

Made in Greece  
Studies in Popular Music

Edited by Dafni Tragaki

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## Present Musical Pasts

### Preamble

The title of Part V borrows from Andreas Hyussen's notion of "present pasts", drawing our attention to the ways we may (re)think of musical tradition through the ongoing politics of memory and the disturbance of normative categories of time in our perception of music history. Separating tradition from fixed ideas of pastness suggests a revisiting of the concept as a ceaseless palimpsest imbued with memories and mediations, or as an object revealing complex intentionalities, and involving diverse agencies, performative milieus, creative histories, and futures. Chapter 13 by Papadatos and Dawe deals with Cretan musical tradition, focusing on the polysemic and ever-transforming landscape of *lyra-laouto* ensembles whose definition as either "folk" or "popular" raises challenging questions, pointing to the problematics of the distinction and its variant uses. The *lyra-laouto* ensembles seem to meet, the authors suggest, the criteria of both a "folk" and a "popular" music tradition, thus providing a critical insight into how social and cultural values are negotiated through musical performance. Based on ethnographic research, the chapter shows how musicians and audiences of Cretan music perceive such terms in discursive constructions representing their music and music at large. They consider the impact of local and international music business, as well as of modern practices of musical production and performance, in the reconfigurations of a tradition at once resilient and adaptable, a tradition at once globalized and rooted to place, culture, and people. Based on musicians' discourses and practices, the chapter further represents the categorization and value system developed beyond the "folk"/"popular" binary (also identified with the "traditional"/"modern" distinction), suggesting the understanding of Cretan traditional music as a "meta-folk" genre.

Chapter 14 travels from Crete to the Aegean island of Ikaria, otherwise described as "the Jamaica of Greece" – owing to its alleged "cool", "relaxed", and "alternative" lifestyle – and the changing significations and emplacements of *ikariotikos* (Ikariot) dance tune/song. Panopoulos maps and analyzes certain symbolic uses, reuses, and transformations of the tune in association with the cultural politics of place and belonging as well as, within the framework of "world music" trends, looking at processes of exchange, mutuality, opposition, and deterritorialization on the national, local, and global levels across time. Listening and dancing to *ikariotikos*, an invented tradition, became key symbols of belonging to and experiencing the Ikariot ideal of life, as the author suggests, also manifested in the national and tourist imaginary of Ikaria as an exceptional cultural milieu. Recent adaptations and remixes of the tune encapsulating diverse local ideals next to Mediterranean, Balkan, national, and oriental musical stereotypes constitute a hybrid "world music" aesthetic circulating in Greece and on the worldwide web. The chapter also focuses on disputes over collective song copyright on the island of Naxos through contested claims of authenticity and cultural property that were deepened in the context of the EU municipal unification program towards the end of the 1990s, revitalizing older controversies and debates. Instead of representing a demand for gaining credits in the regime of the international music

market, such claims, Panopoulos stresses, constituted fields for negotiating local identities and boundaries within an increasingly changing world of national and international politics in the face of the *nisiotika* (island songs) genre booming since the 1980s. In the final section of the chapter the author presents a number of remixes traced on the web in order to exemplify the song's ongoing dynamic transformations and diverse significations enacted within "new" genre worlds projecting local desires, nostalgia, national claims, and global fantasies.

Chapter 15 is based on ethnographic research with the contemporary popular songwriter, musician and singer Sokratis Malamas, mediating particular aspects of his life-world as narrated by himself in order to highlight the poetics of the *entechno-laiko* (art-popular song) genre. Tragaki deals with the art-popular song cosmopolitics defined by his "indigenous cosmopolitan" strategies of weaving a world of musical Greekness created by the pervasiveness of his transnational musical outlooks. Through a relational understanding of indigeneity released from the romance of claiming "rights" and "culture", the approach suggested here challenges hegemonic discourses of the "indigenous" in the context of the renewed rigor of critically addressing essentialist and universalist conceptualizations of the term, as it questions any perceived antinomy between "indigeneity" and "cosmopolitanism". The chapter thus privileges an ethnographically grounded approach to the formation of an art-popular "genre world" focusing on Malamas' "situated cosmopolitan" and (re-)cosmopolitanizing practices, and the openness of its multiple flows and agencies, arguing "against the slur that cosmopolitans are rootless". It focuses on the relational becoming of his diasporic/cosmopolitan self in his multiple encounters with allegedly incompatible musical worlds and the invention of his own musical cosmos formed with a sort of democratic sensibility favoring genre-crossing. *Entechno-laiko* emerges in Malamas' narratives as a "paradoxical assemblage" made by the fertile *rapprochement* and reterritorialization of musical places intuitively forwarding and creatively reworking musical pasts and embedded affective ontologies. His *entechno-laiko* voice and songs produce a popular sound world, evoking sentimentalisms and intimacies of local everydayness in the public sphere, which also manage to attract a transnational audience despite his strategic reluctance to engage with the capitalist logic of the "world music" market.

