

**NATIONAL IDENTITY IN GREEK CINEMA:
GENDER REPRESENTATION AND REBETIKO**

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ABSTRACT

Since the foundation of the modern Greek state in 1832 there has been a major controversy amongst Greeks as to what is truly *Greek*. Two central viewpoints stand out and form the two versions of the Greek national identity – the *Hellenic* and the *Romeic*. Each notion of Greekness is depicted by distinctively different characteristics in terms of its origins, mentality, behavioural norms, musical preferences as well as domestic and international relations. For most of the twentieth century the Hellenic and the Romeic were expressed through cultural discourses such as film and music. The purpose of this study is to examine the expression of these versions of Greek identity in Greek Cinema and the various ways in which this leads to gender representation.

Three films are used as case studies: *Stella* (1955), *Never on Sunday* (1960) and *DiploPennies* (1966). Through musical, textual, sociological and historical analysis, the thesis identifies the ways in which the two notions of Greekness are portrayed in the films, primarily through the personification of these identities in the male and female protagonists. The thesis illustrates how these portrayals result in the engendering of the two identities and the attribution of gender traits to the main characters. Moreover, the study delineates how in Greek Cinema the musical genre Rebetiko became indissolubly associated with the Romeic identity and, indeed, its prime signifier. Rebetiko, through its association with the protagonists, contributes to their personification of the Romeic identity and, with its gendered traits, constitutes a central factor in the formation of gender in the films. Finally, the thesis elucidates how the film musical, the only film genre in Greek Cinema to be associated with the Hellenic identity, forms the battlefield on which the two identities confront each other and are expressed more distinctly and dramatically than in any other genre.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis examines the expression of national identity in Greek Cinema and its relation to gender and music. It aims to show that the two notions of Greek national identity – the *Hellenic* and the *Romeic* – are expressed in a way that implicates gender representation. I argue that music, and primarily the Greek musical genre *Rebetiko*, forms the battlefield on which the two identities come forward and challenge each other; consequently, *Rebetiko* constitutes the prime cultural discourse responsible for the representation of gender in Greek films.

I use three films as case studies to develop the thesis' arguments: *Stella* (1955), *Never on Sunday* (1960) and *Diploennies* (1966). All three films share two distinctive traits: the personification of the Hellenic and the Romeic identities through the male and female agents, as well as the employment of *Rebetiko* and its association with the Romeic identity. *Rebetiko* is the principal source of gender traits in the films and has a dual character, both as the social domain constituted by the *Rebetes* – a group of unlawful and insubordinate *bon viveurs* who look down on conventional domestic life – and as the *Rebetes'* music.

Through musical, textual, sociological and historical analysis, I identify the ways in which the two notions of Greekness are portrayed in the aforementioned films, primarily through tradition and modernity and the personification of these identities in the male and female protagonists. I maintain that these portrayals result in the engendering of the two identities and the attribution of gender traits to the two heroes. Moreover, I analyse excerpts from the films to demonstrate how such representation occurs. I also discuss the dual functions of *Rebetiko* in order to identify the specific gender attributes and behavioural models it offers to audiences, particularly through its affiliation to the Romeic identity. Finally, tracing the similarities and differences between the case study *Diploennies* and the Hollywood Film Musical, I also examine why this, unlike the majority of Greek films that belong to this genre, is considered a

'Romeic' film musical rather than a celebration of the Hellenic identity, and how this conscious attempt on the behalf of the director to produce a Romeic film also contributes to the representation of gender in the film.

1.2 Greek national identity

In 1832 the modern Greek State was founded in the aftermath of the War of Independence against the Ottoman Empire which ruled Greece for almost four centuries (1453 – 1832). The Greeks emerged successful from the struggle, having received substantial economic and materialistic support from the Great Powers – Russia, United Kingdom and France.¹ Since the foundation of the Greek State there has been a major controversy amongst Greek politicians, theorists, anthropologists and historians as to what is truly *Greek*. Two central viewpoints stood out and formed the two versions of the Greek national identity – the *Hellenic* and the *Romeic* (Herzfeld, 2007 [1982]; Fermor, 1991 [1966]). In his landmark work *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece* (2007, [1982]), Michael Herzfeld establishes the basis for depiction of the two identities. Incorporating historical facts and ideologies, laography and archaeology, the author delineates the two notions of Greekness and investigates how Greek scholars constructed cultural continuity in defence of their particular perceptions of their national identity. This book provided the spur for further research on this subject area; the two versions of Greek identity were depicted by numerous scholars with distinctively different traits in terms of their Greek origins, mentality, behavioural norms, musical preferences as well as domestic and international relations. Ideologically, the Hellenic identity appeals to those who consider Greece as the cradle of Western civilisation. It is a response to the European image of Classical Greece and, as such, has a strong affiliation with the West. On the other hand, the Romeic identity is related to the immediate, to the everyday life of the Greek who does not consider himself a European but is attached to the Byzantine and Orthodox Christian traditions of the recent past. The Hellenic notion responds to the

¹ These countries maintained a strong involvement in the new state's administration. Indicatively, the first parties were called *French, English* and *Russian*.

expectations of an idea and is theoretical whereas the Romeic is real, familiar and direct.

As one would expect, cultural discourses such as film and music expressed these two notions of Greekness for most of the twentieth century. As I explain in Chapter Two, in Greek Cinema, the Hellenic identity is most often associated with the female agent and the Romeic with the male; this is the case with two of the thesis' case studies. However, in one of the case studies, *Never on Sunday*, the male hero (not Greek) is associated with the Hellenic identity. I maintain that this association results in the attribution of different gender traits to the male hero from those in the other two films where the male leads are the Romeic's representatives. This constitutes yet another verification of the socialisation theory of gender, testifying to the validity of the widely accepted claim that gender is not fixed but rather something 'made-up' and hence varies accordingly.

The musical genre Rebetiko became indissolubly associated with the Romeic identity at multiple levels: the genre's Eastern origin, its thematic material which referred to the low class milieu of the urban Greek society, as well as the social domain in which it flourished, are all related to the traits that characterise the Romeic identity. Not surprisingly, Rebetiko is the prime signifier of the Romeic identity in Greek Cinema. In the quest for supremacy amongst the two notions of Greekness, Rebetiko is quite often juxtaposed to foreign musical genres in Greek films which, due to their 'imported' nature and western origin, become associated with the Hellenic identity. As it appears from the case studies, Rebetiko – musical and social domain – contributes to the personification of the Romeic identity through the male and female leads.

Prior to analysing the ways in which these two contrasting notions of the Greek identity are expressed in Greek Cinema (see Chapter Two), in this section of the thesis I attempt to offer a succinct insight into these two versions of Greek national identity since such comprehension is critical in order for the reader to evaluate whether and how they are expressed and represented in Greek Cinema. For this purpose, I incorporate historical, political as well as social analysis, adopting a chronological approach.

1.2.1 Hellene and Romios

The two Greek national identities, the Hellenic and the Romeic, took their names from the *Hellene* and *Romios* respectively, which form the two national appellatives for the Greeks. Before focusing on the two identities and their characteristics, it is vital to examine the origin of the words *Hellene* and *Romios* as well as their usage through the ages. As it appears, the development and establishment of the Hellenic and the Romeic identities are largely explained by and associated with the use of these appellatives by foreigners and among the Greeks.

Historic background and national appellatives

The word *Hellene* (Ἑλλην) was commonly used among the Greeks during the Classical period of the Greek civilisation (500 – 336 B.C.), hence the *Hellenistic* period which followed (336 – 146 B.C.).² Another name used for the Greeks was *Grekos* (Γραικός) which was put in the shade by *Hellene* until the fifteenth century B.C., and returned into usage by Sophocles (496 – 406 B.C.). In the West, however, in later centuries, *Grekos* referred explicitly to the Greeks (hence the use of the word today) and was far more common than *Hellene*, particularly among writers and in diplomatic circles (Hadjikostas, 1976:16).

The word *Roman* is also directly related to the Greeks. It derives from *Rome*, which in turn took its name from the Greek word *romi* (ρώμη) which means ‘power’, ‘energy’, ‘fighting army’ and ‘speed exercises’.³ Apart from the etymological association, the link of the Greeks with the Romans is also made obvious through historic facts. Between 146 and 130 B.C., Greece and nearly

² The etymology of the word *Hellas* (Ἑλλάς) is generally said to have derived from *Selloi* (Σελλοί), the inhabitants of *Dodoni* (Δωδώνη) in Hepiros. According to the Greek writer Aeschylus, Hellene was the son of the mythological hero Defkalionas. In relation to this, Greek historian Isiodos suggests that Hellene was Grekos’ uncle since, as he claims, Grekos was the son of Zeus and Pandora, daughter of Defkalionas. The name *Hellene*, however, was not established until the age of *Mides* (Μήδης) (479 B.C.). Earlier on, as found in Homer, each tribe was identified by its own name (*Achaeans*, *Danaos*, *Argios*, etc.) (Hadjikostas, 1976:9,13).

³ *Romi* derives from two Greek verbs: *roomee* (ρώομαι) which means ‘I move with speed or violent thrust’, and *ronimee* (ρώννυμι) which means ‘I become strong and powerful’ (Romanides, 2002:33).

all Hellenistic territory were subjects of the mighty Roman Empire.⁴ The first Latins and Romans were a mixture of Greek Arcadians, Trojans, Pelasgians and Lakedaemonian Savins (Romanides, 2002:32). The name *Latin* also relates to the Greeks, originally referring to a Greek speaking tribe created south of the Tiveris river after the Trojan war.⁵

The strong historical relationship of the Romans with the Greeks, as well as the affiliation of the Greek and Roman cultures, is cited extensively by supporters of the Romeic identity. Indeed, Roman culture was largely influenced by the Greeks. The Romans never attempted to Latinise and civilise the Greeks because, before conquering them, they had been turned into Greeks themselves in terms of language, education and civilisation. Indicatively, in Rome, Greek was spoken as much as Latin and it was considered the second official language of the Empire (Hadjikostas, 1976:20).⁶ Rome had essentially become the empire of the entire Greek speaking world (Romanides, 2002:27,85).⁷

During the so-called 'Byzantine era' (330 – 1453 A.D.) and the Ottoman occupation of the Greeks (1453 – 1821) *Greek* and *Roman* became identical terms.⁸ Throughout the existence of the Byzantine Empire, all its citizens were called *Romans* and the emperors cherished and guarded the title of

⁴ Including territories known today as Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Persia, Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

⁵ According to tradition, Rome itself was built by the two brothers Romulus and Remus, Greek-Albanian twins. The ancient Greek-Latins were conquered by the Romans and eventually absorbed into the Roman State and given the name *Romans* (Romanides, 2002:23,24).

⁶ In fact, according to Greek historian Romanides, Latin itself was a recognised Greek dialect during the reign of Caesar August (27 – 14 B.C.) and Roman sources describe the Greek language as the first language of the Latins (Romanides, 2002:23,25). All educated Romans knew how to read and write Greek. Not surprisingly, the first two Roman annalists, Fabius Pictor and Cincius Alimentus, wrote in Greek and not Latin (200 B.C.). Moreover, Roman citizen Apostle Paulos wrote his epistle to the Romans in Greek, whereas the liturgy in Rome was held in Greek until the fourth century A.D. (Romanides, 2002:86,88).

⁷ Indicatively, from the first century B.C., it was the tradition for the Roman emperors to study in Greece in order to conclude their studies. Moreover, in 92 B.C. the Romans closed the Latin schools of rhetoric and forced all the students to study at the Greek schools (Romanides, 2002:86).

⁸ In 330 B.C. Emperor Constantine moved the state capital from Rome to *Byzantida* (*Βυζαντιδα*). With the division of the Roman Empire in 395 B.C., the western Roman state was called *Romania* (*Ρωμανία*), a name which soon also came to refer to the eastern part of the empire. When the western part was taken over by the Goths (410 A.D.), the term *Romania* referred to the eastern part of the Roman state, what modern historians refer to as the *Byzantine Empire* (the terms 'Byzantine Empire' and 'Byzantium' were unknown at the time). Constantine named the new capital *New Rome* but people called it *Constantinople* in honour of their emperor.

Roman Emperors. Even the Eastern non-Christian people – Arabs, Persians, Turks – referred to all the Christian inhabitants of the Empire as *Roum* (from *Romania*).⁹ By the end of the Byzantine Empire, however, many writings testify to the fact that the appellative *Romeos* (*Ρωμέος*) only referred to the Greeks. Hence, for over a thousand years, Greeks were *Romeoi* as well as *Greeks* (Hadjikostas, 1976:34 – 40). When, in the fourth century, Christianity became the Empire's official religion and the Byzantine Empire itself came to be identified with the Church, *Roman* – *Romios* became identical with *Christian* (Hadjikostas, 1976:22) and was the most common appellative. The Greeks among themselves were using the name *Romios* which essentially referred to citizens of the empire as well as Orthodox Christians. On the other hand, the word *Hellene* ended up meaning the idol worshipper and, with the emperors wanting to eradicate paganism, the term *Hellene* was rejected and was often considered an insult (Hadjikostas, 1976:21,33).¹⁰

From 1453 onwards and until at least two hundred years later, the national name of the inhabitants of the area of Greece was still *Romeos*, both in spoken and in written language (Hadjikostas, 1976:43).¹¹ Although consciousness of origination from the ancient Greeks survived, with Athens in decline and Constantinople being the heart and the centre of the Greek tribe (Fermor, 1991:152,161), Greekness was a virtually identical term to *Romiosini* and *Romeic* (Romanides, 2002).¹²

⁹ From the eleventh century the Byzantine Emperors used the term *Romania* for their financial agreements with foreigners.

¹⁰ The Greek language, although it predominated in education, religion (it was the language of the gospels and of the majority of Christian writers of the early years) and in everyday life, was considered by the Christians as the ransom from their wars against the idol worshippers.

¹¹ The Western European section of the Ottoman Empire was named by the Turks *Roumeli* (*Ρούμην*) 'the land of the Romans', further reinforcing *Romeos* as the Greek national name. For the Turks, however, the word *Roum* had a broader meaning since it also included other Balkanic tribes such as the Serbs, the Bulgarians and the Montenegrins. Thus, *Romios* merged the national and religious identities which became identical with 'Christian Orthodox', linking directly with the Medieval Hellenism and Orthodoxy (Hadjikostas, 1976:5,41). Hence, the title given to the Greek Ecumenical Patriarch by the Turks was the 'Ethnic Leader of the Romans'. Turks still refer to the Greek inhabitants of Turkey as *Roum* and to the inhabitants of Greece as *Yunan* and *Yunanistan*.

¹² In fact, *Hellene*, with its nationalist rather than paganistic meaning, was established only in written works in the fifteenth century (Vakalopoulos as found in Kyriakidou-Nestoros, 1989:225). It should be noted, however, that the use of *Hellene* was not totally abandoned. There was a very minor resurgence after the first fall of Constantinople to the Franks and the Venetians in 1204, due to the Hellenic renaissance in the newly formed states - *Nikaia*, *Trapezounta*, *Epiros* and *Mistras* (Hadjikostas, 1976:34).

Hellene's popularity rose significantly from 1821 onwards, when the Greeks raised the flag of rebellion against the Turks and began the War of Independence with the support of the Great Powers.¹³ Since the early days of the revolution, the name *Hellene* had enjoyed increased popularity among the Greeks. According to Patrick Lee Fermor (1991) there are two possible reasons for this. The first was the fact that the aim of education during this period was to show the continuity of the Greek tribe as well as to spark the admiration of the subordinate Greeks for their glorious ancestors, and encourage emulation of them (Nestoros, 1989:227). The other reason was the evidence that the word *Hellene* was being used by the people themselves. Hadjicostas claims that since the early eighteenth century the use of the name *Hellene* had become more popular and less subject to prejudice (1976:45). *Hellene* was rooted in the Greeks from the very first minute of the revolution and, with the conviction that their Hellenic ancestors were supermen, the Greeks fought for their freedom. And from the very first day, the Greeks believed themselves also *Hellenes*, deriving strength from "the holy bones of the Hellenes", as described in the Greek national anthem (1828).¹⁴ The name *Hellene* finally came to mean hero and semi-god and Christians bestowed with this title saw it not as a disadvantage but an honour.

This myth united the ancient with the renascent Greece. Herzfeld argues that, in the eyes of foreigners, the war of Greek Independence was not fought just to gain freedom:

It was to resurrect an ancient vision – 'Hellas': the achievements of the ancient Greeks on knowledge, morality and art summed up in one evocative word. This unique nation-

¹³ France and Britain, suspicious of each other and of the predominance of the Russian faction among the Greeks, eventually were forced to join in. In particular, the rise of British and French capitalism as well as western commercial diplomatic and military interests seemed naturally to support the Greek vision of independence in the struggle they initiated with the Turks.

¹⁴ The Greeks were reassured by their leaders – principally by Kolokotronis who referred to the ancient Greeks in his speeches – that foreigners throughout the world spoke of the resurrection of the Hellenes. The setting of the date of the start of the revolution, 25th March, 1821, was by no means incidental; this specific date is honoured by the Orthodox Christians as the feast of Annunciation, hence paralleling the regeneration of Hellas with the prophecy of Christ's birth and resurrection.

state would represent the ultimate achievement of the Hellenic ideal and as such would lead all Europe to the highest levels of culture yet known (2007:3).

Hence the name *Hellas* turned out to be the cultural exemplar of Europe. To be a European essentially meant to be a *Hellene* since most European thinkers agreed that all European wisdom was Greek by definition and derivation (Herzfeld, 2007:15).¹⁵

The critical problem, however, was that the *Hellas* that Europe's intellectuals wished to reconstitute on Greek soil was very different from the contemporary Greek culture, despite the western educated Greeks' best efforts to bridge the gap. Discarding anything reminiscent of Turkish domination, the new authority, under the surveillance of the Bavarians, shaped the state according to the image of ancient Greece.¹⁶ The inhabitants of Greece were brought into contact with "a whole museum of marble relatives" (Fermor, 1991:162) and all of a sudden the ancient Greeks became the *beau ideal*. Those who enthusiastically supported the revival of Classicism assumed that the modern Greeks would instantly accept and adopt it, thus creating a new era that would match the glamour and the accomplishments of the Athenian state of the fifth century B.C. (Fermor, 1991:162).¹⁷

Under these conditions, the 'collision' of the *Hellene* and the *Romios* was inevitable. Although the efforts to implant the Hellenic identity among the Greeks benefited from a scant acquaintance on the part of the rural population with Classical culture which made it easy to promote the ideal of a regenerated *Hellas*¹⁸, the intention to form an entity made in the European and Greek

¹⁵ The 'Romantic Hellenism', evident throughout Europe since the end of the eighteenth century, was the guiding star of the Greek scholars from the early years after the revolution and largely contributed to the ultimate ascendancy of the *Hellene* over the *Romios* (Mango, as found in Nestoros, 1989:228).

¹⁶ Accordingly, they formed the *Arios Pagos* (Ἄριος Πάγος, the name of the ancient court) and used ancient Greek axioms such as *nomarchs* and *prytanes* (Mango, as found in Nestoros, 1989).

¹⁷ The Constitution of Epidaurus, which promised a statist democracy in accordance with the principles that guided the Athenian State of the fifth century B.C., evocatively expresses the paradoxical state in which the new *Hellas* found itself (Herzfeld, 2007:6).

¹⁸ Based on the belief that 'Greece should not be resurrected but rediscovered' (Loukas, as found in Herzfeld, 2007:95).

intellectuals' own image and upon their own terms – that of the *Hellene* – collided with the real, nativist image, that of *Romios*. The *Romios* contaminated the idealised picture of Greece (Herzfeld, 2007:35) and the illiterate peasantry formed an embarrassing contrast to the desired image of a new state whose citizens should match the image of true descendants of the ancient Hellenes. In addition, the Romeic image expressed the longing of most ordinary Greeks to keep alive the memory of Byzantium and the belief that “again, one day, again it will be ours”.¹⁹ For them, *Romiosini* (*Ρωμιοσύνη*, noun referring to the ‘Romeic’ Greek tribe) hosted the spirit of Byzantium, Constantine the Great, emperors who governed Constantinople, saints and witnesses of Orthodoxy, even heroes of the 1821 war – Colocotronis, Karaiskakis, etc; for them, these were *Romioi* as well (Fermor, 1991:165). The popular heroic phrase “I was born a Romios, I will die a Romios” found in a demotic song is indicative of the pride and honour that the Greeks felt for their national appellation.²⁰ Understandably, this formed a cardinal problem for the cause of Hellenic regeneration as it came into direct conflict with the ideals of classical Hellenism for which the Greek leaders and their western allies had fought (Holden, 1972:82).

With the establishment of the new Greece a clear distinction was made between the *Hellenes* and the *Grekoï* (*Γρεκοί*). The former were the citizens of the new state while the latter referred to the Greek citizens of the eastern Roman Empire who were named *Grekoï* and later *Byzantines* by the Western powers.²¹ Hence the following paradox was formed: the citizens of the new

¹⁹ A diachronic phrase taken from the demotic poem “Romania has fallen”, referring to the lost Byzantine Empire and urging Queen Mary not to cry because one day it will be recaptured.

²⁰ “Kleftiko song of Vlahava” – the last words of a great *armatolos* (*αρματωλός*, warrior) before he was killed by Ali-Pasa’s men.

²¹ According to Romanides, the distinction was made exclusively for political reasons. The historian claims that Charlemagne ‘decided’ in 794 that the Roman Empire (the eastern part) was a ‘Hellenic’ Empire in order to hide it from the Western Romans who had been subdued by the Franc-Latins. Then, this so-called ‘Hellenic’ Empire had to be transformed into a ‘Byzantine’ Empire to avoid possible confusion with the new Hellenic State (1832) and Charlemagne’s ‘Hellenic’ Empire (Romanides, 2002:25, 49). Romanides maintains that the chiefs of the Greek Revolution of 1821 were led to believe Charlemagne’s lie that the Hellenes had revolted not only against the Turks but also against the Byzantines (2002:51). The name *Byzantine* essentially distinguished the Romans of the eastern Roman Empire from the Greeks of the eastern Roman Empire who, in fact, also called and considered themselves Romans/Romioi. This resulted in the absorption of the Romans who lived outside Greece by the existing ethnic environment in which they lived. Little by little, these Romans got used to the

state, who for centuries were called among themselves *Romioi*, were led to believe that they were descendants only of the ancient Greeks, and were told that from now on they should not be named *Romioi* but instead *Hellenes* and *Grekoï* (Romanides, 2002:69).²² In addition, the Greek people watched their current culture being attacked by foreigners and intellectual Greeks, who called it 'barbarous' and 'oriental'. And they could not help but wonder how they, as Orthodox Christians, were called *Hellenes*, a name which for centuries was identified with paganism (Herzfeld, 2007:6).²³

The Language Domain

The linguistic aspect of the Hellenic-Romeic distinction is perhaps the most accessible to analysis and reflects the fundamental characteristics of each identity; it is no coincidence that it had long been usual to distinguish between the two 'competing' languages as *Hellenika* (Ελληνικά) and *Romeika* respectively. The neo-Classical form of the modern Greek language, which constitutes the linguistic domain of the Hellenic identity, is *katharevousa* (καθαρεύουσα). Largely responsible for the development of *katharevousa* was Adamantios Koraes (Αδαμάντιος Κοραΐς, 1748-1833), a Greek scholar who lived in France. Koraes drew on European traditions of grammatical codification, yet he was willing to retain certain vernacular forms.²⁴ Herzfeld maintains that the invention and cultivation of *katharevousa* were consistent both with early philhellenic idealism and, in consequence, with the 'outer-

idea that in Greece there were only Grekoï/Hellenes and not Romans. What is more, the dominance of the name *Byzantine* for anything Roman ensured that the remaining Romans in the Middle East, Romania and Albania would no longer know that the *Byzantines* were in fact *Romioi* in Greek, *Romanoi* in Latin, and *Rums* in Turkish, with Romeic as their main and official language.

²² One of the most fervent supporters of the name *Grekos*, was Koraes, who asserted that *Grekos* is the name used by all the enlightened European nations. He entirely dismissed *Romios* since he claimed that the Romans were the first to deprive the Greeks of their freedom whereas, although he accepted the name *Hellene*, he feared that "God will throw us (the Greeks) away", due to paganistic associations (Hadjicostas, 1976:46). *Grekos* was also preferred by many merchants of the time since the same word was used by foreigners and thus assisted greatly in communication.

²³ In an effort to give a logical reason for this paradox, Politis lists ostensibly Christian cults as pagan survivals, recognising the syncretic character of cults of many saints. Loukas, another supporter of the Hellenic position, presents the assimilation of pagan concepts to Christian iconography as a common and easily understood phenomenon (Herzfeld, 2007:95,116).

²⁴ Koraes dismissed the notion of the *Neo-Atticists*, who wanted to restore the Classical Greek language of Plato and the Attic tragedians to daily use.

directedness' of the newly formed state (Herzfeld, 2007:17,20). Katharevousa was essentially an expression of political Hellenism and a mediator of the Hellenic identity; it embodied the image of a nation in a light acceptable to the West (Herzfeld, 2007:20) and an attempt to demonstrate that the ordinary Greeks of the time could speak a language which was undeniably their own yet no less Hellenic.²⁵

However, the 'new' language was by no means known to the citizens of the new state; katharevousa was rarely written and never spoken. For centuries, the spoken and written language of the Greeks was called *romeika* (ρωμέικα), given the name *demotiki* (δημοτική) by the philhellenes.²⁶ Reflecting the Hellenic identity, the affirmed antiquarian image of katharevousa was in sharp contrast with the familiarity of the demotiki linguistic domain of the Romeic identity. One of the most renowned demoticists, poet and writer of the Greek national anthem, Dionysios Solomos, claimed that only demotiki would serve as the vehicle whereby the great works of foreign literature and philosophy would be introduced to the Greek people.²⁷ Along these lines, critics of katharevousa accused the Hellenic supporters of, for more than a century, being employed in the unpatriotic task of destroying their national language and literature in order to substitute it with brand new versions 'made in Europe'.

As it transpires, like most of the Hellenic ideas and traits, katharevousa, this supposedly autochthonous tongue, was in fact a response to imported ideals. It is no coincidence that Greece was alone among the new European nations in not using the vernacular as its written official language, a fact that underscores the degree to which the country was beholden to external

²⁵ Indicative of the tendency to reject any eastern element of the Greeks' recent past (aligning with the Hellenic supporters' view) was the fact that the new language's purism demanded that words of obviously Turkish origin should be eliminated from the 'old' language which was full of acknowledged Turkisms and familiar colloquial expressions. In this regard, a principle of the Hellenic position was that anything that was good in the vernacular culture was but a resurgence of antique values (Herzfeld, 2007:32).

²⁶ Romanides asserts that the name *demotic* was intentionally given by the Hellenists and foreign interests to avoid the usage of the word *romeika*. According to Romanides, "we speak romeika, we dance to romeika dances and we sing romeika songs". Based on this, Romanides maintains that if the name *romeiko* had remained (instead of *Hellenic*), then the Europeans' and Greek Hellenists' plan to Europeanise the Greek youth via European and American dances would not have been as successful (Romanides, 2002:92).

²⁷ Nestoros accuses katharevousa's supporters of being blind to the fact that the demotiki they frowned upon was the legal heir of the ancient Greek language and that the 'pure' idiom that they were writing was essentially dead (Nestoros, 1989).

influences (Herzfeld, 2007:21). The dispute concerning the imposition of *katharevousa* and its conflict with the existing *demotiki* was a forerunner of the serious controversy that would follow concerning the Greek national appellation and, ultimately, Greek national identity.

The 'Hellene versus Romios' controversy

By the end of the nineteenth century the name *Hellene* prevailed over *Grekos* but not over *Romios*, which was alive and well in the early twentieth century. A book called *History of Romiosini*, written by Argyris Eftaliotis in 1901, seems to have regenerated the controversy between the *Hellene* and *Romios* supporters. The name of the book aroused a lot of criticism, primarily from the academic and archaeologist Giorgios Soteriades, who fervently supported the notion of Hellenism. Soteriades suggested that from then on the word *Romios* should only be used when it referred to “a shameful and vulgar” *Hellene* (Fermor, 1991:192). Not surprisingly, Soteriades’ aphorism gave rise to a lot of reaction, including that of a gigantic figure of Greek literature, poet Costis Palamas. Having previously criticised another writer, Eftaliotis, for publishing the *History of the Hellenic Nation* rather than *Romiosini* (Herzfeld, 2007:125), the poet took the opposite stance from Soteriades by asserting that *Romios* essentially referred to the Greeks from Emperor Ioustinianos’ time until his (Palamas’) time (Herzfeld, 2007:125). Palamas defended *Romios* with fervour, maintaining that among the Christian Greeks the word *Hellene* had finally come to mean the co-patriot who remained attached to the faith of the ancients, the idol worshipper, and when this religion disappeared so did the name of its followers. He went on to say that outside the world of the literate, the ancient world survived only in folk legends and fairy tales, where the word *Hellene* still recalled memories of supermen and giants.²⁸ For Palamas and the supporters of *Romios*, *Hellene*, like its linguistic domain of *katharevousa*, belonged in a made-up, unreal world whereas *Romios* referred to reality.

²⁸ Stressing that to revive the name *Hellene* was to “throw ash in people’s eyes”, Palamas wondered: “What is *Hellene*? Isn’t it something antiquated and made-up? Isn’t it something pseudo-formal and heavy – in other words, pompous?” (Palamas, as found in Fermor, 1991:195).

Romiosini and *Romios* have lost a lot of ground since the time of Palamas' writings. One of the main reasons was the need of the Greek people to defend their Hellenic origin, which was greatly questioned by Fallmerayer's theory. The German sociologist maintained that Hellenism had been destroyed in its birthplace due to the fact that from the sixth century A.D. onwards the Slav tribes descended on the Greek motherland and for two centuries the peninsula was almost cut off from the Greek power in Constantinople (Holden, 1972:74). Supporters of this theory suggested that the classical world disappeared from popular consciousness and that its revival was essentially a western intellectual concept. Upset and insulted by Fallmerayer and his followers, the Greeks of the new state were forced to fight back by supporting the originality and purity of their ancient Greekness. The basis of their belief, the *Hellenic thesis*, was that perseverance through the centuries of foreign domination represented the persistence of the Hellenic ideal on Greek soil. The massive effort to defend the Hellenic roots resulted in the negligence and purposeful disregard of Romiosini (Romanides, 2002:226).²⁹

At present, the term *Hellene* overshadows the *Romios* which is used exclusively in Greece; having said this, the dispute concerning these national appellatives is still alive. On one hand, the *Hellene* supporters claim that the Greeks never totally forgot their ancient name, even through the Turkish occupation when the name *Romios* was far more common (Politis, as found in Nestoros, 1989:224). On the other hand, *Romios* is to many the name that most closely captures the identity and cultural traits of the modern Greeks. The Byzantinologist Krumbacher asserts that the name *Romios* is kept alive through Turkish domination as "the real and broad appellative of the Greek people", whereas the name *Hellene* is imposed by the government and taught in schools (Nestoros, 1989:224). Romeic supporters accuse the Hellenists of unjustifiable negation of the history of the Greek civilization of Romiosini, when Rome and Constantinople were its centres. They stress that for the Hellenists this period of Greek history is something unclear and unimportant and that they consider

²⁹ Besides, the political implications of the Romeic model (Byzantine, Eastern proximity) were hardly compatible with the new state's dependence on foreign support; the premise of cultural continuity which formed the Hellenist's article of faith was far preferable and suited the times better.

themselves only connected to ancient Greece: in other words, an ancient Greek without a medieval period. The Hellenic notion is vividly described and criticised by Romanides:

Our father is a Roman and our mother a Hellene. Before their wedding, our father had become Hellene due to his great grandfather in terms of his culture and language. From our father we have our national name and from our mother our civilization. Thus we are Romans with Hellenic civilization. The Grekoi who maintain that they only have a mother because they do not recognise her wedding to their Roman father, do not become pure ancient Greeks but bastard children! (2002:231).

The names *Hellene* and *Romios* constitute an indispensable part of the Greek entity and have followed the Greeks throughout their history. What is more, they form the core of the two national identities that have emerged, at least officially, since the birth of the new state. Through the names' origins and their histories across the years, each appellative has taken on distinct characteristics which are attributed to and embedded in the two identities, the *Romeic* and the *Hellenic*.

1.2.2 The Romeic and the Hellenic identities

Inside every Greek two oppositional figures coexist. Sometimes one prevails, sometimes the other; from time to time they agree. They are of course, the *Romios* and the *Hellene* (Fermor, 1991:165).

The terminological opposition of *Romios* and *Hellene* has provided labels for the two ideological currents in Greek cultural history. These two identities reflect the contrasts in contemporary Greece and their distinctive traits still characterise the Greek people today. Moreover, sociologists agree that both images are constructions of history and culture and have become distinct idioms

in the effort to delineate a national identity (Nestoros, 1989; Fermor, 1991; Herzfeld, 2007).

Generalising the conflict, one could well argue that it is between an imported and a nativist ideology. The Hellenic view, born out of the glorification of ancient Greece, is quite appealing to those who have supported the Greek cause abroad. It looks beyond the nation's borders and it considers Greece not merely a part but the heart of Europe (Herzfeld, 2007:20). As the response to the European image of Classical Greece, the Hellenic is outwardly directed towards the West and conforms to international expectations of the nation's image. On the other hand, the Romeic is essentially an impulsive self portrait – the understanding of what it means in practice to be Greek (Herzfeld, preface). Formed by the qualities of everyday life, the Romeic is inward-looking and directly associated with the immediate and familiar attractions of Orthodox Christianity as well as the prestige and sorrows of Byzantium. The Romeic considers itself as being outside Europe which regards it as the land of the 'Franks' (Fermor, 1991:168). Whereas Hellenism was appealing and inspiring as an idea, Romiosini had the features of familiarity and the direct. Here follows a table depicting the fundamental traits of each notion of Greekness (Table 1):

Romeic	Hellenic
Old	New
Tradition	Modernity
Indigenous	Foreign
Rebetiko	Foreign Music
Recent past – Byzantine era	Distant past – Ancient Greece
Greek Orthodox	Western European values and ideals
Immediate, real, everyday life	Idea, theory, philosophy
Introversion	Extroversion

Table 1: Fundamental traits of the Romeic and Hellenic identities

Patrick Lee Fermor, in his book *Roumeli*, attempts to portray what one would expect of the Romios and the Hellene, listing no less than sixty-four categories based on the different behaviours and attitudes (Fermor, 1991:166). Commenting on his list, Fermor underlines the fact that the two personalities refer to different levels of the social hierarchy and their principles. He notes that the dilemma between the two is a dispute between the Old and the New, between the East and the West, as well as the low and the high classes of Greek society (1991:178). Fermor notes, however, that these descriptions suggest two entirely different personalities, both forming parts of the same person, the Greek. For Fermor, the Romios is characterised by actions, reality, instinct and improvisation. The Romios is tied to the recent past (Byzantine era) and preserves the Romeic habits, distrusting the law and having a strong tendency to circumvent it. The Romios is a fatalist and gets easily disheartened when things do not go as wished. The Romios adores *leventia* (λεβεντιά, noun for *leventis* – dashing man), is impulsive and sensitive towards insults, which leads to venturesome, violent and self-destructive actions. Finally the Romios is deeply religious and has nostalgia for the Byzantine Empire, having as a symbol the dome of *Agia-Sofia* (Αγία Σοφία). On the other hand, the Hellene is distinguished by a liking for theories, the abstract, rules, logic and a systematic approach. The Hellene adores the distant past (ancient Greek era) and its ancient heroes and adopts western habits, totally detesting and rejecting the eastern mentality of the Romios. The Hellene is law-abiding and staunchly supportive of those traditional values which ensure continuity and security. Adherence to philosophy is one of the main reasons for the Hellene's lack of religion and it facilitates the handling of negative situations in a moderate and reasonable way. Finally, the Hellene's nostalgia for the 'Golden century of Pericles' (fifth century B.C.) is expressed by the Parthenon's columns.

The majority of the writings that describe the images of the Romios and the Hellene seem to favour that of the Romios. Romanides, an ardent supporter of the Romeic identity, strongly asserts that, as the Hellenic identity is "imported", in the same way the Hellene conforms to the expectations of the Europeans to such a point that eventually he loses his identity and becomes one of them. He argues that the *Grekilos* (derogatory name for *Grekos*) does not

simply want to be an ally with the Western countries but wants to be, and eventually becomes, at one with the ally. On the other hand, Romios remains ideologically detached, without rejecting coalitions, and accepts anything good, making it Romeic by “using the profound wisdom found in his civilisation” (2002:10).

Also in support of the Romeic identity, Fermor attempts to locate the reasons for the negative connotations that *Romios* admittedly exposes. He asserted that under the tough and corrupted Ottoman administration, cunningness and compromise evolved into virtues since adjustability and wit were the keys to survival and enrichment. These ‘virtues’ accompanied the Greeks after the birth of the new state with the difference now being that cunningness and fraud were directed towards their co-patriots instead of the Turkish enemy. Thus, phrases like “Romeic things” and “Romeic jobs” ultimately became associated with unlawful and dirty jobs (Fermor, 1991:156). A character who most clearly epitomises the ‘virtues’ that Fermor attributes to Romios is *Karagkiozis* (*Καραγκιόζης*), the antihero of Greek shadow theatre.³⁰

However, a number of scholars defend the Romeic identity for its purity, realism and authenticity. Fermor underlines that despite its obsolete and negative institutions, the Romeic represents “anything that is virtuous in rural Greece”. Fermor accuses the Hellenic supporters of paying too much attention to the reactions of foreigners and essentially minimising and restricting Greek rural life to a “harmless folklore that reduces the country into the dimension of a doll” (1991:187). The philhellene writer underscores that it is not the monuments of the past (like the Parthenon) that eventually matter the most but, instead, the same living Greeks, further reinforcing the association of the

³⁰ It is not accidental that scholars of the Romeic identity agree that *Karagkiozis* is the absolute Romeic symbol. *Karagkiozis* epitomises the repressed Greek under Ottoman suppression who is poor and lives in a ramshackle wooden shanty (Fermor, 1991:159). He is an adorable little man who has the misfortune of being struck by unbearable misfortune. Although he is always ready to steal (“Romeic things”), no matter how monstrous his behaviour may be at times, the Greeks sympathise and partly identify themselves with him. For *Karagkiozis* “recalls feelings full of warmth, familiarity and affection, common historic memories” and “the sense that you share the same hazards and ambitions with all the rest” (Fermor, 1991:160). Romanides asserts that *Karagkiozis* remained the solid Romios because his Romeic soul knew that despite his right to become a handsome and rich Turk or European (suggesting that this is what the Grekoi and Hellenes did), his duty was to remain a Romios in his land, free in spirit and insubordinate (2002:215). Therefore, *Karagkiozis* is the essence of Romiosini, characterising the virtue of the familiar and direct.

Romeic with reality.³¹ Along the same lines, Nestoros argues that the Greeks failed to recreate the Golden Era because they sought to construct artificial bonds instead of seeking to bond with the lives of real people and their living traditions (1989:230).

Despite the evident preference for the Romeic identity among scholars, it is widely accepted that the contrast between these two 'realities' is quintessential in the attempt to define Greekness (Herzfeld, preface). Holden, argues that both 'poles' need to coexist among the Greek people as well as in the Greek state because "only then the sense of perpetual motion between them is generated" (Holden, 1972:87). For Holden, no Greek is "wholly Romeic or wholly Hellene, any more than Greece itself is so" (Holden, 1972:30). Fermor also underlines the duality that depicts Greekness, noting that the Romios and the Hellene, although they contradict, also complete each other by being sides of the same coin (Fermor, 1991:161,166). The two-headed eagle, symbol of the Eastern Roman Empire after Constantine added a second head to the imperial eagle of Rome, effectively expresses the mark of coexistence of the two identities: one head looking eastwards (Romeic) and the other westwards (Hellenic), both belonging to the same body (Greece) (Figure 1). Psiharris, recognising the associations of the Romios and the Hellene with Byzantium and ancient Greece respectively, asserts that it is even better for a nation to have two rather than one glorious eras from the past (as found in Nestoros, 1989:224). According to Fermor, culturally, the bridging of the conflict was made possible via painters such as Hadjikyriakos-Gikas and poets such as Seferis who have not only adopted the ancient world and derived sources of inspirations from Byzantium and Romiosini but also absorbed everything that the West has to offer (Fermor, 1991:189).

³¹ What is more, Fermor, laying emphasis on the Romeic's strong linkage with Greece, prophesies that Romiosini will never be totally extinguished since it is like a field of wild greens that have been sown for hundred of years and are so deeply rooted that they cannot be uprooted.



Figure 1: The two-headed eagle

The names *Hellene* and *Romios* constitute an indispensable part of the Greek entity and follow the Greeks throughout their history. The origins and diachronic use of the names, as well as their conflicting coexistence, reflect the contradictions of the two leading notions of the Greek identity that officially emerged with the establishment of the new Greek State in 1832: the *Hellenic* and the *Romeic*. These two identities differ at various levels – ideologically, culturally, and even politically – and relate to different social groups. Being in discord in terms of the characteristics of ‘real’ Greekness, these two notions of Greek national identity formed the grounds of a long-standing dispute between their supporters. Cultural forms such as film and music form the battlefield on which the two identities are expressed and most often collide. With emphasis on gender issues, in this thesis I examine the ways in which Greek Cinema and music genre Rebetiko mark both of these identities. In the next sections I present the theoretical framework on gender and gender representation in music and film on which the thesis is based, and I indicate the study’s research questions through the related literature.

1.3 Gender representation

Gender representation and theory

In this thesis, I argue that the personification of the Hellenic and Romeic identities through the male and female leads in Greek Cinema culminates in gender representation. Central to this argument is the disposition that in music and film various representations of gender occur which lead to the perception

and adoption of gender role models. This study is based on the common principle within the sociological discipline that cultural representations such as those found in music and film construct the meanings and characteristics which are given to masculinity/femininity rather than being a reflection of pre-existing gender attributes. In fact, it is widely argued that the representation of gender role models offered in cultural discourses is largely responsible for the learning of gender-appropriate behaviour. The social constructionist perspective of gender supports the notion that representations do not simply produce meanings through which we make sense of the world, but create the possibility of what we may become, constructing places in which individuals map their identities.

These notions stem from the socialisation theory of gender, which refers to the processes by which people come to adopt the behaviours deemed appropriate in their culture. The term 'gender' is commonly referred to as 'the social significance of sex', i.e. is the combination of characteristics and behaviours which come to be differentially associated with and expected of men and women in a particular society (Burr, 1998). Despite the fact that it is usually used in relation to children, socialisation never actually ends. Supporters of socialisation theories have criticised biological accounts, arguing that by basing gender identity on nature, identity is treated as fixed and transhistorical. Although sociological theories accept that biological factors may provide predispositions towards certain behaviours, they maintain that it is the social factors which determine how, or if, such predispositions have an effect. It is rightfully argued that if differences in personality and gender roles were simply an outcome of biological predispositions, one would expect to find the same gender differences and division of labour in all human societies, which is certainly not the case (Burr, 1998). Radical theorists, dismissing any influence of biological factors, argue that social factors can have such an important influence on a child's behaviour that, whatever the biological sex, a child can be raised either as male or female (Turner, 1995). In the words of Butler (1990), gender, as the identification of one sex, is a fantasy, a set of internalized images, and not a set of properties governed by the body and its organ configuration. Influenced by Foucault's argument that sex is a product of discursive practices rather than an origin, some theories of socialisation claim

that gendered identities are in essence produced by means of repetitions of 'performative' (Butler, 1990) or 'representational' (Lauretis, 1987) practices. According to the 'performative' view of gender, our understanding of the world is socially constructed through our interactions and thus, our identity (including that relating to gender) is something we *do* rather than something we are (O'Neill, 1997).

Gender representation in music and film

The thesis is based on the widely accepted notion of the sociological perspective of gender that cultural representations create traits attributed to gender. Accordingly, individuals learn how to be gendered beings through their interactions with music or film. Gender identity in music, for example, is constructed through the musical activities people participate in, through their beliefs about what constitutes gender-appropriate musical behaviour and through their musical preferences (Dibben, 2002). The thesis adopts the principle that the different kinds of musical behaviours and activities men and women engage in are an observable feature of gender identity. More particularly, I focus on the association of the voice with the feminine, which aligns with the belief that the diachronic association of women with nature and the body has made singing a more acceptable activity than the use of other instruments. Gender stereotyping of musical instruments is also indicative of the beliefs of gender appropriate behaviour and thereby merits inclusion in the thesis.

