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# The Adventures of “The Shepherdess”: Poetry, Music, and Cross-cultural Intersections in the Italo-Greek Space

by George Kokkonis and Nikos Ordoulidis

In the field of song, and particularly within the tradition of Greek folk song (*δημοτικό*, demotic), Georgios Zalokostas became known primarily through the widespread circulation of his poem “*Το φίλημα*” (To filima, The kiss), which was, from a very early stage, circulated as “*Η βοσκοπούλα*” (I voskopoula, The shepherdess) or as “*Μια βοσκοπούλα αγάπησα*” (Mia voskopoula agapisa, I loved a shepherdess). This relates chiefly to musical publications associated with the domain of scholarly musical composition, which developed in parallel with—albeit later than—the work of editors of folk song anthologies; a milieu that essentially reproduces what Alexis Politis aptly described as the “second life” of the folk song.<sup>1</sup> The paradox, however, lies in the fact that within this framework Zalokostas’s poem came to be classified as a folk song, despite the obvious fact that it constituted, arguably, a highly successful instance of a folk-style creation. The same applies to Ioannis Vilaras’s earlier “*Πουλάκι*” (Poulaki, Little bird), which many, including well-known performers, also regarded as traditional. And whereas the rhythmic pattern of the tsamiko allowed “Little bird” to develop into a dance tune of nationwide reach, thereby eliminating any suspicion of a scholarly-song origin, Zalokostas’s poem became, in effect, a song intended for seated performance, since its rhythm does not relate to any dance metre. Here, too, it was the poetic text that rendered it “folk”, accompanied by a melody that departs significantly from vernacular stylistic practices.

In a similar vein, his poem “*Η τυφή ανθοπόλις*” (I tyfli anthopolis, The blind flower-seller) was also set to music, though it did not achieve success. In the late nineteenth century, certainly after 1870, the Cephalonian composer Georgios Lambiris (1833–1889) provided both the musical setting and the harmonisation in the conventional scoring for voice and piano. Several years later, Georgios Pachtikos also set the poem to music and published it in the Constantinople journal *Mousiki*, of which he was the editor.

The melody is presented there in Byzantine neume notation,<sup>2</sup> and Pachtikos, in transcribing the lyrics, observed that: “This piece, composed chiefly to be sung as a monody,

contains the following moving stanzas”.<sup>3</sup> Zalokostas was also set to music by Ioannis Th. Sakellariadis in the early twentieth century, confirming that the poet had attracted the attention of numerous composers of the period who were drawn to the patriotic and national themes found in his work. Sakellariadis set excerpts from “*Βότσαρης*” (Votsaris, Botsaris), from “*Ποιητής*” (Poitis, The poet) - under the title “*Ωρα γλυκειά*” (Ora glykia, Sweet hour<sup>4</sup>) - and from “*Η τελευταία νύξ*” (I teleftaia nyx, The last night). The former two were published in *Orphiki Lyra*, in 1905<sup>5</sup> and in Sakellariadis’s volume *Tyrtaios*, in 1907.<sup>6</sup>

The third appears in *Tyrtaios* under the title “*Το Μεσολόγγι*” (To Mesolongi, Messo-longhi) with the subtitle “*Η τελευταία νύχτα*” (I teleftaia nychta, The last night).<sup>7</sup> These musical settings likewise failed to gain traction.

Research to date indicates that Zalokostas also inspired two composers prominent in the commercial recording sector. Notably, Giannis Spanos incorporated the poem “*Η αναχώρησή της*” (I anachorisi tis, Her departure) in *Anthologia II*.<sup>8</sup> The song, written in 5/8 in Spanos’s characteristic *neo kyma* (new wave) idiom and performed by Michalis Violaris, was also released as a 45-rpm record.<sup>9</sup> Following Spanos, the poem was subsequently set by Christos Tsiamoulis, who set it to music in the style of a folk-popular (*λαϊκό*, laiko) *zeibekiko*.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 213.

<sup>4</sup> It is interesting that Sakellariadis utilises as a refrain in “O Poitis” (The poet) the verse: “Human things are transitory, like river water / enjoy your youth, my daughter, do not waste time”, from Vilaras’s “Chloe”. He even modifies the second line as follows: “enjoy your youth, my light, do not waste time” (*Tyrtaios*, p. 84).

<sup>5</sup> See Kleououlos Artemidis, *Orfiki Lyra*, Kousoulinos, Athens 1905, (song 3, pp. 15–17 for the first and song 83, p. 180 for the second, in both Byzantine and Western notation).

<sup>6</sup> See Ioannis Th. Sakellariadis, *Tyrtaios*. Kousoulinos, Athens 1907, (song 1, pp. 1–4 for the first and song 29, pp. 83–84 for the second, in Western notation only).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, song 3, pp. 15–19.

<sup>8</sup> This poem, as well as “The kiss”, are included in the edition by Periklis Matsas, *80 Ellinikai dimotikai melodiai* [80 Greek folk melodies], A. Comendinger, Constantinople 1883. As stated in the subtitle, these are melodies collected and harmonised by Matsas using staff notation, without, however, either the poets or the composers being declared. Reference to a poet is made in only two melodies which are declared as his own compositions. It should be noted here that in the “Olympia” competition (see below), Matsas had been awarded the bronze medal for a polka he had composed.

<sup>9</sup> According to Vasilis Chatzantoniou, the first edition on Lyra was released on 6/11/1968, while that on Zodiac was released on 20/03/1969. The information is drawn from the catalogue, *Elliniki diskografia* [Greek discography], which is available on the internet: <https://www.greekdiscography.gr/Home.htm>.

<sup>1</sup> Alexis Politis, La seconde vie des chansons populaires grecques. Modes d’incorporation de l’élément populaire dans l’intelligentsia du XIXe siècle. *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique*, 8, 2012, 47–59. <https://doi.org/10.12681/hr.275>.

<sup>2</sup> See *Mousiki*, Year I, issue 7, July 1912, p. 203 (song no. 74).

The song was released, with no stylistic variation, on two albums: *Avra thalassini*, under the title “*Αναχώρηση*” (Anachorisi, Departure) and sung by Keiti Koullia,<sup>10</sup> and “*Μονάχα για να ταξιδεύω*” (Monacha gia na taxidevo, Only to travel), with the same title and performed by the composer himself.<sup>11</sup> Yet these musical settings, notwithstanding the stature of their composers, likewise failed to achieve success.

By contrast, the reception of “The kiss”—informed by the romantic imaginary of a bucolic world and an overflowing lyricism—soon garnered widespread popularity among audiences characterised by “urban nostalgia”. The piece swiftly permeated folk-popular musical praxis as well and, thanks to the spread of the recording industry and radio, establishing itself as a staple of the national folk repertoire. Today one may not know “The kiss”, or may be unaware that it is a composition by Zalokostas, yet one will almost certainly recognise the lyrics and melody of “I loved a shepherdess”, which many have sung in social gatherings without instrumental accompaniment. The folk version of the melody—transmitted orally, whether via commercial recordings, professional musicians, or simply by word of mouth—has retained a perennial presence across diverse musical contexts for more than a century.

Underpinning this familiar song is a complex history characterised by philological detours, musicological paradoxes, and unresolved questions concerning the provenance of its melody. The present study seeks to trace this multilayered trajectory, following the path of the “Shepherdess” from its poetic origin—an Italian sonnet of the Italian “Arcadia”—to its Hellenised version by Zalokostas. Through the examination of primary sources, musical anthologies, commercial sheet music, and early commercial recordings, the article reconstructs the song’s journey as it was reshaped through various performance media, such as theatre and cinema, and traverses cultural boundaries, reaching as far as the Sephardic community of Smyrna and the Spanish scholarly repertoire. The aim is not merely to solve a musicological conundrum, but to highlight the “Shepherdess” as an exceptional case study for understanding processes of cultural reception, nationalisation, and the enduring survival of a polymorphic musical-poetic creation.

### Poetic Origins<sup>12</sup>

The genesis of the “Shepherdess” lies not in music but in poetry, specifically in Zalokostas’s poem “The kiss”. It was first published in 1853 in the periodical *Euterpi*,<sup>13</sup> accompanied by a significant annotation beneath the title: “*κατά το Ιταλικόν*” (kata to

<sup>10</sup> FM Records, FM 340, 1996.

<sup>11</sup> Lyra, CD 4891, 1997.

<sup>12</sup> Part of this text was originally published on the website of the Kounadis Archive Virtual Museum, following research carried out by Nikos Ordoulidis and Leonardos Kounadis: <https://vmrebetiko.gr/en/item/?id=5170>.

<sup>13</sup> *Euterpi*, volume 6, issue 23 (1853), p. 547.

Italikon, after the Italian), bearing Zalokostas’s own initials, “Γ. Χ. Ζ.” (G. Ch. Z.), as a signature.<sup>14</sup>

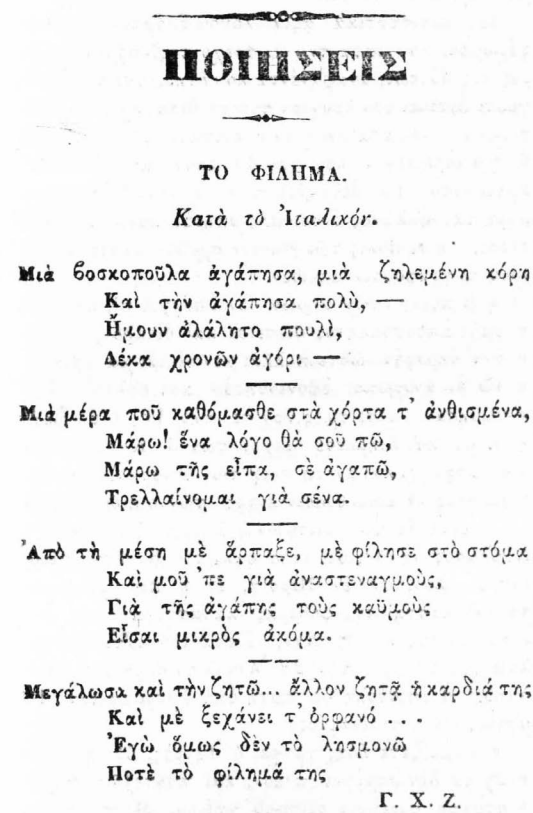


Figure 1: “The kiss”, as published in *Euterpi*.

