



(REVIEW ARTICLE)



The significance of the word «journey» in the Greek song

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GSC Advanced Research and Reviews, 2024, 21(01), 421–427

Publication history: Received on 14 September 2024; revised on 20 October 2024; accepted on 23 October 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/gscarr.2024.21.1.0396>

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to study the theme of "journey" in Greek lyrics during the history of Greek song, focusing on some of the musical genres that were created and developed. The identification of these musical genres will be approximate and based on the composer-creator, rather than on any strict adherence to dates, as many of them overlap in time. The search for the theme of "journey" in lyric writing includes both the narrow - literal sense of the term, and the broader - metaphorical sense. It covers the concept of moving from one place to another, escaping from everyday life, getting to know other cultures and cultural environments, the realm of imagination, broadening the spiritual horizon, changing the way of looking at life, and so on. The study deals with the meaning of the word "journey" in folk song.

Keywords: Journey; Greek song; Rebetiko; Folk song; Manos Hatzidakis; Giorgos Mitsakis; Vasilis Tsitsanis; Mikis Theodorakis

1. Introduction

The history of Greek singing begins around 1824, when the liberation of the country from the Ottomans was finalized and the Greek state began to function informally. Until the beginning of the 20th century, folk, Athenian and Ionian songs dominated, while European Western standards were followed, in an attempt to disregard the country's folk music tradition. (Panagopoulos,2012),(Papatheodorou, 2021)

The Asia Minor disaster of 1922 brought Smyrniot songs to Greece and by extension 'eastern' rebetiko, while during the same period 'western' light songs would flourish in urban entertainment and recreation, from the interwar period to the 1960s. The 'sanitization' of rebetiko would bring about the popular bourgeois song, which would dominate for many decades through the recording industry, radio and Greek cinema. "Artistic" folk music would appear in the late 1950s, pioneered by Manos Hadjidakis and Mikis Theodorakis, and would give a new dimension to the country's newer cultural image.(Papaspiliou,2015),(Rentzos,2023)..(Tzortzaki, 2017)(Mylonas,1992),

In the context of our research, we will refer to and search for the concept of "journey" in three of the most interesting musical genres that developed: rebetiko, light and art folk songs. (Mylonas, 1984), (Mylonas, 1985),

2. Concept of escape to a place ideal away from the oppression of the small society

The song "In fino acroyáli (Tsitsanis (Vasilis Tsitsanis (1915-1984) was one of the greatest composers of rebetiko and folk songs.

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) in Paraguay (Disc 78 rpm. Year of circulation 1959))" was recorded in 1939 on a 78 rpm disc (code DG-6479) , with lyrics and music by Tsitsanis himself, and performed by Stratos Pajoumtzis with the participation of Stellakis Perpiniadis. His lyrics describe a unique and delightful story, a distant, summer holiday trip to Paraguay. The performers plan to escape to places beautiful and foreign, away from the difficult everyday life and poverty (Charisopoulou,2009), in order to share their summer in the company of other people, but without their problems and worries. The destination seems envious, pleasant and enjoyable. The moments of relaxation on the beach, with the sound of the Greek bouzouki orchestrating their summer, add an unforgettable and unique travel experience, while enjoying the "luxury" of their makeshift accommodation, feeling happy and full of gratitude (Arnaoutakis, 2011).

3. The concept of expectation and anticipation and hope for the journey of return

In 1949, "The Traveller (Disc 78 rpm. Year of circulation 1949)" (code DG-6821) was released in a 78 rpm album (DG-6821) with composition and lyrics by Mitsakis (Giorgos Mitsakis (1921-1993), who was sometimes a complainer and sometimes an aristocrat, differentiated himself from his contemporaries and left his own stamp, style and style on the stage.), performed by Tsaousakis Prodromos, accompanied by Marika Ninou. (Gioglou,2021). The song externalizes a man's bitterness for the foreign land he's found himself in, which historically has been an open wound for the Greek people for many decades.(Arnaoutakis, 2012)Violent events, economic, social and other reasons force people to travel "abroad" for a better future. The traveler always expects to return to his/her homeland and family warmth. He hopes for another journey, but one of return. Watching the little boat in the sea, he wishes he were in it, so that his dream may come true. But even if that doesn't happen, he doesn't lose his courage and wishes the little boat well and good luck, even if it's not himself, sending greetings to everything he loves. (Varvaresos, 2017).