## “Dedicated to the Jamaica of Greece!”

### Inventing Tradition, Copyrighting Place, and World Music Transformations of an Island Folk Dance

*Panayotis Panopoulos*

#### Introduction

In a recent (2014) TV advertisement for a Greek brand of beer (*Mythos*), which is mostly popular among foreign tourists probably due to its recognizably Greek name, we watch, in condensed form, a stereotypical scenario of collective goodwill overcoming unexpected setbacks. Hundreds of people are dancing on a mountain plateau at a kind of local feast (*panigyri*), but a sudden storm with heavy rain creates a transient sense of panic, local musicians run away (one covering his head with his ud!), and the celebration seems to be over, until somebody (a makeshift “hero” of the collectivity, clearly a visitor to the area) decides to intervene and, using a bottle of beer as a sound instrument, reinvigorates the disturbed rhythm of the feast and initiates the dance once again. As we see people dancing in a spiraling circle to the music of a popular folk tune, a young male voice intones over the image of two sweating, ice-cold bottles of beer: “Despite the mishap we keep on going. This is our power! This is our myth (*Mythos*)!”<sup>1</sup>

The dancetune is *ikariotikos* and gives to the many of the details in this short spot a very special meaning, while it specifies the target group of the advertisement on the part of its creators. It explains why the feast does not feel exactly like a typical Greek local feast, but is an alternative kind of the “original” genre, with several post-hippie elements of fashion and attire and certain performance peculiarities which are easily recognizable to a young Greek audience. The place is (supposed to be) the island of Ikaria, close to the east coast of the Aegean sea, and the way of doing things and reacting to the facts of life are (supposed to be) specifically ikariot, or, one could say, even more “authentically” ikariot than Ikaria itself, since the visitors are capable of recognizing, evaluating, and putting to good use all the crucial elements of “traditional” culture and attitude, the “local” knowledge, which might be forgotten or underestimated by the locals, in order to respond dynamically and creatively to an unexpected mishap, namely a change in the weather. It requires a very short step of the mind to see all this as a comment on the processes of recovering from the current economic, social, and cultural crisis in Greece and Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The place where this ideal scenario takes place is a recent summertime utopia made up of a land and dreams, people and fantasies, reality and imagination. The web of meanings woven around the signifier “Ikaria” in the past three to four decades consists of a rich and meandering

rhetoric concerning an alternative and uncompromised rather *sui generis* perception of time affluence and a relaxed way of living, an elaborate discourse about a place where slow tempos, cool rhythms, and a genuine conviviality are the norm, as opposed to the programming of life everywhere else, or the prearranged holiday experiences provided by tourist packages and the wider tourist industry around the world. This discourse, partly an indigenous construction and partly a deliberate product of the media and tourist industry, has served over the years both as a symbol of local identity and a visitor's fitting fantasy of a unique summer experience: two sides of the same coin. It draws upon a rich array of historical and geographical elements to create narrative and symbolic associations; it includes remoteness, isolation, and the lack of enough land for cultivation, the dispersion of settlements over wide areas, the continuous threat of pirates in medieval times, a short period of independence in 1912, a longer period after World War II during which the island was used by the authoritarian Greek state as a place of exile for communists, a widely publicized high life expectancy, and much more. Both the people of Ikaria and visitors alike, at some point in their lives, will probably articulate and elaborate on at least some points of this discourse, its agents, ideas, relations, and actions.

This chapter documents and analyzes some of the uses and transformations of Aegean island tunes in general and *ikariotikos* in particular, both in terms of the cultural politics of place and belonging, and the deterritorialized field of "world music", relating stories of exchange, tension, and opposition, mutuality and feedback, between the local, the regional, the national and the global, tradition and (post-) modernity, the past, the present, and the future of emplaced/displaced music recordings and performances. *Ikariotikos* will be used here as a starting point and a prism for viewing the different levels in the symbolic uses of local music and song in the Aegean islands and beyond. In one of the latest turns of our narrative, Ikaria will be eloquently and not unexpectedly described as "the Jamaica of Greece". This provisional closing of a circle was my motive in telling this story.

Starting in 1992, I have conducted anthropological fieldwork on music, song, and dance in the Aegean islands; in 1992 and 1993, long-term fieldwork in the village of Philoti, Naxos island on sound, singing, gender, and local identity (Panopoulos 1996, 2005, 2014), as well as short-term fieldwork in the Raches area, Ikaria on the cultural politics and rhetoric concerning time. Both the time and the particular places of my field research have stamped my ethnographic view/interpretation and they partly explain some of the priorities and limitations in the material provided and discussed in this chapter. Research on the internet was mainly conducted for a period of six months during the spring and summer of 2012 and in the summer of 2014.

### Entering the Dance

*Ikariotikos*, or *ikariotiko*, is the name of a readily recognizable folk dance tune/song relating to the island of Ikaria.<sup>3</sup> Today, this name signifies an array of various versions, arrangements, transcriptions, orchestrations, and remixes in many different styles, played, heard, and danced to in different contexts and venues, from local summer feasts to huge urban nightclubs. The tune has received nationwide popularity since its arrangement, performance, and record release in the early 1980s by Giorgos Konitopoulos, a folk violin player/composer from the island of Naxos, in the Cyclades, and Giannis Parios, a singer of love ballads with national fame and island (Paros, Cyclades) origin.<sup>4</sup> Konitopoulos and Parios were also central agents in the creation and nationwide dissemination and establishment of the so-called "island song" (*nisiotiko tragoudi*), a very successful invented tradition of folk song, music, and dance, which transcended

the boundaries of the islands and islanders' migrant communities in the cities to become a generic Greek popular genre during the 1980s and 1990s.