This reference is far from a perfunctory citation but points directly to the poem’s historical background. Around seventy years after the aforementioned publication, Timoleon Ambelas (1850–1929)—poet, playwright, and member of the Philological Society “Parnassos”—elucidated the process, in a text that appears to have been writ-

<sup>14</sup> See Timoleon Ambelas, “Peripeteiai enos filimatos” [Adventures of a kiss], *Miniaia Eikonografmeni Atlantis* (June 1921), New York, p. 24. See also Konstantina Georgiadi, “To boliasma tou logiou dimotikofanous theatrou sto repertorio tou Karagiozi: ta paradeigmata tou Agapitikou tis Voskopoulas kai tis Golfos” [The grafting of scholarly folk-like theatre into the Karagiozis repertoire: the examples of the shepherdess’s lover and Golfo], in *Elliniko teatro skion - Ayli politistikii klironomia*. Centro de Estudios Bizantinos, Neogriegos y Chipriotas 2016, p. 160, n. 11.

ten after Zalokostas's death and published in 1921.<sup>15</sup> His account transcends a mere philological observation; in effect, it vividly unveils the remarkable odyssey of a poem which, although firmly entrenched in the collective consciousness as a creation of the Greek Muse, concealed an Italian model. This model, in turn, derived its aesthetic impetus from the Arcadian ideal, with its emphasis on bucolic poetry and the erotic motif, and belonged to the wider literary and artistic movement of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>16</sup> The sonnet by Giambattista Felice Zappi (1667–1719) exemplifies this current. It seems to have circulated initially in 1716 in the anthology *Rime degli Arcadi* (*Poems of the Arcadian-s*).<sup>17</sup> Zappi signs it under the pseudonym “Tirsi Leucasio”. A comparative reading of the two texts demonstrates that Zalokostas did not approach the Italian poem as a translator but as a creative interlocutor, reshaping its spirit in the Greek language.



Figure 2: The sonnet by Zappi, as published in “Rime degli Arcadi”, 1716.

<p>In quella età, ch'io misurar solea Me col mio Capro, e'l Capro era maggiore, Io amava Clori, che insin da quell'ore Meraviglia, e non Donna a me pareo. Un dì le dissi: io t'amo; e'l disse il core, Poiche tanto la lingua non sapea; Ed ella un . . . diemmi, e mi dicea: Pargoletto, ah non sai, che cosa è Amore. Ella d'altri s'accese, e altri di lei; Io poi giunsi all'età, ch'uom s'innamora, L'età degl'infelici affanni miei. Clori or mi sprezza, io l'amo insin d'allora; Non si ricorda del mio amor costei: Io mi ricordo di quel . . . ancora.</p>	<p>Στα χρόνια που συνήθιζα ν' αναμετρώ το μπόδι με το μικρό κατσίκι μου, κι εκείνο με περνούσε, είχα ερωτοχτυπηθεί με τη γλυκιά Χλωρίδα που από τότε νόμιζα θαύμα παρά γυναίκα. Μια μέρα είπα: «Σ' αγαπώ», και τ' έπε η καρδιά μου καθώς η γλώσσα αδύνατον ήταν να το προσφέρει. Ένα . . . [φιλι] μου έδωσε ενώ συνάμα μου 'πε: «Αχ μορουνδέλι, άβγαλο εσύ είσαι στην αγάπη». Άλλους αυτή πεθύμησε, άλλοι την πεθύμησαν, στην ηλικία έρωτα του έρωτα κι ο ίδιος, την ηλικία των πικρών ερωτικών μου πόνων. Εγώ από τότε την ποθώ, μα αδιαφορεί εκείνη. Τον φλογερό μου έρωτα έχει εντελώς ξεχάσει· μα εγώ θυμάμαι το . . . [φιλι] που μου 'χε δώσει ακόμα.</p>	<p>In the years when I was wont to measure my stature against my little kid, and it surpassed me, I fell enamoured of the sweet Chloris, whom even then I deemed a miracle rather than a woman. One day I said “I love you”, and my heart spoke it as the tongue found it impossible to utter. A . . . [kiss] she granted me, while saying at once: “Ah, little babe, you are but a novice in love”. Others she has longed for, and by others was she craved, I myself have reached the age of passion, the age of my bitter amorous pangs. Since then I have desired her, yet she remains indifferent. My fiery love she has utterly forgotten; yet I still recall that . . . [kiss] she gave me then.</p>
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Table 1: The original Italian sonnet, its rendition into Greek, and its rendition into English, from the 1716 edition.<sup>18</sup>

Of particular interest is the chain of events that followed Zalokostas's original, candid acknowledgement “after the Italian”, as asserted by Ambelas. The omission of this reference in subsequent editions reinforced its perceived Greekness, leading the Italian poet and librettist Ferdinando Fontana (1850–1919) to perceive it as such.<sup>19</sup> Fontana, regarding the poem as Greek and unaware of its Italian provenance, translated it into Italian,<sup>20</sup> while subsequent translations followed in Latin and Dutch.<sup>21</sup> The poem thus continued its journey, making, as Ambelas aptly notes, “the round of the world with a Greek passport, so to speak”.<sup>22</sup> However, the revelation of the truth had come earlier, in 1884, from the Heptanesian scholar Spyridon Deviazis, who thoroughly analysed not only the journey of “The kiss” and “The departure” from Italian into Greek, but also the reverse trajectory of some of Zalokostas's poems.<sup>23</sup> In this dual migration, even the identity of the heroine was transformed, from Zappi's original Clori to Zalokostas's Maro and, finally, to the Maria of other foreign translations. Ambelas, however, did not confine himself to the empirical evidence of foreign provenance. On the contrary, he highlighted the greatness of Zalokostas, who managed to imbue the Italian sonnet

<sup>18</sup> As Doglio and Stocchi note, the word “kiss” is replaced by dots in the first edition of Zappi's sonnet. See Maria Luisa Doglio and Manlio Pastore Stocchi, *Rime degli Arcadi* . . . , *ibid*, p. 381, n. 2. According to Stefania Baragetti, this practice was common within the context of “decency” and the moral and linguistic cleansing imposed by the editors of *Arcadia*. See Stefania Baragetti, *I poeti e l'Accademia dell'Arcadia*, LED Edizioni Universitarie, Milan 2012, pp. 7, 11 and 14. We would like to warmly thank Konstantina Ger. Evangelou (Professor at the Department of Italian Language and Literature of the Aristotle University) both for pointing out the sources and for the “attempt” at translating Zappi's poem.

<sup>19</sup> Fontana wrote, among others, the libretto for Spyros Samaras's opera *Flora Mirabilis*, as well as the librettos for two of Puccini's operas (“Le Villi” and “Edgar”).

<sup>20</sup> “The kiss” is included in Fontana's collection *Parigi, nuove poesie, e Ellenia moderna*, N. Zanichelli, Bologna 1881, in the chapter titled “Imitazioni dal greco moderno” (pp. 215–288). The sub-chapter concerning Zalokostas (listed as Zalacosta) is on pages 255–270 and concerns the poems: 1) “I anachorisi tis” [her departure]/Partenza (pp. 259–260), 2) “O Rigas” [Rigas]/Atanasio Riga (pp. 261–264), 3) “To filima” [the kiss]/Bacio (pp. 267–268), 4) “O vorias” [the north wind]/Borea [which freezes the lambs] (pp. 269–270). Fontana also provides a biography of Zalokostas on p. 257 with an incorrect date of death.

<sup>21</sup> Timoleon Ambelas, *ibid*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>23</sup> S. De Biasi (Spyridon Deviazis), “Versi neo-greci, che, viceversa, sono italiani”, *Pungolo della Domenica. Giornale di amena lettura* (N. 50, 14/12/1884), pp. 396–397.

<sup>15</sup> Timoleon Ambelas, *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> Maria Luisa Doglio e Manlio Pastore Stocchi, *Rime degli Arcadi I-XIV. 1716-1781. Un'antologia, “Studi e testi” 7*, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma 2019. See also Stefania Baragetti, *I poeti e l'accademia. Le “Rime degli Arcadi” (1716-1781)*, LED, Milano 2012.

<sup>17</sup> *Rime degli Arcadi*, tomo primo, Antonio Rossi, Roma 1716.

with such a “semblance of Greekness” and “semblance of originality” that it was fully and justly assimilated, rendering the story of “The kiss” a parable for the capacity of art to transcend national boundaries and take root within a new cultural homeland.

Zappi’s poem was also set to music by the composer Bonifazio Asioli (1769–1832), probably in 1802,<sup>24</sup> some 84 years after Zappi’s death.<sup>25</sup> Given that Zalokostas lived in Livorno, Italy, from 1814 until approximately 1821, where his family had settled,<sup>26</sup> it is reasonable to surmise that he encountered Asioli’s music in addition to the poem. Nevertheless, Asioli’s music is not identical to the well-known melody that has since become associated with “The kiss”.

