1975.

*Το ποτάμι*<sup>17</sup> [to potámi = the river], once again, has an obvious link to Theodorakis's music. The chord sequence is very close to the sequence of the song entitled *Σαββατόβραδο*<sup>18</sup> [savatónvradho = Saturday evening], written by Theodorakis.

*Η ξεμωαλίστρα*<sup>19</sup> [i xemialístra = the temptress], similarly to some previous cases, is linked to music composed by contemporary laikó composers. In particular, this song's aesthetic is close to the music of Ghiórgchos Zambétas (1925-1992). It is also reminiscent of Theodorakis's song entitled *Παράπονο*<sup>20</sup> [parápono = complaint]. There is also another general characteristic that connects Tsitsánis's music to contemporary styles, and that is the guitarist's performance technique. Here, I am referring to the 'new age' hasápiko songs, where the guitar plays arpeggios in triplets and not the rembétiko-traditional bass guitar (bass\_I – chord – bass\_V – chord).<sup>21</sup>

Some song examples follow that have to do with the development of song structure within laikó style. The song *Ένα ταξίδι είν' η ζωή*<sup>22</sup> [éna taxídhi in' i zoí = life is a trip] is a fine example. It is one of the few in which, after the last intro, the band plays the refrain of the song once more. The 'refrain after the last intro' structure is one of the new characteristics established in the new laikó style, especially after the 1970s.

Another new song structure is the performance of the last verse instrumentally. After the last intro of the song, the band plays the melody of the verse without lyrics. Usually, after this section comes the refrain for the last time before the song's finale. Some song examples are: *Με σπανιόλικες χαβάγιες*<sup>23</sup> [me spaniólíkes havághies = with Spanish havagias]; *Μπράβο σου πως με δουλεύεις*<sup>24</sup> [brávo sóu pos me dhoulévis = well done for the way you play with me];<sup>25</sup> *Πω πω πω Μαρία*<sup>26</sup> [po po po María =

<sup>17</sup> Columbia 7XCG 1176 - SCDG 3025, recorded in 1961.

<sup>18</sup> In LP *Πολιτεία*, Minos-EMI Columbia, 70231/70231, 1976.

<sup>19</sup> HMV 7XGA 2392 - 7PG 3568, recorded on December 2, 1965.

<sup>20</sup> In LP *Πολιτεία*, Minos-EMI Columbia, 70231/70231, 1976.

<sup>21</sup> See Chapter 6.

<sup>22</sup> Columbia CG 4058 - DG 7531, recorded on February 15, 1960.

<sup>23</sup> Parlophone GO 2837 - B. 21936, recorded on November 18, 1937.

<sup>24</sup> Odeon GO 3215 - GA 7181, recorded in 1939.

<sup>25</sup> In this song, the band plays only half of the verse without the lyrics.

<sup>26</sup> HMV OGA 1493 - AO 2875 and AO 2876, recorded on October 19, 1949.

oh Mary]; *Πάρε με Μάρω πάρε με*<sup>27</sup> [páre me Máro páre me = take me Maro take me]; and *Χήρα ζωντοχήρα*<sup>28</sup> [híra zondohíra = grass widow divorcee]; and *Η ρεζέρβα*<sup>29</sup> [i rezérva = the spare wheel].

## Evolution Within

The analysis of a style's development (such as the case of *rembétiko*) does not produce results only after comparing one songwriter's music to another's; it also comes about after comparing the music of a songwriter with itself: how a song was played during the 1950s, and how the same song is been played now, for example. Therefore, some cases follow which reveal clearly in what direction as well as to what extent Tsitsánis's style developed.

The song *Το παράπονο του ξενητεμένου*<sup>30</sup> [to parápono tou xeniteménou = the emigrant's complaint] is one of the most popular songs of Tsitsánis, re-recorded and re-issued by many singers, numerous times. It is a song, along with many others, that has 'suffered' many stylistic changes due to the aforementioned recordings and re-issues. To put it another way (and to generalize the issue), there are two major reasons for the changes that are observed in re-recordings of old songs: 1) its popularity (therefore, people do not stop playing it), and 2) time: because people do not stop playing it, inevitably as the years pass some changes occur – some of them being conscious while others are unconscious. The usual changes that occur in songs such as the one above are: 1) a changed tempo (usually a faster tempo), 2) a changed chordal harmony (usually a more enriched one), and 3) a changed melody (especially in the intro and in the call-and-response melodies). All three of the aforementioned are present in *to parápono tou xeniteménou*.

Another extremely popular hit of Tsitsánis that is now played with major changes compared to the way it was played in the original recording is *Χωρίσαμε ένα δειλινό*<sup>31</sup> [horisame éna dhilínó = we broke up at nightfall]. Once again, the faster

<sup>27</sup> HMV OGA 1395 - AO 2827, recorded on July 16, 1948.