The success of the Konitopoulos' arranged version has instigated heated debates in the Aegean islands, especially the Cyclades, on the commercial manipulation and exploitation of folk tunes and on the supposedly primeval quality of "authentic" local versions/variants, which became a main concern of local cultural politics, raising wider issues over "collective copyright" on a village, island, or regional level, and the use of "local heritage" in the case of folk poetry, music, and dance. Folk tunes and *ikariotikos* have further acquired the status of key symbols of belonging in processes of revitalizing traditions and reinvigorating local customs and rituals which characterized national public discourse and local cultural politics in Greece during the 1980s and 1990s (Panopoulos 2005; cf. Boissevain 1992). It was in this context that Ikaria acquired a very special place in the national and tourist imagination of idealized local cultural niches.

Listening and dancing to the *ikariotikos* gradually became synonymous with the celebration of a distinctively ikariot way of living, perceived as an exceptional experience of coolness and relaxed mood. *Ikariotikos* has recently been played, arranged, and adapted by several bands of various styles and aspirations. These bands draw from a rich gamut of music and cultural sources, mixing a wide variety of influences, from local, folk, ethnic, pop, and reggae to electronica, dub, rap, and fusion. Earlier recordings are sampled and reused over dance beats, breaks, and other sound sources, tunes, or rhythmic patterns are reproduced by musicians playing "traditional" or modern instruments, and/or using all kinds of electronic media. The use of *ikariotikos* in these cases is layered with the rhetoric of localized cultural ideals, as well as several other "Mediterranean", "Balkan", and "oriental" cultural elements and stereotypes, and/or a nationalistic rhetoric, to create new musical hybrids and cultural performances of a "world music" aesthetics.

"World music" is anything but a simple, descriptive term. Far from being a neutral, all-encompassing definition of the creation, circulation, and consumption of "folk", "ethnic", "traditional" or "exotic" ("other") kinds of music, "world music" is, according to Steven Feld, "a label of industrial origin that refers to an amalgamated global marketplace of sounds as ethnic commodities" (Feld 2012: 40). Feld has given a critical spin to Murray Schafer's term "schizophonia", originally referring to the splitting of sounds from their sources, to include wider processes "where sound recordings move into long- and short-term routes of circulation and patterns of consumption" (ibid.: 41). These processes produce and sustain two rich and complex narratives: an anxious narrative focusing on inequalities and exploitation, and a celebratory narrative that "sees musical hybridity and fusion as cultural signs of unbounded and deterritorialized identities" (ibid.), a celebration of freedom, equality, and anti-essentialism. Far from being contradictory perspectives, though, "embedded in both anxious and celebratory narratives of world music is a fraught cultural politics of nostalgia, that is, each is deeply linked to the management of loss and renewal in the modern world" (ibid.: 42; cf. Feld 1996, 2000).

As we will see, there are important similarities and some interesting differences in the uses of "sounds as ethnic commodities" in the "world music" industry, on the one hand, and the Greek case, on the other. The commercial stake seems to be not as high in the Greek case, but some special ethnographic issues are raised. The "long- and short-term routes of circulation" involve families, villages, islands, regions, as well as the nation and virtual space, while cultural politics at all levels layer "anxious and celebratory narratives" and "nostalgia" with crucial issues of identity and belonging in the face of transformations in national and international power relations and politics.

### Aegean Routes

One of the most successful commercial productions of the Greek dance/electronica scene in the past decade was the release of the first CD of the band *palyrria* (sic) in 2004. This is a very characteristic example of what we could describe as “Greek world fusion”, since the musical/sound material of the record consists of various tunes, melodies, rhythmic patterns, instruments, and samples coming not from different parts of the world, but rather from various local musical expressions within Greece (as well as some elements from the wider Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans), mixed with typical rhythmic patterns and loops of an international dance/electronica scene. The second track of the record, for example, under the characteristic title “Kakavia Express”, uses elements of a polyphonic song from the Epirus region of northern Greece and southern Albania, where the Kakavia border post of the Greek–Albanian border is located. We can trace similar musical fusions in most of the other tracks as well: “Isodaoulo”, “Pentadaktylos Dub”, “Elektrokeras”, “Sadam?”. One of these tracks, with a characteristically “hybrid” name and aesthetics, is “Ikariotikos (dry mix)”. Yet, in this case, there is a difference; contrary to all the other tracks on the record, the composition of “Ikariotikos (dry mix)” is attributed to an individual composer. In the CD sleeve-notes we read (concerning the whole CD): “Conceived + arranged + produced by: palyrriaexcepttr: 05 [“Ikariotikos (dry mix)”] composed by G Konitopoulos based on a traditional theme” [English in original].