The thesis also accepts and employs musical semiotics of gender, agreeing with the notion within Western culture that not only is music itself a gendered discourse but also several of its component aspects, such as traditional music theory (McClary, 1991). Musical codes are principally informed by the prevalent attitudes of their time and as a result they change over time. In her ground-breaking work in the area of gendered meanings in music, *Feminine Endings* (1991), McClary suggests that if some of these musical codes remain stable over time it is due to the fact that certain social attitudes concerning gender and sexuality have remained constant. Moreover, these codes themselves participate in social formation, inasmuch as individuals learn how to

be gendered beings and experience their sexuality through their interactions with cultural discourses such as music. McClary, asserting that the common semiotic codes of European classical music (including those leading to gender representation) are still operative in our times, emphasises the use of tonality, arguing that with its process of instilling expectations and subsequently withholding promised fulfilment until climax, tonality has been the principal musical means for arousing and channelling desire since the seventeenth century.

The thesis recognises, however, that musical meaning is not only hidden in the music itself but one must also recognise its provisional nature, its own social constructedness. The current analysis wholly adopts the view that the social identity of a musical work – like all social identities – emerges from its interaction with and juxtaposition to others, people and things (DeNora, 2000). Therefore, the interpretation of musical works found in the case studies of the thesis involves thorough investigation of the intertextual relationship of the music with non-musical things, such as textual documents, critical perception, ongoing discussions and various forms of reappropriation at the levels of production and reception.

Apart from music, film is another domain in which gender representation is put forward. Many theorists have attempted to explain the ways in which gender, as a social construct, is represented in films, focusing on classical Hollywood productions. In this thesis I adopt the highly influential psychoanalytical film theory which examines the subject positions from which a film can be read and how these are textually (camera angles, music) produced from what the theory calls 'spectatorship'. Although the focus of the thesis is on Greek films, Greek Cinema is largely influenced by the dominant classical Hollywood approach on which application of psychoanalytical theory to film is based. Laura Mulvey, in her article *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (1989, [1975]), maintains that classical Hollywood cinema is integrally bound up with erotic ways of looking and with audience identification, i.e. is structured around masculine pleasure, establishing certain ways of seeing and pleasure in looking. According to Mulvey, there are two ways of attaining pleasure in the look: the *scopophilic*, in which the male spectator is in direct

scopophilic contact with the female form displayed for his enjoyment, and *image identification*, whereby the male spectator is fascinated with the image of the male agent (narcissism) and through him he gains control and possession of the woman within the diegesis. Due to this image identification the woman's image functions both as an erotic object within the film story and as an erotic object for the spectator in the auditorium. As a result, the psychoanalytical approach concludes that women are inevitably made into passive objects of male voyeuristic, sadistic, and fetishist drives, appearing simply to fulfil the desires and express the anxieties of the men, both on screen and in the audience.

Mulvey's theory inevitably raises questions as to the way in which a female spectator responds to mainstream cinema. Doane (1985) argues that classical Hollywood cinema is entirely inaccessible to the female spectator since identification with this genre requires the illusionary mastery of the phallus. In the absence of any images of her or for her, the female spectator must deny her sex in attempting to identify with the hero. In a later article, "Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' Inspired by *Duel in the Sun*" (1981), Mulvey attempts to analyse the female spectator's pleasure, arguing that she may unconsciously find herself enjoying the identification with the male hero. She bases her view on Freud's claim that in some women's lives there is repeated alternation between periods in which either femininity or masculinity gains the upper hand. Since classical Hollywood films are structured around masculine pleasure and thus offer identification with the male hero, Mulvey suggests that they allow a woman spectator to rediscover that lost aspect of her sexual identity.

In accord with Mulvey's theory, the majority of theories and readings on gender in films agree that classical Hollywood cinema is entirely based on assimilating identification (Kassabian, 2001). The basic principle of assimilation is that the audience identify away from their identities all the time and behave as if they were no different from the idealised dominant subjectivity (male) that organises most cultures. It offers restricted and narrowed entries of identification and positions tend to line up comfortably with aspects of dominant ideologies. Affiliating identification, on the other hand, opens outward and offers different points of identification, thus allowing for multiple

and mobile identification processes. Most importantly, affiliation, in contrast with assimilation, does not try to guarantee particular forms of identification. Besides, as Sharon Willis argues (1997), identification is not a state, but a process, and as such it is more likely to be mobile and alternating rather than consistent. The case studies chosen for this thesis offer both assimilation and affiliation to enable exploration of their possible links with gender identification. I also examine gender identification in terms of the aural aspect of films. In particular, I use the theory that sight, when considered as an active process and a means of exerting control, is linked with masculinity, while sound, seen as a passive process which forces a surrender of control, is linked with femininity. Stilwell argues that this connection reinforces gender inequity through the domination of sight over sound in culture and especially in film (2001).

Gender representation and film music

In the thesis I argue that many of the musical codes used in the case studies are bearers of gendered meanings. The level to which these codes are communicated depends on competence: the skill that ensures consistency in encoding and decoding of the cultural musical codes (Kassabian, 2001). By definition, competence is culturally acquired through experience and it is possessed to varying degrees in varying genres by all hearing people in a given culture. Individual experience, associations and memories can reduce one's competence and lead to divergent feelings and responses (Durant, 1988:342). In this thesis I primarily use the clear and decipherable codes on which competence is based and which refer to tempo, series of notes to rhythm, volume and orchestration. These can, moreover, be traced back to a great variety of musical genres – from classical music to popular Rebetika songs.

Although I recognise the fact that there is no single reading of a particular instance of film music and that, as explained above, differences in perceivers' relation to the music do exist, there is sufficient evidence testifying to the fact that film music is indeed a bearer of gendered meanings. Tagg's study (1989), which draws a theory of how some musemes (the smallest units of musical meaning) suggest certain things to their auditors through an

awareness of their conventional use, observes high levels of agreement among participants regarding the gendered meanings associated with television theme tunes. The associations formed by this study align with early feminist theories which support the opposition of nature (linked with the female domain) to culture (linked with the male domain), the association of female characters with plot-space (immobility) and the ideology of separate spheres – the public sphere linked with the male and the private sphere linked with the female domain. Moreover, the results of Tagg's study align with the results of a study made by Kalinak (1992), which I also employ in the thesis. This study, employing thoroughgoing film/musical semiotic analysis and drawing on both musical and visual symbols, showed some of the elements that communicate two female sexualities – the fallen woman and the virtuous wife, as portrayed by classical Hollywood in the forties and the fifties. Studies of gender and feminist criticism, such as Turk's investigation of the power of the trained soprano and the threat to the patriarchal system (1991) as well as Kassabian's analysis of orchestral and compilation scores in both semiotic and gendered terms (2001), also testify to the fact that music in film bears gendered meanings.

The level of communication of gender meanings by means of codes also depends upon the processes by which the audience identify with the male or female characters of a film, for which film music is largely responsible. In mainstream Hollywood, whose aim as argued above is to assimilate character identification among the audience, the established dialect of language employed in film music derives from the nineteenth century late Romantic style of Wagner and Strauss (Gorbman, 1987). Caryl Flinn (1992) argues that the ideology of romanticism guided the classical discourse of Hollywood film composition during the 1930s and 1940s and has prevailed ever since. In contrast, in mainstream Hollywood productions, affiliation of identification, where absorption of one subject into another position is not required and where instead the idea is to permit resistance of absorption, is usually tied in with compiled scores – combinations of songs and composed scores with less distinct cueing and mixing. Kassabian (2001) argues that pop soundtracks highlight the deaf spots of both feminist film theories and popular music studies because popular music can link both agency (*in* female) and desire (*for* female).

Although all three films of my case studies use compiled scores, only one of the three – *Never on Sunday* – offers assimilating rather than affiliating identification; in the process of distinctly portraying the two versions of the Greek national identity, *Never on Sunday* takes sides in various ways – music, script, film structure – and overtly supports the Romeic identity, rejecting the Hellenic.

1.4 National identity and gender in Greek Cinema

The concept of national identity in Greek Cinema and its relation to gender and music appears, somewhat surprisingly, to be a relatively novel one. Although various books and/or articles have been written on the related subject areas – Greek national identity, gender and Greek Cinema, Rebetiko – no research has entirely focused on the representation of Greek national identity in film and its relation to gender and Rebetiko. This thesis is the first to thoroughly and exclusively examine the representation of the two notions of Greek national identity in Greek Cinema. In addition, it is also the only study to investigate the ways in which Greek national identity can represent gender, primarily through Rebetiko but also through music in general.

In respect of Greek national identity in Greek Cinema there is very little available literature. This comes as no surprise considering that, even in respect of the history of Greek Cinema, there is only one book collection that systematically describes and analyses Greek Cinema from its early days until the end of the twentieth century: Giannis Soldatos' *History of Greek Cinema* (1999, [1989]). It consists of four volumes; the first three are separated in chronological order, whilst the fourth consists of several articles and documents relating to well-known Greek films. Apart from mentioning the essential facts and personalities pertaining to the history of Greek Cinema, Soldatos presents relatively rich information on prominent films in Greek Cinema, providing in his analysis critiques from newspapers and magazines, extracts from interviews and box office receipts, accompanied by photographic material. The collection by the Greek critic and producer provides an oasis for literature of the history of Greek Cinema and this thesis, although it includes sources from several other books and articles, refers to it extensively. However, despite his considerable

contribution in other areas, Soldatos does not make any mention of the representation of the two notions of Greekness in Greek Cinema, with the exception of a passing reference to “Romeic Comedy”. Soldatos also neglects to make any comments whatsoever on the use of Rebetiko in films although he includes in his books many films which employ the genre in their music.

Not surprisingly, there is similar neglect in terms of Greek film musicals. The only book that studies in detail and exclusively deals with this genre of Greek Cinema is *The Greek Film Musical: A Critical and Cultural History* (2006), written by the scholar, Lydia Papadimitriou. With the Greek film musical constituting the only film genre that overtly celebrates the Hellenic identity, analysis for this thesis draws on Papadimitriou’s monograph as well as various articles. Papadimitriou attempts to define the Greek musical and examines it as a cinematic and a historic phenomenon. She identifies as ‘musicals’ twenty-nine Greek films that match the criteria she herself set for generic classification. These criteria include the minimum number of numbers (minimum six) in the film, the generic characterisations provided by the film’s credits and journals as well as the ways in which the film was promoted (2006:28 – 36). Papadimitriou distinguishes two periods in the short life of this particular genre in Greek Cinema: the ‘early’ (1955-1965) and the ‘mature’ period (1965-1970) (2006:6,7). According to Papadimitriou, musicals from the early period made explicit allusions to the American musicals while borrowing techniques from Greek musical theatre. These films celebrated modernisation and consumerism and were abundant with traits of the Hellenic identity. Papadimitriou notes that the distinct trait that distinguishes the two periods is the fact that musicals of the mature period aimed to project a particular ‘Greekness’ and most of them tried to present a harmonious coexistence of the Hellenic and Romeic cultural identity. Although Papadimitriou supports her view with convincing evidence, it is my belief that this harmonious ‘Greekness’ is portrayed in such a way that a different, ‘altered’ Romeic identity is presented. As I show later on in the thesis, the only truly ‘Romeic’ Greek Film musical is *Diplopennies* (third case study of the thesis, 1966) since in all the other musicals where the two identities seem to coexist, they do so only through the ‘neutralisation’ of the Romeic. Nevertheless, Papadimitriou’s insights on

the Greek film musical and her reference to the ways in which the Romeic and Hellenic identity are projected have been very influential in my analysis of the film musical *Diploennies* in the third case study. The only shortcoming of Papadimitriou's study seems to be the absence of any reference to the critical personification of the two identities through male and female agents and how this might give rise to gender representation, which this thesis argues is the fundamental tool in portraying the Romeic and the Hellenic identities in Greek films. Furthermore, although Papadimitriou recognises the association of Rebetiko and the bouzouki to the Romeic ("emblem of Greekness in the musicals of this [1965-1970] period (2000:7)), the author fails to examine this phenomenon in any depth; the mere association of the bouzouki to the working class (:7) does not account for the indissoluble relation of the instrument and the Rebetiko to the Romeic. Consequently, the genre's central role as the primary source of expression of the Romeic identity and thereby the predominant factor in forming gender – not only in film musicals but in Greek Cinema in general – is essentially ignored.

In their article "Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained: Kakogiannis' *Stella*" (2000), Robert Shannan Peckham and Pantelis Michelakis focus on the filmic space of the tavern 'Paradise', the ways in which it is embodied by Stella and its functions as a mediating space between the bourgeois and the lower social classes. The authors also refer to the use of the car and the piano in the film and how these come to represent the two males' 'vehicles' in their quest to conquer the heroine Stella. Although the article is enriching and insightful, it makes no specific reference to the prime issue in *Stella* for this thesis of the two contrasting notions of Greekness, apart from the recognition that "the desire for change was countered by a fear of instability and a concomitant loss of Greek identity" (2000:67). The article includes a brief yet appealing analysis of the ways in which Stella resists conformity by yielding pleasure not only by being looked at – thus abiding by Mulvey's theory that pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female (1992:750) – but also by her own projected image. She is thus "transformed from an object of male desire to a spectator who is the subject of her own gaze" (2000:74). The article also makes mention of Stella's intentions of "changing conventional forms of musical

entertainment” epigrammatically, using as an example “jazz music”. As it is not relevant to the focus of the article, analysis of the music itself – Rebetiko, Greek folk and the foreign genres included in the soundtrack – is absent. The article also overlooks the numerous ways that Rebetiko is used throughout the film as an expression of the Romeic identity through both its social and musical context. However, Rebetiko constitutes a vital aspect of the film since director Mihalis Kakogiannis chose to put on film the theatrical script *Stella with the Red Gloves* because he, as he maintains, “wanted to explore the world of Rebetiko” (Kakogiannis, 1990:10).

Vassiliki Tsitsopoulou’s article, “Greekness, gender stereotypes, and the Hollywood Musical in Jules Dassin’s *Never on Sunday*” (2000), addresses the issue of representation of Greekness in *Never on Sunday* in terms of the stylistic conventions of the American film musical. She argues that through the portrayal of the film’s two leads, two gender-based antithetical versions of Greekness are developed: the American man is associated with “the cult of ideal Greekness derived from antiquity” while the Greek woman is associated with “modern-day Greekness” (2000:80). Hence, Tsitsopoulou maintains that modern Greekness is both sexualised and feminised while Greek antiquity is identified with masculinity and the West. Although this thesis considers the American film musical’s structural and stylistic conventions, it also provides a comprehensive examination of the representation of the Greek identity through music and Rebetiko, something that is strikingly absent from Tsitsopoulou’s article (except for a mere reference to “bouzouki music”). What is more, by failing to take into account the two well-embedded notions of Greekness – the Romeic and the Hellenic – the article could be transmitting misleading messages. To a large extent, Tsitsopoulou relates “modernity” and “modern-day” to the music that Greek people listen to in the film. But this music is Rebetiko which, as I show in the thesis, is indissolubly related to the Romeic notion of Greekness. Hence, Tsitsopoulou essentially associates modernity with the Romeic and Rebetiko, which is not the case. As this thesis emphasises and explains at great length, the Romeic and by association the Rebetes do not favour modernity or rejuvenation. On the contrary, the Romeic is conservative and unwilling to change (hence the mocking of anything old-fashioned in the

'Hellenic' Greek film musicals). Moreover, Tsitsopoulou contrasts modernity, which as explained is a distinct trait of the Hellenic identity, to antiquity, whereas the whole concept of the Hellenic notion derives from antiquity. Evidently, Tsitsopoulou's analysis is not in accordance with the Hellenic and the Romeic notions of Greekness. In contrast, this thesis' study of the representations of Greekness in *Never on Sunday*, is based on the well established and long-lasting Hellenic and Romeic notions of Greekness with emphasis on the use of music and primarily Rebetiko.

This study is the first to examine the use of Rebetiko in Greek Cinema, as it is the first that makes an in-depth analysis of the genre's correlation to the Romeic identity. This is particularly significant to one of the purposes of the thesis: to demonstrate how Rebetiko, both as a musical and a social domain expresses the Romeic identity, and, through this relation, contributes to the representation of gender in Greek Cinema. Despite the lack of studies on the use of Rebetiko in Greek Cinema, there is an abundance of literature on Rebetiko. One of the main reasons is that Rebetiko is not only a musical phenomenon but a social one as well. Particularly during and since the 1980s, many books and articles have been written on the sociological aspects of Rebetiko to a point that it was described as "a trend". Rebetiko became popular among musicologists due to its attractive background and evolution as well as the continuing dispute over the genre since its first appearance in Greece. Taking into consideration a wide collection of books, articles, magazines and newspapers containing material relating to Rebetiko, the thesis examines Rebetiko in both its musicological and sociological perspectives.

1.5 Methodology

To explore the various ways in which the different notions of Greek national identity are expressed in Greek Cinema and how this leads to gender representation primarily through Rebetiko, I use a case study method. Creswell defined the case study as "an exploration of a bounded system or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context" (2007:61). The case study method is employed by most theses which investigate cultural discourses since

it provides a multipronged approach to examining cultural production as both process and product. Due to the diverse subject matters that the thesis negotiates, the case study is ultimately the only easily accessible method that can effectively combine all these elements and allow thorough examination and analysis in response to the research question posed by this thesis.

Case study approaches are differentiated by the scope of the subject matter and are categorised into three types: intrinsic (specific to the case), instrumental (the case study is used to investigate a different topic) and collective (the use of several cases to understand the bigger picture) (Stake, 1995). As the aim of the thesis is to provide a general and comprehensive view of the variety of ways in which national identity is expressed in Greek Cinema, the method chosen is the collective approach which, as Stake notes, is the most appropriate for studies that seek to answer more systemic questions (1995:3). As described in Chapter Two, representations of either or (less frequently) both of the Romeic and Hellenic identities are commonly found in Greek Cinema of the Golden Era (1955 – 1967). As I will show, melodramas and comedies are typical examples of cultural productions which portray the Romeic notion of Greekness while the Greek film musicals overtly celebrate traits of the Hellenic identity. However, the three films selected as case studies for the thesis accentuate more than any others the coexistence of the Romeic and the Hellenic within a film, and thereby each identity defines and is defined by its own distinct characteristics. *Stella* is a drama, *Never on Sunday* is a comedy and *Diploennies* is a musical. Additionally, *Never on Sunday* was also chosen for the particular reason that, in contrast to *Stella* and *Diploennies*, the Hellenic identity in the film is personified by the male agent. This feature supports my argument that the gender roles formed through the expression of the national identities within a film, as social constructs, are variable, changeable, and not predetermined.

In accordance with the collective approach, and in order to provide a perspective wider than that of the case study itself, the three case studies were selected specifically to meet three principal criteria: popularity, divergence and whether the films were representative of their time and genre. The first case study, *Stella* (1955), is considered one of the most acclaimed films of Greek

Cinema. The Greek Association of Film Critics (ΠΕΚΚ) included it in their list of the ten best Greek films (Frangoulis, 2006) whilst the number of times the film has been shown on local television, as well as famous lines from the script which are considered classic and are still used today (e.g. “Stella! Go away! I hold a knife!”), testify to the film’s diachronic popularity among the Greek people. I argue that, in the film, the heroine Stella personifies the Hellenic identity and through her actions and musical preferences attempts to break away from the oppressive patriarchal world of the Romeic and the Rebetiko. In *Never on Sunday* (1960) the roles are reversed in terms of the heroes’ identification with the two identities, allowing consideration of whether gender roles in Greek Cinema might not be fixed but might alter according to the identity they represent in a film. In this case study, the representative of the Hellenic identity is male whereas the heroine represents the Romeic identity. *Never on Sunday* was an international success and was one of the main reasons for the rise of the tourist industry in Greece in subsequent years. The Oscar for Best Song in Film won by Manos Hadjidakis for his “The Children of Piraeus” – a song performed in the film that was essentially the reason the bouzouki became known worldwide – was also a significant factor. The third case study, *Diplo pennies* (1966), is financially one of the most successful Greek film musicals and a landmark production of the film musical genre.³² Furthermore, it is remarkable for its original script and innovative perception of how a Greek film musical should be, since, in contrast with the vast majority of Greek film musicals, which pay tribute to the Hellenic identity, it is considered the first film musical that attempts to depict and promote the Romeic conception of the Greek identity. In *Diplo pennies*, as in *Stella*, the film’s heroine Marina stands as a representative of the Hellenic identity, during the second half of the film. Being a musical, the film also offers the opportunity for analysis, from the musical perspective, of the various ways by which gender is represented. All three case studies of the thesis satisfy the criteria set for the collective approach: they all come from the Golden Era of Greek Cinema (1955-1967) and stand out for their popularity, are divergent in multiple ways, and are considered trademarks for

³² In the film’s premiere (14/3/1966) 453,853 tickets were sold (Ethnodata, 1997).

Greek Cinema, with significant influence not only for the time period in which they belong but thereafter.

As they are related to the cultural sphere, the case studies of this thesis incorporate histories and biographies as well as sociological, musical and textual analysis. Textual analysis involves applying a combination of semiotic and content analysis. The strength of content analysis stems from its ability to relate information to the sample as a whole in a rigorous manner, and to detect patterns of similarities and differences (Leiss et al., 1990:218). Content analysis of the texts includes systematic descriptions of the films' scripts, images, camera work, lyrics and other visual and audio sources. Each of these is used for the identification of gender traits as well as attributes of the two perceptions of Greekness and to explicitly portray the multiple ways in which gender is represented through the national identities and music in the three films.

Semiotic analysis provides an in-depth analysis of texts by incorporating context as a means of interpreting the symbols within. Semiotics is important to the case study method – particularly the collective approach that the thesis employs – since it is not only concerned with the “movement” of meaning within the isolated text but also between the text and the outside world. This is achieved through signifiers, which are essentially made prominent through repetition. For this reason, I use various examples of other films, songs, lyrics and other sources where these signifiers occur. According to Condit, repetition of signifiers allows the reader to make clear judgements and naturally associate certain elements that are consistent with dominant and over-determined interpretations of the texts used (1989).

For the analysis of the film music of the case studies, this thesis incorporates textual analysis along with musicology, the two broad categories of descriptive analysis tools and approaches in the field of film music (Donnelly, 2001:1,2). Musicology is strictly concerned with the study of music itself in terms of production as well as the relation to the traditions of orchestral music. It includes musical analysis – including descriptions of dances, melodic and rhythmic lines, issues of tonality – and historical evidence. In the thesis, these are central to tracking social functions of certain dance forms as well as

depicting music's gendered attributes (particularly those of Rebetiko), national identity traits and the potential relationships among these elements.

A basic principle of textual analysis of film music is that evaluation of the effectiveness of music with respect to the 'narrative context' requires the analysis to move beyond the purely musical (Donnelly, 2001:39). Claudia Gorbman, in her groundbreaking book *Unheard Melodies* (1987), uses the tools of semiotic narratology to underscore the fact that music acts synergistically in films and thus needs to be studied in conjunction with other elements in the textual system. As Stilwell argues, film music is not a repertoire but exists only in conjunction with a film (2002:20). Textual analysis is found in many significant works on film music, including that of Kalinak (1992) who combined it with historical evidence to demonstrate the articulatory power of film music and the considerable influence of the classical model. Based on the same theory that elements and forms of a text should all be mutually reinforcing, Caryl Flinn (1992) examines film music's function as a discourse and analyses music in classical Hollywood films, situating it within a romantic aesthetic.

An indispensable tool for textual analysis used in film music analysis is semiotics. Film music semiotics is concerned with the ways in which film music communicates through its recognisable elements within certain contexts and brings an acknowledgement of the shared understanding of film music, its living relationship with its audience and its social implications. To explain and verify associations made by listeners/viewers with musical material, I employ studies on music themes used for television in addition to advanced methods for analysing popular music (Tagg, 1989) and research into the musical stereotypes used to describe femininity in classical Hollywood films (Kalinak, 1992).

In this thesis, I consider all film musical codes traced in the case studies as essentially cultural, a view initially expressed by Annahid Kassabian in her book *Hearing Film* (2001). Kassabian, opposes Gorbman's distinction of musical codes into three categories – "pure" musical codes deal exclusively with musical structure, "cultural" refer to enculturated reactions and "cinematic" relate to the textual perspective which codifies music through the filmic context (e.g. the leitmotif, and the film's opening, closure, etc.)

(Gorbman, 1987). Kassabian asserts that there is no such thing as 'pure' or 'absolute' music and accuses Gorbman of setting aside the historical context and the ideological markings that are attached to any musical work. She also claims that a specific musical event may or may not refer to other musical events within the film, but will certainly refer to other musical events in order to convey meanings. Moreover, Gorbman's categorisation of codes does not abide by the sociological perspective on film analysis which argues that our interpretations of texts are enhanced or limited by our cultural fluency (Condit, 1989). Kassabian's arguments are supported by Theo van Leeuwen's writings (1988), in which he argues that various musical systems such as meter, key centre and interval size (i.e. seemingly pure musical codes) encode meanings about social organisation. Taking into account the notion that communication can only take place through a set of cultural conventions through which one member of a society communicates with the society or another member of the same society (Fiske, 1982), music, also, communicates with cultural musical codes, in other words, with recognisable musical elements with certain contexts through which film music communicates with an audience (Donnelly, 2001). Cultural musical codes often shade into "cinematic", Gorbman's third category, since it is from a cultural discourse such as film that most spectators learn to interpret music signifiers (Littlefield, 1989).

1.6 Structure of the study

The dissertation is divided into six chapters. This chapter starts with an overview of the main topics to be examined. It then introduces the two notions of Greekness which constitute the thesis' prime subject matter. Focusing on the two national appellatives of the Greeks, the *Hellene* and the *Romios*, and incorporating historical, political as well as social analysis and a chronological approach, I describe how these names became established among the Greeks as national names and, most importantly, how they came to be closely associated with the two contrasting notions of the Greek national identity. This is followed by an analysis of the Hellenic and Romeic identities which describes their fundamental characteristics and provides an overview of the long-lasting conflict between their respective proponents. This chapter continues with a

presentation of the theoretical framework on gender and gender representation in music and film on which the thesis is based. This is followed by a review of the pertinent literature and discussion of prior research on the topic, defining the place of the current study within the framework of existing research. The chapter also outlines the methodology of the research.

Chapter Two examines how the contrasting notions of Greek national identity came to be expressed through the cultural forms of cinema and music. The first half of the chapter focuses on Greek Cinema and considers its affiliation to the Romeic identity. I argue that for more than four decades (1930 – 1970), the Romeic identity overshadowed the Hellenic, particularly in melodrama and comedy, the two most popular film genres in Greek Cinema. I also examine the uniqueness of the Greek film musical in Greek Cinema in celebrating the Hellenic identity, which forms an essential element of two of the case studies. I demonstrate how intense Americanism, consumerism as well as the rise of tourism – all related to the Hellenic identity – are reflected in the Greek musical and I consider the place of Rebetiko, the definitive Romeic musical genre within this context. I argue that this ‘Romeic’ genre ‘fits’ in the Greek musical only by means of alteration and, essentially, loss of its identity. I also examine the Greek film musical’s marked similarity to its American counterparts, stressing the genre’s ‘imported’ ideology and affiliation to the Hellenic identity. This section concludes by examining gender in Greek Cinema. In particular, I present the stereotypical passive and active roles of the respective female and male leads in Greek Cinema most commonly found in melodrama and comedy. This attribution of gender roles is quintessential to explanation of the gendered meanings discussed in the three case studies.

The second part of Chapter Two examines Rebetiko, both as a musical genre and a social domain. Starting with an overview of the genre’s presence in Greek Cinema, this section then considers how the genre through its origin and growth came to be interrelated with the Romeic identity. Rebetiko’s notoriously patriarchal nature which is reflected onto the Romeic identity is demonstrated through specific examples relating to the Rebetis and the ways in which the image of woman is presented in the songs of Rebetiko.

Chapter Three introduces the first case study – the renowned film *Stella* (1955, dir. M. Kakogiannis). Aiming to underscore the association of femininity with modernity and the Hellenic and that of masculinity with tradition and the Romeic, the chapter divides into two corresponding sections. The first section starts by delineating the ways in which Rebetiko and its patriarchal mores are established in the film. Using textual analysis, I show how Rebetiko, through the use of the songs' lyrics, the *bouzouki* as the definitive instrument of Rebetiko as well as the trademark dance *Zeibekiko*, establishes *Stella's* filmic environment. This section continues by examining the attribution of gender roles through the male lead's personification of tradition and the Romeic in the film as a *leventis* or a *magkas*: the honorary male appellatives in the traditional and the Rebetiko domain respectively, using textual analysis and musical analysis of the folk dances presented in the film.

The second section of the chapter examines the personification of modernity through the female lead, Stella, and the gender representation deriving from her role as a Hellenic agent in the film. I examine the numerous features which testify to Stella's identification with the male Rebetis, subverting the stereotypical gender traits as portrayed in the films of the period and projecting an image of a modern woman who threatens the strictly patriarchal domain of Rebetiko and the Athenian society in general. I also consider the heroine's musical behaviour and show that through her singing performance, her interaction with Rebetiko's dances and her decision to sing the *Zeibekiko* – the absolute banner of masculinity which was 'forbidden' for women – Stella resists and ultimately escapes the conformity demanded by the system. This is followed by an analysis of the ways in which Stella is portrayed in the film as the exotic 'Other'. I describe the features Stella shares with Carmen, a diachronic female representative of 'Otherness' in the European musical scene and illustrate how through the heroine's musical behaviour towards foreign music her association with modernity and the Hellenic identity is further established. The section concludes with a study of the ways in which the piano is used as a symbol of modernity as well as a basic medium for contrasting modernity and tradition in the film. I consider the piano's association with Stella, its physical and musical presence in the film and its

contrast with the Rebetiko orchestra. I finish the chapter with a brief description of the controversy sparked by the film which essentially reflects the Hellenic – Romeic debate.

Chapter Four covers the second case study, the film *Never on Sunday* (1960, dir. J.Dassin), and like the previous chapter demonstrates the ways in which the two notions of Greekness are expressed in film and how this leads to gender representation. Accordingly, the first two sections of the chapter show how this is manifested through the American film musical's fundamental trait, the 'dual-focus' approach, and Rebetiko. I argue that all the secondary dichotomies traced in the film are engendered and derive from the Hellenic/Romeic dichotomy which in turn derives from the male and female heroes' sexual duality. I show how the dual focus approach underscores the Romeic and Hellenic views of Greekness through their personification in the female and male leads respectively and I describe how Rebetiko's direct relation to the Romeic identity and to the film's music highlights the protagonists' association with the two identities and leads to gender formation. The third section examines the film's structural and stylistic similarities to the American Hollywood musical as well as its striking subversions. I argue that the 'marriage ending' and the 'Pygmalion and Galatea' subversions stress the dichotomy of the Greek national identity and through the social and musical domain of Rebetiko represent gender-based behaviour and sexuality. The chapter concludes with a study of the association of the female lead with the barrel organ and the ways in which it underscores the woman's connection with the Romeic identity, also contributing to the representation of femininity in the film.

Diploennies (1966, dir. G.Skalenakis), which constitutes the third case study of the thesis, is a 'Romeic' film musical within a genre that explicitly celebrates the Hellenic identity in Greek Cinema. Chapter Five is also structured around the two identities and their expression through personification with the male and female protagonists and music, with the ensuing gender implications. The chapter first makes the assertion that the Hellenic and the Romeic identities are clearly depicted in the film's introductory scene before proceeding to examine each identity separately. In this section I also identify

the association of day and night to the Romeic and Hellenic identities respectively which is vividly portrayed in the introductory scene, and I analyse the use of this symbolism throughout the film and its significance to the presentation of the two identities and to the representation of gender. Arguing that *Diploennies* is the first Greek film musical that projects the Romeic identity, the chapter then demonstrates the numerous ways in which the Romeic element is established in the film: through the presentation of a typical low-milieu Athenian couple, the delineation of the male and female characters involved in this pairing, the portrayal of the filmic space such as Piraeus harbour and the old Athenian neighbourhoods as well as the depiction of the musical genre Rebetiko which once again underscores the Romeic culture in a Greek film.

The chapter then presents the various features of the Hellenic identity as portrayed in the film and their association with femininity, mainly through modernity – the Hellenic’s prime feature. This is made possible through Rita, the absolute representative of the Hellenic in the film, and the protagonist Marina, who is transformed from a low-profile housewife, submissive to the deeply rooted patriarchal system, to a modern, liberated and independent woman. The personification of the male and female leads in terms of one of the two notions of the Greek identity and the considerable gender connotations in the film are enhanced by the significant subversions of the Hollywood film musical’s structural elements such as the dual-focus narrative and the dream sequence, which are traced and analysed. Chapter Five concludes with a description of the film’s ending which epitomises the film’s classification as a ‘Romeic film musical’, and an overview of the film’s critical reception as well as its significant influence on film musicals that have followed.

Chapter Six provides the conclusion to the thesis. It reviews the main points and arguments and recapitulates the supporting evidence. It also considers the thesis’ findings in relation to the three case studies and their implications for Greek national identity and gender in their contemporary social context. Finally, it discusses possible directions for future research studies.

CHAPTER TWO

The representation of the Romeic and the Hellenic identities in Greek Cinema and Rebetiko

The previous chapter presented the issue of national identity in contemporary Greece. What depicts Greekness is essentially shaped by the conflict between the two dominating notions of Greek identity – the Hellenic and the Romeic. Ever since its emergence, this conflict has expressed itself in numerous ways through various aspects of Greek life. This chapter focuses on the relation of Greek national identity with Greek Cinema and the musical genre Rebetiko. This is quintessential knowledge for understanding the gender power relations that take place in the thesis' case studies. Through a historical approach with emphasis on the socio-political conditions, I attempt to show that Greek Cinema, as a cultural discourse, with some exceptions, reflects Greek society's proximity to the Romeic mentality. In order to accomplish this, this chapter includes a brief description of the various Greek film genres which are strongly associated with the Romeic identity as well as the only genre that is explicitly associated with the Hellenic identity, the Greek film musical. Moreover, it is necessary to consider the issue of gender and the ways in which it is represented in Greek Cinema through the expression of the Hellenic and the Romeic identities. Various examples of these will be thoroughly analysed in the case studies. This chapter concludes with the examination of one of the principal contributors to the Greek Cinema's affiliation to the Romeic identity – the musical genre Rebetiko. As I discuss later, in the case studies, Rebetiko plays a catalytic role for gender representation in Greek Cinema, particularly through its relation to the Romeic identity.

2.1 Greek Cinema and primacy of the Romeic

Before Cinema's invasion of Greece (1898)³³, the Greek cultural scene was dominated by spectacles, the majority of which were strongly affiliated to the Romeic identity: *Karagkiozis*³⁴ (shadow theatre), *Café Aman* (short comic popular play – entertainment for café goers), Puppet theatre, Varieté, Comic Idyll and Revue (which appeared in Greece in 1894 and mainly satirises political situations) (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:9). In particular, Karagkiozis epitomises the Romeic spirit (also see *Greek national identity*). Fermor underlines that Karagkiozis captures the whole essence of the Romeic and that it recapitulates the Romeic world (Romiosini) at its most humble and comic level (2000:158 – 160). Karagkiozis symbolises the poor and repressed Greek under the oppression of the Turkish Occupation. His temper, his daring, as well as the tendency for pretentiousness and evasiveness, make him adorable to the Greek audience (see 1.2.2 *The Romeic and the Hellenic identities*). The Café Aman is also related to the Romeic since it forms one of the early schools of Rebetiko which, as I discuss later in this chapter, is a distinctive musical genre entirely linked with the Romeic identity.

Karagkiozis and its Romeic influence in Greek Cinema became apparent upon the production of the first four Greek short films. They were made in 1910 by the first production company “Athini” and were all in the Romeic models of the Karagkiozis. The first long film was *Golfo* (Γκόλφω), an adaptation of a well-known theatrical play, and it was first shown in 1914. It was a typical ‘mountain’ film, also known as *foustanella* (Φουστανέλλα). Foustanella constitutes a school of thought and a distinctive genre for Greek Cinema. What is more, in contrast to other film genres which are explicitly related with one or the other identity, foustanella seems to be associated with both. “Foustanella” literally refers to the apparel of the Greek warriors during the war of independence and is considered as the most pure local genre, often parallelised

³³ The first Greek public showings were in Athens in 1898 with the films *The Train Arrival* and *Factories' Exit*, both produced by French company “Lumiere” (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:13).

³⁴ When Karagkiozis came to Greece from Constantinople, it was snubbed not only by the upper classes but also by the popular masses and intellectual groups who were opposed to the import of foreign cultural models. The lower classes, however, gradually accepted Karagkiozis and saw it as a form of entertainment. In the early twentieth century – when the nation's pride was wounded by defeat in 1897 by the Turks - heroic Karagkiozis prevailed with stories of the glorified events of 1821.

with the Western's relation to American Cinema. Foustanella took advantage of myths within the Greek region of the past century as did the Western with those of the American domain (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:16). It is divided into two subgenres: the 'dramatic idyll', which describes love stories in villages, depicting harmonious and idealised relationships, and 'mountain adventures' which deals with village communities under oppression and describes the legendary heroes' fight against enemies and injustice. Foustanella's associations, on one hand, with overly nationalistic excitement and extreme patriotism which often reach the limits of folklore (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:6), and, on the other, with the revolution against the destruction of Greekness under the economic and military dependence of Greece on Western powers, render this the only genre with distinct traits of both the Hellenic and Romeic identities. Stelios Kymionis in his article "The Genre of Mountain Film" comments that both subgenres started with the notion of Greekness. In the dramatic idyll "Greekness implies a respect for tradition and pure community values" while mountain adventure presents Greeks of the past as "fighters for freedom and justice" (2000:61). Considering the Romeic's association with traditional values and the Hellenic with patriotic exhilaration, one could well assert that each subgenre of the mountain film represents each of the two cultural identities. Despite these early productions, Greece's involvement in a series of wars – Greek-Turkish war of 1897, the war of *Goudi* (*Γουδί*), the Balkan wars, the First World War and the war in Asia Minor – essentially prohibited the Greek Cinema from having an identity of its own.

During the 1920s and the 1930s, two film genres dominated the Greek market: melodrama and comedy. Both are characterised as 'Romeic' film genres (hence the label "Romeic Comedy" (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:21)) mainly due to their thematic material as well as the social groups they addressed. After the Asia Minor Catastrophe (1922), the refugees from Asia Minor moved into slum areas of Athens and Thessalonica and began to mix with the local poor.³⁵ For them, cheap entertainment such as the cinema was not only more affordable but also more interesting than the Varietés and the

³⁵ This mixture gives a decisive boost to the Rebetiko and signals its rebirth on mainland Greece (see 2.5 *Rebetiko*).

Revues. Although film documentaries concerning the Minor Asia catastrophe were quite popular, melodrama and comedy prevailed due to the fascination that everyday affairs aroused (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:21).

Dramas, especially melodramas, constitute the most popular film genre in Greek Cinema (particularly during the prosperous period of 1955 and 1975). Papadimitriou distinguished between drama and melodrama, asserting that drama is implicitly associated with “bourgeois drama” and was a more respected word whereas melodrama bears negative and more general connotations with extreme sentimentality and exaggeration. Having said this, the two genres have numerous common features, particularly in terms of their plots (2006:21) and their close relation with the features of the Romeic identity. In melodramas, the Greek family is rhapsodised, is put on trial and eventually comes out triumphant (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:169). Melodrama’s basic code is ‘Nation-Religion-Family’ – a fundamental trait of the Romeic identity which praises and supports all three. Moreover, reality and the everyday – basic characteristics of the Romeic – are celebrated in melodrama, enabling average viewers to identify themselves with family characters that appear as real as their next-door neighbours. Melodrama, with its stereotypical characters – a single mother trying to raise her child, a wayward whore, a young man and woman with different social backgrounds etc. – the indispensable conflict between good and evil and excessive behaviour whose primary aim is to cause tears, essentially forms a genre that constitutes the emotional power of the Greek film (Lazarides, 1999:194).

Greek comedy also complies with the Romeic spirit. The paths followed by comedy and melodrama are similar since comedy has the same narrative structure, whilst it emphasises the light and comic rather than the tragic aspects. The fate of sudden reversal, for example, is also met in comedy, although it almost always works out for the better. To a large extent, Greek comedy has, as central heroes, personalities who come from the lower and, less often, the middle class of Greek society; in other words, the same social domain which it seeks to address. It makes light of the adversities of everyday life, the worries and uncertainties as well as the hopes and mishaps. The direct relation of Greek comedy with the everyday is one of the principal reasons for it having been

given the 'Romeic' attribute. It is not by accident that Greek comedians strongly resemble figures from a Romeic symbol, the Karagiozis (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:235).³⁶

During the 1940s the era of 'Romeic' Greek Cinema was extended further. Quite expectedly, the establishment of Nazism in Greece in 1941, accompanied by the rage of violence, hunger and executions that led the country to total destruction, essentially eliminated any local expression in film.³⁷ Melodrama, comedy and to a lesser extent foustanella, remained as the prevailing film genres for this decade.

In the 1950s, the Romeic element in the rapidly growing Greek Cinema was even more in evidence.³⁸ A significant role was played by the rise of the musical genre Rebetiko which, due to its affiliation to the Romeic identity, enhanced the prevalence of the Romeic over the Hellenic culture. Furthermore, the 'Romeic' melodrama and comedy asserted their dominance in Greek Cinema in the 1950s. Melodramatic stories are full of regretful sinners, torn hearts, bastard children, heroine mothers and sinful lovers. In the end, fate comes down on the side of the wretched and the hard done by (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:85,87), acting as a ray of hope for the misery that the majority of the Greek people suffered. However, the quality of Greek films did not match their

³⁶ Comedy and melodrama continued to dominate in Greek Cinema during the four years, 1928-1932, of political stability, which gave Greek Cinema a powerful boost in terms of volume of production (around 30 films). During this period, Greek Cinema did not blossom sufficiently to establish its own identity since the vast majority of films shown were of foreign origin. Having this in mind, one would expect that, at least, the local filmmakers would have embraced and adopted features of the prevailing foreign films. However, the indifference of the metropolitan centres which controlled Greece at this period, the poor technical facilities available, as well as the lack of directors and script writers with European and/or American training, were factors which prevented the thematic material and film genres of the European and American Cinema from flourishing in Greek Cinema³⁶ (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol:47). As a result, free of any foreign influences and with their distinctively Romeic character intact, melodrama and comedy reign prevailed.

³⁷ During this period of world resistance against Nazism, Greek Cinema had nothing to offer but four films (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol:55). The compensation that followed the German occupation was insignificant in comparison to the massive devastation that the country had suffered. As a result, the country's reconstruction was based - as in the past - on foreign capital: with all the political and economic consequences this kind of dependence brings (consequences that were to affect Greece for the next four decades).

³⁸ The drastic increase of the cities' population in the 1950s as well as the shift of the structure of economic production to industries and services, were factors relevant to the significant and rapid increase of film production in this decade - around 200 films were produced (Lazarides, 1999:371).

popularity.³⁹ Inevitably, Hollywood productions dominated the local film industry with seventy percent of the films shown in Greek Cinemas being American (Lazarides, 1999:241). Exceptions to this rule are Kakogiannis' *Stella* and Koundouros' *The Ogre* (1955).⁴⁰ The former, the first case study of this thesis, constitutes a fine example of a film in which the two identities are personified, engendered and eventually collide. The latter, characterised by Soldatos as a "Romeic tragedy" (1999, 2nd Vol.:307), deals with the tragedy of a lonely man who comes up against the everyday, yet obsessive, visions of the Greek tribe: to find the 'chosen' leader who will lead them to better days.⁴¹

Throughout the 1960s, melodramas and comedies were again the most popular film genres, perpetuating the Romeic model in Greek Cinema.⁴² The great Greek comedy actors ensured the success of comedies whilst the audience of melodramas was convinced by the stories regarding mothers in torment and bastard children.⁴³ The most characteristic trait of the current melodramas is the extolment of Greek family, which ultimately manages to emerge triumphant.