### The Musical Setting of the Poem

The year 1875 marked a pivotal juncture in the history of the musical setting of “The kiss”, as two parallel and seemingly contradictory processes were underway in Athens. On the one hand, official national institutions, through the organisation of the third “Olympia” of Evangelis Zappas, announced a competition for settings of works by several literary poets, among whom was Zalokostas with “The kiss”. On the other hand, in that very same year, the French composer Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray (1840–1910) was in the city on a research expedition.

Bourgault-Ducoudray (henceforth Bourgault) arrived in Athens on 15 January and collected material until the end of March, when he departed for Smyrna.<sup>27</sup> This re-

<sup>24</sup> See “Vestigia della storia del sonetto italiano”, in Ugo Foscolo, *Le Opere, Edizione Nazionale, vol. Viii. Prose politiche e letterarie dal 1811 al 1816*, edizione critica a cura di Luigi Fassò, Le Monnier, Firenze 1933, pp. 142-143. The manuscript score of “In quella età, ch’io misurar soleva” is available at the National Library of Spain: <https://datos.bne.es/obra/XX4735654.html>.

<sup>25</sup> A second setting by the composer Ruggero Manna (1808–1864) from Trieste was also identified; he adapted Asioli’s setting in 1834, as evidenced by a manuscript of an edition held at the Library of the “Giuseppe Verdi” Conservatory in Milan. A second manuscript was located at the “Vito Levi” Library of the “Giuseppe Tartini” Conservatory in Trieste (searchable here: <https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/>). We would like to thank here Martina Seleni, *Funzionario Archivista Bibliotecario*, of the “Vito Levi” Library, for the kind provision of the score in question.

<sup>26</sup> Ivi Kazantzi, “Logotechnikes kai politismikes diadromes enos sonetou. I pos mia arkadiki nymphi metamfiezestai se ellinida kai sefaraditissa voskopoula” [Literary and cultural paths of a sonnet. Or how an Arcadian nymph is disguised as a Greek and Sephardic shepherdess], in Iliá Papastathi (ed.) *Zitimata Neoellinikis Filologias. Metrika, Yfologika, Kritika, Metafrastika* [Issues of modern Greek philology. Metrical, stylistic, critical, translational], Proceedings of the 14th International Scientific Meeting (27–30/3/2014), In memory of X. A. Kokolis, Department of Philology, Division of Medieval and Modern Greek Studies, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki 2014, pp. 797–806.

<sup>27</sup> L.-A. Bourgault-Ducoudray, *Souvenirs d’une mission musicale en Grèce et en Orient*, Paris, Hachette, 1878 (2nd edition), pp. 3, 11. The first edition appeared in the newspaper *Le Temps* consecutively on 6, 7 and 10 January 1876. The text of the *Souvenirs* was translated into Greek by Kaiti Romanou, “L. A. Mpourgo-Ntykountraí, Anamniseis apo mia mousiki apostoli stin Ellada kai tin Anatoli” [L. A. Bourgault-Ducoudray, memories from a musical mission to Greece and the Orient], *Mousikologia* 7-8 (1989), pp. 87–107.

search culminated in his collection *Trente mélodies populaires de Grèce et d’Orient*, which was published in 1876 in Paris.<sup>28</sup> Within this collection, in which the composer—moving beyond mere transcription—provided piano harmonisations for the folk melodies—to their harmonisation for piano accompaniment, the transcription of “The kiss” represents the earliest dated instance. Although published one year after the conclusion of the “Olympia” competition, the French composer’s notes reveal that the poem, as a song, had already entered the popular oral tradition and was already exceptionally popular.

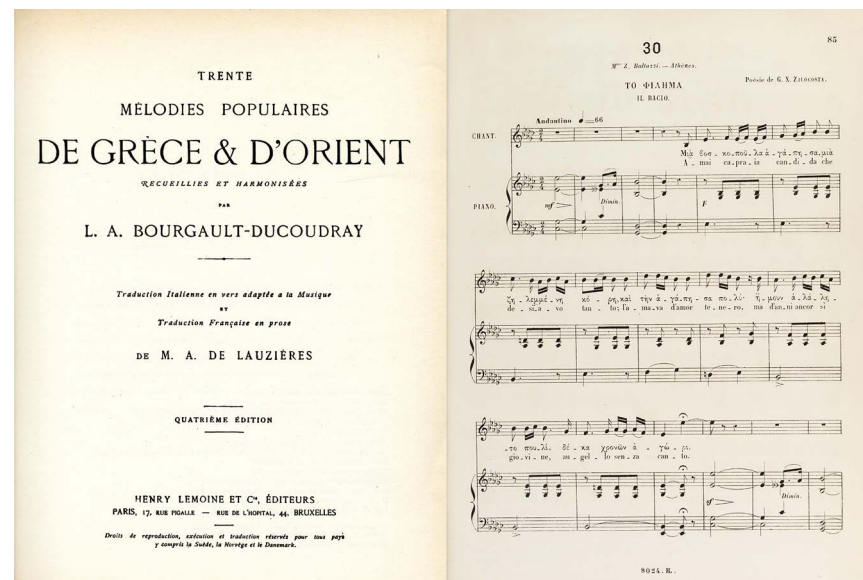


Figure 3: “The kiss” in musical notation, as included in the edition by Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray (first edition in 1876. Source: Gallica.bnf.fr)

<sup>28</sup> For the history of Bourgault-Ducoudray’s research mission see Giorgos Kokkonis, «L’altérité amadouée. Louis Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray et la chanson populaire grecque», in Luc Charles-Dominique, Yves Defrance, Danièle Pistone (éd.), *Fascinantes étrangetés. La découverte de l’altérité musicale en Europe au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Paris: L’Harmattan, 2011, pp. 119-135, Stella Kourbana, “Oí chymoi tis armonias kai ta kladia tou archaiou melodikou dendrou. O Bourgault-Ducoudray kai i elliniki mousiki” [The juices of harmony and the branches of the ancient melodic tree. Bourgault-Ducoudray and Greek music], *Neos Mousikos Ellinomnimon* 8 (January–May 2021), pp. 64–123 (104–112). For the ideological framework see Panos Vlagopoulos, “‘The Patrimony of Our Race’: Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray and the Emergence of the Discourse on Greek National Music”, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 34, No. 1 (May 2016), pp. 49–77 and Panos Vlagopoulos, “Epistimonikos ratsismos kai agnos patriotismos: i ideologia gyro apo tis sylloges paradosiakon tragoudion tou Bourgault-Ducoudray kai tou Arami” [Scientific racism and pure patriotism: the ideology around the traditional song collections of Bourgault-Ducoudray and Aramis], *Mousikos Logos* [Musical discourse] 10 (Spring 2021), pp. 19–42.

Bourgault's testimony is of paramount importance. In a footnote to his transcription, he makes the following clear:

This melody, which has the typical character of the European minor mode, betrays its Italian origin. We heard it sung in Athens by several people, with variations. We owe the melodic version presented here to Mrs Z. Baltazzi, who had harmonised it. In our accompaniment, we have reproduced Mrs Baltazzi's harmony.<sup>29</sup>

This note is exceptionally revealing for three reasons. Firstly, because he was perhaps the first to posit an Italian origin. The conflation of the "European minor mode" with an "Italian origin" is a characteristic perspective of the era, which interprets musical idioms through a binary lens, revealing inherent deficiencies in sustained field observation. In other words, for the French composer, comparisons are made automatically with the sounds he is familiar with, which he categorises within his own framework—that of Central European learned tradition.

If, however, we follow his assessment—a hypothesis that has been perpetuated for years, even online, with the claim that it is a loan from an Italian cantata—our research has uncovered no material exhibiting a close melodic affinity with the well-known tune. Nevertheless, several similarities have been identified with a famous and perennially popular Neapolitan song, as evidenced by numerous recordings,<sup>30</sup> which has been known in its printed version since at least the mid-nineteenth century. We refer to the composition entitled "Fenesta ca Lucive", the authorship of which remains an enigma for Italian researchers.<sup>31</sup>

Although the melodic development of the two songs takes an entirely different direction, their similarity in the initial melodic incipit is striking. A second point of considerable significance is Bourgault's observation regarding the multiplicity of variants he encountered within the Athenian oral tradition.

Considering that a new composition requires a certain period to be assimilated into oral practice, this indicates that the song was already well known by 1875. Conversely, the variations he highlights suggest that it was likely a relatively recent song—a melody that had yet to attain a stable, fixed form. The third point of interest concerns the

<sup>29</sup> L.-A. Bourgault-Ducoudray, *Trente mélodies populaires de Grèce et d'Orient*, Henry Lemoine, Paris 1876, pp. 85-87.

<sup>30</sup> The song has been recorded since the beginning of the 20th century both by lyric singers, such as Enrico Caruso, and by many popular singers.

<sup>31</sup> For this issue, see Raffaele Di Mauro, «Il caso Fenesta che lucive: enigma "quasi" risolto» in *Studi sulla canzone napoletana classica*, a cura di Enrico Careri e Pasquale Scialò, Libreria Musicale Italiana, Luca 2008, p. 195-240.

possession of both the melody and the harmony by Mrs Zoe Baltazzi (or Valtazzi).<sup>32</sup> Baltazzi was an amateur musician but also a prominent and highly cultured figure within the Athenian aristocracy, a prominent figure in Athenian society whose residence functioned as a salon for the capital's intelligentsia of the period.<sup>33</sup> Regarding the harmonisation, she may well have been assisted by her sister Smaragda, who played the piano, if we are to judge by the references made by Tantalidis in a poem dedicated to her.<sup>34</sup> From Z. Baltazzi, Bourgault sourced two other songs: "Αυτά τα μάτια σ' Δίμο μ'" (Afta ta matia s' Dimo m', These eyes of yours, my Dimo),<sup>35</sup> which it is noted she provided from a collection of songs in Byzantine notation, and "Θε μου και να γινότανε το Μακρυνόρι κάμπος" (The mou kai na ginotane to Makrynori kampos, God, if only Makrynoros became a plain), which is listed—much like "The kiss"—as belonging to Mrs Baltazzi's "album". Regarding "The kiss", the reference to a pre-existing harmonisation in Baltazzi's "album" bolsters the argument that it originated neither from an amateur transcriber, nor, naturally, from a collection in Byzantine notation. It is probable that Baltazzi was in possession of either manuscript material intended for publication or commercial sheet music in staff notation, which, as we shall see, were beginning to be published at the time. This would account for the composer's footnote stating that the song was already harmonised.