### *Inventing Tradition: The “Island Songs”*

Giorgos Konitopoulos, the musician to whom the composition of “Ikariotikos (dry mix)” is attributed, is considered to be the most prominent exponent of (one could even say that his name is identified with) the so-called “island song” (*nisiotiko tragoudi*). The establishment of the “island song” genre was based on the release, in 1982, of a double LP record entitled *Ta Nisiotika* (The Island Songs) by the Greek multinational record label MINOS-EMI. The record owed its success partly to the popularity of the singer Giannis Parios, whose origin and pseudonym reflected an “island identity”, and the characteristic violin sound and technique of Giorgos Konitopoulos, who was also the composer/arranger of the songs. Giorgos Konitopoulos (1933–1991) is the most famous member of a well-known family of musicians from the village of Kynidaros, Naxos (Kefalliniadis 1995), a musical family that has shaped the sound and the specific character of *nisiotiko tragoudi*, by homogenizing different musical and poetic elements from the islands and producing an easily recognizable sound of (mainly female) singing and violin solos, the wide dissemination and success of which were based on its appealing melodic line and rhythmic elements that invited people to dance.

Konitopoulos registered a trademark for his arrangements of most of the well-known island tunes, assuring copyright over his creations, whether they were original or arrangements/transcriptions of songs from Naxos and other Aegean islands, based on the fact that copyright, according to both Greek and international law, refers to original, self-contained works by individual creators, while in the case of collective artistic expressions copyright is attributed to individual “arrangers”.

### *Copyrighting Place: Disputes over Property Rights on Song in Naxos*

During the 1990s in the villages of highland Naxos, local authorities, cultural associations, and other agents of collective representation and action were involved in heated and controversial

debates over local culture and the demarcation of cultural boundaries. Central among them were the debates over copyright issues, the musical and poetic “heritage” of the villages taken as collective agents of “authentic” cultural production and performance. Some aspects of those controversial debates were interpenetrated with wider and hot political issues of the period, like the various activities of migrants’ cultural associations in the villages and the so-called “Ioannis Kapodistrias Masterplan”, promoted by the Greek government and the European Union, concerning the unification of village communities in wider intercommunal municipalities.

One of the things I had to explain again and again to my interlocutors during my long-term fieldwork in Naxos in the early 1990s was why I had chosen the village of Philoti for my fieldwork instead of the village of Apeiranthos (or Aperathou), which, according to the rich symbolic geography of the island (Stewart 1991; Panopoulos 1994), is identified with “culture” and “tradition”. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the Konitopoulos family also claimed some kind of origin, identification, or relationship with this important symbolic cradle which was often met with sarcasm on the part of the Aperathites, the people of Apeiranthos. The main idioms through which this relationship was retrieved and expressed were kinship relations and family origin, on the one hand, and male friendship, on the other (Kefalliniadis 1995: 63–64; cf. Panopoulos 1996, 2005). On their part, the Aperathites deeply disapproved of all forms of claiming bonds for their village by members of the Konitopoulos family, considering them to be nothing but an immoral attempt on the part of the Konitopoulos family to appropriate a rich repository of local tradition. In the “local” press of Apeiranthos (newspapers and magazines published in Naxos and Athens by migrants), we would read many extremely sarcastic and outraged allegations against the “thief” or the “master thief” of the musical tradition of Apeiranthos, either naming or implicating Giorgos Konitopoulos; those articles also included accusations by musicians who originated from Apeiranthos and who contended that they were not permitted to make recordings of the songs of their own village if they would not agree to state that they were compositions by “someone named Konitopoulos”.<sup>5</sup>

The ongoing and unresolved dispute of Apeiranthos as a collective agent with the Konitopoulos family was complemented, in the early 1990s, by a similar dispute with another village, Philoti, over collective cultural property rights. This dispute was triggered by the publication of an article entitled “The traditional song in Philoti, Naxos” in the first issue of *O Zas*; that is, the journal of the Association of Philotites living in Athens. The article outraged the publisher and the regular contributors to the journal *T’Aperathou* (Apeiranthos), who commented on its content using extremely sarcastic and provocative language, while they also invited the local scholars of Philoti to respond to the provocation. In their responses, the Philotites were part condescending, part conciliatory, and part sarcastic concerning the accusations of the Aperathites that the Philotites had stolen their songs and tunes. The dispute continued for some time, including implications connecting the local level with crucial national and international controversies of the era: the “theft” of the songs at this particular moment was related by one of the Aperathites to the notorious “theft” of the Greek national insignia by the so-called “Skopjians” (that is, the people of the Republic of Macedonia), perhaps the hottest issue of Greek international politics in the 1990s (Danforth 1995; cf. Sutton 1998).