<sup>28</sup> HMV OGA 1316 - AO 2786, recorded on February 9, 1948.

<sup>29</sup> HMV OGA 2567 - AO 5413, recorded on June 27, 1957.

<sup>30</sup> HMV OGA 1722 - AO 2995, recorded on November 30, 1950.

<sup>31</sup> Columbia CG 2212 - DG 6626, recorded on December 9, 1946.

tempo and the different chordal harmony employed are the most ‘ringing’ changes. Other song examples with crucial changes are: *Κάθε βράδυ πάντα λυπημένη*<sup>32</sup> [káthe vrádhī pánda lipiméni = every night always sad]; *Το ρημαγμένο σπίτι*<sup>33</sup> [to rimaghméno spíti = the derelict house]; *Τα καβουράκια*<sup>34</sup> [ta kavourákia = the monkey-wrenches]; *Χατζή μπαξές*<sup>35</sup> [hatzí baxés (name of a place)]; *Το χαστούκι*<sup>36</sup> [to hastóuki = the slap]; and *Ξυπνώ και βλέπω σίδερα*<sup>37</sup> [xipnó ke vlépo sídhera = I wake up and see the prison’s bars].

Under discussion here are, more or less, the performance techniques and their development, as the musical styles evolve. Apart from the characteristics of a musicological nature that this evolution reveals, it also hides many socio-cultural elements. How does music respond to the needs of the society? In the case of *rembétiko*, *laikó* and *Tsitsánis*, the accelerated tempo observed in many re-recordings of older songs shows the importance of the dancing activity obtained within Greek society, as it was evolving. Therefore, the establishment of large venues with live *laikó* music (from around 1970s onwards) which were full of people who wanted to entertain themselves (especially after 1974, when the colonels’ junta came to its end and democracy was again established) compelled the bands to play the *hasápiko* songs, for example, faster, in order to help the clients to dance to it. Moreover, a slow tempo means a longer (in duration) song; a longer song means less songs performed during the night and, thus, less *παραγγελιές* [parangeliés = special requests] from the clients satisfied. Ultimately, all of these testify to the strong bonds between popular music and society and that almost always evolve side by side.

## **Popular Music Studies in Greece: Laikology at its Birth**

One of the most important results that this thesis aspires to lead to is to stir into action all those involved in the educational system of Greece, and to underline the urgent

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<sup>32</sup> Columbia CG 2739 - DG 7288, recorded on October 31, 1950.

<sup>33</sup> HMV OGA 1272 - AO 2764, recorded in October, 1947.

<sup>34</sup> Odeon GO 4641 - GA 7663, recorded on March 7, 1952.

<sup>35</sup> Columbia CG 2162 - DG 6598, recorded on June 15, 1946.

<sup>36</sup> HMV 7XGA 948 - 7PG 2911, recorded on March 11, 1961.

<sup>37</sup> Parlophone GO 4690 - B. 74261-II, recorded on June 30, 1952.

necessity of giving popular music studies the place they deserve. The flourishing of popular music studies and, generally, the wider acceptance of the value of popular culture within the educational system of Greece looks to be in a more than critical situation, especially in this period of depression, crisis and injustice for the people of the country. Laikology and rebetology should take its place in academia, for two main reasons: 1) popular music studies have developed to a high level abroad, leaving Greece far behind, and 2) by undertaking research on Greek popular music, one can begin to understand the chain that connects far more musical cultures across the world: for instance, Afro-Cuban, the Blues, Ottoman-Turkish, Greek rural traditional, Hindi, Gypsy, Sephardic and so forth. Therefore, it is not only important for Greek education, but also for the development of popular music studies globally.

However, one could wonder: ‘yes, but why not under rebetology? What is the need for laikology?’ It becomes clear through this thesis that there is a need for separating Greek urban popular music into categories. The sub-styles that were examined in this thesis are: the music of the cafés, the Piraeus bouzouki-based style and the laikó style (1950s onwards, mainly under the influence of Tsitsánis’s post-war work). However, as already mentioned in several cases within this thesis, the word ‘laikó’ is vague and cannot describe properly and holistically the musical style to which it was applied. The problem, though, lies in this word’s meaning in Greek, which is ‘of the people’ (*λαός* [laós = the people]). Therefore, what urban popular musical style is not ‘of the people’, that is, is not laikó? To put it another way, today, the music of the cafés (Smirnέiko), the Piraeus bouzouki-based (rembétiko), the post-war song that has been labelled ‘laikó’, the Greek artistic style, the new wave and so forth, are all laikó styles, that is, popular styles, because they are mainly meant for the people (the laós). Therefore, the title that can perhaps describe best the field of Greek popular music studies is ‘laikology’ which, apparently, includes rebetology.