4. The sadness of separation - hope and consolation with the imminent return of the stranger

In 1952, the song "Leaving on a journey to go (Disc 78 rpm. Year of circulation 1952)" (code GA-7705) was released on a 78 rpm record with lyrics by Bayananderas (The Piraeus Dimitris Gogos (1903-1985) appears on the rebetiko music scene in 1925, arranging the Italian operetta "Bagiantera" for folk orchestra with mandolin and bouzouki and since then he has been known by the nickname "Bagianteras".) (Dimitris Gogou), while its musical composition is attributed to his wife Despina Arabatzoglou, without knowing for sure, whether it is a simple entry of her name, or if she actually participated in its creation. The song is sung by Anna Chrysafi, with the participation of Bini Takis, Tatasopoulos Ioannis and Kalfopoulou Soula. The lyrics refer, once again, to the forced foreign travel and the feelings of departure and farewell experienced by the loved ones of the traveler - foreigner. His beloved bids him a tender farewell, expressing her wishes and seeking the protection of the Virgin Mary. She hopes for a peaceful journey and at the same time longs for their meeting again in the future, giving him the promise that she will welcome him to the shore. She feels sadness at their separation, but also comforted by his imminent return.

5. The concept of the expectation of a journey "to the edge of the worl' for a better tomorrow

The well-known and popularly song "I'll take you away (Disc 78 rpm. Year of circulation 1958)", composed by Yannis Spartakos (At the beginning of the 40s, Yiannis Spartakos (1914-2001) made his appearance in the field of Greek music, bringing a new sound - idiom between the Greek and American musical mentality. His songs retain an affinity with distant jazz, which he adapted to Greek meters, and were immediately accepted by the public of the time.) with lyrics by Alekos Sakellariou - Christos Giannakopoulos and performed by Rena Vlachopoulou in a revue of the time, became a worldwide success, entered the Guinness Book of Records as a Greek Bolero and was played by many famous foreign orchestras, starting with Xavier Cougat & his Orchestra. However, it was only in 1985 that it was recorded with Vlachopoulou's voice, while the first official recording was made in 1958 with Panos Papatthasiou as the performer on a 78 rpm disc (Fidelity 7013). Its lyrics capture the agony of the Greek man to escape away from the heartbreak and horrors imposed by the Occupation in the then enslaved Greece. The reference to "another land and other places" suggests people's curiosity to see new images and experience new experiences, to visit places where they could now anonymously be free, without anguish and tears. They describe the expectation of a journey 'to the ends of the earth', which will give them the opportunity to free themselves from the difficulties and adversities of life and to finally live their love in a carefree way. (Daloukas, 2022)

6. The need to escape for new experiences

The collaboration of Menelaos Theofanidis (Menelaos Theofanidis (1913-1997) occupies a special place in Greek music with an important musical contribution to the field.) with the talented lyricist Dimitris Evaggelidis and the great singer Stella Greka gave birth to "Let's go to the unknown (Album: Disc 78 rpm. Year 1946)" (1946), whose lyrics have not

stopped being hummed by many lips until today. This wonderful song describes a journey to unknown places and new skies. The need to escape from the routine of everyday life, for a new beginning and new experiences. In an attempt to confront the physical and mental wear and tear of time, Greca's velvety voice invites us to stop our lives rolling in postponements and wasting away in foolish habits, but to leave to experience what has not yet happened. (Papadimitriou, 2013)

7. The concept of the exhortation to travel and dreams of escape from a difficult daily life.

The song "Vira tis anchors (Album: Disc 78 rpm. Year 1950)" composed by George Mouzakis (George Mouzakis (1922-2005) was the composer of the 1950s with the most and greatest hits, enviable popularity and flexibility to move in all areas of music with comfort and confidence.) with lyrics by Alekos Angelopoulos The song is performed by Smaroula Yiouli and the Kitarra Trio (Kefalas - Dimakis - Zafeiriou), one of the most popular trios of the time. The lyrics describe the everyday life of man, which although difficult or hard sometimes remains beautiful. They urge the listener to escape, to leave this "dunya" (ie. world), to raise anchor and set sail for other places and distant places. To travel to unknown & unexplored destinations, to ports of call, to experience new experiences & adventures and to interact with different people & cultures. The song suggests a man's desire for travel & freedom, as well as his need for a better tomorrow, away from poverty and suffering.