The absolute star of these melodramas and a definitive Romeic persona is the actor *Nikos Xanthopoulos*. The vast number of films in which he starred,

³⁹ The Greek producers, with their poor quality local productions, were unable to compete with the American film companies, since the success of the mainstream Hollywood model depended on a level of economic wealth to which Greece could not aspire. Moreover, the crushing power of the right wing in the political arena whose reign of terror extended to the state executions of several left-wing leaders, posed a significant obstacle to any innovative and liberal producer. Indicatively, despite the fertile ground for accepting the Neorealist seed (Neorealism was created in Italy under conditions that were quite similar to those which Greece suffered at the time: very poor economy, Cinema in poverty, unemployment 30% (Lazarides, 1999:247)), this particular genre was much neglected in Greece. The first film with apparent Neorealist trends is "The skies are ours" (Demopoulos, Ntinis) in 1953, two years before *Stella* is released.

⁴⁰ Koundouros' films *The Ogre* (*Ο Δράκος*, 1955) and *Magic City* (*Μια Πόλη Μαγική*, 1954) are markedly influenced by Italian Neorealism which was widespread in Europe at the time. A characteristic trait is the director's practice of including numerous and lengthy camera shots depicting space.

⁴¹ *Soldatos* obviously refers to the Greeks' undying desire to recapture Constantinople and relive the glory days of Byzantium.

⁴² Indicatively, *Soldatos* seems to align Greek cinema with the Romeic identity; in his attempt to stress Greek's cinema's unstable and chaotic conditions, he characterises it as "a Romeic circus" (1999, 2nd Vol:392).

⁴³ To a lesser extent, Greek Cinema in the 1960s stands out in foustanella films due to their depiction of the mountains and tradition. On the other hand, in genres such as police films and film noir, Greek Cinema (due to e.g. lack of appealing scripts and appropriate actors) was unable to produce any good films (*Soldatos*, 1999, 1st Vol: 224). It is probably for these reasons that no film noir was made in Greece apart from a very few exceptions.

testifies to his popularity.⁴⁴ Generally, Xanthopoulos' roles move along similar lines. He is usually presented as the poor but honest young man (*palikari* – see Chapter Three and Four) who eventually becomes socially established: not through his hard and endless work, but through his good fortune (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:177). Soldatos characterises these films as lottery tickets, asserting that due to people's loss of hope in their individual struggles for a better life, they resort to film/lottery tickets, so that they can see Xanthopoulos, "the child of the people" (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:170), enjoying social elevation even though the 'reality' presented in the film is completely at odds with real life. Xanthopoulos is self-designated as Romios and he is proud of his identity despite the daily struggle and the harsh poverty of his normal life. In *Poor Neighbourhood My Love* (*Φτωχογειτονιά Αγάπη Μου*, 1969) – a stereotype Greek melodrama – Xanthopoulos (Lefteris) describes his world to a girl from the upper social classes: "Let's go and meet the other people... Simple people with feelings, Romeic souls with all the virtues and all the flaws of our race. True Romioi, and for this reason, so beautiful." (1:53:23).⁴⁵ Xanthopoulos is undoubtedly the flagship of the Romeic identity in Greek Cinema.

The introduction of traits of the Hellenic identity in Greek Cinema during the 1960s is primarily due to the exogenous control of the United States in Greece.⁴⁶ Enjoying complete control of the local market, the Americans

⁴⁴ In the period 1959-1971 Xanthopoulos starred in forty-eight films, the vast majority of which were melodramas.

⁴⁵ It is worth noting the film's introductory titles: "Films for all the Greek family, Klak Films Production presents: the favourite artist of the people, Nikos Xanthopoulos in the film *Poor Neighbourhood My Love*". The actor's huge success testifies to the fact that the vast majority of the Greek population of the lower classes associated themselves with him. In the film, Lefteris is a poor, but honest and hard-working young man, who lives in an old and impoverished neighbourhood, quite similar to that of Gregoris and Marina in *Diploennies*. Lefteris' poverty does not prevent him from giving away money in order to help those of his neighbours who happen to be in the same unfavourable financial position.

⁴⁶ This resulted in unstable political situations. The omnipotence of the Right was gradually eroded, mainly due to the challenge of George Papandreou – a major political figure who managed to gain the support of half the country's population (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol:132). From 1964 to 1965, political instability in Greece reached its climax: imperium in imperio on the part of the right wingers who often ignored the authorities and took the law in their own hands, led to the assassination of principal left-wing members, arousing a massive wave of protests and demonstrations throughout the country. Despite the marginal victory of the left wing party ("Centre Coalition") in the elections (52.8%), the party did not manage to form a government. Instead, a series of coalitions of both right and left wing parties resulted in a pattern of resignations and overthrows. Meanwhile, throughout this period, the Americans exercised their influence over the political leadership; their support of the dictatorship which was to gain power three years later (1967) did not come as a surprise (Mercouri, 1995:235).

besieged Greece intensively, permeating many aspects of life – social and economic.⁴⁷ The rampant Americanisation of Greek life became ever more apparent in the cinematic world. Considering the American propaganda films flooding the market after 1944 (Lazarides, 1999:243) and the domination of American films throughout the 1950s, it seems that in the 1960s not much had changed. A typical example is the documentary *Méditerranée* (1963) which was entirely funded by American capital. In the Festival of Greek Cinema (1964) the Greek American director James Paris offered the guests whisky, coca-cola, beers, cigars, and cigarettes – all special delivery from the United States (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:132). Paris managed to introduce the Greeks to the myth of the American show: he brought girls in bathing suits – in boxes, offering flowers to the actors – to the festival, and he even summoned up tanks to promote his film.⁴⁸ As these political and social influences extended to the cinematic world, the ground was fertile for the production in Greece of an essentially Hollywood genre – the film musical. Due to its strong reference to the Hellenic identity and its importance to the thesis (the film musical *Diploennies* is one of the thesis' case studies), the Greek film musical is thoroughly examined later in this chapter. The only optimistic signs for artistic Cinema in Greece during this period were the short films presented in the Festival of Greek Cinema which has taken place annually in Thessalonica since 1960.⁴⁹

During the dictatorship period (1967-1974), the vast volume of films produced seemed to comply with the regime's policies and tactics. On the one hand, the 'historic' foustanella films, by definition, praised Greek virtue and heroics. On the other hand, melodramas and comedies satisfied the Greeks' thirst for drama and laughter. Soldatos argues that the melodramas were particularly helpful to the dictatorship whose main weapon in its dominion over the masses was "stupefied emotionalism" (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:407). And

⁴⁷ This also pertained in the 1970s. In the mid 1970s, right-wing Prime Minister Karamanlis claimed that "Greece belongs to the West", with the opposition, via its leader Andreas Papandreou, answering: "Greece belongs to the Greeks".

⁴⁸ *Never on Sunday*, being made during this period of aggressive Americanisation, acts as an answer and a form of resistance.

⁴⁹ In 1962 the Festival of Greek Cinema was officially entrenched under a state law.

this same industry would continue to prosper during the seven years of dictatorship as long as television allowed it to do so.

In the early 1970s the Greek film industry went into a downward spiral and subsequently collapsed. In the first two years after the introduction of television to Greece, more than half the cinemas closed (Lazarides, 1999:495). The 'small screen' invaded the houses, providing series based on the same and unchanging film codes as those on which Greek Cinema was based. In essence, it provided the same product at practically no cost.⁵⁰

Under these conditions, with the bankruptcy of the commercial cinema a reality, a new kind of cinema emerged: the New Greek Cinema (NGC), its principal trait of absolute control of the director-creator over the filmic product, now considered as 'artistic'. The NGC, so named for its conscious attempt at innovation and escape from the stereotypical past, earned prizes, recognition and respect in Greece and in Europe but failed to gain the masses' attention; it did, however, attract intellectuals and some youth circles who turned their backs on the commercial, conventional cinema. The NGC's emergence was essentially marked by *Representation (Αναπαράσταση, 1970)*, a film by the man who was to become the most prominent figure of the NGC, director Theodoros Angelopoulos. His fame went beyond the Greek borders and he gained international recognition from his early films. Having won numerous Greek and international awards, Angelopoulos succeeded in putting Greece on the World Cinematic map when he was given the Golden Phoenix Award at the Cannes Festival in 1998 with his film *An Eternity and a Day*.⁵¹ By 1976 the NGC had imposed its presence in Greek Cinema but its popularity among the critics was counterbalanced by the dramatic fall in ticket sales throughout the 1970s.⁵²

With the very limited production of comedies and melodramas during the 1970s, and the genres' total extinction in the stereotypical form that made them recognisable and popular from the 1980s and onwards, Greek Cinema seemed to have lost its intensely Romeic character that had typified its

⁵⁰ The same development gave rise to the industry of video films (in VHS format) in the 1980s.

⁵¹ Angelopoulos entered the Cannes Festival several times. In 1995, with his film *The Glimpse of Odysseus (Το βλέμμα του Οδυσσέα)*, he won the Grand Prize, losing the Palme d'Or to Emir Kusturica and his film *Underground*.

⁵² The NGC films were viewed only in a few art theatres and in cultural societies (Soldatos, 2nd Vol:190).

development ever since its first emergence. The 1980s were marked by the conscious attempt to revive commercial Greek Cinema and, through the ‘alliance’ with the NGC, to bring back the audience to the cinema halls. This, along with the enactment of substantial legislation on Greek Cinema in 1985, resulted in more commercial but also more professional and high quality films. Nevertheless, the ticket sales still did not meet the expectations of their creators and neither the transfer of several of these films into video format nor their promotion abroad brought any noteworthy results. By the end of the decade, all the cinematic interest of the country was focused on the National Film Awards and the Thessalonica Film Festival, while the few Greek productions struggled to be screened in cinema theatres due to the monopoly of the foreign films that ruled the market.

In the 1990s the conditions of the previous decade seemed to remain unchanged: the lethargic state of the film industry resulted in the production of only a small number of films, while the few films of high standards rarely enjoyed commercial success (overpowered by Hollywood productions) and sought for recognition through film festivals in Greece and abroad. Bright exceptions are the films of Angelopoulos who represented Greece’s single shining star on the world cinematic scene.

As in the 1980s, in this decade the Romeic character of Greek Cinema failed to prevail. Having said this, the Romeic element is still to be found in Greek films of the present and last decade and is manifested in various forms – plot, music, symbols. The thesis’ focus, however, is on gender representation through the depiction of the national identities in the golden era of Greek Cinema (1955-1970) and the subsequent decades will not come under its scrutiny. Nevertheless, I strongly believe that the ‘new’ ways in which the Romeic and Hellenic elements were demonstrated in the years following the period under consideration in this thesis offer fertile ground for further research.

From its early days (1910), up until its glory days (late 1950s and 1960s), Greek Cinema strongly reflects the primary elements of the Romeic identity outlined in the previous chapter. In fact, during this long period in the history of Greek Cinema, in the most popular film genres – melodrama and comedy – the Romeic identity dominated over the Hellenic, whose traits are

often ridiculed and rejected. Despite the general reaction to foreign interference in the political and social life, the film musical – an American film genre – constitutes the only exception to Romeic supremacy and is analysed next.

2.2 The Greek film musical: a Hellenic territory

In this section I examine the various aspects of the Greek film musical that render it the only Greek film genre whose traits align with the Hellenic identity. In particular I discuss how intense Americanism, consumerism and the rise of tourism in Greece are reflected on the Greek musical during the 1960s and early 1970s. In addition, I consider the various ways in which the Romeic Rebetiko and its trademark symbol, the bouzouki, promote an altered ‘Romeic’ identity. Finally, I present the distinct similarities of the Greek with the American musical with focus on the latter’s indispensable structural elements – the ‘dream sequence’ and the ‘grand finale’.

The early Greek film musicals paid tribute to westernisation and modernisation and overtly rejected anything regressive and old-fashioned (Papadimitriou, 2006:39). This was the result of the severe political and social changes that affected the country during the 1960s. Shortly after the fall of the centrist party (1963 – 1965) which caused political instability in the country, a military coup d’état led to the imposition of dictatorship (1967 – 1974). The regime, militarily and financially supported by the Americans, strongly favoured and promoted the traits of the Hellenic identity. In an unsettled period during which any return to the past would only have scratched old wounds, the Greek people welcomed consumerism and anything else that would brighten up their lives (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:76). Such a view of the future was made possible via the American funds which brought considerable economic growth and markedly improved living standards. Notably, the early film musicals’ celebration of westernisation and modernisation aligned with the Hellenic identity, which is distinctive for its adoption of western values as well as for its extroversion and readiness to assimilate and imitate foreign mores. The adaptation of the film musical – an American film genre – to the Greek Cinema is, in itself, an act typical of Hellenic mentality.

2.2.1 Americanism and consumerism

Americanism and the passion for consumerism are more than noticeable in musicals throughout the early (1955 – 1965) and mature (1965 – 1970) periods and are exclusively expressed through young people. Any contrasting tendencies that suggest regression and refusal to accept new trends are transmitted through the older generation; the film narrative, faithful to the Hellenic spirit, mocks and eventually rejects them. A typical example appears in *Something that Burns* (*Κάτι va Καίει*, 1963) where the protagonist, a conservative man who does not know how to dance modern dances and becomes a laughing stock with his bloomers, expresses his anti-American and anti-consumerism feelings: “I don’t want dollars! I don’t like dollars!” (27:22).

Americanism is also projected through the star system which appears to be a common phenomenon in Greek film musicals; it is common for the protagonists’ appearance to resemble that of American stars, e.g. Andreas’ appearance, particularly the hairstyle, in *Girls for Kissing* (*Κορίτσια για Φίλημα*, 1965), in a dream sequence (1:03:07), is quite similar to Richard Beymer’s in *West Side Story* (1961). Moreover, in the film *Oh! That Wife of Mine* (*Αχ! Αυτή η Γυναίκα μου*, 1967) the heroine Nina is admired by her husband’s boss because she reminds him of Ursula Andress.⁵³

In many musicals, the absolute emblem of modernisation and consumerism is the car; owning a car at the time was a luxury not everyone could afford. The appearance of the sports car in many successful American films of the time – *Thunder Road* (1958), *Grand Prix* (1966), etc. – further associates consumerism with Americanism in Greek film musicals. Indicatively, *Ah! That Wife of Mine!* starts with Nina extolling her life’s dream – to own a convertible sports car. The last scene of the film celebrates consumerism as Nina and her husband drive happily in their new car to the seaside and locate their new ‘target’ – a speed boat. In *Mermaids and Magkes* (*Γοργόνες και Μάγκες*, 1968) Petros refuses to smoke his father’s Greek cigarettes because he only smokes “American cigarettes”. Petros refuses to work in his father’s successful building company. Instead, he is into car racing

⁵³ Although born in Ostermundigen, Bern, Switzerland (1936), the actress was popular worldwide, particularly through her participation in Hollywood productions.

and wishes to be a professional racing driver – an extraordinary and, at the time, modern ambition which appeared appealing for the Greek youth. The car seems to be a point of reference in the film since Marina, the peasant girl with whom Petros will eventually end up with, sings early in the film: “The man whom I will marry will own a car...I will travel with him in Europe and the United States” (24:10). The use of the car as a symbol of modernity seems to be quite common within the genre. In *Rendezvous on Air* (*Rendezvous στον Αέρα*, 1965), for example, youth is celebrated as five young people drive around in the modern city streets in a white convertible sport car as they cheerily sing: “As long as we are young – young – young with a happy song we will always be children!” (1:06:40) (Figure 2). The scene celebrates youth and love as well as liberalism with the young woman driving the convertible full of confidence. Moreover, in *Sea Beads* (*Θαλασσιές οι Χάντρες*, 1967) Mary, a young singer in a women’s rock’n’roll band, takes young Fotis for a ride in her shiny red convertible. This highly unconventional scene not only underlines the heroine’s association with modernism, but it also highlights the redefinition of power between the sexes since it is the woman who is the car owner and offers the ride to the man and not vice versa as was the norm.



Figure 2: Convertible car – a vehicle of modernity

(Rendezvous on Air, 1965, 1:06:57)

Another popular ‘vehicle’ of modernity in Greek film musicals is the frequent employment of beauty contests – a trend most common in the United States and later on in Europe.⁵⁴ In *Something that Burns* (1963), low class teenager Popi dreams of the glory and fame she will enjoy once she becomes Miss Universe at a beauty contest in Long Beach California. *Rendezvous on Air* (1965) starts off in Paris, where the Miss Europe beauty contest is held and the protagonist, the Greek participator, has high hopes of winning the contest. Moreover, in *A Lady at the Bouzoukia* (*Μια Κυρία στα Μπουζούκια*, 1968) Anna seeks to escape from the low-class milieu via her participation in a beauty contest. Glorified by her manager as the personification of eternal Greek beauty which “starts from ancient Greece, passes through Byzantium and lasts until today” (59:49), Anna enjoys appreciation and respect through the ‘imported’ social event. By their nature, beauty contests emphasise a person’s external appearance and undermine her/his other characteristics. Entirely complying with the Hellenic cultural identity, beauty contests in Greek film musicals satisfy the Hellenic thirst for extroversion and proclivity for exhibition and exposure. What is more, the adoration of the female body as expressed in Greek art of the ancient period (particularly sculpture), further emphasises the film musical’s relation to the Hellenic identity and its connection with Greek antiquity.

2.2.2 Tourism

The central role of tourism in Greek musicals contributes further to the Greek film musical’s Hellenic character. The rapid growth of the service sector and tourism was one of the principal factors in the nation’s financial growth in the 1950s and 1960s. Tourism emerged as the new field for economic investment and enterprise and offered a promising prospect for the nation’s economy. Grasping the new economic pulse, Greek film musicals exhaustively portray the country’s attractions – assets which ‘magnetise’ a large number of tourists as well as locals: the Parthenon; picturesque islands with crystal clear water and beaches with white sand (Hydra – *Girls for Kissing* (*Κορίτσια για*

⁵⁴ The first beauty contest took place in the United States in 1854, staged by P.T. Barnum.

φίλημα, 1965), *Mermaids and Magkes*⁵⁵ (*Γοργόνες και Μάγκες*, 1968); Rhodes - *Girls for Kissing*; Corfu – *The Countess of Corfu* (*Η Κόμισσα της Κέρκυρας*, 1972), bright blue skies and white-washed villages; modern night taverns; women in bikinis; the bouzouki and the *Sirtaki* dance (see 2.2.3 *The bouzouki*), etc. Although these films were primarily intended to be shown in Greece and only a few were viewed abroad, they form one of the best promoters of the Greek touristic product and, as discussed later, of the Hellenic perspective of Greekness.

The director who presented Greece most prominently as a tourist product in his film musicals is Giannis Dalianides – the most successful and prolific director of the Greek film musical and the man largely responsible for the genre's proximity to the Hellenic idiosyncrasy.⁵⁶ Having directed almost half of the total productions of film musicals (fourteen out of the twenty-nine⁵⁷), Dalianides formed a particular profile for the film musical in Greece and his films constitute typical samples of the genre.⁵⁸ In his musicals, Dalianides essentially presents Greece as a tourist product and as a utopian land where the audience/tourists can experience escapism and the 'desire to be someone else, somewhere else' (Papadimitriou, 2000:98). In Dalianides' *Sea Beads* (*Θαλασσιές οι Χάντρες*, 1967) some Greek merchants of tourist souvenirs are convinced by an American to transform their low profile, local Rebetiko tavern into a cosmopolitan, upscale restaurant; their primary goal is to attract tourists. This particular narrative idea from the director is indicative of his 'Hellenic' approach in his musicals since it reflects his filmic 'vision' of what

⁵⁵ Honorary adjective for *Rebetis*.

⁵⁶ Indicatively, Dalianides' first four musicals were top box office attractions and made the musical one of the most popular genres of the 1960s (Valoukos, 1984).

⁵⁷ According to Papadimitriou's classification (2006).

⁵⁸ The first attempt to create a film musical in Greece was made in 1954 by Dinos Dimopoulos with his film *Joyful Beginning* (*Χαρούμενο Ξεκίνημα*). It was not until 1960 that a second film musical was produced, *Good Morning Athens* (*Καλημέρα Αθήνα*) directed by Grigoris Grigoriou. The third production of the genre marked Dalianides' debut in the film musical industry. It was made in 1962 with *Some Like it Cold* (*Μερικοί το Προτιμούν Κρύο*), a film which, apart from the title, does not have any strong references to the American classic *Some Like it Hot* (1959). The film's huge success stirred the waters of the film musical industry and foretold a bright future in the years to come for the prominent director. What is more, the film was the first of numerous musical productions that would dominate the box office charts for the following seven years (1962 – 1969).

Greece truly is or should be like: a country released from its links to tradition, to become instead, one which is wide open to modernity and westernisation. In this sense, tourism and film musicals share the same goals. By breaking the barriers of reality, Greek musicals satisfy the audience's/tourists' desire to seek something different from everyday life. This further enhances the Greek musical's relationship with a Hellenic identity that has been associated with ideas and philosophy rather than the reality and pragmatism linked with the Romeic. In an effort to keep up with the contemporary technology and stylistic trends in American and West European cinema and thus present an even more attractive Greece in the musicals, colour film and widescreen format were introduced. Colour was generally associated with spectacle rather than realism, an attitude which prevailed in Hollywood at least until the 1960s (Papadimitriou, 2006:72 – 74). On the other hand, the Greek comedies of the same period – most of which are in black and white and all in full format – deal with the problems of everyday life and routine: hence they are referred to as 'Romeic Comedies' (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:21).

The increasing interaction with the tourists brought the Greeks – particularly the young ones – closer to the modern lifestyle and its values. As a result, traditional elements of Greek culture like the bouzouki (discussed later) and the foustanella became commercialised or altered in order to attract the tourists, a characteristic which is more than apparent in Greek musicals. As mentioned earlier in the thesis (see *1.2.2 The Romeic and the Hellenic identities*), this alignment of 'Greekness' with the perception of the Hellenic originated from the way Europeans viewed or, to be more precise, would like to view Greece. Hence, the Greek musicals blatantly project and promote Hellenic culture – modernisation and the western values and lifestyle – and discard or transform the Romeic, the Greek traditional values and way of life.

2.2.3 The bouzouki

The most characteristic case of commercialisation and alteration of a Romeic feature in Greek musicals is the way in which the bouzouki is portrayed. Formerly a symbol of masculinity and tradition, as well as an emblem of Rebetiko and of the strict patriarchal mores that characterise the

genre (discussed later, see 2.5 *Rebetiko: The definitive Romeic music*), the role of the bouzouki was transformed in Greek film musicals. It was ‘demoted’ to a symbol of Hellenic ‘Greekness’ which, as admitted in *Girls for Kissing* (1965), was good only for “snobs and tourists” (1:37:54). In the musicals the bouzouki was primarily used as a cosmopolitan product, as a major tourist exhibit. Bouzouki taverns were transformed to classy night taverns where bouzouki music alternated with various foreign musical genres – tsa-tsa, rumba, tango, etc. Whilst in Rebetiko – the initial musical domain of bouzouki – other musical forms were not only underrated but also rejected, modernisation and commercialisation of the bouzouki placed it alongside electric guitars and basses, flutes, saxophones, trumpets and all kinds of foreign rhythms. Moreover, as a result of the increased popularity that Greek music enjoyed among foreigners, new customs were added to nightlife entertainment such as the breaking of plates during a song/dance (*Some Like it Cold* (1962), *Diplo pennies* (1966), *Sea Beads* (1967)), and the throwing of carnations to singers.

The instrument itself was altered in the late 1950s when bouzouki virtuoso Manolis Hiotis added a fourth string to the instrument and changed its tuning. This modification brought the bouzouki closer to the guitar (also known as *bouzouki-kithara*) and expanded its pitch range. Hiotis’ action was reproached by the Rebetiko circle and fans since they considered it as an abuse of the instrument and an alteration of its identity. With Hiotis’ catalytic contribution, the bouzouki, from being a stigmatised instrument initially used in prison and in tekédes (Turkish coffee shops), rapidly became fashionable, made its film appearances in rich houses and was applauded by the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie (“Today the bouzoukia are fashionable for the aristocrats” (36:40) from *A Lady at the Bouzoukia*, (1968)).

The loss of the instrument’s original identity that linked it with the Romeic is more than evident in the Greek film musical. An indicative example is the finale in *Girls for Kissing* (1965). The protagonist, Rena Vlahopoulou, acting as an MC – the person who connects or presents the different parts of the show in a venue – describes the nightlife of Athens. Among the various kinds of night taverns that she mentions – cabaret, dance clubs for the young – is the

bouzouki tavern. The altered appearance of the bouzouki betrays its lack of character; faceless performers (the only visible part of their body is their fingers) play on a bland string instrument whose mere resemblance to the bouzouki is its sound (figure 3). Notably, the only time that bouzouki music is heard throughout the whole film is in the finale.



Figure 3: Faceless performers play the bouzouki
(Girls for Kissing, 1965, 1:38:33)

Dalianides' attempt to fuse the bouzouki and Rebetiko with foreign musical genres in order to project a collective Greekness also resulted in the alteration of the instrument's original identity; in Rebetiko, the bouzouki was accompanied only by the guitar and the baglamas and, less often, by the accordion and the double bass. Dalianides combined the Tsifteteli, Hasapiko and Zeibekiko (Rebetiko dances) with Samba, Tsa-Tsa and Tango, sometimes all in the same number (e.g. "I have a sad heart" ("Έχω στενάχωρη καρδιά") in *Some Like it Cold*, 1:12:16 (1962), "Time passes by" ("Ο χρόνος περνά") in *Rendezvous on Air* 1:24:36 (1966)). However, the transformed use of the bouzouki and Rebetiko dances did not produce, as expected, a truly Romeic identity. This forged identity is distinctively different from the vast majority of films from other film genres that blatantly project the 'genuine' Romeic identity (e.g. *Stella* (1955), *Never on Sunday* (1960) and the numerous Greek comedies of the 1960s). As a result, the seemingly harmonious coexistence of the Romeic

and the Hellenic identities in film musicals is ultimately deceptive since the 'Romeic' image produced differs from that already well established and projected in other film genres.

In Greek film musicals, the dance *Sirtaki* (Συρτάκι) is established as a symbol of a 'hybrid' Greekness which resulted from the co-existence of the Hellenic and the Romeic identities. It is considered to be the most popular and well-known Greek dance worldwide and its interrelation with the bouzouki further led to the instrument's promotion as the trademark Greek instrument.⁵⁹ Along with the bouzouki, Sirtaki became synonymous with Greece after it became internationally known from the film *Zorba the Greek* (1964). With the film's worldwide success, the Sirtaki became Greece's second national anthem and, hand-in-hand with the bouzouki, was the first thing sought by tourists visiting the country. As a consequence, the Sirtaki and the bouzouki became extremely commercialised. Since then, the Sirtaki has stood as a dance rhythm of which the basic characteristic is a tune that starts off with a slow Hasapiko and eventually ends in a frenzied Hasaposerviko. The makers of the Greek film musicals did not remain indifferent to the Sirtaki's international popularity. Always aiming to portray Greece from the Western European perspective, directors and script writers such as Dalianides used the Sirtaki consistently. As a result, despite the Sirtaki's relation to the bouzouki and the Rebetiko's rhythms, the dance was not associated only with the Romeic. Its extensive usage in musicals, along with the fact that the Sirtaki became known through an international film which wanted to show foreigners the nature of Modern Greekness, established the Sirtaki as a symbol of hybridisation of the two Greek identities. In *Rendezvous on Air* (Ραντεβού στον Αέρα, 1965), for example, the heroine Jenny teaches the Sirtaki in Paris to French people who are dying to learn how to dance it (14:30). At the end of the film, Jenny – again as a MC –

⁵⁹ The Sirtaki dance is officially attributed to composer Mikis Theodorakis although there is enough evidence to suggest that the melody of the dance was written by the renowned bouzouki player and composer Giorgos Zambetas. Zambetas played the bouzouki in "Strose to Stroma sou gia dio" ("Make your mattress for two") a Hasapiko song which appeared in Theodorakis' successful album *Gitonia ton Aggelon* (In the Neighbourhood of Angels, 1963). According to Zambetas, Theodorakis played to him only 5% percent of the notes and the virtuoso added the rest. The same practice occurred with the bouzouki virtuoso Manolis Hiotis (Kliasiou, 1997:203). In the film *Zorba the Greek* Theodorakis used the exact melody of *Strose to Stroma sou gia dio* and at the end added a hasaposerviko rhythm which becomes increasingly faster; he named it "Sirtaki" (Kliasiou, 1997:244).

confirms that “Europe in its entirety dances to the Sirtaki” (1:27:46). Likewise, wealthy Rita in *Diploennies* is eager to see how the Greeks dance to the Sirtaki because, as she says, “in Paris, everyone is crazy about it!” (26:15).

2.2.4 Rebetiko

As already mentioned, particularly after 1966, there was a conscious attempt on the part of the musicals’ producers to present the Romeic identity alongside the already projected Hellenic one, to suggest a harmonious coexistence between the two in the films. Papadimitriou argues that the aim was to create a “national musical – a typically Greek version of the genre” (2006:6,7). However this was done by altering the Romeic traits in such a way that, to a large extent, the Romeic identity was presented as ‘distorted’, unrealistic and naive. Rebetiko, an indispensable part of the Romeic persona (see 2.5.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*), as a musical genre but also as a social domain, ‘suffered’ such a modification.

One of the most popular Greek film musicals, which attempted to present both identities and stress their compatibility, is Dalianides’ *Sea Beads* (1967). Papadimitriou categorises this film as a ‘National’ musical alongside *Diploennies*, due to the emphatic presence of the Romeic identity in the film. The film, however, with exaggeration and excessive simplicity, creates a deceptive identity which does not correspond to the true Romeic; consequently, the resulting coexistence at the end of the film seems pretentious and unreal.

In the film two different worlds are presented, distinct in terms of culture, social status, mores and music; yet they have one thing in common – they are both Greek. These two sides of the same coin are personified through the female and male heroes of the film – Fotis and Mary. Fotis is the personification of the Romeic: a low class youngster, singer, composer and a professional bouzouki player who is thoroughly immersed in the world of Rebetiko and abides by its mores. He is the symbol of masculinity, desired among the women of his domain (“He is the charmer of the area” (26:13)) and treats them according to the patriarchal and traditional values that characterise the Rebetiko domain (see 2.5 *Rebetiko: The definitive Romeic music*). Mary is the ‘other’ side of Greece. She too is a musician, yet, of a quite different

musical genre. She sings and plays the electric bass in a women's rock'n'roll band and does not perform for money but for fun. Coming from a high-class aristocratic family and representing modern and innovative ideas throughout the film, Mary unmistakably embodies the Hellenic characteristics. The heroine and her Hellenic persona initially appear as a serious threat to the Romeic and Rebetiko since groups like hers, which increasingly attract more people, could render the Rebetes redundant. Fotis instantly falls in love with Mary who, although attracted to him also, cannot see how it is possible for the two to be together: "We are two different worlds...we are accustomed to different habits...how am I going to introduce you to my friends?...it's not only your clothes, it's the way you behave, your aura, your moustache." (51:26 – 51:52) Fotis, blinded by his love for Mary, decides to change despite his fellow Rebetes' warnings: "This is a weird fruit – you don't know how to eat it" (23:45), "She'll do you harm...She is from a different anecdote" (33:45), "She will even make you shave your moustache!" (34:00). The moustache, diachronically being a prestigious trademark symbol of the Rebetes (Petropoulos, 1990:50), becomes a point of reference in the film.⁶⁰ In a satirical and, at the same time, dramatic scene, Dalianides demonstrates Fotis' agonising decision to eventually shave off his moustache in his desperate effort to approach the Hellenic – Mary.⁶¹ The tragicomic scene of the actual shaving which jeopardises Fotis' Romeic identity: "How do I look Panayioti [the barber]? Like a *floros*?" (*floros* is a low class way of referring to anything not Romeic with scorn and belittling intentions), becomes even more intense and extreme with the accompanying dramatic *taximi* (an improvisational piece usually performed at the beginning of the song and used by the instrumentalist to show his skills on the instrument) on the bouzouki. Dalianides' intention to satirise the Rebetes is obvious: they walk peculiarly, behave naively -

⁶⁰ Faidon Georgitsis, the actor who played Fotis in the film, said in an interview: " We frowned on comedies. When one day Dalianides asked me if I wanted to act in a comedy I told him that I don't act in comedies. Dalianides told me that I would play a 'magkas'. I responded that if I was going to play a magkas then he should be 100% magkas – not a fake. And that he should have a moustache! This is how I helped Dalianides in his script and contributed to that scene with the moustache that was to become a classic". (Interview to Paris Potamitis in the daily news programme *From Day to Day* in CYBC1 on 23/07/2009).

⁶¹ Petropoulos marks the great scandal that burst during the 1960s when a renowned Rebetiko singer (doesn't mention his name) shaved off his moustache (1990:45). This particular scene of *The Sea Beads*, made in 1967, may well be inspired by this event.

sometimes with stupidity, and have funny names. One does not need to know a lot about Rebetiko to realise that these characters are not representative samples of their domain. By belittling the trademark musical and social domain of the Romeic Rebetiko which acts as the pole of resistance to modernity in the film, Dalianides' goal to bring together the two identities becomes easier.

The two worlds, the Hellenic and the Romeic, are eventually brought together via Fotis' and Mary's marriage – a device most commonly used in American Hollywood musicals in order to mediate the secondary thematic dichotomies associated with the male and female characters of the musicals (Altman, 1987:51). However, as often happens in Hollywood musicals, the employment of marriage is an artificial solution and marks a superficial and unconvincing approach to the issue of potential coexistence of the two identities. With the heroes' union, Fotis becomes a successful bouzouki player and performs in large halls for audiences of high social status. His success is so great that he even has concerts in Europe. The shot in which Fotis plays his bouzouki under the directions of a conductor, wearing a costume and a bowtie instead of the plain clothes he wore throughout the film (figure 4), is a testimony of the conscious and excessive attempt to bring together in harmonious coexistence the Romeic Rebetiko with Hellenic Western Classical Music. Moreover, this underscored transformation of Fotis and the diminution of Rebetiko and the Romeic to cultural products serving only for commercial exploitation, expose Dalianides' over simplistic approach in his task to present the two identities congruently living together. This goal is eventually 'accomplished' in *Sea Beads*, not by illustrating the two identities in their true entity, but by presenting a phoney, unrealistic Romeic identity in a fantasy world of a classless society where all cultural and class distinctions are dissolved.



Figure 4: Rebetis Fotis in a bowtie being conducted by a Maestro
(*Sea Beads*, 1967, 1:25:13)

Rebetiko mores were further undermined the following year, in Dalianides' film musical, *A Lady at the Bouzoukia* (*Μια Κυρία στα Μπουζούκια*, 1968). In the film, Elena, a rich upper-class lady, behaves like a Rebetis (see 2.5.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*). She sings the Rebetiko song "I am a woman of fun" ("Είμαι γυναίκα του κεφιού") claiming, "holding a cigarette in one hand and a string of beads in the other" (typical 'accessories' of the Rebetis), that she "doesn't care what life brings her" as long as she is having fun (28:00). Yet, she speaks from an invulnerable position since she drinks expensive whisky, wears diamonds and lives in an immense villa. What is more, she 'demands' to dance a Zeibekiko and sings to it as well, a preposterous and unthinkable act permitted only to men in the domain of Rebetiko (37:50). In her song "To the boy across" ("Του αγοριού απέναντι"), the aristocratic female 'Rebetis' takes the role of a male counterpart, using explicit sexual innuendos: "His caresses are a sea, and I am a fire in the middle". The male hero, who himself is actually from the Rebetiko domain (low class youngster with Piraeus origins, Olympiakos Piraeus football

player⁶²) is worried about the apparent subversion and relaxing of principles: “You [women] have started to become dangerous. Soon, we [men] should start going around with an escort in night hours to be protected from you!” However, for Elena this was “called women being equal to men” (42:39).

Musicals like *Sea Beads* and *A Lady at Bouzoukia* which attempted to join in ‘marriage’ the Hellenic and the Romeic identities, were the exception to the rule. The vast majority of Greek film musicals, when addressing both identities, mark their incompatibility by stressing their numerous different characteristics. As already argued, Greek film musicals projected and acclaimed the Hellenic identity by celebrating modernity and westernisation, associating them in most occasions with youth. On the other hand, when present, the Romeic identity, depicted as boring and outdated, was usually associated with the old. Music has a predominant role in this distinction; within a film genre abundant with music, it is turned into an artistic battlefield on which the two identities face each other. Correspondingly, the bouzouki and Rebetiko are marginalised in favour of the current fashionable musical genres, all foreign: tsa-tsa, rumba, tango, shake, hali gali, etc.⁶³

Modernity in Greek musicals is identified with the young. With his musicals, Dalianides appears as the crusader who establishes youth as “a social group with striking characteristics, intense need of sexual expression and self-designation” (Paradisi, 1993:187). Music in the Greek musicals constitutes the primal form of expression of youth and reflects the young’s need for change and subversion of anything traditional and conventional. Accordingly, the foreign genres that magnetise the young Greeks challenge Greek music and particularly Rebetiko. In *Girls for Kissing* (1965), a group of young people do a trial dance act, performing Shake and Hali Gali dances. Upset by the director, who was not thrilled with the foreign genres and told them to leave, the youngsters respond: “You make Greek films don’t you? That’s why you cannot

⁶² Miltos in *Stella* (1955) has exactly the same characteristics.

⁶³ The man who wrote the music for the majority of Greek musicals is Mimis Plessas. Having written the music for over a hundred film productions, Plessas is considered one of Greece’s most prolific composers. Dalianides’ choice to work with him in all of his musicals is indicative of Plessas’ unique ability to musically convey the Hellenic identity and contrast it to the Romeic. To a large extent, this is due to the fact that the composer was greatly influenced by American music, particularly jazz: Plessas is the musician who introduced jazz to Greece and recorded a number of albums with jazz musicians.

appreciate anything nice!... should we wear a foustanella (reference to tradition) and come again?!" (16:40). Youth/modernity's clash with tradition continues throughout the film. Indicatively, the film's soundtrack lacks *any* Greek music (apart from the finale and the 'hybrid' Sirtaki) and, instead, is compiled from all kinds of different foreign musical genres: Parisian cabaret, exotic Arabic, New York Jazz. In another film, *Mermaids and Magkes* (1968), the message is clear early in the film: "The old cannot understand the young" (19:15) and "when the young talk, the old must withdraw" (1:02:53). Greek youth's need to escape the Romeic Greek culture and reach out to Western influences is evident in the film. Hence the young reject the traditional Greek *Balos* danced by the old people and instead they love to dance the Shake – "We used to dance the Twist but now it is out of fashion" (1:01:15). Later in the film, the tourists also dance the shake, underscoring tourism's significant effect on Greek youth.

The distinction between the old and the young as reflected in musical genres started with *Something that Burns* (1963). The film associates the Tango with the old, ("A Tango for the old") and the "Twist for the young" (36:50), a link also made in *Rendezvous on Air* (1965) ("The Tango which is only danced by the old people nowadays" (1:24:40)). Apart from the reference to the tango, Rebetiko is further associated with the old in the same film. Middle-aged Sofia, who is praised as an "expert on Rebetiko" and is offended when the young generation considers her old, sings twice in the film; both songs are in the 'feminine', Tsifteteli rhythm (see Chapter Three). The first song, "The road is rocky" (54:10), stands out from all the other songs in the film since it infuses a sense of realism into the film, describing the adversities of life. The references to the lower classes and the everyday problems of making a living align it more closely with the Romeic and largely explain the choice of the Rebetiko song.

2.2.5 The Greek and American film musicals: dream sequence and grand finale

The Greek film musical's similarities to the American originals, further accentuates the genre's Hellenic character and reinforces the Hellenic's proximity to the West. Structurally, the Greek film musical is largely based on its American 'cousin', marked by two of the latter's distinct traits: the *dream sequence* and the *grand finale*. According to Rick Altman, no musical exists

without its ‘Camelot’, its “Switzerland of the mind”, the dream sequence. For Altman, the dream sequence – where reality is opposed by the unreal be it a romantic interlude or a moment of greatness – is an indispensable part of any film musical (Altman, 1989:77). Virtually all Greek film musicals have at least one dream sequence which, as with their American counterparts, escapes reality and enters the imaginary realm. The utopian and illusory nature of the dream sequence renders it unattainable and unrealistic. Bearing in mind the Hellenic’s characteristics and its tendency to withdraw from the routine and the everyday, one could well argue that the dream sequence is the point in the Greek film musical where the Hellenic identity is sealed; it is the Hellenic’s heavenly celebration. In the films’ dream numbers the protagonists fulfil their utmost desires which seem utterly unfeasible in real life. Hence, the heroes in *Something that Burns* (1963), see their dreams come true, all in one dream number: Popi is crowned Miss Universe (figure 5), the men’s music group becomes a thriving rock’n’roll band and they drive a red convertible sports car (figure 6), Rena is turned into a classy dancer (figure 7) and Sofia’s love for the Rebetiko is sufficient to turn her into a successful singer who sings Tsifteteli (figure 8).



Figures 5,6,7,8: The Hellenic Dream – Miss Universe, rock’n’roll band, dancer, singer (*Something that Burns*, 1963, 1:13:22; 1:14:16; 1:14:38; 1:15:32)

Likewise, in *A Lady at the Bouzoukia* (1968), Anna becomes a pan-Hellenic beauty symbol in a dream sequence where, starting off as the beauty goddess Venus, she then turns into Empress Theodora of Byzantium, and finally she is presented as the princess of the Sirtaki in contemporary Greece.

Indeed, the dream sequence's quality of presenting the heroes as surpassing the everyday reality and turning themselves into something "higher, bigger, brighter and sexier than life" (Altman, 1989:214) is quite evident in Greek film musicals. In *Mermaids and Magkes* (1968) insignificant and low-key Dimitros is madly in love with Marina, whose only feeling for him is contempt, since he is just "a fisherman with a fishy smell!" (21:42). In his dream vision, however, Dimitros becomes the leader of a frightening team of pirates and is transformed into an awe-inspiring, masculine figure. After capturing teddy boy Petros, Dimitros wins Marina's eternal gratitude by sparing Petros' life. To thank him for his magnanimity, Marina dances for him a sensuous, exotic dance. Dimitros' dream reaches its climax at the end when he eventually holds his loved one in his arms. Waking up, he returns to crude reality and the everyday.

The exotic element in the aforementioned dream is found in a number of dream sequences in Greek musicals. All these sequences are accompanied by artistic dance numbers which further dissociate them from reality and the Romeic since, as Altman argues, Art, "by virtue of its very imaginary status, has the power to reach higher realities, truths which would otherwise remain invisible". In this sense, both Art and dreams are in opposition to reality (1987:61). A characteristic example is found in *Sea Beads* (1967). Elenitsa, an ordinary young woman from low class Athenian society, is in love with Costas, a young Rebetis. As Costas is indifferent to Elenitsa's erotic interest, the heroine resorts to magic in order to make him notice her. In the film's dream sequence, Elenitsa dreams that she is a gypsy dancer who succeeds in drawing gypsy Costas' attention with the spells of a gypsy female magician. Ultimately, the couple dance happily to a gypsy tune which, as the nature of the genre dictates, has distinct westernised traits (the instrumentation and the orchestration strikingly resemble Brahms' *Hungarian Dances*). The dream's unfeasibility and distance from realism are reflected by Elenitsa's reaction as soon as she returns to reality: "Oh no, no, no! Impossible!" (49:09). The actress who performed Elenitsa, Martha Karagianni, was associated with the exotic two years earlier when in a dancing number in *Girls for Kissing* (1965), she was dressed as an Arabian girl performing an oriental dance (51:51). On the other hand, Costas (Costas Voutsas) was transformed from a gypsy to a sheikh in

another dream sequence performed a year later in *Rendezvous on Air* (1968). In the dream, as a sheikh, the hero enjoys the luxuries of his wealth, particularly the exotic Arabic dances that each of his harem's slaves performs for his pleasure (1:15:50).

The second distinct structural trait that Greek and American film musicals share is the final number, the *grand finale*. The Greek musical's grand finale is based on *Epitheorisi* (*Επιθεώρηση*), the theatrical genre that appeared in Greece in the late nineteenth century and remained popular throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In the late 1940s, establishing a series of sketches, with song and dance drawn from the French revue and vaudeville, *Epitheorisi* moved the focus away from narrative to spectacle. Aligned with the Hellenic identity's tendency for extroversion and exhibition, *Epitheorisi* is considered 'a strong proponent of modernisation and westernisation, of a Hellenic cultural identity' (Papadimitriou, 2006:24). Whereas popular film comedy of the 1950s and 1960s – successor to the theatrical comic idyll – was conservative and placed emphasis on traditional, family values, i.e. had a distinctive Romeic character, *Epitheorisi* stood out for its progressive and liberated nature. The most obvious influence of *Epitheorisi* on the Greek musical is in the grand finale (it is not accidental that the final number in some musicals is performed on stage) at which *Epitheorisi* and the Greek film musical reach their peak; in both genres, the final number is similar in terms of the settings, costumes and choreography (Papadimitriou, 2006:82).