### *Singing the “Ioannis Kapodistrias Masterplan” Controversy*

The opposition between the two villages is long and deep-seated, and it has been expressed in many different ways across time (Stewart 1991; Panopoulos 1994). By the end of the 1990s,

it was to take a new direction and acquire further strength. In 1997, public debate concerning the unification of local communities in wider intercommunal municipalities was coming to an end. This municipal unification program, a European Union project, was known as the "Ioannis Kapodistrias Masterplan" in Greece, after the name of the first Governor of Greece back in 1830. According to the specifications of this program, Naxos island would be reorganized administratively into one, two, or three large municipalities that would merge and substitute the old municipalities of the island, which were mainly based on village-centered administrative units. In Apeiranthos, as one would expect, there emerged a strong movement for the municipal autonomy of the village, in the name of its cultural uniqueness. Collective copyright issues, along with older oppositions and controversies, were revitalized in the municipal unification debate. Apeiranthos and Philoti were, finally, included in the same municipality, while the first elected mayor was from Philoti.

Some of the songs improvised on the night of the elections in Apeiranthos have elegantly captured the ambivalences produced by the new conditions of merging and disputing traditional social and cultural units, boundaries, and oppositions in local politics, referring to collective cultural property rights over music and song. In the journal *T'Aperathou*, one would later read bitter comments on the Philotites celebrating "their victory" in Apeiranthos and appropriating the "elections' tune" of Apeiranthos, the tune being an apt metonymy of the village's stolen identity.

The television broadcasted  
The victory of Philoti,  
Sung on the elections' tune  
Which now belongs to them.

We gave them the victory  
And our tune is now their tune.

Since we have managed  
To give them the first position  
The elections' tune as well  
Now belongs to Philoti.

And the Philotite [new] mayor  
Inside Stamatogiannis' coffee-shop\*  
With all his company  
Is celebrating his victory.

He is celebrating in our village  
Which does not belong to us anymore.

\* located in Apeiranthos' main square.

In her contribution to an anthropological debate on "exploitable knowledge" organized by Marilyn Strathern, Manuela Carneiro da Cunha contends:

My point is that cultural appropriation debates are ways for dispossessed peoples to phrase claims for power. What is at stake is the authority to define, to represent, to keep or to dispose of, in a word, for lack of a better word, agency.

(Strathern et al. 1998: 115)

In the case of the villages of Naxos, collective property claims over local poetry and music tunes do not represent demands for recognition of rights in a globalized market exploiting local cultural expressions. Cultural claims in this case have neither an institutional nor a commercial character, but they constitute fields of contending and negotiating crucial local identities and boundaries in a changing world of national and international politics, and they stand as powerful idioms of belonging and emplacement. The symbolic emphasis on the “village”, in this case, manifests the primacy of this particular social and cultural unit in asserting political autonomy and collectivity, in the face of a crucial reorganization of political representation and agency under conditions imposed by national and EU policies (cf. Papataxiarchis 2001; Panopoulos 2005). A village’s collective copyright claims over persons, families, or other villages were reinforced when important identity boundaries were degraded, when the village as a unit of political administration and a social entity was weakened and multiply threatened. It is interesting that, although on the level of administrative reorganization the views expressed were often quite conciliatory and pragmatic, on the level of cultural claims one would usually hear the most extreme and purist rhetoric.

#### *From Ikariotikos to Kariotiko, and Beyond*

Disputes between the Konitopoulos family and Apeiranthos or between Apeiranthos and Philoti over property rights on music and song offer a paradigmatic case of the complex dynamics in collective identity construction and negotiation in the Cyclades and the Aegean during the 1980s and 1990s, in the face of the “booming” of “island songs”. The people of Ikaria faced similar dilemmas and proposed solutions that had to take into account both earlier local controversies and historical contingencies. The rapid tourist development of the island during that period had triggered complex processes of reassessing and reinventing local identity and island singularity. The island attracted tourists looking for an alternative destination, away from the popular itineraries of summer vacations. The island’s recent leftist history, being an exile place for communists, and a growing fame of late-hours celebrating and never-ending feasts fueled the construction of a unique cultural identity which was worth discovering. The island also had its own dance that visitors had heard or heard of, mainly through Konitopoulos’ arrangement. At the beginning they didn’t know how to dance it properly, but little by little they were integrated into the local feasts, which gradually became huge tourist attractions.

Local musicians in Ikaria used to play several different versions of *ikariotikos* or, as they used to call it, *kariotiko*. This slight difference in naming, from male to neuter and lacking an [i] in the beginning, gives a rather intimate tone to the dance and a sense of mutual understanding to all those who “know what they are talking about”, no matter whether they are Ikariots or (regular) visitors to the island. Thus, the “local” name and versions became symbols of authenticity and a reinvigorated sense of belonging, as opposed to the “corrupted”, “diluted”, and “superficial” arrangement of Konitopoulos. Although the popularity of the arranged tune has added to the popularity of the island and vice versa, a counter-movement of refusing to recognize the legitimacy of Konitopoulos’ version readily gained support in Ikaria. Next to the standardized Konitopoulos’

arrangement sung by Giannis Parios, different versions of “real” (*i*)*kariotikoi* (plural) were revitalized and given prominence at ikariot feasts by local musicians and dancers. Along with the Konitopoulos’ *ikariotikos*, which maintained its popularity in certain circles and contexts, music lovers, connoisseurs, and certain tourists would now turn to older, slower, more sophisticated, and “deeper” versions, which gradually received more attention and became synonymous with the “real” feeling of an ikariot way of life and ecstatic collective dancing and feasting. The precedence of *kariotiko* in local feasts in Ikaria was gradually well established. In the “making of” footage for the *Mythos* TV spot mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, people dance the *kariotiko*, played by local musicians; yet, the Konitopoulos *ikariotikos* finds its way into the final advertisement. Konitopoulos seems to win at this point in the national media arena.