8. The everyday life of a worker and his dreams of traveling to exotic places with a loved one

Yannis Kalatzis performs "Jamaica (Album "Seascapes", 1970)", a song composed by Manos Loizos (In the mid-60s, one of the most important young composers of the time appeared, Manos Loizos. In 1970, his second big album "Thalassografies" was released, part of the trilogy of his complete collaborations with the lyricist Lefteris Papadopoulos, while he entrusted the 11 songs - diamonds of the album to established and emerging performers.), which was a huge success and was very much loved. He describes his everyday life (probably) as a worker going to work in the mornings, watching the fishing boats leaving for the sea freely. With a mind to play games, he mentally travels with his friend Minas like sailors to exotic places, thirsting for adventure and longing for escape. They build a handmade boat, with a carved mermaid on its stern, dedicated to their loved one, and now as boatmen they set out on their journey to Jamaica, claiming to finally enjoy life, even if they have to leave for faraway places.

9. The concept of uprooting and the deep sorrow and dispersion created by the asia minor disaster

The piece "Allos για Chios pulled (Album: Agios Febrouarios.Et.cycl.1972) " with music composer Dimos Moutsis (Dimos Moutsis makes his appearance in the musical scene in the 60s. In 1972, on the 50th anniversary of the Asia Minor Disaster, the historical record "Agios Febrouarios" is released.) , belonged to the lyrics of songs written by Eleftheriou during the period 1968-70 "in the context of a general preoccupation - research of the lyricist for material... around the Asia Minor campaign and the life of the Hellenes of Smyrna". His lyrics have as their theme the uprooting of the Greeks from Asia Minor and the great wave of refugees that followed. Pain is pervasive in the song, with "the weather darkening" and each uprooted person drinking "blood and tears". The violent removal forces them to travel to other homelands, to take a ship without a return ticket and to part with Smyrna that was lost forever. The expulsion of people from their homeland leads to their dispersion. The references to the Greek islands of Chios, Mytilini and Syros show exactly these destinations of the hasty and difficult journey that followed (Gioglou,2013) (Tsatalbassoglou, & Manola, 2024).

10. Optimism and melancholy about the enduring journey of life

In 1973 the album "The road to Kythera" was released, a milestone in Greek music, composed by Giorgos Katsarou and with lyrics by Ilias Liberopoulos, an album that was a great success. The album includes 13 tracks, which are performed by Dimitris Mitropanos, now well established in singing, and Christiana in her first musical steps. This complete work includes one of the most beautiful and timeless songs of the Greek pentagram "Ta Kythera never will we find (Album: Road to Kythera. Year 1973)" with a charming musical composition and romantic lyrics. This song creates a feeling of optimism and melancholy at the same time. Kythera represents the final destination in the constant journey of life itself, happiness and love. The search for a lost paradise, a utopia, a goal that is difficult to achieve. The performer invites his partner to sit together on the seashore on a sunny day, indicating a moment of relaxation, calm, purity and connection with nature. Together they seek the "mythical" Kythera, expressing the difficulty in the search for happiness and love. The expectation for a better life, whose ship will set sail but will be lost in the sea, will fade away like an Aegean wave for the two performers - lovers (Manola. & Tsagkarellis, 2020).

11. The meaning of pain, disappointment and bitterness of the last journey to the other world

Manos Hadjidakis (Manos Hatzidakis (1925-1994), upgraded the Greek song and endowed it with quality both musically and lyrically, creating a musical language unprecedented for his time.)' last collaboration in 1991, shortly before Gatsos passed away, was to be the last lyrics he wrote for the song "The Journey (Album with the title "Return" was released in 1970 by Columbia on cd)".His lyrics describe in a shocking and poetic way the upcoming last journey of life. The desire for life, freedom, dreams and love, but also a reminder of the challenges and difficulties of the journey (Yapitzakis,2022). The journey is "bile along with vinegar", a life bitter and weightless, full of disappointments and pain, like a snake lurking for its prey, dangerous, full of poison. But despite the difficulties, the performer does not give up on his journey and hopes to find a safe harbour, to continue until he reaches his destination, something worth achieving. (Arnaoutakis,2012)(Manola, 2022).