<sup>32</sup> Zoi Baltazzi (Constantinople 1838 – Athens 1889) came from a prominent Phanariot family of Constantinople. Her father, Stefanos Karatheodoris (1789–1867), was an intellectual, physician, botanist and mathematician, and the founder of the Imperial Medical School of Constantinople, where he taught as a professor for forty years. He was also the personal physician to Sultan Mahmoud II. Zoi married Evangelos Baltatzis (1826–1889), from a prominent family of Smyrnaean bankers. For more information see M.-D. Sturdza, *Dictionnaire historique et généalogique des grandes familles de Grèce, d'Albanie et de Constantinople*, Paris 1983, pp. 224–226, 259–261. See also Ilias Tantalidis, *Vios Stefanou Karatheodori iatrou* [life of Stefanos Karatheodoris, physician], Ellinikos Filologikos Syllogos Konstantinoupoleos [greek philological society of Constantinople], Ek tou Typografeiou Antoniou Koromila, Constantinople 1868 and Stella Kourbana, "Oi chymoi tis armonias...", *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> See Georgios Dertilis, *To zitima ton trapezon (1871-1873) Oikonomiki kai politiki diamachi stin Ellada tou 19ou aiona* [The banking issue (1871–1873). Economic and political conflict in 19th-century Greece], MIET, Athens 1980, pp. 13–14. Several references to musical soirées at the home of Evangelis and Zoi Baltazzi are found in the press of the time: *Efimeris*, 20/01/1887 and 2/02/1887.

<sup>34</sup> Tantalidis, in his edition *Idiotika stichourgimata* [Private verses], Typois tou afstriakou Lloyd, Trieste 1860, dedicated many of his poems to the two sisters, Zoi and Smaragda. In the poem in question addressed to Smaragda titled "Ti kyria Smaragda Valtatzi apodimousi en Londino" [To Mrs Smaragda Baltatzi departing for London], written on 12/12/1850, we read: "A sweet tone represents you / of a pianist-singer / falling through fingers", p. 83.

<sup>35</sup> The transcription is drawn from the edition by Ioannis G. Zografos Keivelis, *Mousikon apathisma periechon diafora ellinika asmata* [musical anthology containing various Greek songs]. *Meros defteron* [part two], Misailidis, Constantinople 1873. It is found on pages 37–38 with a preceding note: "most of these were dictated by I. Tantalidis". Ilias Tantalidis, author of the biography of Zoi's father, Stefanos Karatheodoris, as well as editor of poems and songs, would shortly after become one of Bourgault's main informants in Constantinople.



However, Bourgault's transcription poses a further enigma, this time specifically concerning the composer's choice of key signature. The unusual choice of E-flat minor for the transcription appears far from coincidental; it suggests that the source material may have been a brass band arrangement, a key entirely conventional for such ensembles.

Concurrently with Bourgault's documentation of the urban, stylistically refined version of the melody, another, equally significant process was taking place within the framework of the 1875 "Olympia" competition. The endeavour to revitalise the Olympic spirit prior to 1896 is inextricably linked to Evangelis Zappas (1800–1865) and the organisation of the so-called "Olympia". These events, however, diverged markedly from the Olympic Games, functioned as a major national industrial and agricultural exhibition—a "panegyris" according to the regulations of the period—which was also accompanied by athletic and artistic competitions. In the third "Olympia" of 1875, the exhibition of national products included a category dedicated to the promotion of Greek music. A suite of awards was instituted, while for Category XIII of the artistic awards, a musical composition competition was announced. That year, contestants were invited to provide musical settings for selected poems, including Zalokostas's "The kiss".<sup>36</sup> The proclamation, dated 14 March 1875, encompassed both (a) a composition competition and (b) a competition for the musical setting of Greek songs.<sup>37</sup> Composers were required to submit their works to the "Olympia" Committee by 30 April 1875. The final results were announced following the Committee's deliberations on 19 February 1876. For "The kiss", the First Class Silver Prize was awarded to Maria Damaskinou-Foskarini, then residing in Paris, while the Second Class Silver Prize went to Nikolaos Maggel. Although the minutes are not entirely clear, Leonidas Alvanas (First Class Silver)<sup>38</sup> and D. G. Kambouroglou (Bronze)<sup>39</sup> also appear to have received awards for the five songs—namely the four poems and the *polychronismos*<sup>40</sup>—without specific attribution to individual poems. The highest distinction, which was accompanied by a cash prize of 600 drachmas, was conferred upon Andreas Seiler for the composition of three symphonies (one for military band and one for orchestra),

<sup>36</sup> The regulation of the "Olympia" of 1875 is available in digital format at: [https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/SND\\_Box\\_233\\_FOLDER\\_01\\_doc-1-3\\_small.pdf](https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/SND_Box_233_FOLDER_01_doc-1-3_small.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> According to the proclamation: "In the second competition, musical settings on the pianoforte of the following four poems are accepted, namely, To Filima [The kiss] (Zalakosta [sic]), O Orfanos [The orphan] (Paraschou), Oi Syntrofoi [The companions] (Christopoulou), To Nanarisma [The lullaby] (Valaoriti) and the following prayer for the King, namely 'Polychronion poiisai etc.'". The specific file is available in digital format at: [https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/SND\\_Box\\_233\\_F\\_01\\_doc4\\_pt\\_2.pdf](https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/SND_Box_233_F_01_doc4_pt_2.pdf).

<sup>38</sup> Alvanas does not appear to have set "The kiss" to music. See Kaiti Romanou, Maria Barbaki and Fotis Mousoulidis, *I elliniki mousiki stous Olympiakous Agones kai tis Olympiades (1858–1896)* [Greek music in the Olympic Games and the Olympiads (1858–1896)], General Secretariat for the Olympic Games, Ministry of Culture, Kouloura, Athens 2004, p. 33.

<sup>39</sup> The results are found in a subfolder of the minutes, which is available in digital format at: [https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/SND\\_Box\\_233\\_F\\_01\\_doc\\_4\\_pt4.pdf](https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/SND_Box_233_F_01_doc_4_pt4.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> Hymns chanted for the bishops but also for senior notables, wishing them many years of life.

whereas the celebrated composers Pavlos Carrer and Dionysios Rodotheatos<sup>41</sup> received the Second Class Gold Prize. Unfortunately, the aforementioned prize-winning settings of "The kiss" remain untraceable. Notably, Carrer appears to have submitted a musical setting of "The kiss" to the competition, notwithstanding his absence from the official minutes.<sup>42</sup> This particular composition, however, lacks any melodic affinity with the well-known tune. Nevertheless, his composition entitled "Shepherdess" was reported to have been performed on two occasions by Koromilas's newspaper *Efimeris*: in 1873<sup>43</sup> and 1874<sup>44</sup> respectively. Matters are further complicated when, several years later, likely Koromilas himself—the creator of the theatrical play "The shepherdess's lover"—in an article under the pseudonym "Athenaios" in *Efimeris* on 14 August 1889 entitled "Markos Botsaris", noted among other things:

I was already acquainted with this composer [Pavlos Carrer, 1829–1896] through several small but successful compositions and I always held him in particular esteem, for he strove to create something Greek in music by imbuing his compositions with an eastern colouration. This has rendered some of these highly popular, such as Zalokostas's "Voskopoula" and Valaoritiss's "Geron Dimos".<sup>45</sup>

Nor does the matter end there. An anonymous 1861 edition of Georgios Paraschos's poem "Eothinon", an annotation immediately subjoined to the title states: "To the tune of 'I loved a shepherdess'".<sup>46</sup> This evidence is particularly noteworthy considering that, according to Protopapa-Boumboulidou, the poem, along with others "set to music, had become very well known during the third quarter of the last [i.e. nineteenth] century, as they were played by military bands or sung by the youth in their patriotic enthusiasm".<sup>47</sup> If, therefore, it was indeed sung to the air of "The shepherdess", this indicates that the primary conduit for the melody's transmission was the military bands that maintained a constant presence in the capital.

<sup>41</sup> According to Kaiti Romanou, Maria Barbaki and Fotis Mousoulidis, *I elliniki mousiki stous Olympiakous Agones...*, *ibid.*, p. 35, Rodotheatos also submitted the composition "The kiss" for piano.

<sup>42</sup> This information is confirmed in two studies: a) in Avra Xepapadaku, *Pavlos Carrer*, Fagotto books, Athens 2013 and b) in Kaiti Romanou, Maria Barbaki and Fotis Mousoulidis, *I elliniki mousiki stous Olympiakous Agones...*, *ibid.* This study also includes the score of the setting of "The kiss" by Carrer (pp. 111–120).

<sup>43</sup> "Mousiki tou A tagmatos en ti plateia tis Omonoias. Archimousikos G. Gaidemberger" [Music of the 1st battalion in Omonoia Square. Bandmaster G. Gaidemberger], *Efimeris*, 9/12/1873, p. 4.