### Web Routes

By the time the *ikariotikos* had started a new life as a tune/sample in contemporary electronica/dance music in the mid-2000s, two main versions, Konitopoulos’ standard arrangement and a revitalized local standard, were firmly established. Proponents of the “authentic” *kariotiko* would definitively oppose the use of the term *ikariotikos* to refer to anything but the local standard, since the local versions “came first” and, therefore, they are the “real thing”. In the line of argumentation proposed in this chapter, I try to articulate a rather different perspective, unraveling the role of (*i*)*kariotiko(s)* as a symbol of local identity and belonging, but also trying to assess the dynamic transformations in the meanings of Ikaria and *ikariotikos*, as well as their displaced development in the contemporary Greek cultural imagination.

The list of *ikariotikos* live performances, arrangements, transcriptions, and remixes is quite long. It includes popular singers of national or even international reputation, like Dimitra Galani or Eleftheria Arvanitaki (featuring palyrria’s version), national pop stars, such as Despina Vandi and many others, and second-rate pop stars and DJs, like Stelios Maximos or Alan Hadgis. More examples can be handily retrieved from youtube.com. In what follows, we will examine some of these more recent *ikariotikoi*.

### palyrria/Greek World Fusion

In their first CD, released in 2004, the aforementioned band *palyrria* created a kind of fusion of Greek traditional music elements, along with elements taken from Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan musical traditions. A revitalized interest in “traditional” (*paradosiaki*) music already had a history of two decades in urban Greece, especially among young people who learned to play older, often neglected, instruments and studied music in Turkey, looking for a fresh approach to a kind of music (*dimotika*, “folk songs”) that had fallen into disgrace during the years of the military dictatorship of 1967 to 1974. The so-called “traditional” (*paradosiaka*), the “new” term used to describe this developing field of musical expertise, exerted a significant influence over different kinds of music-making and reinvigorated discussions on national identity and culture during the years of *metapolitefsi* (polity change), the post-1974 period of Greek political life (Kallimopoulou 2009).

By introducing G. Konitopoulos’ *ikariotikos* to their “Electro\_Dub\_Techno\_Traditional Greek Music”, *palyrria* had unexpectedly achieved the success they had probably never expected. In the words of one band member:

*Ikariotikos* is one of these unbelievable circumstances, when while you may have spent four months working on the piece *Kakavia Express*, you spend just five days to make *Ikariotikos*, which finally takes all the *airplay* [English orig.] of the record! It is also quite remarkable that beyond our mood as a band the piece was so perfectly adapted to all this celebratory climate, the Olympic Games [in Athens, 2004], the live performances in the public squares of Athens, etc. I only went to a tennis match and I heard *Ikariotikos* twice inside OAKA! [the Olympic Games' central athletic field]. Let alone the fact that it was widely broadcasted by the Radio Stations! It has probably expressed 100% all this *feeling* [English orig.] of the Greeks in that particular period! It would be interesting to see the reactions of people abroad, when they play the record, they pay attention to every single piece, except *Ikariotikos*, which they just pass over, since they are not so familiar to listening to it as we are.<sup>6</sup>

This mixture of global music elements with tunes, orchestrations, and lyrics which can only be recognized at the local level, a *dry mix* or fusion of the most widely recognized characteristics with more culturally intimate ones (Herzfeld 1997), is the idiosyncratic musical “glocalization” promoted by palyrria, who are nevertheless always ready to recognize that music from Sulawesi (Indonesia) sounds identical to the “Pano Horos” (Upper Dance) from Olympos, Karpathos (Greece).<sup>7</sup> In their more recent piece and videoclip, “Pyrovasia 1208” (Firewalking 1208), they collaborated with MC Yinka, one of the most prominent MCs of the Greek rap scene, to create a musical and visual pastiche of firewalking in the Greek religious healing cult of the Anastenaria (Danforth 1989), a pagan ecstatic religion as social protest and straight references to the dynamism of violent political demonstrations during the Greek crisis.<sup>8</sup> In live performances of *ikariotikos* by palyrria, MC Yinka raps lyrics on Ikaria as being an ideal place for celebrating, drinking, and dancing until morning.<sup>9</sup>

### Locomondo/“Flying Carpet”

Perhaps the most popular contemporary dance remix of *ikariotikos*, along with palyrria's 2004 version, is that of Locomondo, the most successful among Greek reggae bands. In their promotion videoclip “This is Locomondo 2011”, the first song presents a musical/ideological manifesto:

The West and the East  
 Ai li lilili, ai li lilili  
 Are weaving a carpet  
 So YOU can dance on it  
 Ai li lilili, ai li lilili  
 Magic carpet.<sup>10</sup>