Indicatively, in the finale of *Girls for Kissing* and *Rendezvous on Air* the similarities are striking: dances in cabaret style, bouzouki taverns with Sirtaki tunes, women dressed in leotards and feathers and men in black costumes, all descending a grand staircase one by one. In the former film, as well as in many of Dalianides' musicals, there is a definite reference to operetta, which was largely appropriated by post-war *Epitheorisi* (Papadimitriou, 2006: 83). In *Mermaids and Magkes* the finale takes place in a bouzouki tavern where the Hasapiko, Arabic dances, and French cabaret style tunes, mingle to produce a harmonious ending among the strikingly different (musical) worlds. In the finale of *Something that Burns*, staged as a new number in the narrative, men dance to a Sirtaki as women in leotards wear huge necklaces with strings of

beads, a distinctive accessory of the Rebetes (figure 9). Generally, Greek film musicals' endings mark a celebration of westernisation and, at the same time, ridicule and industrialise traditional Greek music and clothes in the name of modernisation.



Figure 9: Women wearing huge necklaces with string of beads in grand finale (Something that Burns, 1963, 1:42:31)

The Greek film musical celebrates the Hellenic identity and constitutes the only film genre in Greek Cinema in which the Hellenic identity dominates over the Romeic. One of the striking differences, which results from the genre's uniqueness, is the way in which gender is represented. As described above in a number of examples, the Greek film musical overtly rejects tradition and instead advocates the western lifestyle, promoting modernisation and women's emancipation. As a result, gender representation in Greek musicals is distinctly dissimilar to the form commonly found in Greek Cinema. An overview of these stereotypical ways in which gender is represented in Greek Cinema is presented in the following section.

2.3 Gender in Greek Cinema

In general, up until the 1960s, gender inequity was more than just apparent in Greek Cinema. For the purpose of this thesis I give an overview of

gender in Greek Cinema by reviewing the typical ways in which men and women are represented in the most popular film genres – melodrama, comedy and foustanella.

The most distinct difference between the gender roles attributed in the most popular genres – melodramas and comedies – is that the female leads engage in typically passive roles whereas the male leads take on active ones. In melodramas, the woman is quite often either a heroine mother who sacrifices herself for her child and would do whatever it takes, even sin, for his/her sake (e.g. *I Sinned for my Child* (*Αμάρτησα για το Παιδί μου*, 1950), *My Child I have not Sinned* (*Παιδί μου δεν Αμάρτησα*, 1964)). Another common stereotype is that of a regretful sinner or prostitute who was led astray and has found the ‘right’ path again (e.g. *Agnes of the Port* (*Η Αγνή του Λιμανιού*, 1951), *The Red Lanterns* (*Τα Κόκκινα Φανάρια*, 1963)). In scripts in which the woman is coupled with a man, she appears as a wretched woman who “has suffered from ill fortune repeatedly and she reacts by crying” (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:172). This excessively passive role of the female heroine is juxtaposed to the male role. Also unlucky in his fate, the male protagonist – unlike his female partner – does not resort to crying and merely wishing for things to be turned around. Instead, the personification of “King of Melodrama” and “the Man of the People” (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:172), Nikos Xanthopoulos does not give up. Gifted enough to make the Greek people identify with him, Xanthopoulos is always presented as the kind-hearted, honest, lower class Greek who takes destiny into his own hands (an issue also discussed in 2.1 *Greek Cinema and primacy of the Romeic*).

Similar gender stereotypes occur in Greek comedies, only in different contexts, the most popular of which relate to the issue of marriage. The male and female stances towards marriage in these films are a clear indication of the social status of each. In general, marriage is the ultimate goal of every woman, particularly those of low social class; rarely do women appear indifferent to marriage. On the other hand, a man who resists marriage is excused unless he is financially secure, in which case everyone conspires against him to make him marry (Delveroudi, 2004:196,200,205). In relation to this, Delveroudi claims that in these films the image of the ‘proper’ man is a polygamous one. Thus,

women face incredible difficulties in persuading their loved ones to be devoted to them exclusively (2004:203). Two of the most important comedy actresses, Georgia Vasiliadou and Rena Vlahopoulou, commonly play the role of the unmarried sister who needs to marry (particularly before her brothers may have the right to do so, for example, Vlahopoulou in *Some Like it Cold* (*Μερικοί το Προτιμούν Κρύο*, 1962)) and of the old maid who eventually finds a groom (for example, Vasiliadou in *Goal at Love* (*Γκολ στον Έρωτα*, 1954) and *The Beauty of Athens* (*Ωραία των Αθηνών*, 1954)).

Since the primary purpose of marriage is for the couple to have children, unavoidably the stereotyped role of the woman-mother is well established throughout Greek comedy as well as in Greek Cinema in its entirety. As a result, the right of a married woman to work is often questioned and/or denied. Any woman who works does so from necessity and does not appear more independent than the others; as soon as an alternative solution appears – almost always marriage – the woman quits her job (Delveroudi, 2004:329). Even in the 1970s, female labour “is treated as something necessary yet temporary” (Nikolaidou, see Delveroudi, 2004:329). Maria Paradisi, in her article on the representation of women in Greek Comedy (1993), compares *Modern Cinderella* (*Μοντέρνα Σταχτοπούτα*, 1965) to *Jenny-Jenny* (*Τζένη-Τζένη*, 1966), with the actress Jenny Karezi starring in both films. Employing binary oppositions such as male/female, career/marriage, virginity/sexual freedom and positive/negative role models, Paradisi notes that in both films the heroines’ fixedness on a successful career disappears as soon as they are given the opportunity to excel as successful wives and mothers next to their beloved man. What is more, in Greek films successful business women appear to have problematic emotional and personal lives: being incapable of feeling ‘like a woman’, even losing their femininity (Kartalou, 2000; Delveroudi, 2004). Katerina in *Modern Cinderella*, for example, claims that she is not a woman but a machine and does not respond to the congratulatory comments that she works “like a man”. In addition, executive director Lila in *Miss Director* (*Δεσποινίς Διευθνήτριάς*, 1964) says she feels like everyone in the office views her as having a beard.

The female model is accepted only when it does not stand in any way against the male interest, especially when it comes to labour. As Paradisi maintains, the model of the ideal female appears as “the dynamic virgin who combines purity with impressive femininity and manages to defeat her rival in a triumph of ‘good’ over ‘evil’ ” (1993:198). Interestingly, in films in which the female seems superior to her male counterpart and reverses the limits of her gender, generally, this does not result in a challenge to the traditional role of women; instead, the female’s eventual submission to her ‘proper’ position suggested by many films’ conclusions signify her “ultimate assimilation in the patriarchal order” (Paradisi, 1993:198). What is more, females who resiliently resist the dictates of the patriarchal society (as Stella in *Stella*) are defeated eventually as a punishment for their refusal to subordinate to the traditional social models; the man-woman power equilibrium is rarely distorted in Greek Cinema.

In foustanella films, gender attributes and power imbalance are stressed even more frequently. This is mainly due to the producers’ efforts to portray the Greek rural society of the nineteenth century, assigning the traditional male-female roles to the heroes. As a result, the male appears as the active, courageous warrior who fights for his country and his family, whereas the female counterpart supports his fight not by engaging in the war but by staying at home taking care of their children, praying for his safe return. Thus, in the foustanella films, the traditional stereotypes of the male-provider and the female-nurturer stand out triumphant.

The stereotypical male and female roles in Greek Cinema are apparent in melodrama and comedy, the dominant film genres in which the Romeic identity prevails. One of the principal factors in reinforcement of the Romeic identity in Greek Cinema is the employment of the musical genre Rebetiko. As I discuss later in this chapter, Rebetiko and its affiliation with the Romeic identity greatly contribute to the representation of gender in Greek films. Prior to this, I provide a short overview of Rebetiko’s use in Greek Cinema.

2.4 Rebetiko and Greek Cinema

From the middle of the 1950s and throughout the 1960s, the distinctively Romeic musical genre Rebetiko was an indispensable part of Greek melodramas and comedies, which, as mentioned next (see 2.5.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*), were cultural mediators of the Romeic identity. This was largely due to the remarkable increase in the popularity of the genre during this specific period and its dominance over the other musical genres (Delveroudi, 2004:317). Rebetiko's presence in films underscored the Romeic culture's supremacy in Greek Cinema. Apart from the film musicals which, as stated earlier, extensively used the Rebetiko and the bouzouki, almost every production of the period, particularly melodramas and comedies featured musical intermezzos, a large majority of which were in the Rebetiko idiom and/or included the bouzouki (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:233).

Rebetiko made its first, emphatic, appearance in 1955 in the landmark production *Stella* (first case study). The film's composer and an enthusiast of Rebetiko, Manos Hadjidakis, employed orchestral pieces by Rebetiko's greatest composer, Vasilis Tsitsanis, as well as composing the legendary songs "In the Bouzoukia of Paradise" ("Στου Παραδείσου τα Μπουζούκια") and "Love, you've become a two-edged knife" ("Αγάπη που γίνεσαι δίκωπο μαχαίρι") in the Rebetiko idiom. Five years later (1960) the same composer won the Oscar for 'Best Song in Film' with the song "The Children of Piraeus" ("Τα Παιδιά του Πειραιά") in *Never on Sunday* (second case study). The composer incorporated the bouzouki almost throughout the film's musical score and had the renowned bouzouki player, Giorgos Zambetas, as a performer.

Rebetiko's popularity encouraged producers to 'recruit' prominent Rebetiko personalities to perform live in many films' musical intermezzos. Indicatively, during the period of 1948-1962, no less than sixty-five films featured Rebetika songs and appearances (Maniatis, 2004). Trademark appearances are those of Tsitsanis, who performed in *From Jerusalem with Love* (*Από τα Ιεροσόλυμα με Αγάπη*, 1967), and an unexpected performance from one of Rebetiko's obscure yet celebrated figures, Giannis Papaioannou, in *Parents' Sins* (*Αμαρτίες Γονέων*, 1963). What is more, bouzouki virtuoso Manolis Hiotis performs live in numerous Greek film musicals and in various

musical genres – tsa-tsa, rumba, etc. – serving the producers’ purpose of projecting a Greekness that incorporates both worlds – the Romeic and Hellenic (as discussed above in 2.2 *The Greek film musical: A Hellenic territory*).

2.5 Rebetiko: The definitive Romeic music

Rebetiko constitutes one of the most controversial musical genres of the twentieth century worldwide. To a large extent, the ambiguity and dispute which characterises the discourse around Rebetiko arises from the genre’s relation to the Romeic culture. In essence, the controversy around Rebetiko is not only quite similar to, but also derives from, the debate concerning Greek national identity. And as the discussion concerning the Romeic and the Hellenic identities still exists, so too the prejudice and debate concerning the genre is alive and well today. A concise look at Rebetiko as a musical genre as well as a review of its historical background is essential for the comprehension of the genre’s association with the Romeic culture. Moreover, an examination of the social domain of Rebetiko and the gender relations within it will greatly enhance the reader’s understanding concerning the use of Rebetiko in Greek Cinema particularly in terms of the representation of gender.

Rebetiko is a form of Greek urban popular song. It has its roots in the geographical area of modern Greece and Smyrna and took its name from the *Rebetes* (*Ρεμπέτες*). The exact date of the first appearance of the *Rebetis* (*Ρεμπέτης*, singular for *Rebetes*) in Greek society has yet to be historically authenticated but it is generally accepted that it is related to the emergence of the first large urban centres in the late nineteenth century. The primary venues of Rebetiko were the prison and the so-called *tekés*, the hashish-smoking dives of the Rebetes (Petropoulos, 1990). The Minor Asia catastrophe in 1922 proved to be Rebetiko’s turning point, since the repatriated refugees, who joined the Rebetes, brought with them their own music which raised the genre to another level. Subsequently, Rebetiko increased in popularity among the Greek people, and despite the Rebetes’ persecution by the authorities throughout the first half of the twentieth century, it reached its apogee in the 1940s. Moreover, the genre’s popularity among the lower social groups of Greek urban society caused it to intertwine with the Romeic identity and contributed to Rebetiko’s

development as a trademark musical genre. The principal instruments of Rebetiko are the *bouzouki* (μπουζούκι) and the *baglamas* (μπαγλαμάς), with the former constituting Greece's current ethnic symbol. The Rebetiko's domain was characterised by its firm patriarchal rules and codes of behaviour since, for the most part of its history – at least up to 1930 – the genre was played and listened to exclusively by men.

2.5.1 The Rebetis and Rebetiko

2.5.1.1 Origin and definition of the Rebetes

With the establishment of the modern Greek State in 1832, the new state's economy underwent a major transition, becoming urban rather than rurally based. This led to a massive move of the population towards the large cities.⁶⁴ Industrialization and population growth also affected the sea ports, especially Thessalonica which was a rail terminal and trading outlet for the landlocked countries of the Balkans. Poverty, the miserable living conditions, as well as the repressive nature of the government were the primary factors which led to the creation of underprivileged social groups. One of these groups was the *Rebetes*.

The association of the Rebetes and Rebetiko with the Romeic identity is formed immediately after the establishment of the Greek state and it is directly related with the early days of the Rebetes. One of the groups that largely contributed to the war of independence (1821 – 1830), was the Greek guerrillas who called themselves *kleftes* (κλέφτες lit. thieves). The *kleftes*, who lived and organised themselves in the mountains, act as the embodiment of Hellenic valour (Herzfeld, 2007:60), reminiscent of their ancient ancestors who fought for freedom and justice, and are an indispensable feature of mountain adventure foustanella films (see 2.1 *Greek Cinema and primacy of the Romeic*). However, after the establishment of the Greek state, a group of these fighters continued to bear arms, only this time they were not directed against the Turkish enemy but against the representatives of the new state (Herzfeld, 2007:60). This discontented group fanatically resented the way in which the cause for

⁶⁴ Indicatively, Athens, in 1834 (the year it became the capital of the newly formed Greek state) had a population of a mere 10,000. By 1920 it had grown to 285,000 (Emery, 1999).

independence had progressed; the sovereignty for which they had fought ended up being controlled by foreign powers.⁶⁵ Ultimately, kleftes, along with the disillusioned anonymous fighters who were promised that there would be work when the war ended, joined the Rebetes (Petropoulos, 1990). The Rebetes' association with the Romeic identity was greatly enhanced due to the serious problem that some of these fighters posed to the representatives of law and order and more generally to "the proponents of ideological Hellenism" (Herzfeld, 2007:60) by frequently performing acts of brigandage; these fighters – members of the Rebetes, undermined the concept of the heroic Hellene who fights only for his country and his loved ones.

In the Athens of 1890, the dropout brotherhood of the Rebetes was at its apogee. They constituted a peculiar social phenomenon and their prosecution comprised one of the top priorities of Greek police. An indication of the widespread phenomenon of the Rebetis is the fact that in around 1900, galantý show *Karagiozis* – symbol of the Romeic – included the Rebetis among its characters (see 2.1 *Greek Cinema and primacy of the Romeic*).⁶⁶

The numerous definitions of the word *Rebetis* add to the ambiguity that characterises the genre. In the context of the songs of Rebetiko throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the Rebetis typically signifies the heroic type of bon viveur, the kind-hearted man and pleasure-seeker who looks down on conventional domestic life, is indifferent to money making and high social status and uses fantasy to forget dreary reality (Gauntlett, 2001). Moreover, the term *Rebetis* refers to plebeian down-and-outs or anyone hanging out in taverns, underground coffee shops and in any other place that bouzouki music is played. Stathis Gauntlett (2001) writes that the Rebetis is characterised by a certain

⁶⁵ Odhisseas Androutsos, one of the most renowned and heroic personalities – fighter for the Greek cause, belongs in this group. Yet another typical example of the paradoxical co-existence of the two identities in modern Greek reality is the fact that although Androutsos was an "archenemy of the political establishment" and to an extent of the Hellenic idiosyncrasy, his portrait wearing a Classical helmet appears on schoolroom posters until today (Herzfeld, 2007:60).

⁶⁶ The Rebetis's name in *Karagiozis* was *Stavrakkas* (Σταύρακκας). *Karagiozis* constantly renewed its characters and was largely inspired by the prevailing social conditions.

degree of disobedience and insubordination. For Gauntlett, the Rebetis is essentially the antonym of a responsible and law-abiding, family man.⁶⁷

As far as the etymology of the word is concerned, the majority of musicologists seem to agree that the most likely derivation is from the old Turkish word *rebet*, meaning ‘outlaw’, ‘of the gutter’ (Gauntlett, 2001).⁶⁸ Notably, *Rebetiko* is not the only term used to refer to the music of the Rebetes. It is suggested that the term *Rebetiko* was not established until Elias Petropoulos used it in *Rebetika songs (Ρεμπέτικα τραγούδια)* – the first book ever written on the genre (1968). Other terms used for the songs of the Rebetes are: *magkika* (from the Greek word *magkas*), *mortika*, *seretika*, *tsahpinika*, *vlamika* and *koutsavakika* (Gauntlett, 2001). In the so called Rebetika, the noun *Rebetis* refers to the man with the leading role and it usually has the same use/meaning as the word *magkas* (μάγκας). The terms *Rebetiko* and *Rebetis* do not appear in Rebetika songs until 1935, while according to Ole Smith (1991), it is certain that Rebetiko made its first public appearance as a musical term among Greeks in the United States, where it appeared in print in 1926.

2.5.1.2 Origin and growth of Rebetiko

Rebetiko has its origins in oral tradition. Its genesis is located primarily in Smyrna, where a great number of Greeks lived up until 1922, most of them in prosperity. According to Petropoulos (1990), the history of Rebetiko starts during the second half of the nineteenth century with the *mourmourika* (μουρμούρικα, ‘muttering’ songs), created by the so-called *mourmouridhes* (μουρμούριδες, mutterers) in prison and in Turkish-style coffee-shops/hashish dens, the *tekés*. The *mourmourika* were essentially improvised musical phrases

⁶⁷ In Babiniotis’ dictionary of Modern Greek (1998) - Greek language’s most highly regarded dictionary - the Rebetis primarily refers to a person who follows “a subversive way of life, has a disobedient and non conventional attitude and is frequently related with the underworld, participating in illegal activities”. For Babiniotis, the fact that the Rebetis can also mean the composer and/or performer of Rebetika songs has a secondary meaning.

⁶⁸ Others believe that the word comes from the also Turkish *rebet asker*, which means ‘rebel’. This seems to concur with another view which claims that the term derives from the Serb word *rebenòk* which also means ‘rebel’. Finally, some musicologists argue that the word *Rebetis* comes from the Turkish word *harabati* which means ‘immoral’, ‘drifter’, ‘drunkard’ (Gauntlett, 2001).

and had no specified composer or poet.⁶⁹ The context of the *mourmourika* was based in what later proved to be the ongoing, principal issues of concern for the *Rebetes*: bitterness from social injustice, poverty, prison and love. Moreover, the principal instruments used in early *Rebetiko* songs remain the same throughout the genre's history: *bouzouki* and *baglamas*. Within this generic urban song, the distinctive style, that later came to be known as *Rebetiko*, began to emerge.

The Asia Minor catastrophe proved to be decisive for the evolution of *Rebetiko*. The central cause was the *Great Idea* - the irredentist vision of a restoration of a Great Greece on both sides of the Aegean that would incorporate territories with Greek populations outside the borders of the initially small Greek State. The Great Idea had been in existence ever since the establishment of the Greek state in 1832 and played a major role in Greek politics. The recovery of Constantinople for Christendom and the re-establishment of the universal Christian Byzantine Empire were deeply rooted in Greek religious consciousness. However, incorrect political and military tactics, as well as the absence of any substantial support from European powers, led to humiliating setbacks and to the disorderly retreat of the Greeks from Asia Minor. The Greek-Turkish War (1919-1922) ended with the Treaty of Lausanne (July 24, 1923) which arranged for the mutual exchange of Greek and Turkish populations; one and a half million Anatolian Greek refugees suddenly poured into the cities of the small Greek state and inflated the problems of the urban poor to breaking point.⁷⁰ The effect of these forced migrations was to shatter the social and economic structures of Greece. There was no housing to accommodate the newcomers nor any substantial health or education provision. On top of this, the incoming refugees suffered from the widespread unemployment and faced racism from Greek society. The newly arrived migrants were organised into large slum communities and shanty towns which

⁶⁹ The mutterers crooned in quiet, hoarse voices, unforced, one after the other, each singer adding a verse which often bore no relation to the previous verse; a song often went on for hours. There was no refrain, and the melody was simple and easy (Petropoulos, 1990).

⁷⁰ There was a two-way population transfer, agreed under the terms of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne: Greek-speaking Turks from the present entity of Greece were shipped en masse to Turkey, and Greeks from what is now Turkey were shipped to Greece (many of them in the face of murder, rape and torture at the hands of the Turks, intent on repeating their massacre of the Armenians).

grew up around the big cities – Athens, Piraeus and Thessalonica. Life in the ghettos was characterised by poverty, unemployment, homelessness, police oppression, social deprivation, prostitution, criminality and drugs (Emery, 1990).

Under these tough living conditions in the large urban ghettos, a group with an urban sub-culture held sway - the *magkes* (μάγκες).⁷¹ Their only livelihood was petty crime, smuggling and odd jobs (Emery, 1990). In early Rebetiko which, as already mentioned, dealt with issues of social injustice, prison and love, the magkes found their musical means of expression and added to it songs on the themes of police oppression, criminality and drugs.

The subject matter of Rebetiko can be categorised into two main themes: the underground life of the cities, and its associated hashish smoking and use of drugs, violence, theft, smuggling, the black market, prostitution, vagrancy and imprisonment; and love affairs and their associated confessions, betrayals, denials and adultery (Gauntlett, 2001). In essence, Rebetiko reflects the contradictory scenery of the Rebetes' way of life which, in turn, echoes part of the people's discontent with the social model of the period. A distinct trait of most of the songs is the element of protest, although it is a vague, indirect protest (Petropoulos, 1990) since the Rebetes never dared to confront directly well-established social principles nor did they aim for high office.⁷² It is no surprise that Rebetiko is often described as the 'Greek urban blues', stressing its similarities with the blues songs of the North American countryside and how these developed into 'urban blues' when black labour-power was drawn into jobs in the cities.

Unavoidably, the dynamics of Rebetiko were transformed utterly by the arrival of the Asia Minor (Anatolian) refugees of 1922. When they were driven

⁷¹ The nearest English equivalent to the term *magkas* is wide boy, or spiv. The culture of the *magkes* was so underworld that even Greeks disagree about what they were. Generally, they were twilight characters living on the edge of the law. Many of them spoke their own street dialect (*koutsavakika*) and dressed with a streetwise swagger (hats, spats, suits). They were involved in the petty crimes of the ghettos, often carrying knives. At night they gathered in hashish dens to hear the new music that by the turn of the century had transformed the bouzouki into a symbol of their urban pride.

⁷² When Andreas Papandreou, leader of the Socialist Party PASOK proposed that the greatest Rebetiko composer Vassilis Tsitsanis stand for Parliament, the Rebetis replied: "My good Andreas, I am a Rebetis, not a politician" (documentary Alpha Greek Channel – "Time Machine", 2007)

out of Asia Minor, the refugees transplanted their musical culture onto the Greek mainland; it was a very distinct musical culture produced by the untroubled interaction of the refugees with a medley of nations and cultures - Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Slavs, Hebrews, Albanians and Greeks of Albanian descent. The musician refugees were not just semi-skilled amateurs or street musicians: they were, like most of the other refugees, in contrast to the Greeks of the host country, quite sophisticated; many were highly educated, and could read and compose music. Living on the periphery of the new society in poverty and degradation, they sought relief in an Ottoman institution, the *tekés*, where the music played was quite different from what they were used to. Consequently, their clarinets, violins, *santouria* (hammer dulcimers) and *kanonakia* (zithers) vied with the bouzouki for the attention of the urban poor. With their Greek-Oriental culture being very distinct from that of the Greek mainland, the refugees experienced an identity crisis. The extreme intolerance with which the inhospitable community in Greece treated them, in regarding them as immigrants, placed upon the refugees a psychological pressure to view themselves as just as fully Greek as their hosts. By recording their music the refugees strongly asserted their culture and it proved to be the only outlet for the preservation of their Greek Oriental identity (Pappas, 1999). Indeed, the refugees' music initially prevailed over the less sophisticated existing form of Rebetiko and set the basis for the first school of Rebetiko, the *Smyrna* school (Emery, 1999).

The *Smyrna* school (1922-1930) underscores Rebetiko's link to the East. It is also called *Café Aman* style, having songs with distinctly oriental melodies from Minor Asia, particularly from Smyrna, known as *amanedhes* (*αμανέδες*). *Café Aman* was a musical coffee shop where middle-class Greeks would hang out and was quite popular in the urban centres of Minor Asia – Constantinople and Smyrna.⁷³ These mournful laments, the *amanedhes*, were often sung by women, fine examples being those of Rosa Askenazi (died in 1981) and Rita Abatzi (died in 1969). *Amanedhes* were accompanied by a small Turkish-style

⁷³ Its name derives from the old Turkish coffee shops in which two or three singers would improvise melodic phrases in a form of dialogue; trying to gain some time in order to think of the next verse and respond to their fellow singer, the singers would mournfully sing the characteristic ritual refrain of *aman-aman* (mercy-mercy, alas).

band, playing violin, *santouri* (dulcimer) and *ud* (stringed instrument, ancestor of the European lute).⁷⁴ Unfortunately for the refugees, preference for their music lasted for only a decade, since the Smyrna school was eventually overshadowed by the mainstream Rebetiko of the *Piraeus* school.

The Piraeus school, based in the sprawling urban port area serving Athens, was very different from its predecessor, not only in terms of the instruments used but also with regard to the music's character. The violin, the *santouri* and the *ud* gave way entirely to the *bouzouki* and *baglamas*. A typical Rebetiko orchestra of that period consisted of two – three *bouzoukia* (pl. for *bouzouki*) in the principal melodic role (usually playing in thirds or sixths), a *baglamas* supporting the harmony and rhythm and a guitar playing the bass and chords. The rhythm could be reinforced either by a percussion player or the singer, mainly with the use of a tambourine. As a genre, Rebetiko became more akin to a form of dance music - based on the *Hasapiko* (*Χασάπικο*) and the *Zeibekiko* (*Ζειμπέκικο*), rather than the oriental *Tsifteteli* (*Τσιφτετέλι*). In contrast to the Smyrna school, the voices were rougher and deeper (Petropoulos, 1990). Another distinctive change with the Piraeus school was the introduction of the Western tonal system into the music: the Western major and minor scales entered Rebetiko alongside the oriental modes used in the Smyrna period (Emery, 1999). Moreover, this period is typified by songs of Rebetiko written by named composers.⁷⁵

Rebetiko is a unique musical genre, not only in terms of the adverse social conditions under which it originated and evolved, but also due to its popularity among the Greek people. Rebetiko became the means of expression for the majority of Greek people, who lived in poverty and depression, and became the Romeic's definitive musical trademark. Imperative for the comprehension of Rebetiko's use in the thesis' three case studies is an understanding of the genre's correlation to the Romeic identity, which I will examine next.

⁷⁴ This style is still to be found in the *rai* music of Algeria (Petropoulos, 1990).

⁷⁵ Marcos Vamvakaris recorded the first ever recordings of *bouzouki* in Greece in 1932, while around 1930 the first Greek recordings were made by "His Master's Voice", "Columbia" and "Odeon" companies in London and Leipzig (Emery, 1990).

2.5.2 Rebetiko and the Romeic

To a large extent, the cultural traits of Rebetiko and the Romeic are in essence the same: Rebetiko's proximity to the Byzantine tradition and psalms (its scales are used in the Byzantine psalms, known as *dromi* (δρόμοι)), Rebetiko's eastern origin and features discussed in the previous section (café aman, instruments, etc.), the genre's subject matter dealing with the real and the everyday as well as the overall mentality and idiosyncrasies of the Rebetes. The majority of musicologists agree that Rebetiko is an authentic popular urban song which expresses every single aspect of urban life (Vlisides, 2004:209). Most importantly, the genre's vast popularity among the Greeks, even today, is a testimony of the fact that the genre has always satisfied and expressed the musical tastes and worries of Greek people and is the style that most closely expresses the Romeic spirit. Rebetiko has been directly associated with the Romeic since the 1930s, when the genre's popularity was increasing. One of the genre's many polemicists, Nikos Georgakalos (1935), admitted that the majority of the songs satisfy the 'Romeic tastes', while an anonymous reporter, in his assessment of Rebetiko, stated that it constituted the "most popular songs of the Greek people, made from their lives, their worries and yearnings" (1936). What is more, among Fermor's sixty-four categories based on the different behaviours and attitudes of the Romios and the Hellene (Fermor, 1991:166), four of these refer to Rebetiko. Specifically, Fermor points out that the Romios has a "psychosis with amanedhes" and "very melancholic monotonous tunes in an eastern minor tone (slow, eastern and sad songs)". Moreover, according to Fermor, the Romios is also obsessed with songs and dances of Rebetiko as well as with the *kompologhi* (κομπολόγι, lit. string of beads), an indispensable accessory that the Rebetis would always hold in his hands. On the other hand, according to Fermor, the Hellene detests amanedhes and songs of Rebetiko as he sees them as "alien and barbaric relics" and overtly prefers listening to Western music.

The support for Rebetiko was not catholic. As the Romeic identity composed a major threat to the other prevailing cultural identity, for the supporters of the Hellenic, Rebetiko constituted a "sacrilegious otherness, an anachronistic survival of a past that needs to be eradicated" (Vlisides, 2004:65).

Among the arbiters of morality and cultural values was dictator Ioannis Metaxas (ruled Greece as Prime Minister, 1936-1941), a fanatical follower of the Hellenic ideal who wanted to cleanse the nation of anything not purely 'Greek'. For Metaxas, Rebetiko was essentially "annoying cultural filth" and he claimed that the cultural identity of the Greek nation could not tolerate the survival and the thread of any pre-existent 'Eastern' cultural tradition (Vlisides, 2004:25). Moreover, Rebetiko offended his belief in a "Third Hellenic Civilization" (a concept based on Hitler's Third Reich) that would draw its character from the folk culture of Greece (Holst, 2001). Hence, as a musical form, Rebetiko was banned by the Metaxas dictatorship in 1936, whilst the Rebetes were often arrested for singing and listening to their music – an attempt by the dictatorial authority to satisfy the middle and upper social classes, who had held a contemptuous attitude towards the Rebetes and their songs ever since the early days of their presence in Greek society (Gauntlett, 2001). Metaxas also banned the amanedhes, probably as a response to a similar ban placed on them by Turkey's ruler Kemal Ataturk.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the censorship law imposed by Metaxas in 1936, required all recorded material to be screened by government officials, whilst hashish songs and, indeed, much else considered 'dangerous' by the authorities, were effectively suppressed from 1936 until the late 1940s. Accordingly, Rebetes musicians became targets for arrest and victimisation by the authorities. Tekédhes (pl. for tekés) were frequently raided, and if people were caught singing songs of Rebetiko (or indeed playing the bouzouki) they were likely to be taken for dissolute hash-smokers and shipped off to internal exile. The ill-famed bouzouki became a symbol of evil and unlawfulness and mere possession of this instrument could result in trouble.⁷⁷

Other, less prominent Hellenic supporters also considered Rebetiko non Greek and "contaminated" music (Herzfeld, 2007:35). For example, a Greek journalist under the pseudonym Megas, mourned the 'degradation' of folk music and poetic traditions "to the level of Rebetiko", which "was an

⁷⁶ As with the Metaxas ban, Ataturk's was part of a general attempt to westernise Turkey, and de-emphasise its 'oriental' character (Holst, 2001).

⁷⁷ As famous bouzouki player, Michalis Genitsaris, declared, "the instrument that later was adored by kings, if you carried it back then it meant you were scum, the worst person in the world" (Kaloudas, 1998:160).

undesirable left-over of the Turkish domination” (1958). Another Greek journalist, with the pseudonym Romeos, claimed that “the bouzouki is to blame for reversing a tradition without being able to replace it: it was an instrument of musical perversion” (1980). Moreover, songs of Rebetiko were assessed, among others, as the “zenith of the Eastern vulgarity” which entertains the low social classes (Vlisides, 2004:16), “a rancid musical sewer in which the Greek people unpredictably crawl” (Spanoudi, 1938), while the amanedhes were characterised as “ghastly Eastern songs” (newspaper *Tharros*, 12/1/1935). Instead, the bourgeois found amusement in the music of the Italian cantatas, the popular European Waltz, the Tangos and the light revues, in other words, Western music that was compatible with the Hellenic vision and its congruence with the values of the West.

On the other hand, Rebetiko had ardent supporters who strongly maintained the purity and Greekness of the genre. Manolis Kalomiris emphatically stated that Greece had nothing to fear from Eastern music, which comes from Byzantine and ancient Greek music (1954). What is more, Kalomiris attacked Tangos and Foxtrots, stating that *these* are the real danger since it is they that defame Greek people’s taste and not the songs of Rebetiko with their “unrefined, popular colour”. The preference for Rebetiko rather than more acceptable musical genres was also expressed by music critic Alexandra Lalaoui. The critic declared that “people prefer the secular, genuine singers who have nothing to do with the musical stave and at times neither with the alphabet to the light song which bears the gloss of the European education” (1940).

Metaxas’ hostile social policy brought changes to the nation’s social structure and the music was to change with it. Maragkakis (1973) suggested that the bourgeois persistence in fighting Rebetiko and preventing its spread had to do with the parallel changes soon to occur in the social structure of the country. In the 1940s, Rebetiko gradually continued to move away from the narrow grounds of the prison and the tekédhes and increasingly attracted wider social groups which, due to the oppressive government and the poor living conditions, could relate to Rebetiko’s thematic material. At the same time, the Greek folk song, which had been nationally popular for centuries, product of an

agriculture-based economy, could no longer express the Greeks' urban social concerns and way of life. The resulting vacuum, caused by massive urbanisation, offered Rebetiko an opportunity to spread nationally.⁷⁸ During the period 1941 – 44, the German occupation spread starvation, horror and despair, eliminating the country's social structure and turning the majority of Greek people, regardless of their social class, into a deprived mass. Kostas Tachtsis (see Holst, 1977:202-211), suggested a possible explanation for the transformation of Rebetiko songs from a narrow local phenomenon to a broadly popular style. He affirms that the extreme privations of the German Occupation reduced class differences:

There were no more hungry and satisfied, there were no masters and slaves, everyone was a slave, everyone was hungry, all felt the need to bewail their fate... All the houses suddenly became hashish dens, not literally of course, but in character. Everywhere the spirit of lawlessness prevailed, of constant fear, misery and death
(Tachtsis, 1964)

Hence, Rebetiko could now express more than ever the misery and anguish all of those that were oppressed, this time on a Pan-Hellenic scale. According to Tachtsis, the economic effects of the war were only one of the reasons for Rebetiko's phenomenal popularity. Another reason was the Germans' promotion of alternative styles of music. 'Foreign' music – compositions based on Argentine Tangos, Viennese Waltzes, and other forms of 'light music' (Holst, 1977) – continued to be written and listened to by the more 'conformist' elements among the Greeks, and were encouraged by the occupying forces so as to give an impression of false optimism to the population of Athens and other cities. However, in contrast to the optimism of the 'light music' promoted by the occupying forces, Rebetiko songs offered the suffering population songs

⁷⁸ As it turned out, Rebetiko failed to be killed off by the censorship initially imposed by Metaxas, but instead could be heard in musical coffee shops and taverns all over Athens, Piraeus and Thessalonica.

that dealt with reality. Famous Greek composer Mikis Theodorakis, in an interview with journalist Vasilis Vasilikos, asserted that the ordinary folk loved and sang Turkish music, with Turkish words, and Rebetiko songs, with words in Greek, “because these gentle melodies were more in tune with their bitter experiences of life...” (Vasilikos,1993). Rebetiko’s indissoluble relation with reality and the everyday epitomises the genre’s direct association with the Romeic. Instead, the repulsion of the majority of Greeks to the imposed foreign music could well be interpreted as an indirect, yet clear rejection of the Hellenic notion at the time.

The strong debates on Rebetiko emerged during the Greek Civil War (1945-1949) when perceptions of national identity were intensely polarised. Emery (1999) argues that through the various periods of flag-waving Greek nationalism, Rebetiko has proved a reference point and a symbol of subversion and change for nonconforming spirits. The deracinated, urban Rebetiko, with the unconventional slang, the shady milieu and anti-authoritarian lyrics, was a thorn in the side of nationalists (backed by the Americans), who were fervent supporters of the Hellenic identity. Accordingly, for the same reasons Rebetiko was attractive to modernist writers and intellectuals who opposed narrow nationalism, as well as to working class urban Greeks, many of whom were sympathetic to the Greek Communist Party’s campaign for a more equal distribution of resources (Holst, 2001).⁷⁹ Rebetiko also became the expressive vehicle for all the groups who were part of Greece’s complex admixture of cultural elements, most of which are easily traced within the Romeic culture. The relation of Greece’s music and culture is also reflected in the thoughts of Gail Holst who, trying to grasp the logic behind the Greeks’ musical preferences, interprets the overt turning to Rebetiko as a natural reaction incurred by society’s growing tendency to assimilate the Eastern Romeic culture rather than the ‘imported’ Hellenic one:

⁷⁹ Before long, a clear symbolic opposition emerged between the Hellenes and the Communists (Herzfeld, 2007:141). Communism was regarded by the Hellenist stream of folklore research (aka ‘patriotic’ or ‘archaeological’, Herzfeld:11) as the treacherous “foreign dogma”, leading the Hellenists to frequently brand the Greek Communists as ‘Bulgarians’. Within the left-wing party, the views on Rebetiko were conflicting. One side, focusing on its subject matters, stigmatised and disdained the genre whereas the other considered it as a genuine popular cultural form which could truly depict the Greek social reality (Vlisidhis, 2004:156).

Changes in the attitude of the Greeks to their popular music, like changes in other aspects of Greek culture, reflect the country's peculiar position between eastern Orthodox Christianity and the western European secular tradition, or more simply, between Asia Minor and Europe.

(Holst, 1977)

The first public sign of Rebetiko's emergence into respectability came on the 31st January, 1949, in the Art Theatre in Athens, towards the end of the civil war (1944 – 1949). One of the country's leading modern composers, Manos Hadjidakis, made a famous speech defending Rebetiko and claiming it to be an integral part of Greek musical heritage. Hadjidakis, although a conservative, stirred the stale waters of Athenian society by explicitly supporting Rebetiko's authenticity as well as recognising its Romeic character. He passionately spoke for the genre's 'pure' Greekness, claiming it is an authentic music of the people, an art form of high musical quality and nobility.⁸⁰ He also pointed out that the taste for Rebetiko united all classes of Greeks, right across a geographic spectrum that had previously been regionally divided. It was - and this was a poignant issue in a country divided by civil war - a unifying force between all Greeks. The other great post-war composer of Greek music, Mikis Theodorakis, agreed with Hadjidakis on the unifying force of Rebetiko, arguing that Rebetiko during the civil war "had a fundamental importance for people's stability of mind. It was that element that united us" (from Vasilikos, 1993).

With the end of the civil war, Rebetiko was 'discovered'. It came out of its low-life backwaters and entered the Athenian night clubs frequented by rich people. Rebetiko's coming into fashion resulted in the irrevocable change of the genre's character. The bouzouki went electric with the use of amplification via

⁸⁰ In line with this standpoint is Kounadis' notion that Rebetiko is a sign of cultural growth in Greece and a fine example of Greek civilisation. In his book *In memory of attracting times* (2000) Kounadis argues that the dominant view, which associated Rebetiko with dropout groups and drugs, is flawed and with no substantial support since it was expressed without any research or study. Instead, with the use of interviews and live testimonies, he supports the genre's Greekness and artistic value.

magnets and amplifiers, and the players began to perform not for the low classes as they used to but for the upper bourgeoisie. Moreover, after 1960, Greek music became internationally famous through Hadjidakis' song "The children of Piraeus" and the bouzouki was transformed into a tourist attraction, with the places where Rebetiko was played quickly becoming among the most expensive night clubs in Greece. With Rebetiko owing its birth and whole existence to the Greek people's need to express bitterness towards injustice, poverty, love and prison, in other words, towards the crude reality that defines the Romeic identity, the songs' immediacy seemed unconvincing in a world of prosperity.⁸¹

However, despite claims that Rebetiko had died, or even Papadimitriou's remark that the only element left from Rebetiko is the bouzouki (2000:86), Rebetiko never ceased to exist. As Gauntlett maintains, "Rebetiko, like all genres, is an evolving product which is constantly being negotiated and reformed in the context of its realisation; it is not a platonic kind" (2001:35). Indeed, many 'post' Rebetiko groups which have emerged throughout the late twentieth century as well as early twenty-first century testify to the genre's evolution.⁸² Moreover, although not as popular as it used to be, Rebetiko, through its evolution, can also claim that the Romeic identity encapsulated in the genre is not entirely abandoned or forgotten.

2.5.3 Rebetiko: a patriarchal domain

Rebetiko's patriarchal norms largely contribute to the gender representation present in the thesis' case studies. In this final section of the chapter I will focus on the social domain of Rebetiko, with emphasis on its extremely patriarchal nature. This particular trait of Rebetiko indicates the current place of women in the Athenian society, especially across the lower class spectrum which is identified with the Romeic identity.

⁸¹ As Hadjidakis said in one of his comments on Rebetiko: "Our times are difficult and our song, which is not made from people of fugue and counterpoint, in order to care about 'reformation' and pretentious inventions, speaks the truth and nothing but the truth" (1989:10).

⁸² These groups perform old Rebetika as well as their own compositions in the Rebetiko idiom. The undersigned is a member of a group of this kind, *Neorebetes*.

2.5.3.1 *The Rebetis and patriarchy*

Although patriarchy characterised the Greek urban lower classes for centuries, Rebetiko is notorious for its extreme and austere patriarchal norms. First, a typical Rebetis is considered a sexually aggressive male. Quite significantly, this is the stereotypical description of a man in the Romeic culture as given by Herzfeld's definition of the Romeic (1986:20). Moreover, it is a common view that the Rebetis was a phallocrat (Petropoulos, 1991). He was never with the same woman permanently because it was well-known that he had contempt for women: a slang word the Rebetis used for women was *psolothikara* (*ψωλοθίκαρα*, lit. pocket for phallus). Furthermore, in order to denigrate someone, the Rebetis would often attempt to effeminise him; in other words, he would belittle the adversary by giving him the female (passive) role since symbolic sexual relations were organised with reference to the archetype of male dominance (Tzakis, 2003).⁸³

2.5.3.2 *The image of woman in song*

The most representative reflection of the Rebetes' patriarchal world is found in the Rebetiko songs. Within this context, the male dominance in the social domain of Rebetiko is striking. In terms of the Rebetis' relationship with a woman, in many songs it seems that the Rebetis' loving feeling is more important than the actual beloved (Petropoulos, 1990).⁸⁴ Indeed, a great number of Rebetiko's lyrics clearly exclude women from the inner cosmogony of the Rebetis. The only exception to this is the *mother*. For the Rebetis, the mother is the only woman in his life who is worthy of his trust and the only one who truly loves and cares for him.

⁸³ In relation to this, from the narrations and the songs of the Rebetes, it is possible to derive the image of a world divided into male and female sectors with the male sector being dominant. Transferring the relationship of two male adversaries into the man-woman model, in other words, in a domain where the relationship between the dominant and the dominated is taken for granted, in the world of Rebetiko that is something natural and consequently nonnegotiable (Tzakis, 2003).

⁸⁴ Based on this, Maragkakis claims that in the songs the woman does not appear as a complete form of existence; instead, he suggests that, since the Rebetis' loving feeling is not realised via the beloved but through his need for love, the woman turns into a fairy, and an imperative need for substance. According to Maragkakis, in the Rebetis' idiosyncratic world, the woman will never hear the man's bitterness and complaints; a Rebetis depends on his fellow Rebetes for this (1973).