<sup>44</sup> "Dimosiai Synayliai. Mousiki tou 10ou tagmatos en ti plateia tou Syntagmatos. Archimousikos G. Gaidemberger" [Public concerts. Music of the 10th battalion in Syntagma Square. Bandmaster G. Gaidemberger], *Efimeris*, 13/8/1874, p. 4. In another entry, without reference to a composer, "The kiss" is announced in a concert at the Athens Conservatoire, *Efimeris*, 20/10/1874, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup> "Ek tou athinaikou viou. 'Markos Botsaris'", [From Athenian life. 'Markos Botsaris'], *Efimeris*, 14/8/1889, pp. 1–2.

<sup>46</sup> "To Eothinon", *Merimna*, 6/11/1861, p. 2–3.

<sup>47</sup> Glykeria Protopapa-Boumpoulidou, "Georgios Paraschos", *Dodoni*, vol. 6 (1977), p. 60 and n. 3.

At the 1875 “Olympia”, however, a further notable figure was honoured—who was associated with “The kiss” in a distinct capacity. Among the laureates was Antonios Sigalas, a chanter and scholar-collector from Thera, who was awarded a First Class Silver Medal for his personal compilation of songs.<sup>48</sup> The Committee minutes record the following:

Regarding the collection of Mr A. N. Sigalas, the Chairman made the following observation. The collection in question, comprising various folk songs—many of which have also been published by others—certainly holds its value when examined from a philological standpoint; however, it is primarily judged and esteemed today for its worth as a work of labour and skill, through which these songs were not newly set to music, but rather, through ecclesiastical musical notation, the idiosyncratic melody of each, preserved in the vernacular, was maintained and expressed.<sup>49</sup>

The significance of this collection lies primarily in its inclusion of a musical setting of “The kiss” in Byzantine notation. If we consider that Sigalas submitted his collection in 1875, notwithstanding its eventual publication five years later, he too may be numbered among the earliest transcribers, or perhaps even composers, of the work. It is evident that Baltazzi did not draw upon Sigalas’s version, since she provided a harmonised version to Bourgault. From whom might Sigalas have acquired the melody? We present here both his own transcription and its transcription into staff notation.

<sup>48</sup> This refers to the collection by A. Sigalas, *Syllogi ethnikon asmaton periechousa tetrakosia asmata tonisthenta* [Collection of national songs containing four hundred songs set to music], Ch. N. Filadelfefs, Athens 1880.

<sup>49</sup> The decision was taken during the same session as the awards for the musicians. See footnote 39.

Εἰς ἄγον λη πα. ρ λ

Μιὰ βο σκο πού λα 'γά πη σα μιὰ ζη λευ-  
 μέ νη κό ρη και την α γά πη σα  
 πο λυ ή μουν α λά λη τον που λι ή ή μουν α-  
 λά λη τον που λι δέ κα χρο νών α γό ο-  
 ρι ή ή μουν α λά λη τον που λι δέ κα χρο-  
 νών α γό ρι.

Μιὰ 'μέρα πού καθόμαστε 'ς τὰ χόρτα τ' ἀνθησμένα,  
 Μάρω 'να λόγον θά σοῦ 'πῶ, Μάρω τὴν εἶπα σ' ἀγαπῶ,  
 τρελαίνομαι γιὰ σένα.

Figure 4: Notation by Sigalas (pp. 178–179) in Byzantine musical notation.

Μιὰ βο - σκο - πού - λα 'γά - πη - σα μιὰ ζη - λευ - μέ - νη κό - ρη και την α - γά - πη -  
 σα πο - λύ η - μούν α - λά - λη - τον που - λι ή - μουν α - λά - λη - τον που - λι δέ - κα χρο -  
 νών α - γό - ρι ή - μουν α - λά - λη - τον που - λι δέ - κα χρο - νών α - γό - ρι

Figure 5: Transcription of the above into staff notation.

It is worth noting here the marked rhythmic and melodic divergences between the transcriptions of Bourgault and Sigalas, as well as the fact that Bourgault’s version more closely aligns with the modern popular version.

Sigalas’s anthology, like others of its kind in the nineteenth century, encompasses both patriotic and those of love, reflecting the prevailing Romantic spirit alongside contemporary national cultural strategies.<sup>50</sup> His statement in the preface that he preserved the “authentic melody” but set it in an “elegant style” does not constitute a contradiction, but rather encapsulates the practice of “refining” folk material to make it more familiar to the literate bourgeoisie. The classification of “The shepherdess” under “domestic national” songs and its transcription in Byzantine notation is indicative of the broader project of nationalising folk material. The lack of attribution to specific performers or informants, as well as to the functional context from which the material was drawn, follows the methodology of all collectors of the period<sup>51</sup>—an individual-centric approach that foregrounded the collector over the primary material itself.

### “The Shepherdess” through Commercial Music Publications<sup>52</sup>

A review of extant musical publications from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries attests to the enduring popularity of “The kiss”. These numerous editions also attest to the gradual superseding of the original poetic title by “The shepherdess” or “I loved a shepherdess”, which established it as a song. These publications, typically for voice and piano, comprised either individual sheet music editions or modest anthologies. Long before the advent of sound recording, this body of work disseminated music primarily among the aristocracy as well as those outside its ranks who nonetheless possessed a piano and were musically literate.<sup>53</sup> This genre of salon music, one might say, enjoyed great success, judging by both the abundance of editions and

<sup>50</sup> On this subject see Giorgos Kokkonis, “Entypes synergeies, atypes synaineseis: Ellines synthetes kai dimotiko tragoudi” [Printed synergies, informal consensuses: Greek composers and folk song] in G. Kokkonis, *Laikes mousikes paradoseis. Logies anagnoseis, laikes pragmatoseis*, Fagotto books, Athens 2017, pp. 67–93. Nikos Ordoulidis, *Musical Nationalism, Despotism and Scholarly Interventions in Greek Popular Music*, Bloomsbury Academic, New York 2021, chapters 10 and 12.

<sup>51</sup> On this subject see Miranda Terzopoulou and Eleni Psychogiou, “‘Asmata’ kai ‘tragoudia’. Provlimatekhdosis ton dimotikon tragoudion” [‘Asmata’ and ‘songs’. Problems in the publication of folk songs], *Ethnologia* 1, 1992, pp. 143–165.

<sup>52</sup> For providing the relevant musical editions, we would like to warmly thank: Panagiotis and Leonardos Kounadis, Thomas Tamvakos, as well as the staff of the “Lilian Voudouri” Music Library of the “Friends of Music” Society.

<sup>53</sup> Alexis Politis, *Romantika chronia. Ideologies kai nootropies stin Ellada tou 1830–1880* [Romantic years. Ideologies and mentalities in Greece, 1830–1880], E.M.N.E. - Mnimon, Athens 1993, pp. 126–130.



Figure 6: The score for “The kiss”, composed by Lambiris, from the Colman Lithography (Consolidated “Thomas Tamvakos Archive of Greek Composers – George Konstantzos Archive of Greek Music”).

the number of publishers. Regrettably, this field remains under-researched, notwithstanding the substantial corpus of such editions catalogued in libraries over recent decades. Nevertheless, establishing a definitive chronology remains problematic, as the year of publication is seldom indicated on such editions.<sup>54</sup> A further complication pertains to the attribution of authorship of the compositions, as an arranger might often be listed as the composer; meanwhile, for reasons seemingly pertaining to copyright or artistic integrity, publishers printed scores without mentioning the composer’s name, citing only the poet. This proved to be the principal challenge in identifying the composer of “The shepherdess” and in tracing the aesthetic trajectory of its musical setting—melodically, harmonically, and rhythmically. What follows is a concise overview, accompanied by observations on the musical text, of certain samples based on the individuals listed on the score as either composer or arranger.

<sup>54</sup> In the press of the period, there are several references to musical editions of this type. They are found from the 1870s, which is of interest to us, onwards. Unfortunately, however, no reference was found regarding the publication of “To Filima” [the kiss].



Produced by the lithographic press of Karl Josef Kohlmann's (1812–1870),<sup>55</sup> this arguably represents the earliest extant edition, given that this particular press was the first of its kind in Greece. Kohlmann had published many similar scores of songs. In the score titled “The kiss” and subtitled “folk song”, it is noted: “Poetry by G. Zalokostas – Music by G. Lambiris”. Although pivotal changes are observed— particularly regarding the rhythmic structure of the initial incipit—the melody exhibits a profound affinity with the well-known tune of “The shepherdess”. Might this be an initial musical setting which, for various reasons, was transformed to eventually reach the form we recognise today? The song is notated here in the key of A minor. A second edition in which Georgios Lambiris (1833–1889) is, by implication, credited as the composer, was released in the series “collection of Greek pieces for violin or mandolin – without words” by the Zacharias Veloudios publishing house. This particular score comprises two arrangements: “*Φύσα βορριά*” (Fysa vorgia, Blow north wind) and “The shepherdess”. Both songs are contained on a single page. Below the title “Blow north wind”, the name of G. Lambiris is noted. Does this, perhaps, imply that the same name applies to the notation of “The shepherdess”, which is situated immediately below on the same page? The key selected this time is B minor. The shift in nomenclature likely indicates that this edition post-dates the previous one.