12. Concept of the pain of migration and alienation

His association with Stelios Kazantzidis leaves a legacy of unique folk songs that made history. Among them is the song "In the Factories of Germany (Thodoros Derveniotis (1922-2004) appears in the musical song in the early 50s. He belonged to the category of the greats of folk song, since for 50 years he dressed with his music the hundreds of songs performed by the most important Greek singers, such as Marinella, Poly Panou, Manolis Angelopoulos, etc.)" with lyrics by Kostas Virvos, released in 1965, a concise anthropogeography of the Greek emigration that took place in the mid-19th century in Greece, after the end of World War II, to countries such as West Germany, Northern Europe and Australia (Gioglou,2011). The lyrics dramatically describe the abandonment of the homeland for the "lands of recitation" in America, Brazil, Canada and Germany. They point out the difficulties and pain of emigration for themselves and their loved ones, the adverse working conditions and the "loss" of skilled and talented people to foreign lands. At the same time, they express hope for the return journey, encourage and motivate them to be courageous and patient until that day (Gioglou, 2020)

13. Concept of frustration of expectations and anticipation of happiness that does not come

The song "The train leaves at 8 o'clock (Mikis Theodorakis (1925-2021) is considered one of the most important contemporary Greek composers.)", sung by the unforgettable Maria Dimitriadis, was included on the album "Theodorakis dirige Theodorakis Vol.1" (2393020), released in 1968 by the album "The Lakes", initially in many European countries by the Polydor record company. After the fall of the junta in 1974 it was released as it was natural in Greece. The lyrics of Manos Eleftheriou, written on Theodorakis' pentagram, take us to Katerini, November 1970. (Gioglou,2023)(Kottis,2015)

It depicts the complete frustration of people's dreams and expectations. Time remains stagnant for the passengers-travelers, they are left alone in the wilderness and the train, as a means of transporting the journey to happiness, never finally starts, leaving them to wait melancholically and nostalgically. The lyrics of the songs are a very important vehicle for expressing feelings and meanings about the journey. From the fiction of wandering journeys to the nostalgia of the stranger, the lyrics reflect the various aspects of the human "Odysseus" wandering in search of happiness.

The geographical position of our country between East and West and its close connection with the maritime element contributed significantly to the reference of these characteristics in the lyrics of many Greek songs, with numerous sailors and captains travelling, numerous ports being places of farewell or waiting for their return and countless seas and seas crossed for places distant and exotic for different reasons (Gioglou, 2013) (Argyros, et al., 2024).

Music accompanies all life activities contributing to tourism through traditional festivals and various events that take place during travels. It is a way or a form of business-tourism event where people can connect with history, culture, art, gastronomy, customs and traditions. Travel is also an educational experience in itself that contributes to the assimilation of cultural heritage, personal contact with the monuments, landscapes and people of the destination(Manola, 2020).(Maniou et al., 2023).(Ikonou et al.,2024),(Maniou et al.,2024)

14. The Role of Internet and Digital Technology in imagination and mental well being

The Internet and the trending digital technologies like Mobile apps [32-34], AI & VR [35-38], and Games [39-44] provide in the 21st century, a powerful mean to support either imagination for journeys as well as a tool for improving wellbeing, mental health and emotional balance. Among others they play an educational role as well as a new media role for

distributing ideas and culture. The digital technologies do they support the education in its various forms but also they support the imagination and creativity

15. Conclusions

Greek songs have the power to express emotions, which preserve memory, tradition that sensitize people and express the poetic feelings that people experience in the course of their lives and in the various difficulties, misfortunes and disappointments that life keeps for them. The Greek song evolved through the history of the Greek state, receiving various influences from social, political and economic events of the time. Travel was a frequent phenomenon for the Greek people, which was recorded in the lyrics of many songs in the various musical genres that developed. Numerous songs have been written on the theme of journey and more specifically on the hard decision of emigration and the even harder one of uprooting, which were integral parts of Greek society from ancient times until the beginning of the 20th century.

The Greek man's need to experience new experiences, to visit foreign lands, to associate with other peoples, his innate curiosity for everything unknown and different, his inner journey towards a different approach to life, etc. were recorded in lyrics and orchestrated by composers, in an effort to ensure that people do not forget, to yearn, to dream, to sing and always to travel.

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

The Authors would like to thank the SPECIALIZATION IN ICTs AND SPECIAL EDUCATION: PSYCHOPEDAGOGY OF INCLUSION Postgraduate studies Team, for their support.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The Authors proclaim no conflict of interest.

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