Bearing in mind the Rebetis' need for love, it is unsurprising that the prominent image of woman found in the songs is the one of the *woman-lover*. This is most frequently characterised by infidelity which is considered non-conventional behaviour (Spiridaki, 2003). Therefore, in the songs one can find parallelisation of the woman with female symbols of infidelity ("But a woman like Eve has infidelity in her veins"⁸⁵) as well as adultery accusations ("you have no God and run along with everyone"⁸⁶). Moreover, her behaviour is incomprehensible and unacceptable for the Rebetis ("I haven't found a woman who acts the way she should"⁸⁷). The image of the woman/lover in the songs is also a source of evil and is treated as what many musicologists refer to as the threatening *Other* (e.g. McClary, 1991). Accordingly, in many songs the woman's representation refers to traditional stereotypes which associate woman with the devil/snake, evil, filth, unfaithfulness ("Alas him who trusts... woman's words"⁸⁸) and weakness (Tzakis, 2003). One of her basic 'weapons' is seduction which ultimately results in the Rebetis' destruction ("She bewitches me, she ruins me"⁸⁹, "you bewitch all hearts... and you wither me"⁹⁰).

As one would expect, the woman in Rebetiko songs represents the 'weak' gender, with the double meaning of the term – both as physical weakness and moral disadvantage. Quite often the woman is treated as the Rebetis' possession; obtaining pleasure from the admiration of the other Rebetes, the Rebetis dresses his woman with noticeable accessories to attract the Rebetes' attention ("I'll buy her pumps and golden shoes to glow whenever she dances and make all magkes dizzy"⁹¹).

Interestingly, the way a woman feels and behaves is also found in male dominated Rebetiko, but only as described by male lyricists. Therefore, the woman appears to recognise the male's 'superiority' and holds a subservient stance towards him. According to the Rebetes' lyrics, the woman wants her man to be a *levantis* (*λεβέντης* lit. dashing, upstanding man, see Chapter Three),

⁸⁵ St.Tzaounatos, "She remains a woman". All the songs' translations were made by the undersigned.

⁸⁶ M.Chrysafakis, "Go away heartless and mean woman".

⁸⁷ B. Papazoglou, "Now I begin to understand you".

⁸⁸ Anonymous, "We took a vow with God", in E.Petropoulos, *Rebetika Songs*.

⁸⁹ P.Tountas, "Persephone".

⁹⁰ P.Tountas, "My Maritsa".

⁹¹ V.Tsitsanis. "Tonight you thrive".

a working man and a frequent habitué of the tavern. She also wants him to be rough with her and appears willing, with apparent masochism, to forgive him any unfaithful acts (Maragkakis, 1973). In other words, the Rebetes describe women's thoughts and desires not in their true perspective but in the way that best fits into their patriarchal world.

The Rebetes' tendency to ignore reality and depict an ideal world is very distinct in the so-called *Oriental* Rebetiko songs. As discussed earlier, the popularity of the songs of the Smyrna period dropped dramatically due to the emergence of the Piraeus school and the strong trend towards the westernisation of Rebetiko that followed (see 2.5.1.2 *Origin and Growth of Rebetiko*).⁹² In the few songs of this kind which emerged during the Piraeus period, the East attains a mythical dimension and becomes exoticised (Holst, 2001), denoting all those things desired by the Rebetis which are forbidden to him in the real world. Accordingly, in the Oriental songs of Rebetiko the Rebetis desires Arabian women, distinguished by their exotic features ("lustful, amorous Arabian girls"⁹³) who dance erotic dances ("Turkish women dance gypsy tsifteteli"⁹⁴), ("a magic dance from an exotic body"⁹⁵) and longs to smoke drugs ("To smoke nargilehs with turkish hashish"⁹⁶), listening to his favourite instrument, the bouzouki. According to Holst, the Oriental songs of Rebetiko comprise the Rebetis' paradise in which the Orient becomes identical with female eroticism (2001).

Aims of the case studies

In a cultural discourse such as cinema, the two versions of Greek national identity are apparent. For most of its history, Greek Cinema projects clear traits of the Romeic identity, particularly through its most prominent genres – melodrama and comedy. The Greek film musical is the only example of a film genre that celebrates the Hellenic identity in Greek Cinema. Rebetiko,

⁹² In the 1940s there was a general trend: most songs were written in major and minor keys, a second voice was often added to the soloist's vocal line, and a piano or accordion joined the ensembles.

⁹³ Tsitsanis, V. "Arabian Girls".

⁹⁴ Dhelias, A. "In the Baths of Constantinople".

⁹⁵ Kaldaras, A. "A song from Algiers".

⁹⁶ Dhelias, A. "In the Baths of Constantinople".

both as a musical and social domain, with its austere patriarchal norms reflected in the songs, is one of the principal contributors to the establishment of the Romeic identity in films. In the three case studies that follow, I attempt to show the ways in which the two Greek identities are represented in film. Moreover, I argue that the identities' personification in the films through the male and female heroes, as well as the patriarchal Rebetiko's association to the Romeic, contribute to gender representation in Greek Cinema.

CHAPTER THREE

Case Study: *Stella*

Introduction

To date, *Stella* remains one of the landmark films in the history of Greek Cinematography, having enjoyed impressive financial success; according to box office receipts, in the year of its release alone *Stella* sold 134,142 tickets, making it the best-selling film of that year (Soldatos, 1999, 4th Vol:203). The well-received performances of the talented new actors who were to become legends of Greek Cinema (Melina Mercouri, Giorgos Fountas, Alekos Alexandrakis), as well as the popularity of the film's celebrated makers contributed greatly to the film's success: director Michalis Kakogiannis, script-writer Iakovos Kambanellis who wrote the theatrical play *Stella with the Red Gloves* (*Στέλλα με τα Κόκκινα Γάντια*) on which the film is based, composer Manos Hadjidakis and painter Yiannis Tsarouchis were all considered prominent figures in the Greek cultural scene of the time. However, what makes *Stella* really stand out from other Greek films is its subject matter; *Stella* is the first Greek film that explicitly deals with issues of gender relations and woman's position in Greek society.

Stella (Melina Mercouri) is a beautiful, free-spirited singer who defies the rules of conventional morality by refusing to marry. Determined to keep her independence, she discards her timid bourgeois lover Alekos (Alekos Alexandrakis) and begins a torrid affair with Miltos (George Foundas), a brash football hero and macho figure from Crete who satisfies her hunger for unbridled passion. Soon after, however, when Miltos forces a marriage proposal upon her, *Stella* faces losing her freedom. When she is obligated to choose, *Stella* submits to Miltos' demand and accepts his marriage proposal although she knows that she will regret it. On the day of the marriage *Stella* flees with Antonis, a young college student, and leaves Miltos waiting for her at the church. With his honour irrevocably blemished, and refusing to live in shame, Miltos meets *Stella* in the square the next morning and kills her with a knife.

The basic purpose of this chapter is to show the ways in which the two identities are expressed in *Stella* primarily through the association of femininity

(personified by Stella) with modernity and the Hellenic, and masculinity (personified by Miltos) with tradition and the Romeic, and to depict the ensuing gender representations in the film. Through the juxtaposition of modernity with tradition the two identities are contrasted and gender issues are set forth. On one hand, the concept of tradition becomes apparent through Rebetiko's long-established patriarchal values and morals as well as the musical codes inscribed in the genre which feature almost throughout the entire score. Tradition is enhanced even more through the use of folk music and dances. Tradition is personified in the film by the character Miltos who comes from a rural background but is raised within the urban domain of Rebetiko. With Miltos presented in the film as the absolute symbol of manliness, the association of tradition with masculinity is stressed. On the other hand, the theme of modernity is linked with femininity through Stella. The heroine's struggle for modernity is substantiated primarily through her musical actions towards Rebetiko's rigid behavioural codes and her lust for new ideas and new music. The heroes' interactions and behaviours reflect their disposition towards each tendency as well as the two contrasting notions of Greek national identity. Each of the film's two dominant themes, tradition and modernity, and their associations with the protagonists and the different versions of national identity are examined in the next sections.

3.1 Tradition, masculinity and the Romeic in *Stella*

In this section I examine tradition – one of the two dominant themes in *Stella* and the main feature of the Romeic identity as it features in this film. I argue that tradition largely contributes to the representation of gender in the film and I examine tradition's close correlation with the Romeic identity and with Rebetiko as well as with masculinity through its personification in Miltos. I particularly focus on the reflection in the film of the Romeic mentality through Rebetiko mores, and I examine the association of Miltos with tradition, particularly through the use of Greek folk music.

3.1.1 Rebetiko mores in the film

3.1.1.1 The beginning of the film

Fundamental Rebetiko attributes, which explicitly exhibit gender power relations within the social sphere, are evident from the beginning of the film in the first two scenes. In the opening credits, the film begins with medium shots of the character Alekos walking through the streets of Athens' old town. The rocky streets and the walls made of clay are manifestations of the old and the traditional. On his way to "Paradise" – the Rebetiko tavern where most of the film's action takes place – the music starts with the bouzouki performing a *taximi*, a musical improvisation which was quite popular during the Smyrna period of Rebetiko (00:01). The use of the bouzouki solo in the opening scene essentially sets the ground for the film's musical genre and social domain – Rebetiko. The degree of identification of Rebetiko with the bouzouki in people's perception is reflected in the use of the term 'bouzoukotragouda' (μπουζουκοτραγούδα, lit. bouzouki songs) or simply, 'bouzoukia', to refer to Rebetiko (Gauntlett, 2001). For the Rebetes, the bouzouki is more than the principal instrument which accompanies their activities. It is a sacred symbol which renders them worthy of being runaways as well as subjecting them to hardships which lead to 'holiness'. In the world of Rebetiko, the bouzouki turns into a symbol, an idea worth suffering for. The lyrics of the song "At the Angels' Bouzoukia" testify to the perpetuation of the notion that the bouzouki (and the "holy songs") makes the Rebetes ("bums") worthy of veneration. Moreover, the notion that "the Angels' bouzoukia", a place where bouzoukia are heard nowadays, feels "like the Byzantine days" once again reaffirms Rebetiko's association with the Byzantine era and the Romeic identity.

At nights, some friends of ours called 'bums'...
they play and they get hurt and sing for us...
Some strangers at nights, lifers for many years
Chant some holy songs...
We go to the Angels' bouzoukia

It seems like the Byzantine days...⁹⁷

Being Rebetiko's ultimate symbol, the bouzouki signifies the poor and uneducated classes of the urban population (see 2.5.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*). The performing instrument perfectly matches the setting in the introductory scene. In an old neighbourhood with wrecked houses, two women peer from behind wooden doors, waiting for the play to begin (figure 10, 00:06). A group of the opposite sex (four men and a boy) sit outside; one of them holds Rebetiko's other archetypal instrument – the guitar (figure 11, 00:12). From the start, characteristic attributes of the patriarchal domain of Rebetiko are set up: the male sex, with representatives of different ages, appears in the public domain, unaccompanied by women; instead, women are confined to the domestic sphere. Women's access to the public domain, in this case watching the play which is about to start, is achieved only by sneaking through the door. This separation of male and female spheres fully aligns with Eisenstein's observation that there is a "consistency with which societies have organised themselves into public realms considered male and private realms considered female" (1981:22).



Figures 10 and 11: Women sneaking through the door while men play and sing Rebetiko outside (*Stella*, 1955, 0:00:06; 0:00:12)

⁹⁷ "At the Angels' Bouzoukia", Music: Nikolopoulos, C. Lyrics: Eleftheriou, M. (1993). A Zeibekiko song-tribute to the Rebetes.

Mores associated with gender in the Rebetiko domain become well-established in the following scene. As Alekos enters the Rebetiko tavern “Paradise”, the principal value of the Rebetiko domain is highlighted: “Long live manliness!” (Ζήτω η Λεβεντιά!) (03:00). The lyrics of the song “At the bouzoukia of Paradise” reaffirm the patriarchal nature of the film’s domain:

Verse

The stars have come out
and the girls in white
stroll around in the old neighbourhood
The palikaria drop the dice
and they meet at the street’s corner”

Chorus

You’ll take me to the bouzoukia of Paradise...
...to make me say “I love you”.

Textually, the verse of the song presents a representative sample of gendered mores in the Rebetiko domain. The Rebetes are honourably accredited as “palikaria”, plural for *palikari* (παλικάρι), the name given to Greek soldiers during the war of independence. *Palikari* is used commonly in rural Greece and is associated with bravery, stoutness and masculinity. In the Rebetiko domain, the respective adjective was *magkas*. The accreditation of the Rebetes as ‘palikaria’ sets aside Rebetiko’s urban character and brings the domain closer to the rural and hence to tradition. According to the song’s lyrics, the Rebetes – palikaria – leave the coffee-shops (where women were not allowed) and their backgammon games to go and meet the free-spirited girls who, dressed in white as a symbol of difference, ‘the other’, have come looking for them. They spend the night amusing themselves with Rebetiko’s prime form of entertainment – music, at “the bouzoukia of Paradise”. The song’s lyrics promote free love (“to make me say I love you”), much preferred by the Rebetes over the idea of marriage. Not surprisingly, in the scene, a great majority of the customers are

men accompanied by single women, thus depicting the male domination of the place and Rebetiko in general.

3.1.1.2 *The Zeibekiko*

The Rebetiko rhythm *Zeibekiko* plays a significant role in the representation of gender in the film. The dance, as shown in the scenes discussed later on, is associated with social mores which constitute *Zeibekiko* as the stronghold of the Rebetiko domain. It is, along with the bouzouki, the Rebetiko's symbol, the ultimate banner of masculinity. Once this is established in the film, Stella's singing of a *Zeibekiko* song towards the end of the film appears an even more daring act of non-conformity and – for the Rebetes – a definite insult.

The *Zeibekiko* took its name from the *Zeibekidhes* (*Ζειμπέκηδες*) (Turkish *Zeybek*, plural *Zeybekler*), a race from Minor Asia perceived to be insubordinate. *Zeibekidhes* were professional warriors. In order to get rid of their annoying presence, the sultans would either move them out of their regions or indulge them by offering them high-ranking posts (Petropoulos, 1990). The lyrics of the *Zeibekiko* “The *Zeibekidhes*' Feast” (“*Η Γιορτή των Ζειμπέκηδων*”)⁹⁸ are quite illustrative of the fighters' aggressiveness (having “swords in their hands and knives in the teeth”) as well as of the veneration they received for their manliness (“we salute you men”, “*palikaria*”).

Oh, oh *palikaria* one by one,
with embroidered breeches
Oh, oh with golden buttons
Oh, oh they have swords in their hands
and knives in their teeth
Oh, oh we salute you men⁹⁹

The *Zeibekiko* is a solo dance traditionally for men. As Tzakis states, “the quest in the *Zeibekiko* is the exhibition of *magkia* and the recognition of

⁹⁸ Composer: Kaldaras, A.

⁹⁹ *The Zeibekides' feast*, Music: Kaldaras, A., Lyrics: Pythagoras (1972).

manliness” (2003:54). It has no specific steps but only improvised movements (9/8 meter). It is a ‘vaguely threatening’ dance and refers to “aggressive attitudes, cruelty, bullying, defiance, violence, the ability to dominate”, in other words *magkia* (Tzakis, 2003:54). Through the Zeibekiko, the Rebetis can express his feelings – usually pain and anguish – with dignity and in a manly manner. Haritopoulos suggests that this is the reason it is strictly forbidden for a woman to dance a Zeibekiko: expressing her pain in public would bring unbearable insult for the man who accompanies her. If the man is not in a position to relieve her pain, this degrades his manhood, something he cannot tolerate (Haritopoulos, 2008:15). Stressing the Zeibekikos’ diachronic value and the need of the Greek man to express himself in this way, Haritopoulos claims that the Zeibekiko will only be lost if injustice, love and pain are gone, or if men discover some other way to express their feelings with such beauty and nobility (2008).

The patriarchal rules that characterise Zeibekiko and, by and large, a woman’s behaviour in the world of Rebetiko, are rigid and are set early in the film. We are introduced to the Zeibekiko’s sound and its rules in all their glory at “The Paradise” tavern (19:05). The Rebetiko orchestra performs an instrumental Zeibekiko written by a Rebetiko legend, Vassilis Tsitsanis, whose music is heard several times in the film.¹⁰⁰ A Rebetis dances to the piece (figure 12) which he assumingly pre-ordered since, before playing a Zeibekiko, the musicians would announce its ‘owner’ (Petropoulos, 1990). As is apparent from the dancer in the film, Rebetes used individually choreographed dance steps. It should also be stressed that the Zeibekiko was not a dance by which to satiate oneself; for the Rebetes a Zeibekiko dance was something sacred, a ritual. If the Rebetis were to dance, he would only dance once. If anyone were to interrupt a Rebetis dancing to his Zeibekiko it would be like dicing with death (Petropoulos, 1990).¹⁰¹ Abiding by the Rebetiko code in the tavern, Stella sits at

¹⁰⁰ ‘Orchestra’ is the name used in the film for a Rebetiko ensemble. (“My tavern has an orchestra”, Maria, 09:01).

¹⁰¹ These mores seem to be deeply rooted in the Greek society since they were applied several years later, in a real-life case in 1973. Nikos Koemtzis stabbed to death three policemen and injured six others because they provocatively danced during the Zeibekiko dance that his younger brother had ordered. Because of the Zeibekiko rules, Koemtzis spent twenty-three years in prison for manslaughter. Quite symbolically, the Zeibekiko’s title was “The prisons’

a nearby table, watches, listens, even smokes in a manly manner as a true magkissa but nothing more than that; no woman is allowed to be involved in the dance/ritual (figure 13).



Figure 12: A Rebetis dances the Zeibekiko at the tavern

Figure 13: Stella and Anneta watch the dance and stay uninvolved

(Stella, 1955, 0:19:11; 0:19:22)

The Zeibekiko's status as the ultimate 'men's dance' within the Rebetiko domain is exemplified in the scene where Maria sings the Zeibekiko "The thirteenth of the month" ("Ο μήνας έχει δεκατρείς", 20:56). This is the only occasion in the film that we see close shots of the customers' tables being occupied only by men. The only obvious female presence in the scene is the singer; Maria, however, is essentially behaving like a male Rebetis, with masculine voice, looks and behaviour (particularly her smoking style). Indicatively, film scholar Gianna Athanasatou comments that Maria is "a man and a woman at the same time" (2001:183).

In this scene, the male reign over the Zeibekiko becomes even more evident via the dance figures vigorously performed by the Rebetis on stage. In various figures, the dancer acts as if he is drunk, going back and forth in his

echo" ("Αντιλαλούν οι Φυλακές"), M.Vamvakaris. Nowadays, trying to make a living, he sells his book *The long Zeibekiko* in front of the buildings of the Athenian courts. His story was turned into a film *The Order* (*Η Παραγγελιά*, 1980).

dizziness; this is very typical of Rebetiko dancing. In other figures, the dancer stretches his arms and appears like a bird since, in a Zeibekiko dance, the dancer mimes the eagle which circles whilst trying to spot its prey.¹⁰² This has clear reference in the lyrics of the song the Rebetis dances to: “Cursed day, you’ve done me in you’ve clipped my wings”. The theme of the eagle/bird is also used earlier in the film, in the song “An eagle was sitting” at the traditional folk wedding in Kastella (see 3.1.2.2 *The folk dances*). In *Stella*, whether it is in the rural domain or in the Rebetiko domain via the Zeibekiko, man is always portrayed as the almighty hunter (eagle), whereas woman is his defenceless, hopeless prey (the partridge in “An eagle was sitting”). Stella watches the Rebetis’ dance with noticeable admiration (19:18), even jealousy, since her sex deprives her of the privilege of dancing the Zeibekiko and thus expressing herself with movement in the Rebetiko domain.

The use of the Zeibekiko for both the themes associated with the bourgeois Alekos not only establishes the dance’s association with the male sex but it also denotes that the particular rhythm does not discriminate according to social status but only according to sex. Alekos’ themes are first performed in the opening scene where all themes used in the film are presented by the composer.

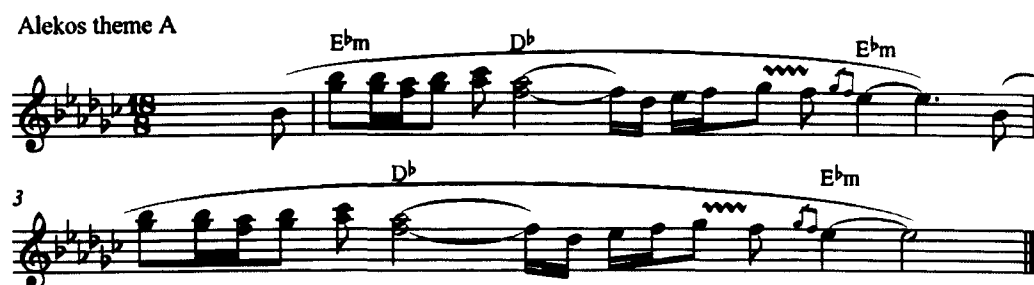


Figure 14: Alekos’ theme A

¹⁰² Two of the film’s makers acknowledge the Zeibekiko’s magnitude. According to Hadjidakis, Zeibekiko is the ‘cleanest’ contemporary Greek rhythm, the most dramatic in context and the hardest to dance. He argues that a good Zeibekiko dancer is he who employs great imagination and adequate flexibility so as not to leave a single bouzouki note without ‘interpreting’ it with a corresponding move of his body (1949). Praising the dance’s uniqueness, famous Greek painter Tsarouchis (the film’s designer) characterised Zeibekiko as «the dance of all dances» (1963).

Alekos theme B

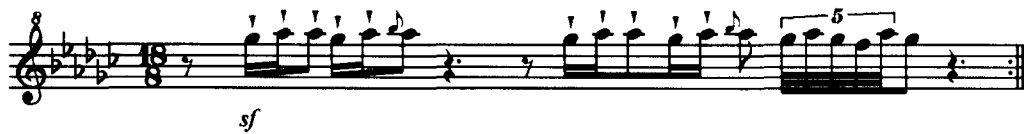


Figure 15: Alekos' theme B

Alekos' theme is binary, both in form as well as in instrumentation – not without reason. The intensely melodic motive of theme A (figure 14, 00:55) – performed in turn by the bouzouki and the piano – emphasises the character's sensitivity and gentleness. On the other hand, the brusque, tense part, performed with staccato – theme B (figure 15, 01:15) – can be interpreted as betraying the hero's emotional instability and nervous disorder. Alekos' sensitivity, a stereotyped feminine characteristic, is contrasted with his 'cruelty', a masculine trait associated with the low class Rebetis and the palikari. Despite Alekos' bourgeois origins, he cannot but yield to the exciting sound of the bouzouki music and the Zeibekiko. Unsurprisingly, the principal melodic line of both of Alekos' themes is performed by the bouzouki. The way Alekos' binary trait is portrayed musically is congruent with the views of the ancient Greek philosophers and particularly those of Aristides Quintilianus (3rd century A.D.), who asserted in his *De Musica* that rhythm is inherently male and melody is female (1983).

Notably, the diachronic use of the Zeibekiko rhythm and its associated codes reinforces the assertion, principally made by McClary (1991) that the characteristic traits of masculinity in music – at least, in Western civilization – have changed little since the seventeenth century. According to McClary, many codes used to represent gender have stayed the same: in keeping with the fact that social conditions in relation to gender have themselves largely remained unchanged. Evidence of this can be found in theoretical and perceptual studies. For example, Tagg's study (1989) on meanings associated with television theme tunes reveals similar associations between musical materials and gendered meanings to those found in the Zeibekiko. The study showed that tunes associated with masculinity by the study's participants tended to have more rhythmically and intervallically active bass lines and greater rhythmic

irregularity. The latter attribute is perhaps Zeibekiko's most recognisable trait, while the vast majority of Zeibekiko songs written in the Rebetiko era are particularly active in the bass line (here performed by the guitar).

The Rebetiko mores, with their austere patriarchal character, are well embedded in the film right from the first scenes and through the Rebetiko's 'dance of all dances', the Zeibekiko, gender roles are clearly attributed in the film. They are further established through the male protagonist's personification of tradition and the Romeic identity discussed next.

3.1.2 Miltos, tradition and Rebetiko

3.1.2.1 Miltos – a leventis and a magkas

Miltos is the definite male symbol in the film and explicitly expresses the world of tradition and the Romeic. Miltos comes from the traditional rural domain. His mother stresses the fact that she comes from Crete, a place whose inhabitants' sense of honour and pride is well-known in all of Greece.¹⁰³ The traditional folk dances performed at the wedding to which Miltos is invited (obviously as kin to the wedding couple) constitute the primary reference to Miltos' rural background. In addition, being seen for the first time within this environment, he becomes identified with the folk songs as well as with the values of marriage, both distinctive parts of rural tradition. Enjoying everyone's respect, Miltos is considered a leventis since everyone calls him so – "Leventia" (noun for *leventis*, 14:58).¹⁰⁴ With the low angle shot suggesting a hegemonic, manly figure (figure 16), Miltos perfectly matches the model of masculinity commensurate with his rural origins. Fermor classifies *leventia* as one of the characteristic features of the Romios and evocatively gives his own definition of leventia:

[Romios has] Love for leventia, that is the thrust and the flame of youth, the cheerful idiosyncrasy, courage, speed,

¹⁰³ Indicatively, in order to wash away shame the Cretans are often led to commit murder.

¹⁰⁴ *Leventis* comes from the French word levé which means lifted. It is a synonym of palikari in the rural domain.

quick reflexes, good looks, ability to sing and dance,
ability to drink wine have a good time... (1991:170)

Miltos defines *leventis* in the film since he is depicted as having all the above traits of leventia: he is reckless, spontaneous, athletic (a professional football player), handsome, performs Rebetiko dances impressively, and he loves to drink wine.



Figure 16: Miltos' manly look at the wedding
(*Stella*, 1955, 0:15:58)

In the modern urban domain the leventis – the archetype of masculinity in the rural domain – gives way to the *magkas*. Whereas the rural domain is socially organised in relation to blood bonds and paternal ideology, in the urban domain, within the framework of hierarchally organised groups, the *magkas* is in competition with the rest of the *magkes*, seeking distinction and domination. Dionysis Tzakis, in his article “The *magkas*’ world: representations of a good man in the Rebetes’ domain” (2003) argues that in the domain of Rebetiko, the *magkas*’ identity is established via the confirmation of certain values – most often through acts of violent behaviour. According to Tzakis, within the Rebetiko domain, masculinity is expressed through *magkia* (the noun of

magkas), primarily through the use of violence. The more magkas a man is, the greater will be his ability to dominate and, consequently, the level of social status he will enjoy. As a result, the social values of this entirely patriarchal domain are essentially the male 'virtues' – strength, violence and dominance (Tzakis, 2003).

Miltos may not have been living the life of a Rebetis/magkas but he lived in the Rebetes' domain and acted accordingly, matching the stereotypical model of masculinity of Rebetiko. Through extreme actions (he attempts to enter the tavern with his car, threatens to blow up the tavern and bullies the waiters) and disrespectful behaviour towards women (he violently grabs Stella by the arm at the wedding and sexually harasses her in the car), Miltos assumes that the respect and admiration he enjoys within his social surroundings endow him with the right to act in this fashion, to do, as he boasts, "whatever I [as a man] want!" (24:58). Bearing in mind that the magkas is involved with violence and manliness and recalls acts of 'leventis' and of 'palikari', magkas is in fact the heroic model of manliness of the rural domain, redefined in the urban domain. The meaning carried by both terms is all in all the same, with both terms being directly related to manliness (Hadjidakis, 2003). Miltos, for both rural and urban societies, is the archetype of manliness in the Athens of 1955.

Spyridakis maintains that the male's ability to dominate and his recognition as a magkas at the social level are put to the test and are jeopardised when it comes to his relations with women, either as a family member in which case he is often required to defend the family honour or, more frequently, as a lover. In this case, the magkas may come down against disobedience and unfaithfulness (2003). The same applies to Miltos who, behaving as a true magkas, needs to know that the woman he is with will always be his and that she will be eternally faithful to him: "I want people to say you are my wife. This talk about boy-girl relationship brings to mind rows and children who stab each other" (1:01:37). The loss of Miltos' honour – occurring through the humiliation he has suffered by being stood up in church by Stella – meant at the same time the loss of his manliness since, in both the rural and the urban

environment, a woman's infidelity was considered the absolute offence.¹⁰⁵ Rejection meant an insult to the man's egoism as a *magkas* and it denoted inadequate manliness. Moreover, his inability to control his woman betrayed his weakness to dominate in general, with domination being an essential trait of a *magkas*. Once the rejection was disclosed, the level of shame became even greater for Miltos, since the dishonour to his position as a *magkas* forced him to withdraw from the public sphere (Spyridaki, 2003).¹⁰⁶

The violation of the moral code on the woman's part activates against her the use of violence – practices of the traditional rural as well as urban domain. Hadjidakis argues that men/*magkes* remain the dominant group, using violence both as a means of supremacy and as a remedy for female weaknesses (2003). As explained earlier in the thesis (see 2.5.3 *Rebetiko: A patriarchal domain*), for the *Rebetis* the woman is inherently weak – both as physical weakness and moral disadvantage – and prone to infidelity; therefore, he must resort to violence in order to restore order and to prevent her from dishonouring him. Accordingly, restrained by these codes, Miltos had no other option: he should reinstate his masculine strength and pride by eliminating the danger represented by Stella. Despite his love for her, she broke the moral code, and as a result she was the cause of his humiliation and loss of his pride. Pride and honour are cherished by the people living in the domain of *Rebetiko* since, as Tzakis suggests, any man who is not a *magkas* “is nothing” (Tzakis, 2003:44). Aware of the danger – since the murder of adulterers was very common in both rural and urban domains – Stella, wanting to protect young Antonis that fateful morning, urges him to walk away and not to turn around. When Miltos sees his beloved breathing her last breath in his arms, order is restored.

The apparent conflict between Miltos' mother and Stella reflects the relative roles of mother versus mistress in the *Rebetiko* domain. The *mother* is an eminent figure in *Rebetiko*. There is no *Rebetiko* song referring to or dedicated to the *father* figure (Petropoulos, 1990). In songs where the mother

¹⁰⁵ This applies in the traditional societies and social groups of the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean: the social prestige enjoyed depends upon the individual's response to the relevant model of masculinity (Tzakis, 2003).

¹⁰⁶ In the original theatrical script, Miltos did not leave his house for two weeks (1991:90). The lyrics of the *Rebetiko* song “Getting involved with you” are indicative of this: “you have turned me into a bum and I remain sleepless in the back alleys”. Composer: Tsitsanis, V.

and the loved one co-exist, priority is always given to the mother. Accordingly, in *Stella*, the only person that Miltos respects and obeys is his mother: he wanted her blessing to marry Stella; he and his mother decided on the wedding date without consulting Stella and he bought a house with his mother's approval without even discussing the issue with Stella. All these were natural actions for Miltos since for the Rebetes a mother loves her son with self-denial and offers her love unconditionally.

The scene featuring Miltos' mother's confrontation with Stella effectively contrasts the two women (even via the use of costumes – black versus white, respectively) and the different worlds each represents. Stressing that she is a Cretan, Stella's mother-in-law-to-be speaks on behalf of her son the language of patriarchy. She categorically disapproves of Stella working once she gets married for, as she says, "Once a woman gets married her life changes. You'll have your husband, your home, your kids. You'll have to forget all this [her work]" (1:07:42). The fact that these instructions come from a woman suggests that Stella too should follow her example like all the women of Stella's age.¹⁰⁷ For Stella, however, a woman's job should be entirely irrelevant to her relationship and whether she has children or not; this fundamental woman's right was still questioned many years after *Stella*, in melodramas and comedies of Greek Cinema throughout the 1960s (see 2.3 *Gender in Greek Cinema*).

3.1.2.2 *The folk dances*

"An eagle was sitting" – Tsamikos (12:51)

As already mentioned, at the scene of the wedding at Kastella (12:50) Miltos is presented as the ultimate symbol of manliness within the middle and low class strata of Piraeus' society. This is primarily established through inclusion of the folk dances, the *Tsamikos* and the *Gaida*. Furthermore, traditional gender roles seem to be assigned to the male and female heroes of the film through the lyrics of the *Tsamikos* song "An eagle was sitting".

¹⁰⁷ In Kambanellis' original script, Miltos' mother instructs Stella: "God did not create man to be taller and better [than woman] for show, but in wisdom! And in life, let's not pretend, woman is an inferior creature, she does not determine her destiny" (1991:69-70).

An eagle was sitting

The musical score is written on four staves in 2/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a half note G4, and then a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The second staff starts at measure 6 with a C major chord, followed by Dm, C, and Dm. The melody continues with eighth notes: D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, A4, G4. The third staff starts at measure 11 with a G major chord, followed by C, Dm, and G. The melody continues with eighth notes: G4, A4, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The fourth staff starts at measure 16 with a C major chord, followed by Dm, C, and Dm. The melody continues with eighth notes: D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, A4, G4, ending with a quarter rest.

Figure 17: “An eagle was sitting”

Both visually and sonically, *Miltos* is accompanied and effortlessly associated with the *Tsamikos*, performed by gallant dancers on the wedding’s amphitheatric stage. Tzakis, in his essay on folk dances, argues that traditional folk dances – especially those which refer to societies and groups inclined to conflicts – are distinguished by the exhibition of masculinity with the aid of dancing figures. As an example, Tzakis uses the *Tsamikos* (Tzakis, 2003:54).¹⁰⁸ It is traditionally a men’s dance and is the best opportunity for a Greek dancer to show off his acrobatic skills – on many occasions, the leader of the dance improvises, doing huge springs, turns and scissoring with his legs. With the *Tsamikos* considered the most heroic of the traditional Greek folk dances and a definite symbol of manliness, gallantness and Greek pride since the war of Independence, the selection of the *Tsamikos* dance in this scene is not accidental. The low-angle shot of the camera is used by the director to portray the commanding stature of the male dancers. The leader, in particular, has the prestigious role of improvisation, and with the aid of the low-angle shot and the

¹⁰⁸ This dance is probably named after the *Tsames* or the area *Tsamouria* in Epirus, but some say that it is named after the clothes of the *klephtes*, the mountain fighters in the Greek War of Independence (see 1.2 *Greek National identities*). The *klephtes* spread the dance throughout the country so that today it is one of Greece’s most representative dances. The meter is in 3/4, 3/8, or 6/8.

clouds appearing just above his head, resembles a bird heading for the skies (figure 18).



Figure 18: Male dancer in the Tsamikos resembles a bird heading for the skies (*Stella*, 1955, 0:13:34)

Miltos' identification with the Tsamikos is not only due to the intense manly character of the dance and the dashing, aggressive nature of those who dance it, but also to his rural origin. Tsamikos' performance at the wedding denotes simplicity and faith in traditional values (marriage, family, etc.). Miltos is surrounded by family and relatives in the most celebratory family gathering – a wedding. As a result, the Tsamikos lines up against the Hasapiko and particularly the Zeibekiko, in the same way that Stella and Miltos – and their background and values – are opposed. One of Rebetiko's critics, Romeos (1980), juxtaposes the “humiliatingly undisguised eroticism of the Rebetiko song [most probably meaning the Zeibekiko] with the humble harmony of the traditional folk dance *Syrtos*”. The fact that the particular song/dance is written in Dorian mode (D Dorian, figure 17) further emphasises its folklore quality and its disconnection from Rebetiko; Dorian is quite popular in Greek folk music whereas it rarely occurs in Rebetiko (Rebetiko more frequently uses the Ionian, Aeolian and Phrygian modes).

The instrumental version of the Tsamikos song “An eagle was sitting” directly associates the protagonists with specific gender roles.¹⁰⁹ “An eagle was sitting” is a song-symbol of the eternal glory and bravery of the tribe:

An eagle was sitting under the sun and was sunbathing
and was removing the lice from his nails, from his toenails.
‘My beloved nails, my little nails and my toenails
the partridge you have caught, don’t spoil her.
I will put her in a cage, to sing every morning’

The associations of the breeds of bird in the song with the film’s heroes are unmistakable. Miltos, as the dominant patriarchal code has dictated for centuries, has the energetic role of the eagle – the provider, the hunter, who proudly and complacently thinks about his prey. The admiration of the man behind the piano for Miltos confirms it: “He is Miltos, our best hunter!” (15:01) with ‘hunter’ referring to ‘striker’ (of the Olympiakos Piraeus football team) but the term can well be read literally. Once Miltos traces Stella with his eagle look, he goes after her, blocking her way. However, like the eagle in the song, Miltos does not want his ‘prey’ harmed. Later in the film, he claims to Stella that he does not “spoil women” and takes them “as they are” (38:58). Miltos’ conception of the woman’s unruly character, the need to be governed and at the same time be protected, is confirmed in the same scene when he admits to Stella that when he likes a woman it is as if he enters “in a beast’s cage” (38:47), which is where the tsamikos’ eagle wants to have its prey.¹¹⁰

In the Tsamikos song, however, Stella is not represented by a beast, but by a partridge. The Greek partridge – the sweet singer, the graceful wanderer of the world, features in common with Stella – has been celebrated countless times in Greek songs. Stella, with her stunning presence, acts as a threat to the smooth flow of the festivity, attracting all men’s attention. Meaningfully, as prey, the partridge is renowned as a delicious treat. However, in the hunters’ (men’s)

¹⁰⁹ It is performed by the wedding’s orchestra, comprised of a santouri (traditional folk Greek instrument, a dulcimer hit with hammers), a tambourine, a violin, a clarinet and a piano.

¹¹⁰ The conception of the woman’s need to be governed and at the same time be protected is also found in Aeschylus’s *Suppliant Women* (see *Ancient Greek Tragedy and Stella*).

conception, the beloved bird (women) needs to be protected (apart from hunted!).¹¹¹

Gaida (15:20)

In the film the Gaida dance is just as significant as the Tsamikos since, apart from the meanings, the mere use of the dance links the rural domain with the urban Rebetiko. Immediately after the Tsamikos and all its connotations have been presented, the Gaida reaffirms the film's gender roles.



Figure 19: The Gaida dance

The Gaida takes its name from the bagpipe instrument which is usually used to perform the dance's melody. The instrument's usage goes back to ancient Greece (Baines, 1966), a fact that strengthens the link between the ancient and the contemporary tradition via the rural domain. Meaningfully, the dance is primarily performed by men. Marinakis suggests that the dance was used in the past as a preparatory ritual by Greek men before going to war as an exhibition of bravery and prowess (2003).

In the film, the dance is performed in the background while Stella and Miltos argue in the centre of the amphitheatric stage. Miltos has already set his eyes on Stella and, as a true 'hunter', the eagle in the Tsamikos performed earlier, goes after his prey – the partridge. The patriarchal codes of behaviour of his rural origin are apparently not well-mannered: he grasps Stella by the arms, demanding to know where she is going, and boasts that he feels like making Stella stay. Musically, through the use of the Gaida, Miltos' role in the film is

¹¹¹ The irony of this conception is vividly portrayed in the words of Maria Styliarogianni, an editor of a Greek hunters' web site: "These songs are especially dedicated to all the partridge hunters who live to hear her sweet singing in our country's *levantika* (adjective for *levantis*) mountains, who seek her in the skyline and above all respect and protect her!" (Styliarogianni, 2002).

confirmed. After the 'eagle' has spotted his prey, he fights to take hold of it. Stella's resistance and noncompliance forewarn of the war which is about to break out; Miltos, with 'his' Gaida performed and danced around him, feels as if he is already at war. In fact, the constant repetition of the four bar melody (figure 19) which becomes ever more intense due to the tempo increase and the monotonous harmonic support (just the tonic D chord is used), largely contribute to the rise of tension, as if it is a war scene.

Another significant factor of the Gaida is the fact that it is in 2/4 meter, first in a slow and, as in the film, increasingly in a faster tempo. John Pappas, a well-known dance instructor and educator in the USA, argues that the Gaida can be considered as a combination of the Hasapiko and the Hasaposerviko; later on, with the prevalence of Rebetiko, Hasapiko and Hasaposerviko were recognised as two separate dances (1978). The implications behind this regarding the film's meanings are significant. With the Gaida encompassing two of Rebetiko's basic rhythms, the dividing line between folk and Rebetiko and, consequently, the rural and the urban domain of Rebetiko, is becoming less discernible. As a result, the message strongly implied here is that Rebetiko is in essence an evolution of traditional folk music. Accordingly, due to the perpetuation of the film's dances through the centuries and their minor changes through the guise of different names, it seems that this also applies in the film for the codes of the domains with which the dances are associated. Consequently, although Miltos originates from the rural domain, his connections with the patriarchal world and codes of Rebetiko are implied through the use of the dances. The hero, through his behaviour, makes sure of reinforcing this relation.

Whether in the rural or the urban Rebetiko domain, Miltos is the absolute symbol of masculinity in the film; he is both a leventis (rural) and a magkas (Rebetiko). Miltos' association with tradition and its rural roots is achieved through the folk dances performed at the wedding in the film. The dances also contribute to the attribution of gender roles to the film's heroes, roles that conform to the patriarchal traditional society of rural and urban Greece of the time.

3.2 Modernity, femininity and the Hellenic in *Stella*

In this section I examine the film's other dominant theme, modernity, and the ways in which it contributes to gender representation in the film. Apart from constituting the Hellenic identity's most characteristic trait, modernity is essentially directly associated with femininity since it is personified by the film's central heroine, Stella. The heroine does what a typical Greek woman of the time would not: she challenges anything that comes up against her freedom and her own beliefs – Rebetiko and Athenian society's ethical and behavioural codes – and anyone who tries to enforce them. As a result, Stella conveys a strong sense of modernity and subversion in the film. Having already described the narrow patriarchal boundaries of Rebetiko within which Stella is confined, in this section I examine the concept of modernity in Stella from two viewpoints: first, through the character's actions and notions and second, through her musical behaviour. The development of Stella's role in the film as the exotic 'Other' is also analysed since it contributes to the heroine's resistance to conformity and to her celebration of modernity. Finally, I study the ways in which the piano is used in the film, as a symbol of modernity and a medium for contrasting modernity and tradition.

3.2.1 Stella and Rebetiko – the social domain

According to Damianakos (1987), there are two types of women in the domain of Rebetiko: the free woman, known as the *magkissa* (μάγκισσα, female for magkas) or *Rebetissa* (Ρεμπέτισσα), who is extolled by the Rebetes, and the errant woman, the sinner who is denounced.¹¹² Stella explicitly belongs in the first category: whether she dances in front of the male audience or she walks in the street market, Stella verifies her status within the world of Rebetiko; she is hailed and acknowledged by the Rebetes and she is admired – and in some cases envied – by women. However, Stella is not just a female Rebetis and the heroine's relation to the Rebetes is not merely restricted to her singing the Rebetiko. Most importantly, through her attitude, actions, words, even appearance, Stella has all the characteristics of a *male* Rebetis, sharing his way

¹¹² Interestingly, in Hollywood films of the 1940s and 1950s, two corresponding categories of female sexualities prevail – that of the 'virtuous wife' and the 'fallen woman' (Kalinak, 1992).

of life and idiosyncrasies. Therefore, in this section I examine seven features which testify to Stella's identification with the male Rebetis, since this has a predominant role in the subversion of the stereotypical gender attributes as portrayed in films of the period (see 2.3 *Gender in Greek Cinema*). Firm to her beliefs and turning her desires into actions, Stella projects a modern woman who demands equal rights and defies the society's norms, posing a serious threat to the patriarchal order of the Athenian society.

First of all, Stella, as a woman, is presented as a liberated and insubordinate Rebetissa singer, closely related to the characteristics of a male Rebetis. Attempting to prove that a certain Rebetiko singer was truly a Rebetissa, Gauntlett quotes from her biography: "...Lili never conformed to the rules of the society" (2001:145). Moreover, Elias Petropoulos, in an attempt to reveal the magnitude of the Rebetissas' free-spirit and nonconformity, argues that the Rebetissa is the most emancipated woman Greece has ever known (1990).¹¹³ Although Rebetissa could give her favour to whomever she liked erotically (Petropoulos, 1990), she knew how to protect her body and her dignity. A demonstrative image of this kind of Rebetissa is given through the lyrics of the legendary Rebetiko song "Nterbenterissa":¹¹⁴

Magkas go and ask them to tell you who I am
I am a fine woman, Nterbenterissa
who treats men like dice

I am not into loving feelings,
as long as I have a good time
Every night to drink
and have men fight to death over me

Stop arguing how I will be yours

¹¹³ For Petropoulos, in comparison with the Rebetissa, modern feminists are comic figures.