The urban popular musical styles in Greece are truly many. Conservatoires and universities (and thus, the Greek state) should begin to invest in Greek popular musicology (that is, laikology). Apart from the progress of the studies and research, this will also lead to new labour positions, something which is examined below. The recognition of laikology and generally of popular music studies in Greece should not only be viewed as a matter of academia but of a more general educational and political matter. Special programmes of studies that will exclusively concern popular

styles are needed in all levels of education (public and private). The most critical act that the Greek government should initially take, as already mentioned and examined in Chapter 2, is the recognition of popular music studies (theories and instruments), just as is the case with Western classical music which is one of the two main musical styles that are taught in public and private education in Greece. The other recognized field is Byzantine music. Why, then, such a delay towards the recognition of laikó music? Moreover, as analyzed in Chapter 2, why do the two ministries responsible for such matters not come to an understanding and jointly recognize popular music studies?<sup>38</sup> After all, it is at least undemocratic not to treat all musical styles the same way, within an educational system. The equal treatment of all musical styles (that is, to be available for studies at all educational levels) shows respect towards them and the culture they enclose; it also denotes a high level of civilization and progress of a modern state. The persistence towards a restricted number of musical styles, such as the case of the Greek state and its persistence towards classical and Byzantine music, shows a rather conservative spirit. After all, the lack of equal options and opportunities in education shows, unfortunately, a lack of democratic spirit.

### **The Labour Market**

If one examines the whole issue from another point of view, it will be ascertained that, today in Greece, the labour market for musicians is extremely limited. The once, more or less, good jobs at venues with live music (that is, membership of a band on music stands) has now been transformed into a nightmare, due to Greece's economic crisis: people do not have money to spend on entertainment and thus, venues do not have clients; therefore, they do not need musicians. At this point, I should mention an anecdote from my personal experience: I was working as a rembétiko-laikó pianist in the 2004-2005 season, at a live music stage in the city of Thessaloniki. The venue was opened five days a week and, therefore, the musicians (including myself) went to work five times per week. In 2006-2007, the venue was opened only three days (actually nights) during the week. My fellow musicians with whom I have been working with told me (because I was in the United Kingdom for my studies) that in

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<sup>38</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Ministry of Education (that is, academia) recognizes popular music, whereas the Ministry of Culture (that is, conservatoires) does not.

the 2010-2011, they used to go to work only two days a week. The same (that is, two days a week) is true of the 2011-2012 season – not to mention the simultaneous reduction in the day-wage. To put it another way, in merely five years, the days per week that an average professional musician works have been reduced from five to two days, along with their earnings. On the other hand (and obviously this is true of every profession), taxes, goods and generally the cost of living have gone up.

Continuing with the situation within the labour market of musicians in Greece, it is the same economic situation that made people stop sending their children to conservatoires (which are the primary educational establishments in order for them to learn music in Greece). Therefore, conservatoires have reduced the number of employed music teachers, due to the reduction in the number of students. Consequently, another job option for musicians has also turned out to be non profitable. A third job option for musicians is the position of music teacher in public schools. There are two problems, though: first of all, music (as a class) is not mandatory in all schools and in those that it is mandatory, the regulations of the Ministry of Education order one class hour per week.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the job positions in public schools are limited, considering the number of available musicians. Secondly, the aftermath of the economic crisis and the loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have caused a dramatic reduction in wages of almost every social stratum, including teachers in public schools. The following table (Table 8.2) shows the wages of the teachers at public schools.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Whether music as a class is compulsory or not depends on the number of students of the school.

<sup>40</sup> Information has been taken from the Teacher's Union of Greece (DOE) <[www.doe.gr](http://www.doe.gr)>.



Employment years	Main wage (in Euros)	Compulsory deductions	Wage without deductions (in Euros)
1	985	346	639
2	1,092	379	713
3-4	1,201	378	823
5-6	1,225	389	836
7-8	1,250	399	851
9-10	1,381	424	957
11-12	1,409	436	973
13-14	1,437	448	989
15-16	1,588	485	1,103
17-18	1,620	498	1,122
19-20	1,652	511	1,141

**Table 8.2: The wages of teachers at public schools in Greece**

According to the above, the job of a professional musician is now in the heart of the crisis and in one of its worst periods. The field of popular music studies is so big (especially in countries like Greece) that it can open new horizons in the labour market of musicians. The official recognition by the state of popular music can top up conservatoires' number of students, for there are many children that desire to study popular instruments but be able to obtain a degree recognized by the state. Moreover, the creation of research programmes on popular music (something that it is promoted and economically supported by the European Union but, paradoxically, does not work in Greece) can create new jobs – popular music researchers. If one takes additionally into consideration several contiguous fields, whose bonds are closely knit with popular music, such as the construction of popular instruments and sound engineering, one will understand that popular music studies is nothing else but a viable field; a field that can open the road to more and new opportunities in the labour market of musicians.