The “magic/flying carpet” stands for the Eastern folk-tale element in an East/West fusion, where the West is interestingly represented by Jamaica and the Caribbean. After the song's Greek lyrics, there usually follows a change of music climate, with a relatively straightforward quote from a famous “island song”, which finally turns reggae, in an outbreak of globalized fantasy:

Inna da Balkan they use it  
 Mix it up with Jamaican music

Try it once don't you refuse it  
 Try it twice don't you confuse it  
 In every way.<sup>11</sup>

According to the Locomondo's official site's main page, "the band . . . fuses Reggae, Ska and Carribean sounds with Greek traditional musical elements". This is a rather eloquent statement concerning the balance and types of various influences in their music and performance; musical "sounds" come from the Caribbean, while some secondary "elements" are Greek traditional. Further on, we read:

"Locomondo is the most known Reggae band in Greece, as well as the only Greek group that has recorded in Jamaica. . . . The album [they recorded in Jamaica] contained two songs that meant to be great hits in Greece, but also attracted attention beyond the Greek borders. The first was a reggae cover of the Rembetiko song *Frangosyriani* composed in 1935 by the legendary *Markos Vamvakaris*. . . . In the album "Me Wanna Dance" and "Gamilio Party" [Wedding Party], the band used a great variety of Greek traditional musical instruments such as buzuki, baglama, violin, Gaida, Tsampouna [Greek bagpipe], Kaval, Santouri, Cretan Lyra and Laud which gave the Caribbean sound a special Mediterranean touch". (English original, original orthography, emphasis in original)<sup>12</sup>

In a rather expected turn of this "loco mondo", a jump to "the Jamaica of Greece" is celebrated in their live performances, as in a clip from one of their concerts the singer of the band exclaims just before starting to play *ikariotikos*: "Dedicated to the Jamaica of Greece!",<sup>13</sup> thus turning the Aegean into a Caribbean of the Mediterranean. In their recent "official audio release", a version of local *kariotiko* is preferred,<sup>14</sup> while in other clips we find mixtures of Konitopoulos' *ikariotikos* with "Lambada".<sup>15</sup>

#### *DJ Pantelis Features Teodora and Teddy Georgo/Balkan Nationalisms*

In 2006, Thessaloniki-based DJ Pantelis, promoted as the "Balkans' Most Wanted DJ", made a remix of *ikariotikos* with Bulgarian *chalga*, a folk-pop genre developed and popularized in post-socialist Bulgaria (see e.g. Kurkela 2007). Featuring *chalga* singer Teodora and Bulgarian DJ Teddy Georgo, the "OPA (My Ikariotiko)" videoclip abounds in images of sexual provocation, expensive cars, excessive nightclub entertainment, luxuriance, and voluptuousness.<sup>16</sup> DJ Pantelis' remixes in the 2000s were often based on popular music elements from various Balkan countries, gangsta rap, and international house music in order to appeal to different nationalistic young audiences across the Balkans ("Macedonia is Greek" (2006), "Put your Hands Up for Belgrade" (2009)). His *ikariotikos* remix triggered many offensive comments in youtube.com on the origin, nationality, and authenticity of the music.

#### *Andriana Babali/Political Ballad*

Andriana Babali, a singer of pop ballads, recorded the CD *O John John Zei* (John John is Alive) in 2010 (Minos-EMI). It includes a song which uses, as its refrain, lyrics from Konitopoulos' *ikariotikos*. The song is also named after a very characteristic word from those lyrics:

“Periplanomeno” (Wandering). The song, composed by Stamos Semsis with original lyrics by Nikos Moraitis, addresses, mainly in the second person, the migrants and refugees coming to Greece and Europe having endured long journeys and incredible dangers and adversities, being exploited by networks of traffickers, only to find distrust and rejection when, and if, they finally manage to reach their promised shore.<sup>17</sup>

The Konitopoulos *ikariotikos* lyrics come from a time when the experience of internal and international migration was a central and devastating issue in the lives of persons and families of Greeks migrating from the countryside to the cities or to other countries:

I am [someone who is] roaming for years and years  
 Like a wandering bird  
 In solitude, in a foreign place,  
 Which I can't stand anymore.

In this mixture of pop-singing style with some contemporary reverberations and a possible implicit reassessment of the “political song” tradition that flourished in Greece in the post-Junta era, as well as with a popular “traditional” song, an interesting hybrid is created, which acquires its new range of signification through this series of meaningful juxtapositions. According to the lyricist of “Periplanomeno”:

Who wrote these words [*ikariotikos*], which go counter to the dance steps? Someone lost somewhere in time. A Greek migrant in a foreign place. Or someone “burned” by the migration of his own people.

Then, coming to his own lyrics:

They were lost and the water  
 Brought them up to here  
 Stray, without any papers  
 With dry faces.

The foreigners. And then, us, opposite them.

I was a foreigner as well  
 Before I become a boss  
 Before I build and make myself up  
 Before I learn to forget.  
 I was a foreigner, but  
 You are the foreigner now  
 And as you live next to me  
 You disturb my day.