¹¹⁴ Music/lyrics: V. Tsitsanis, recorded in 1949. Tsitsanis' "Nterbenterissa" was used as the main theme for the film "Madame Sousou" (1948), based on the original novel by Dimitris Psathas (Gauntlett, 2001). This is indicative of the fact that Rebetiko was not the only means of promotion for the 'mythical' characters of the Rebetis and the Rebetissa: they also appeared in journalism, in neo-realistic novels and in cinematography.

I made myself clear – I don't fancy useless talking

I was born in taverns and cabarets

Nterbenterissa's traits, as described in the song, align with Stella's. Orphaned since childhood, the heroine makes her living as the principal singer in the tavern "Paradise" ("was born in taverns and cabarets"). She is fiery, spontaneous and owes no obedience to conventional morality ("Stop arguing how I will be yours, I made myself clear – I don't fancy useless talking", "I am not into loving feelings, as long as I have a good time"). Stella is fascinating and attractive yet without being coy.¹¹⁵ Although she is completely broke, she declares "I am not interested in money" (38:18), while Miltos fails to make an impression on her when he proclaims that he "will cover the ground [Stella walks on] with money" (38:21). Like a true Nterbenterissa, all Stella wants is "to sing, dance and have all men at her feet" (09:58) ("I am a fine woman, a Nterbenterissa, who treats men like dice", "I have men fight to the death over me"). Singing was an inseparable part of Stella, since, as for the Rebetis, the song is not a form of entertainment or a detached activity but a way of life.¹¹⁶ As Vergopoulos claims, for the Rebetis, life is only embodied through song and dance (1974). He argues that the Rebetiko has the religious austerity and the spiritual uplift of liturgy; its principal characteristics are 'pathos' and 'cruelty'. On one hand, pathos is portrayed as a passion for life and secures the constant flow of singing and dancing. Cruelty, on the other hand, characterises the antonym of apathy and impassiveness and not the opposite of sensitivity. A Rebetis would not stay indifferent to anything that involved him, especially when matters of honour were at stake. Cruelty, as bravery, is interpreted subjectively, based on a person's but also on a society's ethical values. In a similar manner, Stella is cruel to the men she left in the sense that she could not stay indifferent and impassive to her desires and feelings, but not 'cruel' in the

¹¹⁵ This kind of 'coyness' was quite popular in the 1960s in roles impersonated by actress A.Vougiouklaki (see *Chapter Five*).

¹¹⁶ Indicatively, in the original theatrical script, Stella protests: "He [Miltos] doesn't want me to sing – to exist!" and proclaims: "My songs are *me!*" (Kambanellis, 1991:28,72)

sense Annetta and the others see her.¹¹⁷ Moreover she is criticised for not sticking to one man and for not accepting any of the numerous marriage proposals she has had from various men.

The second way in which Stella is identified with the male Rebetis lies in the fact that in her affair with Miltos the stereotypical gender roles are reversed; *she* acts and feels like a Rebetis in the relationship and essentially she, and not Miltos, is the Rebetis. As a genuine magkas, Stella is unable to handle the situation created by her man and blames herself for not being able to say “no”: “Damn you Stella, why can’t you say no?” (1:02:44). As is apparent in many songs, in the sphere of Rebetiko the woman in the love game is renowned for her magical ability to seduce: “she bewitches me, she ruins me”¹¹⁸, “you bewitch all hearts ...and you wither me”.¹¹⁹ Markedly, in Stella’s case, the same characteristic occurs only in the opposite sex: Stella believes that Miltos “bewitched” her and that *she* had become Miltos’ slave. As a Rebetis who has lost his freedom, Stella feels powerless, “ruined” and “withered”.

The third similarity of Stella with the Rebetis is the fact that her beliefs regarding marriage and work are in line with those of the Rebetis, who generally hated marriage and preferred free love (Petropoulos, 1990). Scholar Kostas Hadjidakis argues that a Rebetis tried to keep his relations within two different spaces, each excluding the other. One of them was the domestic domain of the *house*, i.e. the space of the wife and family. The other one was the public domain of the *street*, the only space where magkia could exist (2003). The more a Rebetis aligned himself to the street, the tenser his relationship with his wife or children became. Stella tries to balance the two but it is impossible. She feels like a Rebetis and as such she belongs entirely in the domain of magkia (the social domain of the magkes), such as the “Paradise” tavern. Marriage for Stella meant her withdrawal from the street, but most importantly meant withdrawal from her work and a move into the house, the family. As Spyridaki argues, “once the woman gets married, any participation in the world of magkia is not well-received” (2003:120,121). This situation

¹¹⁷ Annetta characterises Stella as an “adder”, since in the Rebetiko domain a woman’s beauty and sexuality also bring within them dishonesty and evil (Spyridaki, 2003).

¹¹⁸ “Persephone”, P.Tountas.

¹¹⁹ “My Maritsa”, P.Tountas.

reflects Rebetiko's patriarchal conception which condemns the female existence in a schism of mother vs. whore, family-wedding vs. work-social activity (Athanasatou, 2001). For Stella, however, a woman's job should be entirely irrelevant to the likelihood that she may be married or have children. Later on in the film, Miltos' mother predicts that "those two will either live in Paradise, or one will burn the other in Hell" (1:09:00). With 'Paradise' being also the name of the tavern Stella works at, these lines indirectly, yet clearly, suggest that a conventional life for Stella, deprived from her right to work wherever she wants, would be similar to living in 'Hell'.



Figure 20: Stella 'framed' by the kiosk's magazines

(Stella, 1955, 1:19:03)

The shot of Stella 'framed' by the women's magazines of the time effectively captures Stella's hopelessness and is indicative of the social notions of the time concerning a woman's place in society (figure 20, 1:19:03). Italian magazine *Mani di Fata* (lit. Hands of a Fairy), which is a journal for women focusing on topics such as embroidery and knitting, holds a particularly

prominent place in the shot. This specific issue has a woman on the front page with a title underneath “ΕΠΓΟΧΕΙΠΟ” (lit. embroidery). Embroidery was very popular among Greek women and held a prominent place in the curricula of nineteenth-century and twentieth-century girls’ boarding schools (Bakalaki, 1994:84). To compound this, the shots of men next to Stella and other men passing by, in combination with the fact that no other woman except Stella is present, lay bare the patriarchal world in which Stella lives. This strong impression is made even greater in the next scene by the shot of the priest, holding his umbrella, watching the military parade (figure 21, 1:17:15). The priest represents the Greek Orthodox religion – a fundamental trait of the Romeic identity. In addition the priest acts as a reminder for Stella that the social mores require her to wed Miltos, in fact to be with him before a priest for their wedding at that very moment. The rainy weather reflects Stella’s emotional turmoil and her entrapment in the patriarchal world of the Romeic and the Rebetiko.



Figure 21: The priest represents the Greek Orthodox religion
(*Stella*, 1955, 1:17:15)

However, Stella never belonged to the family/home domain. The fact that there is no mention in the film of any family member of Stella’s (in

contrast with Miltos, Alekos and Anneta, i.e. all the other young heroes of the film) shows that Stella is entirely a person of the street and as such, definitely not of the house.¹²⁰ Moreover, Stella's views and, especially, acts against marriage, differentiate her from the other women in the film. Indicatively, Anneta, although a Rebetiko singer, was not a true Rebetissa. Anneta longs to find a good young man (preferably with a generous dowry), marry him and settle down – in other words, follow the bourgeois way of life. On the contrary, Stella shows contempt for the bourgeois and the whole issue of marriage. This becomes very apparent through her meeting with Alekos' sister (42:02) (which results in Alekos' sister slapping her), and her indifferent response to Alekos' marriage proposal – instead of answering his question she wonders what colour to dye her hair (16:42). For Stella (and in the Rebetes' world in general) adultery is neither a crime nor sin (Petropoulos, 1990) since she feels she can be with anyone at any time if she wants. The Rebetis longed for and praised the magic of the first erotic glance, free love and the joy of desire – the same feelings of sensation that Stella seeks and finds in Antonis. However, for Miltos, Stella's love and admiration are sufficient reasons for marriage and the archetypal coupling demanded faithfulness from the woman.

It is worth mentioning that the noticeable lack of any happy family in the film, in combination with the apparently boring life that Alekos' family leads ("boredom at Patisia", Alekos, 20:20) suggest the emptiness of marriage and family life. Moreover, the youngster's cynical remarks about Miltos "Let's hope that he is not wasted on marriage too!" (1:04:15) possibly disclose the director's stance towards marriage and his conscious attempts to present a progressive view of women, justifying Stella's final choice to escape from marriage.

The fourth similarity of Stella with the Rebetis is the fact that a typical and predictable action of a Rebetis was to quit his woman once he felt his freedom was in danger (Petropoulos, 1990). The scene in which Stella looks in revulsion at her white wedding gown (1:10:25) utterly subverts the

¹²⁰ It should be noted that the presence of women in places where men hang out, as well as the imitation of manly practices and behaviours are acceptable and desirable only if through these actions faith and respect for the Rebetis is confirmed (Hadjidakis, 2003).

conventional scene of a wedding ceremony as the happy ending and puts forward a whole different meaning of wedding symbols. Young Antonis' presence acts like a catalyst to the intense and distressing battle going on inside Stella in the scene. The young man's presence reminds her of her days of freedom which are now threatened by the marriage she is forced to have, and the consequences it will bring; when she finally makes up her mind, her dilemma ends. Once she feels threatened, Stella feels "closed in a cage" (1:14:20), abandons her relationship, and acts as a *magkas*, who, after deserting his girl, moves on to find a new love. The need for escape is also imperative for suffocated Stella. Her escape from reality is, temporarily, realised through singing: "Maria, I can't take it anymore. I need to sing!" (57:53). In the song "Love, you've become a two-edged knife" (57:57) she cannot hide her despair as she sings "I find no solution, I find no cure". As soon as the song ends she seeks to escape once again via *Rebetiko* – via the *Hasaposerviko* dance that immediately follows her *Zeibekiko* song (1:00:35). However, under the fixed and intense gaze of *Miltos*, the *Hasaposerviko* seems to achieve no result. Hopeless and desperate, she resorts to fleeing (1:01:05).

Stella's appearance is the fifth similarity of Stella with the *Rebetis*. The heroine has unambiguous masculine traits, at least in relation to the looks of the other women in the film. In contrast to *Maria*, *Anneta* and *Alekos*' sister, *Stella* has short hair (a boy's cut) with no curls, which was not in keeping with the feminine hairstyle trends in Greece at the time. In addition, early in the film, *Stella* thinks of dyeing her hair red, an act quite extraordinary for the time. Apart from her hairstyle, *Stella* conveys a stereotypically masculine impression with the way she talks and behaves. This is particularly noticeable in the scene where she watches a football match (figure 22, 31:42). *Stella* behaves more aggressively and avidly than any man at the stadium. Moreover, the marked contrast of *Stella*'s attitude with the one of a woman of the same age sitting in front of her, accentuates even more the heroine's extraordinary behaviour in regard to her sex. In front of a principally male audience, being entertained by a traditionally phallogocentric sport, *Stella* acts and feels as if she is among 'equals'.



Figure 22: Stella at the football match
(*Stella*, 1955, 0:31:42)

The sixth element that contributes to the identification of Stella with the Rebetis is the two-edged knife referred to in the Zeibekiko love song “Love, you’ve become a two-edged knife”, sung by Stella towards the end of the film (57:57). The two-edged knife was extremely significant for the magkes and was an inseparable part of a Rebetis, who carried it on him wherever he went (Tzakis, 2003; Petropoulos, 1990). The two-edged knife was used at a ritual in the Ottoman Empire according to which the love-struck man tore his arm with the knife under the balcony of his beloved (Petropoulos, 1990). The ritual passed on to Greece, with the magkas stabbing his heels with the two-edged knife at the end of his Zeibekiko.¹²¹ The hardest and the most admirable dancing figures of Zeibekiko were performed with knives, particularly two-edged knives, as an accessory.¹²² Not surprisingly, a great majority of the Rebetiko songs which mention weapons refer to two-edged knives.¹²³ Zeibekiko’s close relation to two-edged knives is also found in song lyrics

¹²¹ In Crete, even today in some cases men dance armed.

¹²² Other acrobatic figures include dancing with a glass filled with wine on the head, jumping over chairs and lifting a table with the teeth.

¹²³ For example, in “The Koutsavaki” (*To Koutraβάκι*), the magkas is challenged to use his knife: “Magkas, if you want to carry around your knife, you must have the soul, the heart to take it out” (Anonymous).

which associate them with manly actions.¹²⁴ Not accidentally, Stella is tragically killed in ‘Rebetiko style’ – by Miltos’ two-edged knife.

Finally, it should be noted that Stella’s traits – daring, audacity, high self-respect and fervour for life – are in complete contrast to the way female characters were presented in books and films of the time, and, to some extent, to the way they are presented today. In the 1950s, female characters were typically passive compared to active male characters; they engaged in domestic activities and were affectionate, dependent, nurturing, etc. Typical examples are the heroines in successful films such as Agne in *Agne of the Port* (*Αγνή του Λιμανιού*, 1951), Keti in *Barrel-organ, Poverty and Dignity* (*Λατέρνα, Φτώχεια και Φιλότιμο*, 1955) and Krinio in *The Little Mouse* (*Το Ποντικάκι*, 1954) (see also 2.3 *Gender in Greek Cinema*).¹²⁵ On the contrary, Stella fulfills all the characteristics of the way male characters were – and still are – usually portrayed: adventurous, assertive and aggressive (Seidman, 1992; Sommers-Flanagan, et al, 1993). As a result, the audience’s expectations that the male character will act and behave in certain ways are instead met in the female heroine Stella, quite innovatively for that period of Greek Cinema.¹²⁶

With Stella’s defiance of the rules and mores applying to her sex within the social domain of Rebetiko, the image that a woman was expected to have within the Athenian society of the time was subverted. Instead, the role of Stella embodies a new, modern woman who is daring, courageous and enjoys equal

¹²⁴ An example of this is the song “I who break crystals”: “I who break crystals, mirrors with my hands, I dance Zeibekiko with two-edged knives” (Music: Vamvakaris, M., Lyrics: Kaplanis, K. and Mouflouzelis, G.).

¹²⁵ Actresses: E.Hadjiargyri, T.Karezi, A.Vougiouklaki respectively.

¹²⁶ This phenomenon also occurs in a film genre that was quite popular during that period in the United States and Western Europe – Film Noir. This particular genre shares distinctive features with *Stella*, particularly in relation to the heroine’s character. There are two archetypal female characters in Film Noir. The first is that of a nurturing woman who longs to get married and is often depicted as boring and featureless – features strikingly similar to Anneta’s in *Stella*. The other type is recognised as a *femme fatale*. According to Gauntlett, a true Rebetissa is a daring, unruly, *femme fatale* (2001). Like Stella, a *femme fatale* is an independent woman who feels confined within a marriage and generally her actions put her in conflict with a woman’s traditional role as subservient to man. Moreover, a *femme fatale*, transgressing the societal norms with her independent actions, brings both herself and her male partner to a downfall that often leads to murder. However, Stella’s final punishment seems less significant to the power of her character since, like in Film Noir, the audience retains an image of the non-traditional female as powerful, unrepressed and independent, not neutralized or punished (Place, 1978:41). This is testified by Stella’s diachronic value as one of the most recognisable and popular heroes of Greek Cinema.

rights and privileges with men. Stella's modernity is not only achieved via the social domain of Rebetiko but also through the musical domain, which is discussed in the next section.

3.2.2 Stella and Rebetiko – the musical domain

Apart from the social domain of Rebetiko, the musical genre itself is also central to the representation of acts of modernity in the film. In this section I examine Stella's daring musical 'intrusion' into the men's kingdom and the domain of *magkia*, which sends clear and subversive messages concerning woman's place in Athenian society. In particular, I focus on Stella's distinctive traits as a Rebetiko singer as well as on the ways in which the Rebetiko dances *Hasaposerviko* and *Antikristos* stress Stella's subversive attitude. The heroine's eventual usurpation of Rebetiko via her singing of the *Zeibekiko* is critical and will also be studied since it represents Stella's personal conquest and symbolizes the heroine's total defiance of the social mores.

First, Stella's identity as a Rebetiko female singer is strikingly different from the identity of the other singer in the film, Anneta. The mere performance by Stella of "At the bouzoukia of Paradise" (30:00), a song performed by Anneta at the beginning of the film (2:45), highlights differences between the two singers. It is a common view that the way a song is performed, reflects not only the performer's abilities but also distinctive features of the performer's character. The expressive, firm singing marks Stella's performance and stands out from Anneta's impassive singing. Furthermore, the slower tempo of Stella's version, at 105 bpm compared to Anneta's performance at 120 bpm, provides her with valuable time for extra breathing and more emphasis on individual words and syllables. Moreover, Anneta's version has a constant tempo throughout whereas Stella's includes a long pause between verse and chorus, thus drawing the audience's attention. Last but not least, Stella sings in a lower register (Eb minor instead of Anneta's F minor), enabling her to appropriate the song to her own personal style and express it with directness and intimacy. As a result, the second execution of the song sounds more determined, energetic, and alive. Moreover, it is worth noticing the presence of the two women on stage (figures 23 and 24). While singing for the second time the song's chorus,

Anneta puts her hands on the shoulders of the bouzouki players. Stella, at exactly the same moment in the song, not only puts her arms around the two members of the orchestra but, quite remarkably, holds each man's head in her hands. Stella's gestures subvert woman's image in Rebetiko and explicitly promote a re-evaluation of woman's status in the domain. The unavoidable contrast resulting from the singers' presence and the two performances of the same song projects Stella as a woman different from the other women of her domain (dressed in black, not "in white" as the women of Rebetiko referred to in the song), a woman with a lust for life, with poise and self-confidence.



Figures 23 and 24: Anneta's and Stella's different presence on stage
(*Stella*, 1955, 0:03:35; 0:31:36)

Stella's courageous actions in the film are emphasised and, in two cases, comply with the behavioural codes found within the Rebetiko dances performed by the orchestra of the tavern. The first case occurs when Miltos – hailed as “palikari” and “leventis” earlier in the film – threatens to crash into the tavern with his car, tearing down the place (including Stella's piano) (24:32). No magkas or palikari dares to stand in his way; no one except Stella. She gallantly stands before the car with Miltos at the wheel, challenging him with his own code – a code she recognises and accepts herself: “if you are a palikari come...if you are a man” (24:56). Hence, Stella, with her actions, proves, on one hand, that the terms ‘magkas’ and ‘palikari’ are in essence empty adjectives for men, since none of the men who were present proved to be anything close to

the meanings that these two words are supposed to bear. On the other hand, she surpasses her role as a Rebetissa and she becomes herself a magkas and a palikari. In this way, Stella breaks the Rebetes' code 'of honour' by which a woman possesses honour only through the man she is associated with (Athanasatou, 2001). Instead, she takes things into her own hands and acts as a true Rebetis, subverting the traditional ideology which suggests that men defend their honour aggressively, whereas women defend their virtue passively (the traditional patriarchal code of 'honour' and 'virtue').

The Hasaposerviko dance, heard in this scene as source music being performed by "Paradise's" Rebetiko orchestra (25:00), is itself both a means of eroticising the heroes' confrontation and a main factor in representing female and male interactions. Once Stella challenges Miltos, the situation resembles a war scene. Markedly, Hasaposerviko was formerly a men's war dance called *pyrrhic* (πυρρῖχειος), whose origin goes back to ancient Crete where it was performed in full armour (Hunt, 1996). Hasaposerviko's cue starts right at the point where Stella challenges Miltos: "If you are a palikari, do it!" (24:56). Traditionally danced by a man and a woman, Hasaposerviko is considered a dance of love and passion, qualities diffused in the atmosphere of the scene. The male dances opposite his female adversary and tries to entice her with promises, lively gestures, with steps full of longing and quick, burning glances. The woman dances with small, delicate steps, and graceful and gentle movements of her hands and her head. She gives him quick, passionate glances that one moment repel him and the next give him hope (Fourakis, 2004). Tsitsanis' Hasaposerviko not only contributes to the scene's energy and intensity, but one can well argue that the heroes behave according to the way dancers interact in a Hasaposerviko dance. The way in which the dialogue of the two heroes progresses (the verbal provocation, the erotic innuendos), in combination with the camera work (low-angle, close shots of the heroes' faces), is unmistakably similar to the way Hasaposerviko advances – the face to face confrontation, the staring glances full of passion, the challenges, the erotic implications as well as the promising possibilities (figure 25). Thus, it becomes apparent that the model of gender interaction demonstrated in the scene is perpetuated through the Hasaposerviko's continuous use throughout the

centuries; dance carries within codes which are maintained both in Miltos' rural and Stella's Rebetiko domain.



**Figure 25: Stella and Miltos interact according to the Hasaposerviko
(*Stella*, 1955, 0:26:09)**

The heroine's daring and pride are bluntly projected when the two heroes meet again at the tavern in the subsequent scene. This is the second case in which Rebetiko contributes to the formation of male and female interactions within the film and, at the same time, underlines Stella's anti-conformist attitude. Stella and Miltos stare intensely at each other. With waiter Mitsos bouncing between them like a ping-pong ball, the two heroes look as if they are players in a highly antagonistic game of aggression, madness and fiery lust. Once the 'game' begins, so does the music (35:52). The Rebetiko orchestra symbolically performs an *Antikristos* (*Αντικρυστός*), literally meaning in Greek, 'face to face'.¹²⁷ The *Antikristos* is considered the *Zeibekiko*'s brother since its

¹²⁷ The dance is also known as *karsilamas* which is the Turkish translation of 'face to face'.

rhythm is also in 9/8 (originally a war dance danced by two men).¹²⁸ Tsitsanis' Antikristos in the scene reflects the antagonism between the heroes while revealing the growing passion between them. Notably, even though the dancers improvise the steps on a basic pattern, good Antikristos dancers can anticipate their partner's moves, mirroring each other's steps (Hunt, 1996). The same applies with Miltos and Stella: one waits for the other's next move. Once the 'preliminary' act is accomplished, Miltos stands up and Stella, in response – as in a Western movie – throws away her cigarette flamboyantly, preparing for action (figure 26, 36:45). On this unexpected turn, a violin performs a forceful solo, accentuating the intensity of the moment; the violin – principally used in a traditional folk ensemble – heard simultaneously with Miltos' authoritarian voice, reaffirms the hero's rural background. These distinctive similarities of the Antikristos to the heroes' moves reinforce the notion of gender representation through music and dance; through the dance's usage and the codes it carries throughout the years, the scene's music acts as if it virtually guides the two heroes' actions. To a large extent, it appears that it is with the contribution of Antikristos, a men's dance, that Stella challenges Miltos. What is more, along with Miltos, Stella defies everything else that Miltos stands for in the film: the dominant patriarchal world and the mores which preserve it.

¹²⁸ The dance was known throughout the Ottoman Empire; different regions have different styles. Before 1922 it was very popular in Ionia and it can still be found today in Macedonia, Thrace and Cyprus. Under the influence of the Smyrna Greeks it also found its way into Rebetiko. Almost all Antikristos songs are in 9/8 (2+2+2+3 or sometimes 2+3+2+2) time.



Figure 26: Stella and Miltos interact through the Antikristos (36:45)

(Stella, 1955, 0:36:45)

Stella's ultimate defiance towards the rules of patriarchal Rebetiko is achieved via the genre itself, via Stella's performance of the Zeibekiko "Love, you've become a two-edged knife" (figure 27, 57:57). The 'sacred' dance of Zeibekiko is used by the Rebetes, and only them, to express their agony and frustration. No woman is entitled to such a privilege. Stella's audacity to sing and appropriate the Zeibekiko – the ultimate men's rhythm and dance – and use it for her own purposes is, by itself, an act of treason in the patriarchal world of Rebetiko (also see 2.5.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*). As gender identity in music is constructed partially through the musical activities individuals participate in (Dibben, 2002), Stella, by appropriating the Zeibekiko, constitutes a serious threat to the foundation of Rebetiko and what it represents. Carving a new path for the way women may behave in Rebetiko, Stella stands as the forerunner to women's demands for equal rights. On top of this, by her total defiance of the domain's mores, Stella essentially conquers the stronghold and ultimate symbol of the patriarchal genre and its world. From all the numerous performances of this song to date, Stella's stands out for its lack of long legato phrases (each meter is normally sung in one breath) and for its strong accents, giving even more emphasis to the Zeibekiko 9/8 rhythm. Taking into account Tagg's study

(1989) which showed that themes associated with masculinity tended to have greater rhythmic irregularity (see 3.1.1.2 *The Zeibekiko*), Stella not only dares to sing the Zeibekiko, but, she performs it in the most masculine way possible.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Love, you've become a two-edged knife". It consists of three staves of music in a 6/8 time signature. The first staff is labeled "Intro" and "Marcato" with a dynamic marking of "mf". The second staff is labeled "Verse" and has a dynamic marking of "mp". Above the second staff are four chord symbols: Bbm, Ab, Bbm, and Ab. The third staff has four chord symbols: Db, Ebm, F7, and Bbm, with a dynamic marking of "mf" below it.

Figure 27: “Love, you’ve become a two-edged knife”

Love, you’ve become a two-edged knife
 once you only gave me joy
 but now you drown the joy in tears
 I see no escape, I see no cure

Stella’s reference to the two-edged knife once again confirms Stella’s invasion into the world of magkia. With Miltos’ marriage proposal, Stella finds herself at a dead end that makes her love for Miltos resemble a two-edged knife – the common weapon each Rebetis would carry upon him (see 3.2.1 *Stella and Rebetiko – the social domain*). Deeply in despair over the development of her affair (“now you drown the joy in tears”), the heroine resorts to singing – her only way of channelling and expressing her feelings. Stella’s song is an outlet for her turbulent inner world as well as a presentiment of her tragic end. When she sings the song in front of Miltos, they both know that the conflict has already entered its decisive stage. Before her, the two options are clear – either leave Miltos or marry him, and unfortunately for Stella none of them offers an easy way out – “I see no escape, I see no cure”. Having said this, her choice to sing a Zeibekiko song sends prophetic messages for her eventual decision. As

with all tragic heroes, she is well aware of the consequences brought by any decision she makes. The shot of the heroine between the Rebetiko orchestra and the piano towards the end of the song (figure 28, 1:00:19) brilliantly portrays the dilemma of her situation: on her right-hand side, the Rebetiko orchestra with its association to the Romeic identity and tradition and on her left-hand side and much closer to her, her beloved piano with its association to modernity and to the Hellenic identity (discussed later). With the heroine turning her back on the Rebetiko orchestra, one could well predict what her decision will be.



**Figure 28: Stella between Rebetiko and the piano, tradition and modernity
(*Stella*, 1955, 1:00:19)**

The importance of the usage of the Zeibekiko rhythm in “Love, you’ve become a two-edged knife” is considerable, given that the same melody is performed earlier in the film, twice, without the Zeibekiko rhythm, signifying a totally different meaning. We first hear the verse of the song in the introductory scene. Right after the piano’s *taximi* we watch, in close shot, the film’s title “ΣΤΕΛΛΑ” on the wall, as we hear in *rubato* a simplified version of the song’s

melody (figure 29, 00:28). In this version, almost all repeating notes (except one) are omitted from the song's melody which adds lyricism to the melody and increases the rhythmic freedom.

Love theme - rubato



Figure 29: Love theme

The melody of the theme is performed by the bouzouki, which is reasonable given that Stella comes from the Rebetiko domain. The same piece is used later in the film as the 'love' theme for Stella and Miltos. For this reason, as we hear the theme in the introductory scene, we watch their names along with the actors' names. The love theme reappears, again in rubato, as Miltos' and Stella's fervent feelings for each other reach their climax (38:04). Through the use of music and the lack of restraint that the masculine and austere Zeibekiko rhythm imposes, it seems that the heroes' love is powerful. Via the lack of restriction of rhythm, the heroes' love looks as if it is strong enough to suggest a boundless world of their own in which no rules apply and whose members are entirely liberated from any constrictions.

At the end of the film's final scene, with order restored and the 'threat' extinguished, the love theme – this time performed with the verse completed but as always liberated of rhythm – signifies all there is left: the heroes' undying love (1:29:31). By breaking the social code, Stella had to pay the ultimate price with her own life. Her soulless body is now carried by the same arms that found the strength to kill her; the arms of the man who loved her unlike anyone else. The love theme prevails audibly – over the mourning of the women's chorus and the ringing of the church bells (1:29:28). It also acts as a response to the petty human pathoi, underscored with long shots of 'tiny' people gathering around the dead body. The message seems to be that within our invented worlds and their made-up rules and limitations, love still survives and is seemingly our only tool for creating a new, better world, the kind of world Stella wished she lived in. The unifying power of music is reinstated

earlier at the dance club and the tavern where, the Hasaposerviko is linked harmonically with the latin and the twist tune: the Hasaposerviko is in Bb minor, the twist is in the parallel major while the latin tune is performed in Bb's relative minor G. In other words, although the heroes are physically present in entirely different settings with seemingly incompatible musics, music finds the way to link them once again as it does in the end of the final scene.

Apart from its ending, the rest of the final scene in the film is 'silent' (1:26:21); in contrast to the common mainstream Hollywood practice where one would expect the film's music to reach its climax at the end, quite unexpectedly this section of *Stella* lacks any music at all. Bearing in mind that throughout the film Stella and music are virtually identical terms, the absence of music in the scene of Stella's death is not accidental. Stella identifies her whole being with music – after all, all she wants is “to sing, dance and have all the men at her feet” (10:00). In addition, Stella's world breathes and expresses itself through music. Once she finds herself “choked”, her only resort is music: “Maria I can't take it. I want to sing, to go out. I am choking, you hear me? I'm choking!” (57:53).

As a result, in *Stella*, the gendered split of the visual association with the male domain and the sonic (music) association with the female one is apparent. The heroine's binding relationship with music is in accordance with the widespread argument that music tends to be assigned to the feminine identity because of its ability to engage the body. On the other hand, Miltos acts in the film as the agent of vision: the low-angle shots at the wedding in Kastella portraying a despotic and hegemonic figure, the extremely close shot of his look (15:58) etc. Doane (1980) asserts that sight, linked with masculinity, is seen as an active process and a means of exerting control whereas sound, linked with femininity, is seen as a passive process which forces a surrender of control. Taking these into account, one can safely perceive not only the ways in which gendered identities are allocated to the heroes, but also the ways in which, through the identities' juxtapositions, emerges the suggested superiority of the one over the other. As Stilwell (2001) argues, the association of vision and aural with the masculine and feminine respectively, reinforces gender inequity through the domination of sight over sound in culture and especially

film. This discloses yet another reason for Stella's punishment. As Laura Mulvey asserts, "in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female" (1992:750). Stella's derivation of pleasure not only from being looked at by both the customers of the tavern and the spectators but also by gazing at images of herself – her bedroom is filled with photographs of herself, has a large mirror and she enjoys looking at the poster announcing her show on the wall across the street – undermines the active/passive dichotomy (Peckham and Michelakis, 2000:73). Although Stella is displayed and sexualised in such a way as to constitute the stereotypical female erotic object, she is not impassive for she also accepts the gaze. The dramatic close shot on Stella's widely open eyes the moment she passes away (figure 30, 1:28:07) is a strong confirmation of Stella's 'wrong doing' that led to her exemplary punishment.



Figure 30: Stella passing away with widely open eyes
(Stella, 1955, 1:28:07)

With Miltos on the opposite end of the square and the two-edged knife in his hand, Stella realises that the fateful time has come. By waiting for her death, unshakable and composed, Stella completes her entity as a tragic hero. With music being used throughout the film as the only 'weapon' Stella had in order to express herself, now she is consciously 'unarmed', bringing to mind Plato's comment on music: "Man's perfect guardian is speech in combination with music" (Republic). Miltos' action to suppress Stella is in essence an act of

stifling everything Stella represents – her ideas, her life-style, her music; in other words, anything that could prove threatening to the deep-rooted patriarchal system. Stella’s suppression becomes more intense through sound – not only through the absence of ‘her’ music but also through the dying woman’s cries.

With the help of music, Stella finds the way to resist and escape the conformity imposed by the narrow domain of patriarchal Rebetiko, via Rebetiko itself. ‘Playing the game’ by the domain’s rules, Stella succeeds in subverting the image expected of her as a woman within the specific social surroundings. Furthermore, doing the unthinkable for a woman of her time, performing a Zeibekiko, Stella conquers the extreme symbol of masculinity in the Athenian Rebetiko community, maximising her total defiance towards the patriarchal genre’s mores. However, Stella does not just resist conformity through the musical domain of Rebetiko. In order to express herself and enjoy her freedom she resorts to music again, but ‘other’, foreign music. Stella’s musical behaviour beyond the narrow boundaries of Rebetiko examined in the next section, underline the heroine’s role as the Hellenic agent in the film and contribute to gender representations.

3.2.3 Stella – the exotic “Other”

“Try and do a Fantasie dance with bouzoukia!”

(Stella in *Stella*, 1955, 09:07).

Stella’s comment effectively exhibits the heroine’s frustration in her struggle to get rid of bouzoukia and Rebetiko and rejuvenate music via the use of non-Greek dances and the piano. Most importantly, her views on a social discourse such as music symbolically mirror the heroine’s personal conflict with the inflexible status quo as well as the incompatibility of her modern ideas with the conservative male-oriented notions and customs of Athenian society. What is more, Stella’s comment reflects the conflict between the Hellenic and the Romeic notions of Greek identity, not only towards music, but also in relation to the nation’s general attitude towards foreign trends. Through Stella’s musical behaviour, which I examine in this section, the heroine is presented as

the threatening female 'Other' (McClary, 1991) – the female character who, by her actions, undermines the patriarchal social system. McClary used the term 'the other' in her reference to women in the western European musical tradition who "circumvent reason and arouse desire" (McClary, 1991:79). To illustrate her argument, McClary uses as an example one of the greatest representatives of the 'Other' in the European musical scene: Carmen, the legendary female character in Bizet's opera. In this section, it is important that the unambiguous common features that Stella shares with Carmen be identified and analysed, since they reinforce Stella's identity as the definite female 'Other' as well as reaffirming the association of femininity with the Hellenic identity in *Stella*.

Carmen is a beautiful gypsy who is juxtaposed with the proper code of female behaviour and morality of nineteenth century Europe. One of her admirers is Don José who, being unable to control his sexual urges towards Carmen, is punished for his weakness and eventually punishes Carmen for it. Through Don José, who sacrificed his purity and masculine pride through his involvement with a gypsy, Carmen is portrayed as an unfaithful manipulative prostitute. The transformation of Don José and the eventual murder of Carmen embodied a strong message to the nineteenth century middle-class audience: Carmen's immoral actions would not be tolerated and any contact with her would lead to social, spiritual, and moral decline (Helbig, 2003).

Stella is a modern Carmen. Indicatively, the newspaper "Rizospastis" writes:

Stella is the Greek version of Bizet's Carmen. In Stella's blood, as in Carmen's gypsy blood, flows passion, love, flame, ice, infidelity and, most importantly, flows ample contempt for anything conventional. (March 5th, 2000:18)

Carmen was widely known among the Athenians by the 1950s. The play was staged in numerous theatrical productions at the time *Stella* was released (Athens could not host an opera production at the time). Moreover, Mérimée's *Carmen* (1846) was the first staged play to be broadcast on the radio by the

First Programme of National Radio in 1953, with the accompanying music written by the renowned composer Mikis Theodorakis (Monemvasitis, 2005).

Stella's similarities to Carmen (the way the character is presented in Bizet's opera), are instantly recognisable. Stella is a woman definitely different from everyone else, not "dressed in white" as the women of the song "At the bouzoukia of Paradise" are described. In a flamboyant dress, she performs a solo dance at the centre of "Paradise" and the place transforms into a true paradise for all the male customers of the tavern. Before their lustful eyes, Stella is the ultimate sex symbol: "Dance Stella, dance. You are what we want Stella!" (7:07). As a result, early in the film, via her dancing body which acts as an immediate indicator of sexual difference, Stella is presented as the female object of desire – a distinguishing characteristic of the 'Other'. Moreover, Stella's connection with her predecessor Carmen is confirmed via Stella's striking difference from the other women, the massive effect she has on men, and her gypsy-like dance (figure 31). The music to which Stella dances has elements of Spanish music, such as the characteristic trumpet sound and the Spanish-like rhythmic and melodic figures. Whereas Miltos is musically identified with the Tsamikos (12:50), Stella's association with the exotic Spanish-like tune (06:07) underscores Stella's reluctance to musically conform to the Rebetiko songs and rules. Arousing sexual desire in virtually all the male population in both societies, the definitive 'Others' – Stella and Carmen – travel on the same path; they both pose a major threat to the patriarchal value system of the worlds they live in and, ultimately, they suffer the same tragic end by paying the price with their lives.



Figure 31: Stella dancing in a gypsy-like manner
(*Stella*, 1955, 07:50)

The aforementioned scene's conclusion, with the gramophone's cartridge falsely repeating the same phrase on the vinyl, seems to be congruent with the widely accepted view that the phonograph culture is decidedly male (Wojcik, 2001). In addition, Keightley argues that audio technology in general was fully gendered as masculine by the 1950s (2003). As Wojcik maintains, a woman's association with the phonograph "most typically betokens female desire, with some accompanying transgression" (2001:441). Stella's involvement with the gramophone is indeed an act of transgression – yet one more of the heroine's attempts to transcend her gender and enter the men's world. What is more, the gramophone's malfunction underscores Stella's transgression. Even under these conditions, Stella continues to dance to the modern tune; she only stops when the gramophone reaches its 'limits' and, in frustration, Stella resorts to breaking the vinyl (08:23). The agonising manner with which the heroine breaks the vinyl, testifies to the fact that her attempt to achieve modernity and in the process bypass her gender 'limitations', is not only difficult but may prove to be futile.

However, Stella needs to go beyond Rebetiko's boundaries – both artistically and, most importantly, on a personal level. Her attempt to dance to a tune which is entirely 'inappropriate' within the Rebetiko environment, echoes her strong desire for modernisation and her need to expand her horizons to new music, new ways of thinking and new ideas. On the other hand, the song of the celebrated trio of Rebetes – Vamvakaris, Tsitsanis and Tsaousakis – "To Hell With Rumba And Swing" ("Βράσε τη Ρούμπα και το Σούνγκ", 1946) reveals the Rebetes' hostility and uneasiness with anything innovative, with anything that could distort the well-established balance between tradition and their conventional world of male domination. Not surprisingly, all of the 'imported' dances mentioned above are danced in couples, whereas all Rebetiko songs in the film are danced exclusively by men. Thus, while the Rebetiko and the Romeic are once again associated with masculinity in the film, Stella's identification with the foreign dance verifies the association of femininity with the Hellenic identity which applauded any 'imported' Western European music. What is more, the apparent exclusion of foreign dances from the Rebetiko

domain suggests that the two notions of the Greek identity are unable to co-exist.

Stella's trait as the definite 'Other' and her indissoluble connection with Carmen is confirmed towards the end of the film, once again, via the heroine's musical behaviour. After fleeing from Miltos on the day of their scheduled wedding, Stella decides to spend her night in an entirely different setting from the one she was used to; away from the bouzouki orchestra and the restrictive environment of the "Paradise" tavern, she chooses to entertain herself, along with young Antonis, at a trendy dance club. Making it clear that the world of Rebetiko and the bouzouki are not enough to satisfy her uncompromising need for freedom and modernity, Stella seeks other musics.

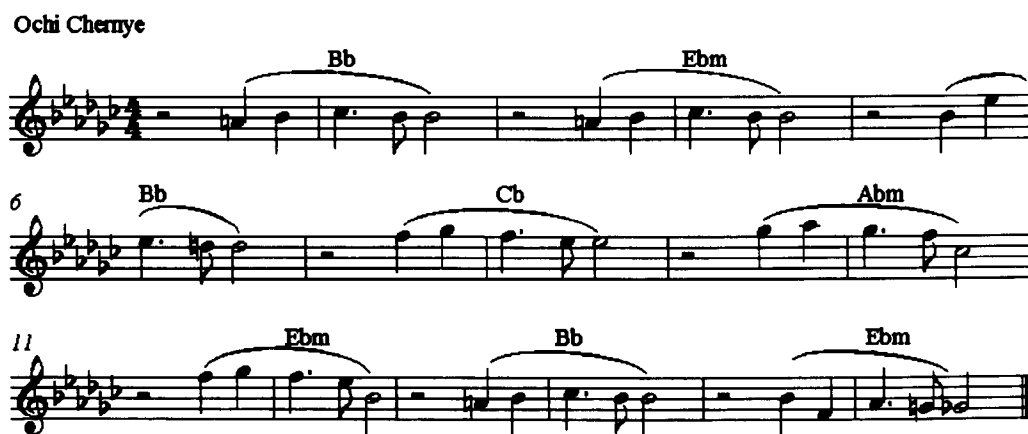


Figure 32: "Ochi Chernye"

Initially Stella and Antonis dance to the Russian folk song "Ochi Chernye" ("Dark eyes") which, along with the contribution of the camera work, reflect Stella's thoughts. The song is performed by the club's jazz orchestra with the melody played by the trumpet in a jazz-influenced improvisation (figure 32, 1:20:37). The close shot of Stella's eyes (figure 33, 1:22:40) mark her edginess and anxiety and it becomes obvious that she cannot get her mind off Miltos and their affair.



Figure 33: Stella thinks about Miltos at the jazz club
(Stella, 1955, 1:22:40)

Considering the fact that in this particular critical phase of the film Stella does not speak throughout the scene, music constitutes the film's 'insider' to Stella's feelings. This is accomplished through the song and its lyrics:

I do love you so,
But I fear you so,
Seems I met your fateful gaze on a fateful day!

The white tablecloth is all soaked with wine...

But one does not sleep, he drinks still champagne,
to the dark eyes of a gypsy girl.

Had we never met, I'd not suffer so,
I would have lived my life smiling joyously,

You have destroyed my soul, dark and lovely eyes,
Carried off forever my happiness!

The lyrics not only reference the film's story but also express Stella's thoughts. The couple met "on a fateful day", and their first gaze proved to be

“fateful”. Moreover, as in *Stella*, there is a prophetic omen for the couple’s future in the song: “The white tablecloth is all soaked with wine...”. Stella cannot hide her apprehension over the final outcome (“but I fear you so”) and her love for Miltos made her behave differently from how she had understood herself to behave: “Damn it Stella, what’s the matter with you?” (1:02:45). Had she not met Miltos, she would “not suffer so, and would have lived” her “life smiling joyously”. She feels that Miltos has “destroyed” her “soul”, “carried off forever” her “happiness” and that he “drowns the joy in tears”.

The reference in the lyrics of “Ochi Chernye” to the “gypsy girl” directly brings to mind ‘the other’ gypsy, Carmen. Gypsies throughout the world are symbols of recklessness and freedom, having no country of their own and thus no boundaries, no restrictions and no rules.¹²⁹ Stella’s idiosyncrasies and way of thinking could well be similar to those of the song’s gypsy girl. Moreover, the chromatic movement that characterises the song’s motive (figure 32) is a common feature of Carmen’s melodies in Bizet’s opera, for example, the “Habanera” (McClary, 1991).

Interestingly enough, Hadjidakis’ composition “Love, you’ve become a two-edged knife” is based, almost in its entirety, on Tsitsanis’ song “Mad gypsy” (“Τρελέ τσιγγάνε”), also referring to a gypsy:

Mad gypsy, where are you headed for?
Where are you going alone in the middle of the night
Your breaking up with me is a sorrow
eternal in my heart

Why are you running away alone and in a hurry
As if you are a stranger, a passer-by
I am your eternal slave
Take me with you to the distant lands

Mad gypsy, why are you staring me?
You leave me alone and deserted

¹²⁹ For example, Emil Kusturitsas’ “Black cat, white cat”, 1998.

Let's go gypsy before dawn
I'll come with you and wherever may that lead.

The gypsy's traits in this song seem to be quite similar to the traits described in the song Stella dances to. A gypsy's basic feature is that he/she is free to go wherever he/she wants. For this reason, the gypsy can become an idealised persona and provoke romantic feelings so intense that they may lead an admirer to risk everything to be with them ("Let's go gypsy before dawn, I'll come with you and wherever may that lead", "I am your eternal slave, take me with you to the distant lands"). Moreover, both gypsies in the songs, with their unconventional attitude, cause heartbreak to the persons they are with ("Your breaking up with me is a sorrow eternal in my heart", "You leave me alone and deserted"). One could well argue that the music thoroughly reflects Stella's situation and justifies Stella's acts: with freedom also being the most valuable possession for Stella, she identifies herself with the gypsy who runs away, whatever the consequences or any pain she may cause. Markedly, the gypsy in "Ochi Chernye" is a woman, whereas the "Mad Gypsy" is a man; in the progressive, 'free' world of the gypsies any differences in gender characteristics are minimised and ignored.