### **What Comes Next**

Along with the end of this research project, a great desire of mine was also fulfilled. This was the introduction into academia of one of the most popular, beloved and key figures of Greek urban popular song, *Βασίλης Τσιτσάνης* [Vasilis Tsitsanis].

Moreover, part of the same desire was to develop in-depth understanding of as many elements connected to *rembétiko* and *laikó* (and thus, to *Tsitsánis*) as possible. Under discussion here are either historio-cultural or musicological elements. What I have been performing on the music stands since my youth – a rather detached participation – has now been turned into a more holistic participation. To put it simply, it is far more essential (at least to me) to know why (how it theoretically works) the fourth degree minor chord of a Minor mode (in Greek popular music) occasionally becomes major, than to just know (by memory) that at specific points the minor becomes major.

However, at its beginning (and even more now, in the end), I did not consider this project to be the ultimate level either of my studies, or of my general ambitions. I found research on Greek popular music fascinating, for there are countless issues that can provoke the interest of someone who tries to examine and analyze this unlimited subject. Therefore, this thesis has contributed in giving birth to new ambitions and aspirations regarding my future. There are some key sub-subjects of vital importance, as far as the development of the field studies is concerned. For instance, this research project has given birth (in my mind) to some highly critical possible subjects for future postdoctoral research: these subjects range from projects similar to mine (for example, an analysis of other key figures such as *Márkos Vamvakáris*) to more complex and multifaceted projects, such as the thorough analysis of the *laikized Afro-Cuban Latin rhythms* found in *laikó* music. The subject for future research that fascinates me more than perhaps any other is the relationship between Greek *laikó* music and Hindi popular music; and even more specialized, the examination of the connection between the Greek *dhrómi* and the Hindi *rāgās*, on the one hand, and the connection between the Greek *laikó* rhythms and Hindi popular rhythms, especially those found in movies played in Greece from 1960 onwards, on the other (see Chapter 2).

Nevertheless, there are dozens of possible future projects that can be (and according to what was described in this chapter regarding popular music studies in Greece, should be) carried out: how were the elements from the Blues style assimilated in Greek *laikó* music? Does *Tsitsánis*'s *kandádha* song style hide more information regarding the cultural relationship between Greece and Italy? How can the Greek popular singing technique sound so similar to the Turkish technique but at

the same time have many differences? What is the historical connection among Byzantine *īhi*, Turkish *makams*, Hindi *rāgās* and Greek *dhrómi*? In what way did the Sephardic musical culture affect the cultures with which it has reacted and in what way was it assimilated by them? What is the real import of the Gypsy culture in Europe and especially in the Balkans and Mediterranean region? What was the true role that it played and continues to play?

At this point, apart from the aforementioned possible subjects for future research, I should also mention the fact that there still is a huge amount of unexploited material concerning Vasilis Tsitsanis and (part of this material) *rembétiko* and *laikó* in general. This information has been gathered during the four years of my research. The two basic reasons for not including these data in my thesis were time pressure – therefore much of this material could not be handled within the time given, and the fact that, in many cases, I was not able to obtain complete information about some particular types of data. For example, Kostas Tsitsanis decided to give me the entire archive of the family. Before that, he had just given me part of it, such as the payment receipts of his father. Some small-scale projects that I desire to accomplish in the near future are the digitalization of this archive which, apart from the receipts, includes hundreds of rare photographs, handwritten notes and lyrics by Tsitsanis, contracts with recording companies, correspondence and so forth. As regards the digitalization of the payment receipts, I should mention that this has almost been accomplished, for I began to work on it a year ago. The digitalization of such types of archives is of vital import for the foundations of popular music studies in Greece, and therefore, it is one of my most basic aims for the future.

All of the above, and especially the relationships and connections amongst countries and cultures, are some of the most foundational characteristics and aims of popular music studies, at least to me. To put it another way, and perhaps a little simply and child like, the same moment that there is political turmoil between Greece and Turkey, a Greek musician can sit at the same table with a Turkish musician, and without each knowing the language of the other, can ‘communicate’, using the language of music, having nothing to separate, at all. Music and culture, nevertheless, show that there can be no borders in civilization and progress, and that humanity can continue to evolve without politics, but not without art, especially in one of its purest

and oldest forms: popular art. After all, as a graffiti street-saying that I read puts it: 'borders are scratches on the body of Earth'.

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**List of Abbreviations**

AEPI	Hellenic Society for the Protection of Intellectual Property
DOE	Teacher's Union of Greece
HMV	His Master's Voice
IMF	International Monetary Fund
m.z.1 and 2	Mixed zeimbékiko-1 and 2
rpm	Recording revolutions per minute
T.E.D.	Tsitsánis Electronic Database
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
WW2	World War 2

**Appendix A**  
**Tsitsánis Chronology of Events**

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### A

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