We encounter a similar case with an edition issued by the Konstantinidou publishing house. The edition in question features a cover titled “Greek dances and folk Songs”. It contains two songs: “*Το καράβι*” (To karavi, The ship), for which Andreas Seiler is listed as the composer, and “The shepherdess”, which is designated as a “folk song”. The titles of the two songs are translated into French here: “Le bateau” and “La bergère” respectively. What is of particular interest here is the adoption of E-flat minor, identical to the key signature employed by Bourgault. Although the melodic line remains identical in both scores, the harmony and the accompaniment in general diverge significantly. The same notation of “The shepherdess” was also released on its own by the Z. Veloudios publishing house. In this edition, the song occupies more space, and all three stanzas of the poem are presented, featuring the same subtitle, “folk song”, as well as the same French translation of the title.<sup>56</sup> As before, the question arises as to whether the publishers intended to imply that the aforementioned composers were also the creators of “The shepherdess”, or were merely leveraging these names for commercial purposes. Regarding Seiler, however, the answer is provided below.

<sup>55</sup> For the Kolman lithography studio, we draw information from the study by Giannis Bolis and Dimitris Pavlopoulos, *Elliniki charaktiki 1843-1915. Istoria - Lexiko charakton* [Greek printmaking 1843-1915. History - Dictionary of engravers], Da Vinci, Athens 2012, p. 110, n. 280. The lithography studio is also recorded in the 1875 commercial guide, see Miltiadios Boukas, *Odigos, emporikos, geographikos kai istorikos ton pleiston kyrioteron poleon tis Ellados tou etous 1875* [Commercial, geographical and historical guide of most of the main cities of Greece for the year 1875], “Elliniki anexartisia” Press, Athens 1875, p. 73. However, from the Kolman lithography studio, 1869 has been dated as the year of publication of the score of the composition “Ymnos eis tin A. M. ton Vasilea ton Ellinon Georgion A” [Hymn to H.M. the King of the Greeks George I] by Rafail Parizinis to poetry by Georgios Paraschos, see “D. A. Zakythinou” Library - Digital library of rare pamphlets: <https://fylladia.eic.gr/>

<sup>56</sup> The score from this edition can be viewed at the Kounadis Archive Virtual Museum: <https://vmrebe-tiko.gr/en/item/?id=3283>.



Figure 7: The score from the Veloudios editions (Kounadis Archive Virtual Museum).



Figure 8: The edition of “The shepherdess” by the Konstantinidou publishing house (Kounadis Archive Virtual Museum).

A second, more illuminating category of publications consists of scores in which the respective musician is credited as the arranger. One such edition was issued in Constantinople during the early twentieth century by the S. Christidis publishing house and features a potpourri of the songs and instrumental pieces used in D. Koromilas's famous play "The shepherdess's lover" (see below). According to the edition's cover, "The shepherdess"—and in French "L'amant de la bergère"—is a piano arrangement attributed to Ange Pulher. The melody in question commences on page 6. It is written in the key of G minor and exhibits several variants compared to Bourgault's transcription.



Figure 9: The edition by Christidis publishing house, arranged for piano and voice by Ange Pulher (Kounadis Archive Virtual Museum – Mertikas Family Archive).

Another edition, issued by the Gaitanos publishing house, is likewise a song anthology, bearing the title "Το Ρηνάκι, η βοσκοπούλα, ελληνικοί χοροί και δημόδη τραγούδια" (To Rinaki, i voskopoula, ellinikoi choroi kai dimodi tragoudia, Rinaki, the Shepherdess, Greek dances and folk songs) on its cover. It is tentatively dated to the early twentieth century, with the arrangements attributed to Rigas Akritas. On this occasion, "The shepherdess" is notated in F minor, and the notation closely aligns with the version that was subsequently standardised, employing identical harmonic structures.



Figure 10: The score from the Gaitanos editions (Kounadis Archive Virtual Museum).

A comparable instance is found in an edition issued by a US publisher (Apollo Music, New York). The collection bears the title "Pieces for Greek-style programmes" on its cover, while below the title "The shepherdess", the French translation "L'amant de la bergère" reappears. Here too, in the same manner as before, the piano arrangement is attributed to Dimosthenis Zattas (1890–1960). The edition is dated 1937 and is included herein both to illustrate the dissemination of the printed version of "The shepherdess" in the USA and to establish a correlation with an American recording (see below). The song is also written here in the key of G minor and exhibits several variants relative to Bourgault's transcription.

The printed presence of "The shepherdess" during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not confined to a handful of editions; rather, it proliferated across a vast array of publishing houses and formats. We have presented an indicative sample here, and it is highly probable that more will be discovered in the coming years, underscoring the pervasive nature of "The shepherdess" within the printed music trade. The melody itself was printed sometimes as a folk song, sometimes as a piece of urban repertoire, or as an instrumental arrangement for the salon milieu (primarily for voice or mandolin with piano accompaniment) or for brass bands. These different versions reveal its ambiguity: existing simultaneously as folk and learned music, theatrical and

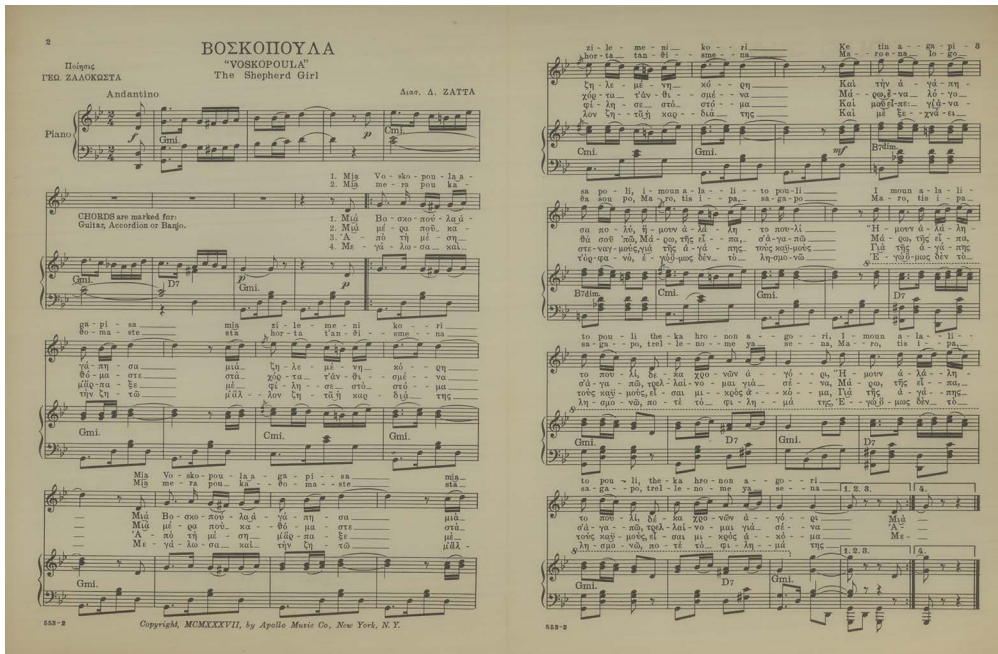


Figure 11: The edition by Apollo Music in America, arranged by Zattas (Music Library Lilian Voudouri).

domestic, “national” and international. These scores reveal that they function not only as evidence of musical dissemination but also as markers of social history. They show how a song, which began as an Italian sonnet, subsequently became a Greek poem and song, migrated to the theatrical stage with considerable acclaim, and simultaneously became a commercial commodity for the music market. This happened even before powerful means of mass dissemination, such as records and radio, made their appearance. The various orchestrations and arrangements were tailored to specific audiences: sometimes piano for the salon, at other times violin and mandolin for amateur musicians, and at others brass for public performances. “The shepherdess” thus acquired the ability to play a leading role in multiple environments and to function in diverse ways—at least on a symbolic level—within different performative contexts.

### Koromilas’s Theatrical Play and Andreas Seiler

“The shepherdess’s lover” (*Ο αγαπητικός της βοσκοπούλας*, *O agapitikos tis voskopoulas*) represents one of the most celebrated and enduring dramatic works of Dimitrios Koromilas (1850–1898). It is evident that Zalokostas’s poem, “The kiss”, provided the central inspiration for Koromilas’s play. The nexus between the dramatic work and the song, which is sung by Mitros in the performance, proved instrumental to the melody’s widespread resonance: the melody ceased to function as a detached musi-

cal unit; instead, it became an integrated component—a “leitmotif”, as it were—of a dramaturgy that capitalised on the romantic idyll, pastoral fantasy, and their inherent moralising dimensions. The song thus assumed a pivotal symbolic function within a theatrical production that was regarded as emblematic of its era.

The play received its premiere on 30 December 1891 at the Verdi Theatre in Constantinople, performed by the Athens-based “Menandros” touring company, under the direction of the Tavoularis family.<sup>57</sup> In the preceding year, on 23 December 1890, Koromilas himself had given a public reading of the work in the hall of the “Friends of the people” society. On 30 May 1892, the performance was staged for the first time in Athens. The inaugural edition of the play was issued in 1900 in Constantinople by the N. G. Kefalidis printing house.

On 7 February 1893, Odysseas Andreadis published a synopsis of the play’s plot.<sup>58</sup> The article’s headline stated: “Verdi Theatre – The shepherdess’s lover, an idyll in five acts, by Dem. Koromilas, music by Seiler”. Consequently, the aforementioned composer was once again associated with the song’s history. We should recall that Seiler was the laureate of the “Olympia” musical competition. What, then, does the attribution “music by Seiler” signify? Might he have been the one tasked with the general musical direction of the performance, rather than serving as the primary composer of the music performed therein?