"Ochi Chernye", along with the other music performed at the dance club irrevocably establishes Stella's degradation from the category of *magkissa* – a virtuous wife – to that of the other type of woman in the *Rebetiko* domain (discussed earlier), the sinner, the fallen woman. Kalinak's study of classical Hollywood films of the 1940s and 1950s (1992), showed that the feminine category of the 'fallen woman' was musically portrayed by dotted rhythms, increased chromaticism and brass in jazz and blues style. All three music characteristics are found in the music played at the dance club: the jive and swing tunes to which the couple dances after "Ochi Chernye" are marked for their short phrases and lack of legato, the motive of "Ochi Chernye" (figure 32) is distinctively chromatic and the club's band consists of brass instruments performing in blues/jazz style.¹³⁰ Hence, the same cultural discourse that has led

¹³⁰ According to McClary, chromaticism takes on the cultural cast of 'femininity' since it enriches tonal music (tonal centre-male) and is finally resolved to the triad for the sake of

to the audience's perception of Stella as the respectable Rebetissa has now officially debased the heroine, stigmatising her as a sinner, a 'fallen woman'. Notably, McClary, in her analysis of the musical representation of madwomen in operas, remarks that these stigmatised women are musically associated with uncommon keys such as Gb major (1991:96). Interestingly, Gb major's key signature is used in the song "Ochi Chernye" that Stella associates herself with. The song is in Eb minor which is Gb major's relative minor scale and shares the same key signature.

Notably, Stella's femininity and degradation to a 'fallen woman' are symbols of modernity in their own right. According to Benjamin (1986), who studied women's representation in relation to modernity in nineteenth century societies, femininity acts as an allegory of modernity.¹³¹ What is more, since the era of Enlightenment, the whore and the fallen woman have been archetypal female representations which worked as symbols of the sordidness of the people and of the cultural symbol of the revolution.¹³² Georgosopoulos (1995) suggests that these archetypes endured in the popular Greek Orthodox Tradition (a distinctive feature of the Romeic identity) through the interaction of the Greek Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire with the European movement of Enlightenment. The archetype of the fallen woman attained a double meaning which aligns with the features of the feminine 'Other' (as described by McClary): "as expression of the sordidness and at the same time an erotic symbol" (Georgosopoulos, 1995:129).¹³³ In other words, apart from the erotic object that Stella appeared to be at the beginning, by the end of the film, with her degradation, Stella turns entirely into the definite 'Other', 'fulfilling' its other basic feature: that of unreasonableness and sordidness.

The sound of jazz manages to conjoin Stella's feminine side with her intense need for modernity. On one hand, jazz stands as the ultimate evolutionary genre in the music world, an art genre with no boundaries and

closure (masculine trait). For McClary, chromaticism is enriching yet incomplete, and unlawful (1991).

¹³¹ As found in Glycksman C. (1986) 'Catastrophic Utopia: The feminine as allegory of the modern', p.227.

¹³² See Demopoulou R. "Definitions and symbols of the revolutions of the nineteenth century in France", *Politis* issue 18, p.34.

¹³³ As appears in Athanasatou G. (2001), p.197

symbolizing absolute freedom of expression. In the scene at the jazz club, Stella, captivated by jazz's modern sound and, entranced by its progressive rhythms and harmonies, identifies herself with the genre and its significations. On the other hand, Jazz is linked with femininity. One of the fervent supporters of 'absolute' music, Adorno, characterises Jazz as "feminine" and "eunuchlike" and asserts that the lack of pure triadic sound and the extensive dissonances in jazz establish the genre as a "castration" symbol (1936).¹³⁴

Apart from the jazz version of "Ochi Chernye", Stella becomes associated with the other foreign musical genres performed by the club's orchestra, which also testify to Stella's 'exoticness', 'otherness' as well as her proximity to the Hellenic rather than the Romeic identity as a Greek. Moreover, the juxtaposition of Stella dancing to foreign tunes at the jazz club with Miltos dancing to Rebetiko dances at the "Paradise", climaxes in the collision of Miltos' Rebetiko world with Stella's modernity, and, in essence, the Romeic with the Hellenic identity. Immediately after the Russian tune, a Latin tune follows (1:23:00). The musical delirium reaches its climax as the Hasaposerviko in the tavern is performed (and danced to by Miltos) in an inconceivably fast tempo while the Latin tune is replaced by a frenzied Twist (1:23:28). The alternating dances of the club and the tavern maximise the incompatibility of the two worlds since, in the patriarchal world of Rebetiko and the Romeic, as mentioned earlier, these dances seemed peculiar, foreign, and, most significantly, feminine. Indicatively, Tsifteteli – the only Rebetiko dance considered by the Rebetes to be primarily a feminine dance, suitable only for women and gay men (Petropoulos, 1990:91) – is an Eastern dance and not Greek.¹³⁵ It is no surprise that in the world of Rebetiko, femininity is closely related to the Oriental and the Exotic (see 2.5.3.2 *The image of woman in song*). In relation to this, Spyridaki argues that in the eyes of the Rebetis, the image of a dancing woman is based on images which refer to Eastern dances (2003). Thus, Stella's association with the foreign musical genres she enjoys dancing

¹³⁴ Theodor W. Adorno, "On Jazz" as found in *Moments musicaux* (1964).

¹³⁵ The term 'tsifteteli' comes from the Turkish *ciftetelli*, literally meaning two strings, since initially *ciftetelli* was a melody played on a double-string violin. It is a vivid and quick dance danced by the refugees who brought it with them to mainland Greece after the Minor Asia disaster. The *tsifteteli* shares many common characteristics with the well-known Turkish belly-dance.

to, seals her position in the film as the exotic “Other”. Moreover, it is no surprise that the *tsifteteli* – with its exotic and oriental character – is not included in *Stella* since it could lay on the line Rebetiko’s intense manly character. What is more, any possible association of Stella with the *tsifteteli* could suggest that Stella is merely an exotic ‘other’ and downgrade Stella’s complex alliance with Rebetiko. For this reason, the film includes only the two primary Rebetiko dances – the *Zeibekiko* and the *Hasapiko* and its close relative, the *Hasaposerviko*. It was crucial to show musically the domain of *magkia* so that Stella’s ‘intrusion’ into the men’s kingdom would seem an even more daring act and her usurpation of the genre – via the *Zeibekiko* – her ultimate conquest.

Finally, it should also be mentioned that the mere act of dancing is itself an act of subversion and modernity by Stella. As already mentioned, the act of dancing throughout the film (and in the Rebetiko domain in general) is strictly performed by men as a privilege which marks them as the active sex, thus the stronger one. In contrast, singing – performed entirely by women in the film – relegates women to passivity and thus to a weak status. In the dance club, Stella consciously chooses to be in a place where both men and women dance, thus enjoying equal rights. Watching Stella dance for the first (and only) time in the film, the message is clear: for Stella’s revolution, which symbolically started with her singing the *Zeibekiko*, there is no turning back.

The clashing of tradition with modernity and the Hellenic with the Romeic identity is climaxed through the alternation between the jazz club and the tavern both visually and musically. The Rebetiko world is represented by close shots of the *bouzouki* (figure 34) – the absolute masculine symbol of the Rebetiko and the patriarchal tradition – while the modernistic world of the jazz club is represented by close and frequent shots of the trumpet, particularly its bell, alluding to femininity (figure 35). The instruments are preceded and followed by intense close-up shots of the heroes’ eyes (figures 36 and 37), underlining the tension between masculinity and femininity, tradition and modernity, the conflict of the Romeic and the Hellenic identity and the irreversible clash between them. Prophetically, concluding to shots of their feet

(1:24:20 – 1:24:35), the director subconsciously suggests that the heroes will eventually walk into each other, preparing the audience for the fatal clash.



Figures 34,35,36,37: The Greek identity clash: tradition vs. modernity, masculinity vs. femininity, Miltos vs. Stella, Romeic vs. Hellenic (Stella, 1955, 1:24:40; 1:24:39; 1:24:35; 1:24:36)

Stella, a modern Carmen, the definitive ‘Other’ of the narrow domain of Rebetiko and Athenian society in general, poses severe threats to the foundations of the patriarchal system and therefore must be extinguished. As with Carmen, her will to live by her own rules brings her against the society’s set of laws. Both heroes’ main outlet is music, via which they find ways to escape – at least temporarily – and live out their modernity and freedom. Due to Stella’s instantly recognisable similarities with Carmen and her association with the gypsies and the foreign musical genres, the heroine’s stigma as the exotic ‘Other’ in the film is sealed.

3.2.4 The piano and modernity

The piano stands as an important signifier of modernity in *Stella*. In this section I examine the ways in which the piano is associated with Stella and how the instrument progressively develops into a symbol of modernity and rejuvenation in the film. Moreover, I study how the piano becomes the prime medium via which the modern and the old worlds are contrasted in the film. The juxtaposition of the two worlds is significant because it accentuates the need for rejuvenation and rationalises Stella’s actions within the patriarchal world of Rebetiko.

From the beginning of the film, it becomes obvious that the piano refers to a different world than that of Rebetiko. In the film’s introductory scene, right after the bouzouki performs a taximi which establishes the world of Rebetiko

(00:01), the piano ‘answers’ with a short improvisational phrase in a dialogue-like manner, presented as if it is the bouzouki’s rival (00:16). As the piano performs, it is associated with the bourgeoisie and its representative in the film, Alekos, as he walks in his elegant outfit and tie. In the background, a new car is being taken care of by its proud owner. Being an unusual instrument for the world of Rebetiko and a particularly expensive one (thus unattainable for people from the lower social classes), the piano stands as the marker of a world dissimilar to that represented by the bouzouki. In essence, from the first seconds of the film, the Romeic and the Hellenic identities are marked through the sounds of the bouzouki and the piano respectively.

It is therefore no surprise that Stella treasures her piano and the world it represents; she treasures it so much that she stays by its side when the instrument is being carried by a truck (“Be careful! The piano is mine, mine! It is brand *new!*” (10:25)). At the wedding in Kastella, Stella’s shot by the piano (14:50) enhances the sense of freshness and airiness that she breathes into the conventional wedding feast. Moreover, when Miltos threatens to crash into the tavern in his car (24:32) or even when he threatens to blow up the place with dynamite (35:52), Stella is only concerned for the safety of her adored piano. Symbolically, along with the piano, Stella essentially protects her own autonomy from the social and cultural forces which threaten it – marriage and car respectively. The heroine resorts to the piano as an artistic means of escaping from the narrow social and musical domain of Rebetiko. Thinking about Alekos and the precious gift he gave her, Stella smiles with satisfaction and leans on the piano as if she embraces it (figure 38, 33:10).

In the aforementioned scene, the piano affirms the association of modernity with femininity. On the one hand, the piano stands as a symbol of modernity in the film. On the other hand, the music performed on it, by Pipis the pianist, is typically ‘feminine’, as suggested by McClary, with lyrical, sweet melodic lines embellished with ornaments (McClary, 1991). Significantly, on all of the above occasions that the piano is used, it accompanies Stella – both visually and audibly – and naturally becomes associated with her in every respect. The piano is not only the musical instrument which enables her to

satisfy her artistic quests, but it is essentially Stella's only access to the modern world.



Figure 38: Stella leans on her adored piano
(Stella, 1955, 33:10)

Via the use of the piano, the contrast of modernity and tradition is vividly represented both visually and musically in the scene where Stella, standing by her brand new piano, is on the back of a truck heading to the pianist's place (10:58). With the camera following the truck on its route, Athens' two worlds are displayed. On the one hand, there is modern Athens, with its streets full of cars and buses.¹³⁶ This is contrasted to the ancient world – with images of the city around the ancient Acropolis of the Classical era (fifth century B.C.) and the conspicuous Parthenon in the background. The director chose to show extension of the past through to the present and juxtapose the two worlds in his search “for a fundamental identity comprised by the timeless living elements” (Soldatos, 1999, 3rd Vol.:149 – 150). However, the rivalry and incompatibility of the ancient and the modern worlds is profound and is reflected in Stella's words to the truck driver, with the shot of the Acropolis symbolically in the background: “Slow down! We're going past the

¹³⁶ Kakogiannis, in his “Memories from *Stella*” writes how much he loved the disorder and impulse of post-war Athens (1990).

competition” (11:53). The “competition” for Stella could well refer to the tradition which, with its deep-rooted values, seems to prevail over the Athenians, thus preventing them from exploring novel ideas, new musics, new worlds of modern times. Stella acts as an answer to all these, glowing next to the film’s symbol of modernity and renewal – her shiny piano, propelling into the scenery a vital sense of freshness and rejuvenation (figure 39).



Figure 39: Stella on the truck guarding her piano with the Acropolis in the background (*Stella*, 1955, 11:53)

The director’s intention to underline this extension of the past into the present (Soldatos, 1999, 3rd Vol.: 149 – 150) and the seemingly harmonious coexistence of the two worlds is portrayed musically, as in the introduction, via the use of the bouzouki and the piano – instruments-emblems of the two worlds. The piano provides the harmonic and rhythmic elements in a Hasapiko tune and the bouzouki, as the musical code imposes, performs the melody. At first glance, the two worlds seem to coexist and become musically unified in a euphoric tune, via the melodic line which is based upon a major scale using the tonic, subdominant and dominant chords. Moreover, the music’s simplicity

suggests that the prospect of compromise between the two worlds seems an easy and realistic task. However, this image of ostensibly peaceful coexistence of the two worlds is deceptive. The element of excessive jubilation and comedy is diffused in the music via the piano's triumphant chords and the rising drills at the introduction, reminiscent of the piano part at the introduction of Saint-Saens' "Marche royale du lion" (Carnival des Animaux, 1886).¹³⁷ Moreover, the piano's accompaniment is strongly reminiscent of the kind of accompaniment used for ragtime, a musical subgenre of Jazz, whose principle trait is rhythmic exuberance. All these elements create the impression of an unnatural situation, with a comical/satirical quality rather than depicting reality. The crude reality of Athens of 1955 is that behind the seemingly harmonious image projected to the outside world, instability and friction prevail (see Chapter Two). And towards the end of the film, when the piano is used once again to juxtapose Stella's modern world with the old world of Rebetiko and tradition, the discord of the old and the modern is again made obvious (figure 32) (1:00:19). A victim of circumstance, Stella finds herself trapped amidst the disharmony of the two worlds.

It should be noted that piano's counter artefact in the film is the car. In contrast to the piano which represents modernity and the Hellenic identity, the car, owned by Miltos – the Romeic representative in the film, denotes an exclusively male domain. Miltos' intention to 'invade' tavern "Paradise" with his car and destroy Stella's beloved piano, symbolically discloses Miltos' sexual desire for the heroine. Moreover it reflects the incompatibility of the two identities as well as their struggle for supremacy. Stella's entrapment in the vehicle when she accepts Miltos' challenge to go for a ride with him, indicates Miltos' intentions to 'contain' Stella in a conventional relationship (Peckham and Michelakis, 2000:70). Stella's refusal to conform and to let herself be imprisoned is marked by ridiculing Miltos' car as an "old banger" (24:48).

¹³⁷ This particular composition was written to parody political affairs of its time.

3.3 Critical reception, censorship and *Stella*

3.3.1 Critical reception

At the time of the film's release (1955), women's emancipation in Greece was still a long way off, as in the rest of Europe. *Stella*, with her subversive nature and total defiance of social norms, became a secret idol and a symbol of freedom for Greek women who craved equal rights. Expectedly, *Stella*'s rebellion against the social status quo generated unwelcoming reactions from Greek critics, particularly those of the left wing who fought for the survival of the declining left party. Left-wingers intensely opposed the demand for erotic freedom and women's equality, fearing it would gain equal status to their struggle for social freedom from class oppression.¹³⁸

Apart from women's struggle for emancipation, the film negotiates Rebetiko – both as the musical genre and the social domain of the Rebetes – which is another issue that stirred great commotion in the Athenian society. In a period of great disapproval of Rebetiko by the middle and upper classes (see 2.5.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*), some Greek critics predictably regarded the film as provocative, insulting and unrealistic.¹³⁹ In addition, the left-wing movement once again resented the fact that low class populism was expressed via Rebetiko's 'subculture' (Athanasatou, 2001).

However, the negative responses from a section of the local press and critics were counterbalanced by the majority of the Greek press and the foreign critics who, at the time, hailed *Stella* as the best Greek film ever made.¹⁴⁰ More than fifty years after the film was released, *Stella*'s flame still shines brightly in

¹³⁸ Indicatively, critic Stamatiou claims: "Thus freedom for the women to go with the first man they like and we achieve our Independence! Unfortunately many will be the victims of Mr. Kakogiannis' audacity". (Newspaper "Avgi", 1955, cited in Soldatos, 1991, 1st Vol.:113).

¹³⁹ Notably, critic Moshovakis writes: "Mr. Kakogiannis would do well to take a walk at midnight at the streets of St. Konstantinos, Sophocleous and Socratous (these streets were notorious for illegal activities) in order to take a good look at his 'palikaria' and realise who his 'girls in white' really are" (Newspaper "Art Revue", 1955, cited in Soldatos, 1991, 1st Vol.:114).

¹⁴⁰ Film critic Ahilleas Mamakis characterised *Stella* as "the best accomplishment of Greek Cinema" of the time (1955), while film critic Alan Brien admitted that watching *Stella* was "one of the most fascinating ninety minutes he ever watched in cinema" (1956).

the hearts of Greek people. Indicatively, the lyrics of “Rock”, a Greek popular song released in 1995, confirm:

Rock’ is Jagger in a sports car
and Vlahopoulou¹⁴¹ in *The forty-year-old lady*¹⁴²
Marlon Brando in the singlet
and Melina¹⁴³ dressed as Stella¹⁴⁴

Stella was and is still considered a favourite film character by the majority of Greek people. With the extensive use of Rebetiko and its association with the lower social classes, and to a lesser extent the costumes and the designs, Soldatos rightly claims that *Stella*, “adds something to the Romeic” (1999, 1st Vol.:113).

Apart from its controversial issues, the film owes its varying reviews largely to the fact that it offers affiliation of identification between the audience and the film’s characters (Kassabian, 2001, see *1.3 Gender representation*); *Stella*’s music score facilitates affiliation of identification since it is not based on the ideology of nineteenth century romanticism on which classical and mainstream Hollywood film compositions heavily depend. Instead, with the score being composed of a combination of songs and scores without strict cueing and mixing, the film offers mobile identification processes (Kassabian, 2001). In addition, using Rebetiko songs in a film entails risks as to whether the audience will identify with the protagonist at all, as indeed happened with *Stella*.

3.3.2 Censorship and *Stella*

Bearing in mind the severe censorship that Greek Cinema suffered during the 1950s and 1960s, and considering the controversial thematic material with which *Stella* deals, it is surprising that the film was not censored. *Stella* breaks melodrama’s basic code of ‘Nation-Religion-Family’, which is a

¹⁴¹ Greek actress and comedian.

¹⁴² Popular Greek comedy.

¹⁴³ Melina Mercouri.

¹⁴⁴ Composer: Kraounakis, S.

fundamental trait of the Romeic identity. Unlike the vast majority of films of this period which celebrated these values (the third case study *Diploennies* is a fine example of a film in which family values eventually triumph), Stella's subversion is accentuated by the breaking of this code. Stella ignores the 'Nation' law: instead of wearing fancy clothes, she symbolically wears black clothes at the national parade; moreover, the next morning, the ragged and threadbare flags underscore Greece's degradation from its abuse by the Americans and the British. Stella ignores 'Religion' by failing to appear in church and undergo the sacrament of marriage and she completely turns her back on the 'Family' code and values.¹⁴⁵

Kakogiannis managed to circumvent the censorship of the junta (1967-1973)¹⁴⁶ and speak out against the oppressive regime, particularly with *Stella*.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Alexis Zorbas (*Zorbas*, 1963) is male version of Stella. In *Zorbas*, Kakogiannis also juxtaposes the modern man being trapped within moral, religious and social codes. Like Stella, Zorbas too broke the 'Nation-Religion-Family' code.

¹⁴⁶ Kakogiannis succeeded in getting his messages across to the Greek public without the circumvention of censorship during the junta censorship primarily due to his appropriation of the classics – Sophocles and Euripides (Zacharia, 2008:330). This is a practice adopted later by another great Greek director, Theodoros Angelopoulos. Kakogiannis, who succeeded in attaining international recognition mainly due to his work on Greek tragedy, staged a number of ancient Greek dramas. Moreover, he turned into films ancient tragedies such as *Elektra* (1962), *The Trojan Women* (1971) and *Iphigenia* (1977). By transferring tragic elements of modern Greece into the European domain (and later on the American), Kakogiannis' in-depth analysis examines the ancient Greek standards, comparing their connections and contrasts with their modern counterparts (Soldatos, 1999).

¹⁴⁷ Censorship in Greek Cinematography has a long history. When Cinema made its first appearance in Greece, the threatened authority introduced reactionary laws some of which still apply today. Most of these laws were cancelled in 1974, when democracy ruled again after the 1967-74 dictatorship (Lazarides, 1999: 237). In 1937, a year after the dictator Metaxas took over, the first Cinematic Act was formulated and was finalised in 1941 by legislative decree. The laws, whose principal aim was the maintenance of "lawfulness and pure nationalism" (Lazarides, 1999: 236), were rigid and awkward; among other things, entrance to public cinemas was allowed only to adults and the shooting of a scene in Greece was prohibited unless permission was granted by the police (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol:52). The Control Committee that was formed to supervise film activity in the country, examined any suspicious elements "that may harm youth, distort the order, promote propagandistic subversions, or bring the country into disrepute in terms of nationalistic and tourist issues, or anything that in any way subverts the healthy social traditions of the Greek people or rejects the Christian religion" (Lazarides, 1999:256). Accordingly, the Control Committee needed to know in advance the place of the shooting as well as all the actors, the director, etc. Censorship made itself particularly noticeable in 1949, when it forced a change in the script of Tsiforo's *The Last Mission* (*Η Τελευταία Αποστολή*) (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:73). In 1954 it forbade Koundouros' *Magic City* (*Μια Πόλη Μαγική*) from representing Greece in the Venice Film Festival so the film was presented unofficially. Two years later, the censors were worried by Koundouros' masterpiece *The Ogre* (*Ο Δράκος*), in which he allegorises Greek society and its evolution since the German occupation and the civil war (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:122). In 1960 censorship was at its peak and Koundouros was forced to work again with allegoric symbols in *The River* (*Το Ποτάμι*). What is more, censorship also intervened in the Festival "Second week of Greek Cinema"

The association of Stella with Greece and the Greek people is prominent throughout the film. At times when Greece – once the country of free-speech and democracy – is heavily controlled by foreign interests (particularly American), Stella, as a genuine Greek, lives her life independently and expresses herself in her own way. Moreover, she says ‘NO’ on the 28th of October, one of modern Greece’s landmark dates in history.¹⁴⁸ It is no coincidence that Stella’s wedding date is set for October 28th 1955. Fifteen years after that nation’s heroic day, Stella gallantly projects her own “NO” to surrender. What is more, she dies as a Greek hero confronting face to face her would-be ruler, preserving her Greek pride and honour. One could argue that the film acts prophetically since, just as Greece suffers the Generals’ dictatorship in the next decade, so too Stella is deprived of her freedom by Miltos.

Produced at a time when women’s rights were still largely questioned, *Stella* constitutes one of the finest examples of the presentation and consideration of gender issues in Greek Cinema. This chapter analysed the various ways in which distinct features of the two versions of Greek national identity are attributed to the male and female leads. It was demonstrated that the association of the male lead with tradition and the social and musical domain of Rebetiko – both characteristic features of the Romeic identity – created a stereotypical model of masculinity in the film. Likewise, Stella’s temperament, radical actions and her resulting association with modernity and the Hellenic subverted the expected woman’s role within the patriarchal Athenian society and created a different behavioural model; one which is remarkable for its liberal attitude and yearning for independence and innovation. In a similar way, the protagonists’ distinct gender characteristics contributed to the formation of the two identities in the film. Analysis of the film’s music underscored Rebetiko’s rigid patriarchal domain and the significant contribution it can make

(1961), excluding certain films, one of which was the short film *Your eyes are shining* (*Ta Matóκλαδα σου Λάμπουν*), which refers to Rebetiko (Soldatos, 1999, 1st Vol.:316). Indicative of the unchanged and enduring policy and attitude of the Control Committee is the fact that the same people who worked for the Committee during the 1967 – 74 dictatorship remained in their positions after 1974, as if nothing had changed (Lazarides, 1999:469).

¹⁴⁸ It is the day that Greek dictator Metaxas rejected the Italian ambassador’s ultimatum for Greece’s surrender in World War II. Since then, that day is remembered as the day of “NO” and is celebrated as a national holiday.

to establishing gender representation in a film. Stella's non conformity to its norms and her preference for foreign musics, testifies to the fact that Rebetiko, the prime musical signifier of the Romeic, plays a predominant role in projecting and contrasting the two identities in Greek Cinema.

CHAPTER FOUR

Case Study: *Never on Sunday*

Introduction

Never on Sunday (1960, director Jules Dassin) is another example of a Greek film in which both notions of Greek national identity, the Romeic and the Hellenic, are represented. In this chapter I argue that gender and sexuality are portrayed in the film through the delineation, personification and contrast of these two views of Greek national identity. The representation of gender and sexuality is primarily made manifest through Rebetiko and the American Hollywood musical. As in *Stella*, Rebetiko depicts gender in *Never on Sunday* through its affiliation to the Romeic identity and its social and musical mores. Furthermore, I argue that the Romeic identity is promoted and gender-based behaviour is implied by the film's conspicuous structural similarities to the American Hollywood musical and its distinct subversions of that genre. Finally, I examine the ways in which the barrel-organ and its direct association with the film's heroine and the Romeic identity represent gender in the film.

Homer Thrace, the male protagonist in the film (played by Jules Dassin), is a grecophile American intellectual who comes to Greece in his quest for 'The Truth', as this is found in the writings of the ancient Greek philosophers. Ilia (played by Melina Mercouri) is a carefree and irrepressible prostitute who lives and works in the area of Piraeus port. In *Ilia*, Homer seeks the answer to the puzzling question: what has led to the corruption of ancient Greece (personified in Ilia)? Despite his continuous efforts to persuade Ilia to change her lifestyle and follow the 'right' path which abides by Western society's norms, he ends up being beaten up by the Greeks, who lead a strikingly different way of life and have a dissimilar mentality. In his despair, Homer accepts an offer of money from Mr. Face – a pimp who controls the other prostitutes of the area – and takes over the 'education' of Ilia. However, once Ilia discovers Homer's agreement with her greatest enemy, she interrupts her 'studies', discards her new knowledge and 'new' self and returns to her previous, beloved way of life. With his plans ending in complete failure, Homer

leaves Greece in bitter disappointment, having discovered a totally different 'reality' of Greece and its people.

4.1 National identities, gender and the dual-focus approach

In this section I argue that the *dual-focus approach*, a fundamental trait of the Hollywood musical (Altman, 1987), is used in *Never on Sunday* and that it contributes to gender representation in the film. With this technique, the film musical, instead of focusing all interest on a single character, has a dual focus and is built around parallel stars of the opposite sex and radically divergent values (Altman, 1987:16 – 58). Altman suggests that the specific cultural values and distinct opposing characteristics which mark each hero are secondary dichotomies which arise from the heroes' primary dichotomy, their sexual duality. Commenting on this notion, Tsitsopoulou rightly argues that the opposing "cultural values" on which the conflict of the dual-focus approach is based, are engendered through being, in fact, "gender stereotypes passing for cultural values" (2000:86). In this chapter my arguments are based on the socialisation theory of gender, particularly on the common principle within the sociological discipline that social identities, like gender, are not fixed but are products forged through 'cultural work', in other words, cultural representations construct the meanings and characteristics which are given to masculinity/femininity rather than being a reflection of pre-existing gender attributes. I argue that in *Never on Sunday* the secondary dichotomies I identify are engendered and that they derive from the dichotomy of national/cultural identity (i.e. Romeic and Hellenic) – which, in turn, is presented through the primary dichotomy of the heroes' sexual duality. As a result, I maintain that the two national identities predetermine gender roles in the film and, likewise, they are attributed with specific characteristics.

In *Never on Sunday*, the dual-focus approach is highlighted by the script and the way in which it depicts the dichotomies of the male and female leads, as well as by the interchange of scenes in which the male and the female lead appear, music and the camera work. It becomes obvious early in the film that Dassin deliberately based his script on the dual-focus approach, reflecting the Romeic and Hellenic cultural and national views of Greek identity. Homer is an

amateur philosopher, an “American boy scout from Middletown Connecticut” (18:20). He seeks “the Truth”, the lost “purity that was Greece” (3:48). He is looking for the “real” reasons for the fall of ancient Greece – “the cradle of civilization”. The answer to his quest is personified in Ilia, an untroubled local prostitute. With her unrestricted sexuality, Ilia stands as the definitive object of sexual desire in the film and is extremely popular amongst the male characters. The heroine is considered by Homer as the incarnation of the ancient Greek ideal yet, nevertheless, lives “by the Stoic and Epicurean philosophies that came after the fall of Greece” (59:31). In essence, Homer sees Ilia as the Europeans viewed the Greeks: uneducated and of a low cultural level that therefore needed to be infused with Western ideals deriving from the Greeks’ ancient ancestors. On the other hand, Ilia and her fellow Greeks project the divergent Romeic, domestic view of Greekness, with an indifference and opposition to any hopeful, foreign attempts to change them.

A second way in which the dual-focus approach is manifested in *Never on Sunday* is the interchange of scenes in which the one hero appears, with scenes in which the other hero is present. On almost all occasions in *Never on Sunday*, any segments of the film in which only one lead is present, alternate with segments where the other lead is present. In addition, Dassin does not side with either of the two leads – Ilia and Homer. Apart from the fact that they both occupy the screen for relatively equal amounts of time, any possible identification of the audience with either of the two heroes is avoided via the use of music and the camera work. In relation to the music, the film’s composer does not overtly associate any hero with a specific musical theme – a common classical and mainstream Hollywood practice. As far as the camera is concerned, Dassin’s employment of ‘neutral’ camera shots – point-of-view shots, for example, are not used, and low angle shots are scarce – limits the possibilities for audience identification with either of the two leads.

In addition to the primary gender dichotomy, Homer and Ilia develop a series of secondary dichotomies which effectively form their gender roles in the film. These secondary dichotomies derive from the film’s principle dichotomy – the competing ideas of Greek national identity: the Romeic and the Hellenic. In the following sections I show the ways in which Ilia and Homer become

associated with the Romeic and Hellenic identity respectively, and how these identities predetermine gender behaviour and representation in the film.

4.2 National identities, Rebetiko and the film's music

The film's use of Rebetiko as its only Greek musical genre plays a dominant role in the formation of the Romeic identity in the film. In the film, Rebetiko is intertwined with the Romeic and so are those who love it – Ilia, her friends, and in general, modern Greece and its people. On the other hand, the personification of the Hellenic identity in the film, Homer, is associated with classical music. In this section I examine the ways in which the film's music underscores the heroes' association with the two identities as this contributes to the representation of gender in the film.

The film's saturation with musical acts using Rebetiko – songs (performed in the tavern and at Ilia's place) as well as diegetic instrumental pieces (performed by the tavern's Rebetiko orchestra) – emphasises the fact that singing and dancing to Rebetiko was an essential part of Greek daily life. This becomes apparent to unfamiliar Homer, early in the film, when he enters the Piraeus tavern. The bouzouki orchestra performs an instrumental version of the song in Hasapiko rhythm "It has been a misunderstanding" (4:50). The hero is in for an unparalleled experience: he sees men singing (figure 40, 04:12), a man dancing while drinking (figure 41, 07:29), other men dancing and waving their hands to the Hasapiko rhythm while seated and others just drinking plenty of Ouzo.



Figures 40 and 41: Rebetiko part of Greek life – singing and dancing
(*Never on Sunday*, 1960, 04:12; 07:29)

These illustrative scenes are strikingly similar to the images described by the Frenchman Bartholdy from his experience in 'Romeic' Smyrna, before the Minor Asia catastrophe, when Rebetiko was flourishing:

For a Greek to dance, any time of the day is suitable.
The taverns in Smyrna and the other ports are continuously filled with men drinking, dancing and singing. Even on the decks of their boats they manage to find a bit of space where they can dance...

*(Defi magazine (1993), vol. 18)*¹⁴⁹

Indeed, other examples in the film testify that scenes like the one described above, formed part of the Greeks' daily routine: Giorgos dances to a Zeibekiko tune "just for himself" (6:03) and later on in the film he sings (46:39); Ilia and her friends sing in high spirits at her birthday party (28:24); the bouzouki player Takis plays a joyful tune and cheers up everyone present at the tavern (52:10); Ilia sings and dances "The Children of Piraeus" ("Τα Παιδιά του Πειραιά") in ecstasy (1:08:17); singing and dancing is present even in the prison (1:21:27). The Rebetiko (performance and dance) and its abundant use by the characters throughout the film at any given time of the day, accentuate the film's Romeic character. The indissoluble association of dancing with the Romeic identity is stressed by Homer's evident inability to dance to the Hasaposerviko tune at the end of the film. The hero becomes a laughing stock of the tavern's customers and – along with him – the Hellenic cultural identity and its supporters are ridiculed.

By contrast, Homer, as the Hellenic's representative in the film, is associated with Western classical music. Considering the Hellenic identity's strong tendency to assimilate Western European culture, Homer's association with the Bach cello suites seems appropriate: Homer and Ilia listen to a vinyl recording of the Prelude from Bach's Suite No.3 in C major (BWV 1009) as part of Ilia's 'reformation'. Ilia's apparent apathy to the Prelude (she yawns

¹⁴⁹ As found in Emery (2000).

while pretending she is eagerly focused on the piece's timing), which is heard as background music throughout Ilia's studies, marks her general attitude (and that of the modern Greeks in general) towards the Hellenic and her 'education'. The Prelude switches to the Sarabande dance from the same suite during the night when Ilia is alone gazing at her 'reformed' home – hence the choice of the quieter, more relaxed mood of the Sarabande rather than that of the hectic Prelude. In the day, however, the prelude returns: with Ilia being just about ready to open the door and meet the sailors from the American fleet which has just arrived – thus returning to her 'old' self – the Prelude comes back (1:10:38). Acting as a reminder and a last minute 'saviour', the cello rescues the heroine from the delineated 'downfall', the return to her old self. The choice of Bach's Cello Suite is not accidental. The cello, a recognisable instrument typical of the Western musical tradition, becomes associated with Homer through his use of the compositions written for that instrument as the musical way to 'reform' Ilia. The instrument's solemn character consolidates the pretentious gravity that the director seems to attribute to the Hellenic identity. What is more, Bach's Cello Suites are generally thought to have been intended as advanced etudes or studies and are still treated as such.¹⁵⁰ Unavoidably, the etude's laborious nature parallels Ilia's uninteresting training which appears as endless torture. Hence, the film's music enhances the already established dichotomy by completing the puzzle via the Bach Suite: the Romeic, is associated with every day Greekness, carelessness, spontaneity, amusement and happiness through Ilia and Rebetiko; the Hellenic is linked with antiquity, plainness, rigour, severity and pretence through Homer and the Cello Suite. In other words, music epitomises the personifications of the Romeic and the Hellenic through Ilia and Homer respectively.

The dichotomy within Greek national identity is further stressed via two of Homer's idols, Aristotle and Plato – hegemonic figures of the Classical era and prominent symbols of the Hellenic. The two philosophers held a particular position towards music and women. As far as music is concerned, both

¹⁵⁰ In fact, the first two published editions of the Cello Suites bore the title "Etudes", a clear indication of the attitude of mind these seemingly impossible tough works engendered (Gramophone magazine, 1952).

Aristotle and Plato made the distinction between the modes used in ancient Greek music, distinguishing them as ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ music. Aristotle made a distinction among the Greek modes, claiming that they have a different effect on the soul. For example, Aristotle maintained that melodies in Mixolydian and Dorian modes have a somewhat calming effect, while the Phrygian makes the soul more agitated. Plato, in his *Republic* (1993), also distinguished between Western and Oriental music, between the Ionian (Western tradition – the major scale) and the Phrygian (Oriental, commonly met in Rebetiko) modes, and argued that Oriental music should be rejected. Evidently, the philosophers’ views on music reflect the arguments of the Hellenic supporters regarding Rebetiko’s Eastern origins and its non-Greekness (see 2.5.3 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*).

Similarities between the ancient and modern Greek eras are also observed in terms of male attitudes to women. The extremely patriarchal views of the Rebetes discussed earlier (see 2.5.3 *Rebetiko: a patriarchal domain*) seem to draw upon those of the two philosophers, albeit at a different level. Aristotle, considered by Homer as “the greatest Greek of all” (41:37) (“I want to walk where Aristotle walked” (12:33)), had a very low opinion of women and is generally considered by feminist critics as misogynist. It is natural that Ilia could not have cared less about the philosopher’s writings since, according to the Captain, he claims that “men are everything and women are nothing” (41:44). In the philosopher’s view, women are not the equals of men; they lack men’s bodily and moral virtues and hence they are destined to obey – a deed which deprives them of their freedom (Hummel, 1993).¹⁵¹ Although Plato (Aristotle’s teacher) had a better opinion of women, he, too, considered them as inferior beings. Despite his claim that women should receive equal education to men, he remarks that “it is only men who are complete human beings and can hope for ultimate fulfilment; the best a woman can hope for is to become a man” (Plato, *Timaeus* 90e, 2000)). Whether in ancient Greece or in modern

¹⁵¹ Aristotle claims that women are defective by nature because they cannot produce semen, which contains a full human being (Whitbeck, 1976). Therefore, he concludes, “a male is male in virtue of a particular ability, and a female in virtue of a particular inability” (*Generation of Animals*, I, 82f, 2004), characterising her as “an infertile male” (*Generation of Animals*, I, 728a, 2004).

Greece of the twentieth century, the apparent inequality between the sexes seems to be perpetual.

Although the Bach Cello Suite represents Homer and the Hellenic, the hero is accompanied by a Rebetiko theme (figure 42) in two instances in the film. This association of Homer with a musical genre which is foreign to him and he sees only as a tourist attraction, is not only unusual but hints at significant connotations in terms of the Greek national identities presented in the film. This theme, in binary form, is the only Rebetiko theme in the film with a distinct oriental flavour. The A part is based in its entirety on a particular bouzouki mode (*dromos*) called *Sabah* (figure 43). *Sabah* has Arabian-Persian origins and it means “crack of dawn”.

Homer's theme

3 Am C⁷ F A⁷ A^{#9} A^{b9}

5 B^b A Dm

Fine

Figure 42: Homer's theme

Sabah

Figure 43: Bouzouki mode Sabah

The theme is heard for the first time immediately after Homer has been literally and metaphorically punched in the face by the Greeks. It is presented as diegetic music as it is played in the background by the tavern's Rebetiko orchestra. The second time it is heard, the Hellenic's representative is once again overwhelmed by the 'crude' Romeic reality he seems to have failed to consider or comprehend; Homer is presented, desperate and 'down-and-out',

sitting on Ilia's front step, literally at 'sabah' (the melody's mode) – the crack of dawn.¹⁵² This time the theme's melody is performed by an American instrument, the electric guitar, which emphatically confirms the association of the theme with the hero. Given the Hellenic efforts to erase any recall of the nation's recent Ottoman past, (Papadimitriou, 2000:121), the Rebetiko theme, with its intense oriental traits, acts as the death knell of Homer's efforts to impose the Hellenic identity on Ilia and her friends. Moreover, Homer's association with the Rebetiko theme, at a time when he and the Hellenic culture he represents are completely overpowered by the Greeks and the Romeic identity, highlights the Romeic's supremacy over the Hellenic.

Greece and Ilia are connected with the Romeic not only through the musical but also the social domain of Rebetiko. The film's settings are essentially confined to Piraeus port, the shipyard and the Rebetiko tavern, places directly associated with the Rebetiko social domain and the lower class milieu.¹⁵³ Moreover, through the bookish Captain's line: "This is Romios! Don't mess with him!" (2:00) in the film's introductory scene, Dassin emphatically establishes the Greeks' 'true' identity. This is further highlighted through the frequent scenes of the men working at the harbour, which depict the film's realistic and routine-like character and underscore the film's Romeic identity (Papadimitriou, 2000:122).

At the same time, the film degrades and ridicules the Hellenic identity, ascribing its typical traits to Homer – a passionate enthusiast of the values and ideals of ancient Greece and a fixated critic of modern society. For example, the hero reveres the Parthenon, the symbol of the Hellenic identity as it appears in the film and trademark of Greece's link to the ancient past. While on the Acropolis, after watching Medea, Homer tries to explain to Ilia the harmony of Greek art forms, that "all evil is disharmony" and how she, Ilia, is in disharmony with herself (42:10). In response, Ilia, turns her back on him, the Acropolis and, in essence, the Hellenic (figure 44, 42:03). It is also worth mentioning that, although Greece became a popular travel destination after the

¹⁵² Failing to recognise him, Tonio thought he was a beggar and gave him some change (57:25).

¹⁵³ During the Classical period of Rebetiko, the genre evolved primarily in Piraeus (see 2.5.1.2 *Origin and growth of Rebetiko*).

success of the film, none of the commonly known and identifiable Greek sights or objects appears in the film other than the bouzouki (appearing in all its glory from the very first frame of the film, in a close shot (figure 47)) and the Acropolis. Moreover, foustanella, a popular tourist attraction and a traditional symbol of the Hellenic cultural heritage (Verinis, 2005), is avoided in the film.



Figure 44: Ilia walks away from Homer, the Acropolis and the Hellenic
(Never on Sunday, 1960, 42:03)

The film's music underlines the personification of the Romeic and the Hellenic identity by Ilia and Homer respectively. On the one hand, the Rebetiko music, to which Ilia and her friends listen, sing and dance, is an identifier of the Romeic. Moreover, Rebetiko's social domain, as depicted in the film, emphatically establishes the Greeks' Romeic identity. On the other hand, Homer's association with classical music, a product of Western culture so attractive to the Hellenic supporters, denotes the dissimilarities between the two heroes and, in essence, between the two identities. The two protagonists' association with the respective identities directs them to specific attitudes and behaviours which as shown result in particular kinds of gender representation in the film.

4.3 National identities and the American Hollywood musical

In this section I argue that the film's structural and stylistic similarities to the American Hollywood musical and, even more importantly, its striking subversions, accentuate the dichotomy of the Hellenic and Romeic identities through their embodiments by the male and female leads. This, along with the employment of Rebetiko, essentially leads to the representation of gender-based behaviour and sexuality. The fact that *Never on Sunday* is fundamentally structured around the conventions of the American Hollywood musical is not surprising considering the fact that Dassin is himself American and is heavily influenced by the American Broadway and Film musical. Dassin, like the film's hero, Homer, whom he plays in the film, was born in Middletown Connecticut.¹⁵⁴ His involvement with the film industry flourished in the forties, in his work as a director of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Universal Studios productions. In 1952 he entered the musical world, directing *Two's Company*, a Broadway musical revue starring Bette Davis. Soon after he was blacklisted as a communist and, being forbidden to work in any Hollywood productions, he went to France. His influences from the culture of the musical became more apparent eight years later, in *Never on Sunday*. The film's plot development, the dynamic of its characters and the overall quality all have their roots in the tradition of the Hollywood musical.

4.3.1 Subverting the Hollywood musical

Despite using the dual-focus approach and syntax of the Hollywood musical Dassin includes a number of devices which subvert the Hollywood musical: the film does not end with a marriage, and neither does he follow the 'Pygmalion and Galatia' schema (discussed in the next subsection), both so common in the Hollywood musical. This subversion of the Hollywood musical structure stresses, in a variety of ways, the incompatibility of the two heroes and of the identities they personify – the Romeic and the Hellenic. As a result, these distinctly different traits of the two identities become engendered.