The stab, though, still comes from the opposition with the refrain of *Ikariotikos*. That Greek migrant “who can't stand it [the foreign place] anymore” and the contemporary Greek property owner “who can't stand them [the migrants] anymore in his territory”.<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusion

In the musical documentary film *Whose is this Song?* (2003) by Adela Peeva and in Donna Buchanan's introductory chapter to the volume she edited on *Balkan Popular Culture and the Ottoman Ecumene* (Buchanan 2007), tracing the ethnic, linguistic, religious and local life and transformations of a particular tune in Ottoman Balkan history and the present becomes the vehicle for unraveling cultural, social, and political osmoses and oppositions, historical contingencies, *long-durée* processes of mutuality and exchange, conflict and hatred, with the two authors using different accents and emphases in their presentations. In this chapter, I have drawn inspiration from these and other works mentioned above in order to approach the life and transformations of a Greek folk island dance tune/song over the past three to four decades. I have tried to explain that this journey should neither start nor end on the island of Ikaria itself. I have proposed a narrative reconstitution of the social and cultural life and transformations of *ikariotikos* that involved different places and levels of signification. Moving from the "island songs" of Konitopoulos and Parios to cultural property rights issues in the villages of highland Naxos, from a discussion of naming (*(i)kariotiko(s)*) to the dynamics of belonging and the construction of a unique locality, from revitalized "traditional" music to reggae remixes and Balkan folk pop, from displaced imagination to localized desires, I have tried to show the wide range of issues and the complex processes involved in the life and transformations of a Greek popular dance tune of local claim, national fame, and global fantasy. Although the various *(i)karitikoi* discussed in this chapter are involved in complex debates over authenticity, originality, and hybridity, local and wider "realities" and "fantasies", in the routes I have followed here I have tried rather to focus on the multiple levels and musical paths of irony, nostalgia, and loss in contemporary music-making, as well as on the perplexities created, sustained, and negotiated by both anxious and celebratory uses and interpretations of "traditional" music in "new" contexts of sharing culture and meaning.

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## Notes

- 1 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rdq8BuloXSY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rdq8BuloXSY) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 2 For two interesting and multiply revealing "making of" films of the advertisement, see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLfkUgdaZY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLfkUgdaZY) and [www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfyB7Q-SAz0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfyB7Q-SAz0). For the *Mythos Ikariotikos* (Remix Renos, featuring Eirini Haridou), see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sHR00Tfkgp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sHR00Tfkgp) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 3 *Ikariotikos* [male sing. adjective, implying *choros* (dance) or *skopos* (tune)], *ikariotiko* [neutral sing. adjective, implying (but not necessarily) *tragoudi* (song)].
- 4 See e.g. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYbYcJEaKnY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYbYcJEaKnY) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 5 For detailed references, as well as a more elaborate presentation of issues discussed in this section, see Panopoulos (2014).
- 6 [www.hxos.gr/show\\_page.php?page\\_id=226&cat\\_id=46](http://www.hxos.gr/show_page.php?page_id=226&cat_id=46) (accessed March 12, 2014).
- 7 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJBaNPQ9W5c&list=PLA9ABC93D8DFA04D3&index=1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJBaNPQ9W5c&list=PLA9ABC93D8DFA04D3&index=1) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 8 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=twdt\\_NDJ2ZM&list=PLzg5MJxxxEejHyhZXyPRDkiI-DKwwULF0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twdt_NDJ2ZM&list=PLzg5MJxxxEejHyhZXyPRDkiI-DKwwULF0) (accessed February 23, 2017).

- 9 In an interview/self-presentation of MC Yinka in *Lifo* free press magazine, we read: “I was born in Athens in 1981, at Papadiamanti square, in Lambrini. In 1984, we moved to Kato Patissia and since then I roam around this area. Yinka is my name. I am called Emanuel Olayinka Afolanio, of Nigerian origin, from the tribe of Yoruba, with a great heritage, musical and pagan” ([www.lifo.gr/mag/features/1910](http://www.lifo.gr/mag/features/1910) (accessed February 23, 2017)). On the symbolic significance of “roaming” and “wandering” in *ikariotikos* lyrics see later in this chapter.
- 10 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWfjEXlWxA0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWfjEXlWxA0) (subtitled in English) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 11 English in original. See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9S3gr6I3TLQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9S3gr6I3TLQ) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 12 [www.locomondo.gr/locomondo/BIOGRAPHY\\_en.html](http://www.locomondo.gr/locomondo/BIOGRAPHY_en.html) (accessed March 12, 2014).
- 13 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBzgYSvMg7E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBzgYSvMg7E) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 14 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKw5xYXyLjM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKw5xYXyLjM) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 15 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KZDs4Jpv-s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KZDs4Jpv-s) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 16 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH6kyktMocg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH6kyktMocg) (accessed March 14, 2014).
- 17 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K3oo01teCo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K3oo01teCo) (accessed February 23, 2017).
- 18 [www.protagon.gr/?i=protagon.el.8emata&id=4920](http://www.protagon.gr/?i=protagon.el.8emata&id=4920) (accessed February 23, 2017).

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