Stella Kourbana, in her paper delivered at the Third Musicological Conference on Spyridon-Filiskos Samaras, mentions: “In January 1977, Spyros Evangelatos’s newly founded *Amphi-Theatre* staged a production entitled *Genovefa and her ‘past’*. As we read on the programme’s cast page, it was a ‘free composition from seven modern Greek theatrical and musical works (1790–1895)’”.<sup>59</sup> One of these works was “The shepherdess’s lover”. Kourbana spoke with Iliada Labridou, who participated as an actress in the production in question, and recounts the following: “In relation to the other works, Mrs Labridou told me that Giorgos Tsagaris had composed original music for *Maroula’s Luck*, while for *The Shepherdess’s Lover* the original music was used—

<sup>57</sup> See the newspaper *Neologos*, 19 December 1891, p. 2 and Rea Grigoriou, *O Dimitrios Koromilas kai to neoelliniko teatro tin teleftaia 25etia tou 19ou aiona* [Dimitrios Koromilas and the modern Greek theatre during the last 25 years of the 19th century], Doctoral dissertation, Department of Theatre, School of Fine Arts, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki 2009, p. 16.

<sup>58</sup> “Dramatiki epitheorisis” [Dramatic review], *Neologou Evdomadiaia Epitheorisis*, vol. 2, no. 16 (7/02/1893), p. 315.

<sup>59</sup> Stella Kourbana, “‘É giorno senza sole la vita senza amor’. H Flora Mirabilis tou Spyrou Samara sto ‘Amphi-theatro’ tou Spyrou A. Evangelatou (1977)” [“É giorno senza sole la vita senza amor”. Spyros Samaras’s Flora Mirabilis at Spyros A. Evangelatos’s “Amphi-theatro” (1977)], *3rd Musicological Conference*: Spyridon Filiskos Samaras, Corfu 28/05/2017 (Mantzaros Philharmonic Society concert hall).

that is, the music written earlier by Andreas Seiler ('I loved a shepherdess')—as noted in the programme".<sup>60</sup> At this juncture, the historical record becomes increasingly convoluted. It is plausible that Labridou was under the impression that the music of the performance was an original composition by Seiler.

The announcement of the performance in Athens in 1892, published in Koromilas's *Efimeris*, serves to further obscure the historical record: "Today, the dramatic idyll by Mr D. Koromilas is performed at the theatre within the Orphanidou garden by Mr Tavoularis's company. [...] The music, consisting of folk songs, was assembled by Mr Seiler. The drama is preceded by a musical symphony".<sup>61</sup> This prompts the question of why Koromilas opted for Seiler and not one of Carrer and Lambiris, whom he so admired? Perhaps because Lambiris, whom *Efimeris* followed so closely and praised constantly from around 1873 until 1887,<sup>62</sup> had died a year before the staging of "The shepherdess's lover", whereas Carrer remained in seclusion in Zakynthos.

A second question concerns the "folk songs" of the work. Was their selection the sole prerogative of Koromilas, or Seiler, or perhaps the result of a collaborative effort? The answer is provided by Stella Kourbana, who refers to three significant publications in June 1893: a) an unfavourable review of the work by Aristotelis Petsalis, b) Seiler's reaction, and c) Koromilas's reaction.<sup>63</sup> From Kourbana's thorough analysis, it is inferred that Koromilas selected the songs and shaped the final versions of the lyrics, whereas Seiler utilised Bourgault's collection extensively.<sup>64</sup> One point from Petsalis's critique is, however, of interest regarding the divergent perceptions of the folk song: "Mr Seiler, completely inexperienced in the so-called music of the mountains, just as the author is inexperienced, as is apparent, in the life of our mountain-dwelling peasants, was unable in the music of this comic idyll, despite all his genius and the ease with which he composes, to convey the required local colour. Deceived into thinking that the Kalamatiano or Smyrnaic songs played by violinists are songs of the mountains, he transferred some of them or imitated their style, thus creating an incomprehensible pastiche".<sup>65</sup> Petsalis was evidently unaware of Seiler's source of material, while

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> *Efimeris*, 30/5/1892, p. 2.

<sup>62</sup> Seiler is also promoted by *Efimeris*, but is referred to primarily as a conductor in public concerts rather than as a composer.

<sup>63</sup> Stella Kourbana, "Oi chymoi tis armonias ..." [The juices of harmony ...], *ibid.*, pp. 104–112.

<sup>64</sup> Kourbana also identified some of the orchestral parts composed by Seiler, as well as other transcriptions that were not utilised. Furthermore, she records certain songs that were used in the performance which do not belong to the Bourgault collection. Kourbana, "Oi chymoi tis armonias...", *ibid.*, pp. 108–109.

<sup>65</sup> "Theatron Omonoias: O agapitikos tis Voskopoulas" [Omonoia Theatre: The shepherdess's lover], *Akropolis*, 22/06/1893, pp. 2–3.

he expected to hear the "sound of the mountain" in a theatrical work.<sup>66</sup> However, for both Seiler, who adhered to Bourgault's collection in an almost imitative fashion, and Koromilas, who likely drew lyric variations from song collections, the final selection could not have taken place outside their common "locus" of the folk tradition. That is, the printed collections which were, in any case, more familiar to them and more adaptable to a theatrical performance.

### The Discography of "The Shepherdess"

Bourgault's notation, while capturing the core melody known to this day, diverges markedly from the crystallised vernacular version as documented in recordings and subsequent performances. It represents, in effect, a simplified melodic reduction of a composition that was developed and established by folk musicians, who enriched it with ornaments and instrumental fills: rhythmic and harmonic fluidity, ornamentation, and a variety of melodic developments, as well as the renegotiation of musical material that defines improvisational praxis. In any case, Bourgault's unusual choice of key—E-flat minor—appears far from coincidental.

The migration of "The shepherdess" from the domains of the printed score and the theatrical stage to the burgeoning phonographic industry heralded a transformative phase in its trajectory. In the early twentieth century, as sound recording technology gained a firm foothold in Europe and America, the song found an auspicious conduit for its entry into a medium that would contribute to unprecedented circulation, as well as to new performance practices.

According to current archival evidence, the earliest known recording is traced to Milan in December 1902. It is "I voskopoula (the shepherdess)" featuring Demetrios Karopoulos (or Demetrio Caropulo), recorded for Gramophone (5532R – 12424). The inclusion of this melody at such a seminal stage in the industry's development suggests its profound significance for the Greek and Greek-Italian public, as well as the strategic interest of record companies in capturing repertoires that already possessed theatrical and social resonance. To date, the audio material for this particular recording remains untraceable.

We next consider the recording by the Piraeus Municipal Philharmonic for Odeon (GX 96 – 65074<sup>67</sup>), conducted in Athens between 1907 and 1908. This recording, spanning both sides of the disc, features an instrumental potpourri of melodies associated with

<sup>66</sup> We do not believe that Petsalis's comment regarding the "Smyrnaic songs of the fiddlers" is a reference to Bourgault, but rather an indirect adverse comment on the repertoire of the Athens café-amans. On this subject and the stance of the press see Thodoros Hatzipantazis, *Tis asiaticos mousis erastai... I akmi tou athinaikou kafe aman sta chronia tis vasileias tou Georgiou A'*. *Symvoli sti meleti tis proistorias tou rebetikou* [Lovers of the Asiatic muse... The heyday of the Athenian café-aman during the reign of George I. A contribution to the study of the prehistory of rebetiko], Stigma, Athens 1986.

<sup>67</sup> For the recording of the philharmonic, see: <https://vmrebetiko.gr/en/item/?id=5170>.

the play, including “The kiss”. This rendition aligns with the notation in Figure 8. The philharmonic’s choice to render the melodies instrumentally and in the form of a symphonic arrangement underscores the extent to which the work had already permeated the realm of public musical spectacle.



Figure 12: The label of the pot-pourri recording, by the Piraeus Municipal Philharmonic (Kounadis Archive Virtual Museum).

On 5 December 1912, in New York, “The kiss” was recorded by Marius Lyberopoulos for Columbia (38482 - E 1256<sup>68</sup>). The inclusion of “The shepherdess” within American discography underscores the vibrancy of the Greek diaspora,<sup>69</sup> which sought musical signifiers of the homeland and found a quintessential expression in this particular melody. It should be noted, however, that this specific performance adheres to the transcriptions found in the printed editions of the song and displays a stylistic inclination towards the light (*ελαφρό*, *elafro*) song genre.

<sup>68</sup> For the recording of Lyberopoulos, see: <https://bit.ly/3E7Bkxo>.

<sup>69</sup> We must emphasize here that “The shepherdess’s lover” was also a great success in the USA, and specifically in New York, with numerous performances starting from the beginning of the 20th century. See Aikaterini D. Diakoumopoulou, *To elliniko teatro sti Nea Yorki: apo ta teli tou 19ou ai. eos to 1940* [The Greek theatre in New York: from the end of the 19th c. until 1940], Doctoral dissertation, Department of Sociology, Panteion University 2007.

In 1937, Charalambos Margelis (1895–1954), a clarinetist from Nikoli, Lefkada, who later moved to Mesolonghi, recorded “The shepherdess’s lover” for Odeon (GO 2778 – GA 7053<sup>70</sup>) in Athens in his signature stylistic idiom. This instrumental performance, based on the folk clarinet, transfers the song into the repertoire of folk music, imbuing the melody with a pronounced folk-popular character. This specific recording encapsulates a suite-like sequence, as after “The shepherdess”, Margelis segues into an improvisation based on the Smyrnaic *manes* form, ultimately culminating in a *sirba*. However, the rendition that was to establish the definitive paradigm for subsequent vernacular versions of the song “I loved a shepherdess” took place on 7 February 1961 in Athens for His Master’s Voice (7XGA 893 - 7PG 2892<sup>71</sup>). This recording featured a contingent of eminent soloists: Vasilis Saleas and Giorgos Karakos (clarinet), Giorgos Koros (violin), Aristidis Moschos (santur), Stavros Andrianos (lute), and Dimitris Zachos (vocals), who appears on the record label as the song’s arranger. The song, although clearly “folk-like”, would subsequently be registered as a folk song, just like Vilaras’s “Little bird”, which was similarly recontextualised under the new title “Strange little bird” and was indelibly shaped by Giorgos Papisideris’s 1939 performance.



Figure 13: The label of the recording “I loved a shepherdess”.

<sup>70</sup> For the recording of Margelis, see: <https://bit.ly/39hspeX>.

<sup>71</sup> For the recording of Zachos, see: <https://bit.ly/3kmHh24>.

Beyond the formally documented discography, several other recordings remain obscure or unpublished. In Constantinople in 1905, the orchestra “La musique de Gramophone” recorded a version of “The shepherdess” (Zonophone 487r - X-100022 and Gramophone 15-12554), the precise details of which remain elusive. In 1909 in Athens, the “Athenian Orchestra” recorded a “Shepherdess, symphony” (13429b - 10882) for Gramophone. Later, circa 1912, the “Orpheon orchestra” in Constantinople recorded “The shepherdess A!” (214/10420) and “The shepherdess B!” (214/10421), spanning two sides, for which audio material has also not been found.

The significance of these recordings is twofold. On the one hand, they offer historical traces of the trajectory of a song that began as a poem, became a song, moved to the theatre, and then into commercial recordings in Europe, America, and Greece. On the other, they demonstrate the remarkable plasticity of the folk-popular repertoire, broadly defined: “The shepherdess” manifests variously as a piece of salon music, as an orchestral potpourri for a brass band, as part of an instrumental improvisation for folk clarinet, and finally as a “folk” song.

### “The Shepherdess” in Cinema

The cinematic adaptation of “The shepherdess’s lover”, as was the case with other theatrical successes, significantly bolstered the dissemination of both the work and the melody. The inaugural film version, produced in 1931, represented Greece’s first sound film. It was directed by Dimitris Tsakiris and produced by Olympia Film. The score and musical direction were entrusted to Dionysios Lavrangas (1860–1941), an eminent figure of the Ionian School of music. The composer, although he wrote original music, followed the same path carved by the theatrical version due to the lyrics of the “folk songs” included in the script. Thus, what was stated above regarding Bourgault’s collection also applies here. Lavrangas, however, who enriched the film with several musical excerpts, deployed the melody of “The shepherdess” as a central leitmotif. We hear it in the opening credits in orchestral form, while it subsequently recurs in pivotal scenes, such as the dramatic climax and, naturally, the finale. In addition to the songs from Bourgault’s collection, Lavrangas also utilised Carrer’s “Gerodimos”, as well as other folk-like songs, such as “Tsopanopoulo”.<sup>72</sup>

The commercial success of this first film precipitated a series of subsequent productions. During the 1950s, the work was adapted for the big screen on three further occasions. In 1955, Dimis Dadiras directed “The shepherdess’s lover” for Olympia Film with music by Margaritis Kastellis,<sup>73</sup> while in the same year, Dinos Dimopoulos presented his own version with music by Takis Morakis for Finos Film. A year later, in 1956, Ilias Paraskevas filmed the third version with music by Athanasios Kokkinos for Drimaropoulos & Co.<sup>74</sup> In all these films, the musical setting followed the paradigm

<sup>72</sup> For the opening credits of the film see: <https://youtu.be/S4XmdbZIT30>.

<sup>73</sup> For the film by Dadiras: <https://youtu.be/0aKIJviPuic>.

<sup>74</sup> For the film by Paraskevas, see: <https://youtu.be/oYGrYd5gsEg>.

established by Lavrangas: the arrangement and interpolation of songs from the Bourgault collection, combined with variations of folk and folk-like songs.

### Cross-cultural Routes: the Sephardic “Pastora”

The trajectory of “The shepherdess” was not confined to the Greek theatrical or recording spheres. Already from the end of the 19th century, the melody had passed into a different cultural environment: that of the Sephardic community of Smyrna. The performance by the “Menandros” company in 1895, which presented “The shepherdess’s lover” to the city’s public, served as the starting point for the song’s translation into Ladino. This adaptation was titled “Una pastora yo ami”, meaning “I loved a shepherdess”.

The work was met with considerable acclaim from the Sephardic audience. On 12 March 1903, students of the Alliance Israélite Universelle school mounted a production entitled “La chobana”, meaning “The shepherdess”, in Smyrna.<sup>75</sup> Three years later, on 10 March 1906, the Jewish charitable organisation “Ozer Dalim” presented the performance titled “El amante de la pastora”, meaning “The shepherdess’s lover”, at the Sporting Theatre in Smyrna. According to Christos Solomonidis, who recorded the event in 1954, the Ladino translation of the Greek work is attributed to Kasser, a Smyrnaean Greek-speaking Jew.<sup>76</sup> This information underscores the active role of Greek-Jewish networks as conduits of cultural mediation, through which the cultural artefacts and meanings of the Greek-speaking world were circulated and reconfigured.<sup>77</sup>

The cultural life of “pastora” was by no means limited to the theatrical stage. During the twentieth century, it also transitioned into the realm of commercial phonography. To date, the earliest identified recording features on Gloria Levy’s album “Sephardic folk songs”, released in 1959 by Folkways Records (FW 8737). Levy, born in New York with origins in Smyrna (on her father’s side) and Alexandria (on her mother’s side), records the song under the title “La pastora”.<sup>78</sup> This recording, although made within the American diaspora, keeps alive the memory of the song that had been translated and performed in Smyrna half a century earlier.

The melody of “The shepherdess” was also integrated into the scholarly Spanish re-

<sup>75</sup> See Alberto Nar, *Keimeni epi aktis thalassis... Meletes kai arthra gia tin evraiki koinotita tis Thessalonikis* [Lying by the sea shore... Studies and articles on the Jewish community of Thessaloniki], University Studio Press, Thessaloniki 1997, pp. 175–189.

<sup>76</sup> Christos Solomonidis, *To teatro sti Smyrni (1657–1922)* [The theatre in Smyrna (1657–1922)], n.p., Athens 1954, p. 158.

<sup>77</sup> For the musical relationships between Greek and Jewish music through historical discography, see Nikos Ordoulidis, “Musical Palimpsests: Greek-Jewish Historical Discography”, in Ed Emery (ed.), *The SOAS Rebetiko Reader: Collected Papers Arising Out of the Hydra Rebetiko Conferences 2000–2020*, Red Notes, London, 2025, pp. 129–154. Accessible at: <https://www.geocities.ws/soasrebetikoreader/>.

<sup>78</sup> For the recording of Levy, see: <https://youtu.be/-dtRCTCG6e8>.

pertoire. Joaquín Rodrigo Vidre (1901–1999), one of the most important Spanish composers of the twentieth century, completed the “Cuatro canciones sefardíes” for piano and voice in 1965, which were released a few years later, in 1968. Included among these four songs is “Una pastora yo ami”, now incorporated into a cycle that highlighted the Sephardic repertoire within a symphonic and lyrical context.<sup>79</sup>

The itinerary of the Sephardic “Pastora” exemplifies the intricate circuits that connected multicultural musical networks shortly before the establishment of nation states. From the Greek to the Judeo-Spanish environment of Smyrna and from there to the New York diaspora and the Spanish scholarly repertoire, the trajectory of “The shepherdess” highlights the dynamics of cultural circulation: the transformed melody functions as a field of re-signification, where new symbolic codes interweave and multiple identity claims are articulated.

The history of “The shepherdess” constitutes an exemplary narrative of the fluidity and diversity that characterise cultural phenomena. Its trajectory, from Zappi’s Italian poetic prototype to Zalokostas’s Greek version, is but the first act of an odyssey of transformations. The central paradox arising from the official institutional request of 1875 for the setting of “The kiss” to music, at a time when a pre-existing, anonymous melody was already in the process of its establishment within the social and musical field, reveals the existence of differentiated aesthetic and ideological expectations. As research indicates, the transition from the poem “The kiss” to the song “Shepherdess” and, subsequently, to the more popular “I loved a shepherdess” does not merely constitute a linear process of musical adaptation; instead, it indicates a multi-layered process of cultural “translation” and re-signification of the material through the performance practices surrounding it. In this context, the search for the melody’s authorship becomes secondary to the dynamics of performance which ultimately highlights the superiority of the realisation over the composition itself: a complex process that is not limited to the reproduction of a prototype, but shapes the “locus” of negotiation for aesthetic standards, identities, and collectivities. It is as if “The shepherdess” is transmuted into a living cultural cell which is constantly transformed through its cross-cultural circulation and its social performances.

When the attributed, award-winning compositions of the “Olympia” were sinking into the oblivion of history, the anonymous melody recorded by Bourgault began its own journey. The theatrical success of Koromilas’s “The shepherdess’s lover” served as the occasion for its definitive integration into the collective consciousness, while the plethora of printed scores, commercial recordings, and film adaptations confirmed its remarkable adaptability to different media, aesthetic environments, and social contexts. Its adoption by the Sephardic community and its inclusion in the Spanish scholarly repertoire completed a cycle that transcended national and cultural borders. Ultimately, “The shepherdess” proved to be something more than a mere popular song of the

time; it was transformed into a constantly evolving cultural formation, a palimpsest upon which every era, every medium, and every community inscribed its own imprint. The fact that its melody’s authorship remains uncertain does not diminish its value but, on the contrary, underlines the very nature of its identity, which was forged not by a single creator, but by its successive receptions, adoptions, and performances throughout time.

<sup>79</sup> For the recording of “Una pastora yo ami”, see: [https://youtu.be/z\\_vVIiFwOXg](https://youtu.be/z_vVIiFwOXg).