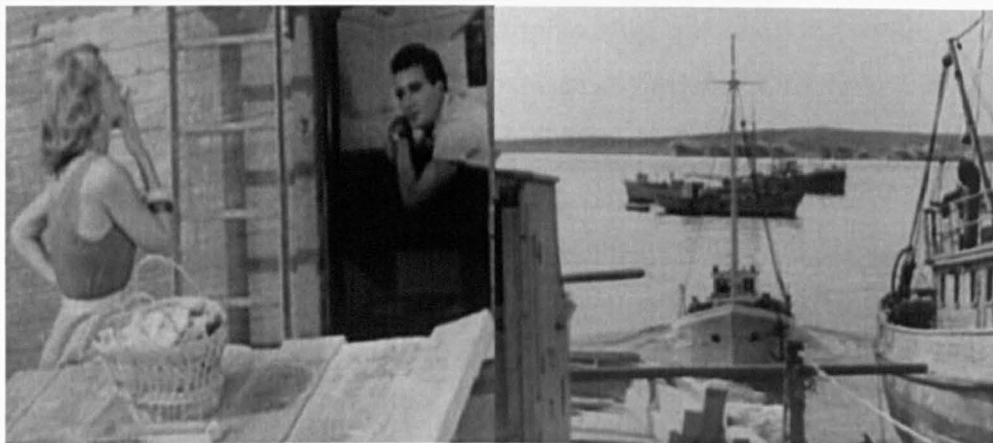
¹⁵⁴ He went to high school in the Bronx and worked in New York, starting out as an actor with the ARTEF (Yiddish Proletarian Theatre) company in New York.

The *marriage ending* is considered the cornerstone on which the Hollywood musical's structure is built. As discussed earlier, the American film musical is based on the logic of the dual-focus approach, in which the structure of the film grows out of the characters instead of the plot. The male and female leads, apart from their prime sexual distinction, are opposed early in the film through secondary dichotomies – radically divergent cultural values, e.g. beauty/riches, child/adult, order/liberty, progress/stability and work/entertainment (Altman, 1987:26). In order for the plot to reach a successful outcome, in film musicals these oppositions are commonly resolved through the conjoining of the couple which inevitably leads to marriage. According to Altman, the marriage not only resolves the sexual tension but also all the problematic secondary thematic dichotomies that seemed irreconcilably opposed throughout the film. Altman suggests that the common device of marriage in musicals is a non-rational mediatory model without which there would be no climax and no resolution in the plot (1987:26).

By not employing the device of marriage and the reconciliation of the conflicting attitudes and worldviews it offers, Dassin emphasises the great differences of the unresolved thematic dichotomies of the film: primarily the Romeic versus the Hellenic but also others deriving from these, such as modernity versus antiquity, Greece versus United States, work versus entertainment, etc. As a result, the audience, having clearly conceived the duality in Greek cultural/ethnic identity presented in the film, is left to believe that the two worlds are unable to co-exist. The one and true world that they see on screen is *their* reality, the world of the Romeic. Any other than that remains, and will always be, unreal. As it appears in the film, the 'idealised' Hellenic identity is merely academic theory, existing only on paper which in turn is eventually torn to pieces by Homer, admitting his defeat (1:30:47).

A second way in which the conventions of the Hollywood musical are subverted is through the way in which the heroine is presented in *Never on Sunday*. Ilija embodies the Romeic and she reflects the Romeic's trait of realism, unlike the Hollywood musical in which the heroine is presented as dream-like and thus unattainable (Altman, 1987). Ilija is real and attainable since even the simplest of men can 'have' her (the fisherman, the baker, etc.). With her

presentation as the absolute object of desire in the film, it becomes apparent that she can exist in real life too, and that although not anyone can possess her (as Tonio does through ‘marriage’), it is more than likely that anyone can sleep with her. The symbolic cinematographic effects in the film underscore this. As soon as Ilia is established as the definite object of male desire (from the very first scene of the film, analysed later), Dassin introduces a scene where Ilia visits Tonio at the shipyard (17:55). The two of them stare passionately at each other without expressing their thoughts in words (figure 45). Instead, this is done with film semiotics; during this ‘silent’ moment in the scene, a boat slowly entering the sea (figure 46) denotes the sexual innuendos hidden in the characters’ stare. This subconsciously efficient yet common cinema code further stimulates the sexual lust for Ilia in the audience’s gaze, confirming her presence as being realistically ‘graspable’ and not at all a daydream.



Figures 45 and 46: Ilia and Tonio stare passionately while the boat enters the sea (*Never on Sunday*, 1960, 18:03; 17:55)

The use of music in the film creates yet another subversion of the Hollywood musical standard methods, which further underscores the differences of the two heroes and, consequently, the diverse versions of the Greek national identity they represent. In the American film musical the contrast of reality to ideality is the norm. Music and dance are employed in musicals to blur the boundaries of the two worlds and establish a communication unobstructed by differences in viewpoints and beliefs

(Tsitsopoulou, 2000:83). This transition – what Altman refers to as the ‘audio dissolve’ – creates continuities between the realms of reality and wish fulfilment, thus generating an artificial sense of closure and integration (1987: 62 – 74). Despite the usage of the audio dissolve in *Never on Sunday*, the unsuccessful ‘marriage’ of the two worlds is accentuated by Homer’s general attitude towards Rebetiko and its music and dances. His inability to comprehend that Rebetiko is the key to Greek popular modernity and that it meets a vital emotional need for the Greeks, seals the failure of his scheme. In essence, in *Never on Sunday*, music not only bridges the two worlds, but it “emphasises the distance that separates them” (Tsitsopoulou, 2000:83).

Dassin chooses to apply another of the Hollywood musical’s methods, the ‘crossover’, yet it is seemingly modified to highlight again the Romeic’s superiority over the Hellenic. The ‘crossover’, i.e. the values once associated with one of the partners eventually being adopted by the other (Altman, 1987:5), is a standard approach in Hollywood musicals. Dassin follows it, but instead of there being a mutual adoption of values among the two heroes, in the film it only works one way. At the closing scene of the film at the tavern, Homer is acting the Romeic way; dancing the Hasaposerviko (quite showily too, swinging a chair and with numerous glasses on his head), drinking ouzo and at the end tearing up all his notes and throwing them to the sea, is an explicit indication of the hero’s adoption of the Romeic way of life. On the other hand, Ilia not only did not cross over to Homer’s values, she made no effort to temper her previous code of conduct. Homer’s attempts to ‘educate’ Ilia and teach her the Hellenic culture and way of living worked only temporarily and at the end are ridiculed.

Having said all these, one could well argue that ultimately there is formation of a couple in *Never on Sunday*, something which is expected in the Hollywood musical. And indeed there is; the coupling of Ilia and Tonio, rather than of the two leads, constitutes a subversion which once again seems to be purposefully made to undermine the Hellenic identity and its inability to prevail over the Romeic. As in the Hollywood musical, the coupling process here of Tonio and of Ilia, is endowed with “the magical qualities of music and dance” (Altman, 1987:250). At the tavern, the couple-to-be dances to the instrumental

version of the erotic song “Children of Piraeus”, previously sung by Ilia in the film (1:06:15). The fact that they dance to a Hasapiko tune marks the couple’s bonding: one of the dance’s characteristic traits being that it expresses the solidarity of the dancers (Petropoulos, 1990). Moreover, their dancing before a large crowd within the domain of the tavern, as Altman maintains, establishes the joining together of the couple as official and final, as well as celebrating the successful conclusions of both show and romance (1987:227). The union between Ilia and Tonio suggests that the Greeks choose to go with anyone they like, with anyone who thinks alike, i.e. in the Romeic way. Tonio, though half Italian, has proved early in the film that he, too, thinks and behaves the Romeic way: in the first scene he accepts the challenge to jump into the sea as the “Romioi”¹⁵⁵ previously did, and later on at Ilia’s party, he knows exactly what will convince Ilia to tell Media’s story in English – music (32:21).

Despite the fact that Dassin did not follow the conventional ‘recipe’ to bring to union the two leads, by forming the coupling of Ilia and Tonio, ultimately, the film’s ending is consistent with the typical ending of the American film musical. As mentioned earlier, marriage, as a device, at the end of the musical film, appears to resolve all the problematic thematic dichotomies which appeared between the male and female leads. Altman argues that the “American Popular Mythology” is essentially built upon the foundation of marriage for love. He asserts that in the American film musical the two leads appear to be “confined to the dim world of unfulfilled sexual drives” and that only self-sacrificing and transfiguring love has the power to accomplish the miracle (Altman, 1987:262). Despite Ilia’s sympathetic free-spirit and autonomy, Dassin, at the end, presents her as if, indeed, she needs to be ‘cured’, and that the only ‘medicine’ that can ‘cure’ her is love. The last lines of the film are indicative. Watching Ilia as she is being carried away by Tonio, Homer and the wise Captain remark (1:27:37):

Captain: “If anyone will save Ilia, it will be Tonio.”

Homer: “Why Tonio?”

Captain: “Because with love...it’s possible.”

¹⁵⁵ Captain’s words (2:02).

Tonio courts Ilia throughout the film but now he finally possesses her since courtship is longing but marriage is possession (Altman, 1987:263). With Ilia's union with Tonio, the heroine's sexual cravings and unfulfilled needs appear to forcefully come to an end. Presented as the absolute object of desire for all the male characters and being equally attractive to all the male audience, the film's female lead is ultimately restrained and possessed, as happens in the American film musical.

4.3.2 The 'Pygmalion and Galatea' schema

Dassin's adaptation of the Pygmalion and Galatea schema further highlights the incompatibility of the unresolved thematic dichotomies of the film. The metaphor is widely used in the American show film musical where the male lead appears as the artist and the female as the art-object shaped by him (Altman, 1987:249). This relation further strengthens the woman's identification with "seductive visibility" and man's association with the camera (Tsitsopoulou, 2000:86). In Hollywood film musicals such as *Easter Parade* (1948) the male lead attempts to guide the female and provide her with the required skills and knowledge. Altman argues that when the process of teaching is seen as a skill and that of learning as a matter of practice, the chances of success are limited. However, once the teaching/learning process is transformed into male affection and female responsiveness, then the mission is accomplished triumphantly (1987:247).

Dassin chooses to use this schema but seems to ridicule it, and, in effect, the Hellenic identity. Homer wants to transform Ilia from a joyful yet naive prostitute to an intellectual, gnostic human being. His view of 'education' is entirely based on Western-European culture, on the ancient philosophies of Aristotle and Plato and two of those who followed – Racine and Descartes. Scenes like Ilia yawning while listening to Bach, the disappointment on her face when the picture of her favourite Piraeus team Olympiakos is replaced by Homer with a Picasso painting, or even the unjustifiable 'pride' with which she shows Tonio her 'grand' accomplishment: successfully drawing a two-dimensional square, reveal the futility of Homer's task as well as its predestined

failure. What is more, it stresses the huge incompatibility of the Hellenic perception of Greekness with 'real' Greekness, underlining that any attempt to enforce it on Greek people is a futile dream.

Not bringing the Pygmalion/Galatea metaphor to the typical Hollywood musical closure, Dassin lets us believe that Homer's 'project' turned out to be a failure only because the hero did not show Ilia the warmth and affection she apparently needed. Despite the fact that at the end Homer confesses to Ilia that he has "been dying to sleep with her...from the first minute" (1:27:12), he wilfully does not treat her as a woman but as an idea, "a symbol" (1:27:06). This is where his failure lies. His obedience to the Western, chivalric code which, as Tsitsopoulou argues, requires that the woman be chaste, virtuous and sexually unattainable (2000:87) leads Homer to deliberately refuse to 'see' Ilia as what she first and foremost is presented in the film: a sexually active and attainable woman. On the contrary, all the male characters in the film and through the camera work and music (discussed later) the male audience, view Ilia as Tonio does: "Is not a symbol, is a woman!" (1:27:08). Homer's obsession with Ilia being an "idea" and "a symbol of his quest", is in fact paralleled with the Romeic perception that the Hellenic thesis is based primarily on theory and that it cannot be substantiated in action. Any obsession with the ancient past and what it stands for (as the Europeans view it) proves to be vain, ineffective and unrealistic.

The striking subversions of the Hollywood musical syntax and structure such as the marriage ending and the Pygmalion/Galatia schema are examples of methods which convey the general perception that characterises the film: the two notions of Greek identity are not only incompatible but also are completely unable to co-exist; the only 'true' identity is the Romeic one. What is more, these subversions are responsible for gender representations in the film since the behaviours of the male and female leads are related to the traits of the identities that each one represents.

4.3.3 Representation of femininity and sexuality by the Hollywood musical and Rebetiko

Never on Sunday hides within some other characteristics which are also distinctive of the American Hollywood musical. These traits come forward through the use of the film's music – Rebetiko and its association to the Romeic identity – and are integral to the representation of gender and sexuality in the film. One of the most important of these common characteristics is the fact that Ilia is both visually and audibly presented as the absolute figure of male desire. Either secretly or, in most cases, overtly, the heroine signifies the utter lust and sexual yearning of all the male characters of the film (main and extras).

To present the film's heroine in such a manner is a typical practice of the American musical which, like *Never on Sunday*, has clear cut gender-stereotyped images: woman as the object of desire and the man as the spectator. Altman argues that the spectator is both the consumer and the creator of the film and that the identification of the camera/audience as male and the show as female constitutes the very foundation of the musical's (particularly the show musical's) syntax (1987:213,226). Moreover, cinema scholar Lucy Fischer asserts that the manipulation of images of the female body is in accordance with the traditional stereotypes of woman as a passive, decorative and malleable object of male creativity and desire (1981:159-173). Woman is the perfect vision, a work of art, whereas man is the voyeur intent on consuming the woman visually. This is thoroughly reflected in the apparatus of one of the most successful musical producers, Ziegfeld Florenz:

man = eyes = camera = desire,

woman = body = art = object of desire (Altman, 1987:243).

From the very first scene of *Never on Sunday* it becomes apparent that the film will follow the same path, both visually and musically. In the first frame of the film, there is a close shot of Rebetiko's trademark symbol – the bouzouki (figure 47), the most popular musical instrument among the Piraeus men ("Men like this music" (16:32)) and some men working in Piraeus harbour in the background.

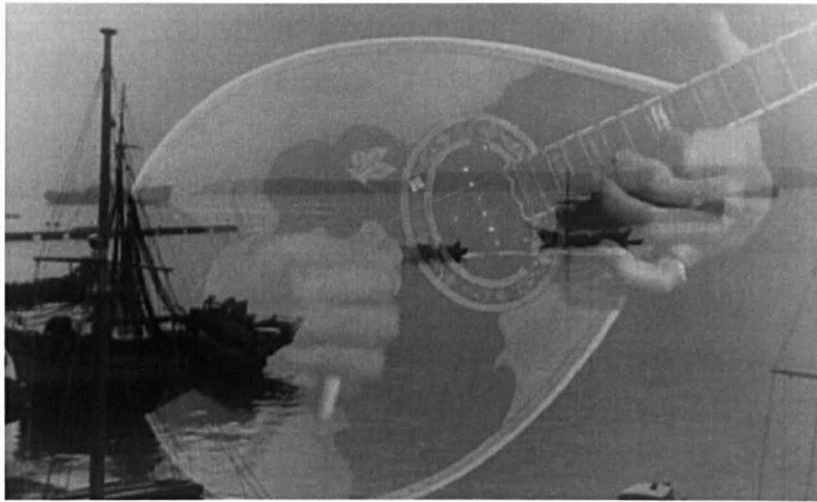


Figure 47: Commanding presence of Rebetiko's symbol, the bouzouki
(*Never on Sunday*, 1960, 00:00)

Via its principal instrument, Rebetiko and its patriarchal domain establish the film's setting. Along with the male dominated working place of the harbour, shown shortly after, they form the film's realm as well as indicating from the very beginning the film's stance and preference towards the Romeic identity. After the bouzouki's persistence in the continuous semi-quavers which build up the tension (figure 48) (6x bars 1 – 4), the markedly prolonged and extended ascending arpeggios, with distinctive chromaticism, that follow (bars 5 – 18), prepare the ground for the grand sight which will soon appear. As discussed in the previous case study, chromaticism is a musical trait closely associated with femininity (Kalinak, 1992; McClary, 1991). Suddenly the scene reaches its climax both literally and metaphorically: on the cut to Ilia heading to the sea, the bouzouki hits a distinctive high G performed with a tremolo (bar 19). As Ilia rushes to take off her clothes, she causes huge turmoil among the all-male population of the harbour. Right after the climax, the downshift follows with a descending melodic pattern (bars 19-24) of semi-quavers as well as quavers, which help to release the tension. The introduction resolves firmly on a crotchet – the first time on the dominant of the tonic chord and at the repeat on the root of the tonic (D).

Bouzouki Introduction

Figure 48: Introduction (bouzouki)

Ilia's 'intrusion' into the male-dominated domain of the shipyard attracts the fixated gazes of all the male workers and exemplifies, right from the beginning, the stereotypical gender roles used in the musical and throughout this film: that of the exhibitionist woman and the voyeuristic man (figures 49 and 50). Rebetiko, the bouzouki and the accompanying music greatly contribute to this.



Figures 49 and 50: The exhibitionist woman and the voyeuristic men
(Never on Sunday, 1960, 00:53; 00:51)

Another notable resemblance between *Never on Sunday* and the American musical in terms of the ways they represent gender and sexuality is the fact that Ilia's character and overall behaviour are essentially 'shaped' by the men who surround her. In the American musical, the heroine discovers her true nature in being desired by a man and it is her love for a man that motivates her actions and accomplishments (Tsitsopoulou, 2000:88). In *Broadway Serenade* (1939), for example, the heroine, MacDonald, is typically represented as if all her beauty and talent depend on the attention given to her by her male partner. In a similar fashion, in *Funny Face* (1957), a fashion photographer (Fred Astaire) transforms an apparently ordinary clerk (Audrey Hepburn) into an object of beauty and desire. This is accomplished due to Astaire's lavish attention to the heroine, which helps her to release her repressed self.

In a similar fashion, in *Never on Sunday* Ilia's deepest needs are fulfilled by loving and pleasing men. When Homer eagerly asks Ilia what makes her happy, she answers with simplicity: "I touch you – if you feel good I'm happy!" (59:20). After Homer's intense criticisms and eagerness to impose his ideal of Greekness on Ilia's reality, the heroine replies: "Can you make me somebody who it is good to love?" (1:01:20), complying with the aforementioned depiction of femininity in the Hollywood musical.

Ilia's innermost sexual desires are wholly reflected in the lyrics of the song "Children of Piraeus" (1:08:17):

Verse 1

From my window I send one and two and three and four kisses
that reach the port as one and two and three and four birds
How I wish I had one and two and three and four boys
who, once they grow up, they'll be leventes for the pride of Piraeus

Chorus

No matter how much I look, I find no other port
that will make me as crazy as I am about Piraeus
which, when it gets dark, offers me songs,
changes its chords and gets filled with men

Verse 2

As I step out my door, there is no one that I don't love
and as I sleep at night, I know I'll dream of him
I put jewels on my neck and a bead for lucky charm
because at night I expect, as I go out to the port, to meet a stranger.

The song is suffused with eroticism. The heroine, gazing in adoration at the players of her beloved Olympiakos Piraeus team (by far the most popular team in Greece, especially supported by those of the lower class who turned it into a Romeic symbol¹⁵⁶), sings about the erotic nature of the Piraeus port. Being in complete ecstasy on her bed (figure 51), she overtly declares her desire to meet with a stranger (“because at night I expect...to meet a stranger”), further enhancing her sexually accessible nature and for this reason she wears a lucky charm (“I put ...a bead for lucky charm”). She glorifies the port of Piraeus for all the men it attracts (“No matter how much I look, I find no other port...which, gets filled with men”) and wishes that she might, someday, make *leventes*¹⁵⁷ like these who will be the pride of Piraeus (“How I wish I had one and two and three and four boys who they'll be leventes for the pride of Piraeus”).



Figure 51: Ilia in ecstasy singing in her bed
(*Never on Sunday*, 1960, 01:08:36)

¹⁵⁶Olympiakos is also found in *Stella*: Miltos is a football player of Olympiakos.

¹⁵⁷ Plural for *leventis*.

Despite the clear-cut tonality of the song, the song's intro is distinct for its chromaticism although, again, the chords used are strictly diatonic I and V (figure 52).



Figure 52: “Children of Piraeus” – the introduction

Moreover, the song's chorus is indicative of the heroine's sexual mood (figure 53). In particular, the shape of the melody, after it climaxes at the highest note of the song, F# (3rd bar), commences a steady anti-climactic downshift (the melodic and rhythmic pattern in bars 3-4 are identical with those used in bars 5-6 but a pitch lower).



Figure 53: “Children of Piraeus” – the chorus

Ilia's liking for Rebetiko is directly linked with her deepest need to please and sexually satisfy men. She likes Rebetiko because – as she informs the English sailor lying naked in her bed – “men like this music” (16:32). To the voyeuristic male gaze, the close connection of the female object of desire on screen with Rebetiko – “their music”, the music that it is part of their everyday routine – distinguishes Ilia as something more credible and accessible (Tsitsopoulou, 2000:90). The English sailor's unsuccessful attempt to make

love to Ilia is triumphantly reversed with the help of Rebetiko. Music is the first possible solution to arousing the sailor’s manhood that comes to Ilia’s mind; and not just any kind of music but a Rebetiko song, “Let’s take a walk to the moon” (“Πάμε μια Βόλτα στο Φεγγάρι”), once again confirming Rebetiko’s place as the absolute musical genre for the Greek man. The sailor from Manchester is instantly attracted to the bouzouki’s sound – a reaction which suggests the universality of Rebetiko as symbol of masculinity – and, as if by magic, he recaptures his lost sexual drive. The chorus’ lyrics are indicative of the mood as well as the purpose of the song – Ilia intends to lift the sailor’s spirits (“send away the sorrow”) so they can (sexually) take each other to the moon (“let’s go for a stroll to the moon”):

Palikari, send away the sorrow
let’s go for a stroll to the moon

What is of more than passing importance is the fact that the song which instils the sailor’s manliness is in Zeibekiko rhythm – the absolute symbol of masculinity in the Rebetiko world (see 3.1.1.2 *The Zeibekiko*). Moreover, the melody of the song’s chorus follows a similar climactic and then anti-climactic course to that of the “Children of Piraeus” (figure 54). Right on the downbeat of the first bar, the melody emphatically begins with an accented high D, which is the highest pitch of the song as well as the tonic note of the scale. From there, the melodic line follows a straightforward descending course, concluding to the fifth of the tonic chord (pitch A). The second bar’s melodic and rhythmic pattern is identical to the first, only two scale steps lower, something that is quite similar to the “The Children of Piraeus”.



Figure 54: “Let’s take a walk to the moon” – the chorus

In *Never on Sunday*, the representation of femininity complies with the Hollywood industry's standard of male desire and the construction of the gaze as male which is then adopted by male and female spectators (Mulvey, 1992). Just as in a Hollywood musical, Ilia is presented in the film as the absolute figure of male desire and her behaviour is essentially shaped by the way she is treated by the men who surround her. In the film, the Hollywood musical standards depict femininity and sexuality primarily through the use of Rebetiko and its affiliation to the Romeic identity. Ilia's association with the barrel-organ, an instrument closely related with the Romeic, further contributes to Ilia's depiction of femininity and sexuality as well as reaffirming her Romeic nature.

4.4 Laterna, Ilia and the Romeic

In *Never on Sunday* Ilia is associated with the barrel-organ, known in Greek as *laterna* (λατέρνα). Despite the fact that Ilia is fond of listening to Rebetiko – men's favourite musical genre ("men like this music", 16:32), the heroine is not directly connected with Rebetiko or with any of its instruments since that may alter her intense femininity. The *laterna*, which came to mainland Greece from Smyrna and Constantinople, is intertwined with the Romeic cultural identity.¹⁵⁸ Indicatively, the Greek films in which the *laterna* has a predominant role – *Laterna, Poverty and Dignity* (Λατέρνα, Φτώχεια και Φιλότιμο, 1955), *Laterna, Poverty and Carnation* (Λατέρνα, Φτώχεια και Γαρύφαλλο, 1958) are considered canonic Romeic comedies. In this section I examine the association of Ilia with the *laterna* – which, it should be noted, is of feminine genus in the Greek language – as well as with the *laterna*'s music and the ways in which it underscores Ilia's connection with the Romeic identity and contributes to the representation of femininity in the film.

Ilia's similarities with the *laterna* are obvious throughout the film. To start with, Ilia's profession, by nature, resembles that of the *laterna* player. They are both associated with the street domain and are asked to perform in order to earn money (with the difference that Ilia chooses whom she goes with). Early in

¹⁵⁸ In 1878 the folk-musicologist Bourgault-Ducoudray was impressed by the number of barrel-organs he saw in Smyrna (Emery, 1990).

the film *Ilia* expresses her envy to the laterna player for having such a job: “What a life! You have your music and you earn money!” (24:22). The recognised ‘luxury’ to consider job as entertainment or entertainment as work (Dyer, 1981) subverts the Hollywood musical’s common dichotomy – work versus entertainment (Altman, 1987:48). This fusion of work and play within Greek popular modernity, i.e. the Romeic identity, is symbolised by the laterna in the film (Tsitsopoulou, 2000:3).

The parallelism of the laterna player and the laterna with *Ilia* is stressed on screen. As *Ilia* discusses her profession and her independence with Homer, the laterna player appears in the background with his instrument (figure 55).



Figure 55: *Ilia*, the laterna and the laterna player
(*Never on Sunday*, 1960, 25:06)

At the same time, the laterna performs its melodic theme (figure 56). The theme essentially consists of a core four-bar phrase (bars 1 – 4) which circulates – either with the very similar rhythmic and melodic pattern (bars 5 – 8, 13 – 16) or with slight differentiation in the melody due to the replacement of the root chord with the VI chord of the minor harmonic scale (bars 9 – 12). Harmonic minor, the theme’s scale, is commonly found in Rebetiko songs of the

'Eastern', Smyrna period. Moreover, the 'Oriental' sound colour of the scale accentuates the laterna's proximity to the Romeic culture.



Figure 56: Laterna's theme

The shape of the theme's melody illustrates a firm wave form, following an alternation of ascending and descending lines, each time for the same number of bars. The unambiguous cyclical character of the laterna theme, traced both in the melody as well in the form, is firmly connected with the laterna's and Ilia's feminine nature. The 'cycle' is closely associated with the feminine cycles, the monthly lunar cycle, the cycles of pregnancy and birth, the menopause, the female orgasm (which, in contrast to the male one, can be repetitive) (Crooks and Baur, 2002: 158-168; McAnulty and Burnette, 2001: 108-110). For these reasons, women have often been associated with the moon, and are considered cyclical, which explains the women's association with a repetitive clock motive (Sayrs, 1994).

The laterna theme is used at various moments in the film, confirming and further emphasising the laterna's association with Ilia. After the initial connection of the theme with Ilia in the scene mentioned above, Ilia subsequently enters the tavern in her black dress accompanied by the diegetic sound of the laterna across the street playing the laterna's theme (44:42). Soon after, the laterna's theme is heard once more when No Face and Homer discuss Ilia. This time the melody is performed not by the laterna but by the accordion, an instrument which in the film is associated with Homer – one of the two

heroes in the scene (53:43). Finally, at the film's finale, when Tonio picks up Ilia in his arms, the laterna theme appears one last time. In this case, the theme acts as an epilogue to the couple's happy ending and alludes to the sexual innuendos traced in the theme's cyclical character.

Ilia's association with the laterna is stressed even more when the heroine receives a laterna as a present for her birthday, given by all her Greek friends (all male since all her friends appear to be her clients as well). Ilia's laterna is made of carved wood and is embellished with embroidered lids and beads (figure 58). The embellishment of lanterns was very common in Greece, especially in the first half of the twentieth century when the laterna was very popular.¹⁵⁹ There were shops that dealt exclusively with everything to do with laterna decoration (Papadopoulos, 2002). This loving care, with which the Greeks "treated" their lanterns in terms of decoration, supports the argument that the laterna shares distinct feminine traits and thus highlights Ilia's association with the instrument. An erotic photo of Ilia is portrayed in a prominent position at the front of the gift-instrument, sealing the identification of the heroine with the instrument (figure 58). The custom of having a woman's picture on the laterna was very common; popular figures were Maria Pentagiotissa – a legendary female heroic figure and Rosa Eskenazy (Papadopoulos, 2002) – a popular Rebetiko singer and thus another Romeic element of laterna.

In the portrait on her laterna, Ilia is presented as a gypsy-like figure with the distinct addition of long, wavy, dark hair and a large carnation above the ear (figure 58). The illustration of the carnation on the ear as well as the kerchief on the hair was an explicit gypsy woman's trait. It should be noted that this is not the first time in the film that Ilia is associated with gypsy women. Earlier, in Ilia's bedroom, straight after the heroine has successfully aroused the sailor's manliness, the couple lie back embracing on Ilia's bed (17:34). Directly above the bed, there is a large painting which illustrates three beautiful gypsy women in a blossomed garden (figure 57). All of them wear their distinct gypsy kerchiefs on their hair. The one on the left caresses her hair, and her shoulder

¹⁵⁹ It is estimated that before 1940 there were 80,000 lanterns in Athens and Thessalonica alone (Papadopoulos, 2002).

becomes visible with the help of the loose stripe of her revealing dress. The one in the middle smells the vapour from a porcelain cup which, judging from her closed eyes, contains liquid pleasing to the senses. The last gypsy, smoking hashish, completes what seems to be a Rebetis fantasy of living paradise: sharing the garden of ‘Paradise’ with exotic, sexually appealing women and drugs.



Figure 57: Three gypsy women illustrated in the painting above Ilia’s bed
(*Never on Sunday*, 1960, 16:53)

For the Rebetes, gypsy women were a symbol of exoticism and were considered highly erotic. In Rebetiko songs the gypsy woman is praised for her charms and sexual appeal. Indicatively, in a 1948 song “Katsivella” (“Κατσιβέλλα” means “gypsy woman”) the male singer glorifies the gypsy woman’s beauty (“the sky trembles and falls with all its stars”) and calls for her to join him (“come my sweet gypsy”).¹⁶⁰ Most importantly, he asks her to leave the gypsy man she loves (“don’t go to your tent... your man will lose you”), change her appearance, discarding clothes and kerchief in order to look like a

¹⁶⁰ Composed by Mitsakis, G. The song was a success and was re-recorded in the early 1950s in the United States.

*Romia*¹⁶¹ and join him (“throw away the kerchief and...change your clothes and become a *Romia*”). The song confirms the self-definition of the *Rebetes* as *Romii* as well as the gypsy women’s allure.



Figure 58: Ilia and her gypsy-like image on her laterna
(*Never on Sunday*, 1960, 27:24)

Five years before working on *Never on Sunday*, Manos Hadjidakis wrote the music for one of the most popular films of Greek Cinema - *Laterna, Poverty and Dignity* (*Λατέρνα, Φτώχεια και Φιλότιμο*, 1955). The film was such a great financial success that a sequel followed two years later – *Laterna, Poverty and Carnation*.¹⁶² A year later the composer was asked to write the music for yet another film that dealt with the laterna – *A Laterna, a Life* (*Μια Λατέρνα, μια Ζωή*, 1958). Not surprisingly all films are akin to the Romeic identity since they deal with the poor living conditions of the low social spectrum. In a particular scene of *Laterna, Poverty and Dignity*, which stands out as one of the most recognisable and loveable moments of Greek Cinema, a group of gypsy women sings the classic song “Carnation on the ear”

¹⁶¹ The female *Romios*.

¹⁶² The carnation obviously was added after having made its mark on the 1955 production

(“Γαρόφαλλο στ’ αυτί”). The song lyrics praise the characteristics of beauty (“a carnation on the ear, and a kerchief on the hair...and cunningness in the eye”) and point to the strong sexual appeal that the gypsy woman possesses (“your breasts are like a tight fist that tears the silk...your mouth is cool, your lips are fire...”):

Verse 1:

A carnation on the ear, and cunningness in the eye
The pocket is empty as always but the heart is full
A carnation on the ear, and who is going to take it away from you
Your breasts are like a tight fist that tears the silk

Verse 2:

‘A carnation on the ear, and a kerchief on the hair
Your mouth is cool, your lips are fire
A carnation in the ear, a cigarette in the mouth
Where is your tent to come and pick you up?

One distinctive trait that enhances both the song’s exotic character and its feminine quality is the Tsifteteli rhythm. Tsifteteli stands out as an exotic and oriental rhythm that came to Greece from Minor Asia and it is primarily a women’s dance. The Rebetes in Athens considered it an effeminate dance suitable only for women and gay men (Petropoulos, 1990:91) (see Chapter Three).

In *Never on Sunday*, the association of femininity with Tsifteteli and the laterna is similar to that of *Laterna, Poverty and Dignity*. Iliá caresses the instrument as if it is a living being and stares at the exotic picture of herself portrayed on her laterna (figure 58). Straight after, she sings a song which is attributed to the laterna – symbol of her. The song is simply titled “The Laterna” and its composer, consistent in his practice, wrote it in Tsifteteli rhythm as he did in 1955 with “Carnation on the Ear”. The lyrics of “The Laterna” praise the instrument’s extraordinary power to promote and infuse love in the neighbourhood (“it sings sweetly... like a bird the heart flutters”),

despite the adverse conditions – the “love killer” and the “winter” with its associated bad weather conditions (“with south wind and snowy weather”). The laterna’s efforts are eventually fruitful since “the birds of Paradise have put up a nest” and even “a lemon tree... blossoms” during the winter time.

Verse 1:

Every time it gets dark in the small neighbourhood
With sun, with hail, with south wind and snowy weather
arrives and parks – be aware love killer
a laterna lamely in the corner

Verse 2:

The laterna sings sweetly in the night
like a bird the heart flutters
And blossoms again in the withered neighbourhood
a lemon tree, fooled in the winter

Bridge:

...it seems as if they have put up a nest
the birds of Paradise.

In the song’s lyrics, the laterna’s characteristics and its activities strikingly resemble those of Ilia. The laterna appears in the song as the personification of love. Ilia appears in the film as the absolute representative of love and love-making; she succeeds in instilling love and desire in all the men around her, even when the circumstances are unfavourable (“love killer” may well refer to Mr. No Face). What is more, they both sing beautifully, “like a bird” – Tonio calls Ilia “my little bird” from the first scene of the film while the two of them are in the sea at Piraeus (3:14).

Conversely, Ilia’s absence from ‘work’ had a tremendous effect on every man in the film and was a torture to them. During Ilia’s ‘study’ period, fisherman Spiros confesses to Ilia how miserable everyone is without her around (1:03:55). Ilia’s impact on everyone during the ‘transformation’ period becomes

even more apparent through the change in her. Her ritualistic and greatly anticipated arrival at the sea, that used to cause huge uproar, is replaced by an unforeseen and heartbreaking disappointment: “And Ilia ate from the apple of wisdom and she knew shame!” (Captain, 1:03:28).

It is worth mentioning that the inclusion of Ilia’s picture on the laterna, with the evident gypsy-like traits, has multiple functions in this scene. Apart from enhancing the song’s Oriental character and its proximity to the Romeic, the gypsy woman’s exoticness further stresses Ilia’s sexual appeal and fascination: in the world of Rebetiko, as discussed earlier (2.5.3.2 *The image of woman in song*), the Oriental-exotic and female eroticism intertwine (Holst, 2001). Moreover, it also denotes Ilia’s free-spirit and independence, typical gypsy characteristics. In a period of intense anti-Americanism in Greece due to the United States’ total control over the political and economic life of the country, Ilia’s firm defiance to No Face’s (the United States) plans to gain power over her, presents the heroine as a national symbol. In a similar manner, the subversion of the usual coupling of the main heroes underlines Ilia’s (Greece) autonomy and determined eagerness to make her own decision without being guided by No Face or Homer (the United States and its foreign policy). What is of more than passing importance, when Melina Mercouri (Ilia) overtly challenged the junta (1967 – 1974) which was controlled by the United States, her passport was taken from her with the ridiculous claim that she was not Greek. Mercouri responded with the song “I am a Romia” (“Είμαι Ρωμιά”), an action which underscores the actress’ notion of Greekness and confirms that the Romeic national identity was alive and well in 1972.¹⁶³

Apart from the gypsy’s contribution, the aforementioned scene with Ilia and her laterna adds to the Romeic in other ways. In the first place, the laterna’s song stands out for its Eastern tsifteteli rhythm which is a basic element of the Rebetiko and the Romeic culture. Moreover, the laterna tune used later in the scene to accompany Ilia as she narrates *her* version of Euripides’ *Medea* (32:27) is marked as the only piece in the film’s soundtrack that uses the Phrygian mode (the use of bII (Gb chord) in a minor key (F minor), figure 59). The employment of this chord is important since it is considered a distinctively

¹⁶³ Composer: Dassin, J. Lyrics in Greek: Mercouri, M. (1972).

'eastern' chord and is very popular in tsifteteli songs. Finally, once again, the composer chose to write his melody on the particularly recognisable and popular, eastern harmonic minor scale so commonly found in Rebetiko.

Medea's theme - Verse

Figure 59: Medea's theme – the verse

The melody of the song “The Laterna” is used again at a turning point in the film. As soon as Ilia discovers that Homer is sponsored by No Face (and in effect all the money she was using was No Face's money), she explodes with anger. Shouting “Aera!” (Αέρα in Greek means “air” and was used as an attack signal by the Greek soldiers during the Second World War), she starts destroying everything that is around her that is related to her “Hellenic” studies. At the same time, her friend Despo plays the melody of “The Laterna” on the instrument. The accompaniment of this melody to Ilia's uprising, allies the heroine to her rebellion against her ‘transformation’ and, in essence, supports the Romeic's struggle over the Hellenic. What is more, the sound of the street instrument signifies Ilia's return to the “street”.

Ilia's association with the laterna epitomises the heroine's affiliation with the Romeic identity in the film, emphatically marking the fact that the Romeic and Hellenic identities are attributed with gender traits. In addition, the instrument's distinctly feminine characteristics are conspicuously attributed to Ilia, thus largely contributing to the representation of femininity in the film. Last but not least, the significance of the music played on the laterna arises from its predominant role in both presenting Ilia as a symbol of femininity and sexuality in the film and underscoring her intense Romeic traits.

This chapter showed that in *Never on Sunday*, as in *Stella*, the male and the female leads, with their distinct characteristics, become associated with the

Romeic and the Hellenic identities. However, in contrast to *Stella* in which the male lead personified the Romeic, in *Never on Sunday* it is the female lead who takes up this mantle. As a result, masculinity and femininity are attributed with traits quite different to those depicted in *Stella* (as explained in the next chapter of the thesis: *Diploennies*). This confirms the socialisation theory of gender which maintains that gender is not something predetermined but, conversely, is changeable. This chapter also reaffirmed Rebetiko's role as the primary source of expression of the Romeic in films, and, furthermore, through the analysis of its social and musical mores demonstrated how Rebetiko leads to gender representation.

The chapter also explained how the film's association with the American Hollywood musical contributes both to the personification of the Romeic and the Hellenic through the two leads and to the representation of gender and sexuality in the film. Although not a film musical, *Never on Sunday* is marked with distinct elements that characterise the American Hollywood musical. It was discussed in this chapter how the secondary dichotomies of the male and female leads which characterise the American Hollywood musical can be traced in *Never on Sunday* and are engendered due to the dichotomy of national/cultural identity. Moreover, the chapter showed that, in *Never on Sunday*, through the subversion of Hollywood musical devices such as the marriage ending and the 'Pygmalion and Galatia' schema, the incompatibility of the two heroes and the identities they personify are accentuated. Both cases testify to the fact that the American Hollywood musical constitutes another way in which the two versions of Greek national identity predetermine gender roles in Greek Cinema. The next case study, *Diploennies*, is also related to the American Hollywood musical and investigates the concept of Greek national identity within a Greek film musical.

CHAPTER FIVE

Case Study: *Diploennies*

I always had the ambition to make a national musical – I mean Romeic. Why should we make musicals of an American kind when we can not even reach the tip of the fingers of the American productions and ours will only appear as pale imitations of theirs? Such a film is *Diploennies*. I tried to convey the local ‘colour’ (of Greece) in a film full of music, dance and good spirit.

Giorgos Skalenakis ¹⁶⁴

Skalenakis’ musical film *Diploennies* (1966) stands out as the first Greek musical in which the Romeic identity is distinctively projected. Within a film genre that pays tribute to the Hellenic identity and is abundant with films marked with Hellenic traits and values (during the prolific period 1960-1966, see 2.2 *The Greek film musical: a Hellenic territory*), the film creates new standards and embodies a different philosophy in terms of the making of Greek musicals. In *Diploennies*, the portrayal and celebration of the Romeic is based on two major factors: music and gender. In the first case, the director’s choice to extensively use Rebetiko and contrast it to foreign musical genres, plays a predominant role in the creation of the Romeic identity in the film. Moreover, Rebetiko constitutes the primal reflection of the Romeic mores and its mere usage in the film is unprecedented in the Hellenic world of the Greek film musical. In the second case, gender, the two Greek identities are personified by the two heroes. Through the protagonists’ association with the two Greek identities, Skalenakis employs the sexual dichotomy as the master of other secondary dichotomies depicted in the film: Old – New, Tradition – Modernity, Indigenous – Foreign, Rebetiko – Foreign musical genres, etc. By doing so, the director not only puts across his attitude towards the two identities but also depicts gender and national identity attributes within the film. Therefore, I

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in Soldatos, 1999, vol.1:229.

examine in detail, and in separate subchapters, the processes by which the Romeic and Hellenic national/cultural identities are formed in the film. In addition, I study the ways in which the two protagonists become associated with the Greek identities and I trace related secondary dichotomies, considering how these represent gender in the film. Finally, in order to assess the film's uniqueness in terms of its correlation to the Romeic, I examine *Diploennies'* reception by Greek society and media as well as the film's influence on the film musicals which followed.

Synopsis

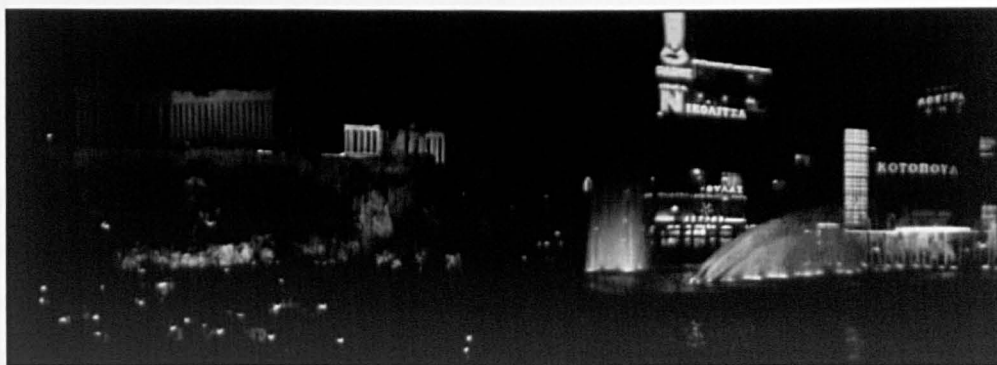
Gregoris and Marina are a couple from the lower class milieu of Athens of the 1960s. Gregoris works as a painter in the construction industry and enjoys singing and playing the guitar. Marina does not have a job and instead is entirely committed to running the home and taking care of her husband. The couple's dream is to raise a family but their economic status does not permit it. Unexpectedly, things rapidly change for the better when Gregoris is offered a job as a singer at a touristy Rebetiko tavern. The gigs pay well and gradually the quality of life of the couple considerably improves as they move to a modern apartment and buy a car and a motorcycle. However, their relationship deteriorates, as Gregoris is being courted by Rita, one of the wealthy female clients of the tavern. Things get even worse when Marina is also hired as a singer at the tavern. The heroine's unforeseen huge success overshadows her husband's prospects as a singer and, driven by jealousy, Gregoris decides to quit his job and leave Marina. Finally, Marina's pregnancy acts as a catalyst for the story's ending as well as for the couple's fate: Gregoris returns to the tavern while Marina returns to her full-time job as a housewife. The film ends with the couple walking along with eight children at their side, and the disclosure of Gregoris' secret plan: to have as many children as possible so as to keep Marina occupied raising the children and thus keep her permanently in the house.

5.1 The two identities: introduction and day and night in *Diploennies*

Skalenakis made sure that the Romeic and Hellenic signatures are present right from the opening titles of the film. After all, the mere title of the

film foretells the existence of two elements in the film, whether identities or entities. *Pennies* (πεννιές) in Greek is the plural for *pennia* (πεννιά), which means the playing of a note on the bouzouki. *Diplo* (διπλό) means *double* or *two*. Thus *diplopennies* essentially means playing two notes at the same time on the bouzouki (usually in an interval of a third or a sixth). The binary character of the title could refer to the male and female protagonists of the film, but also to the two different identities which they represent. Moreover, the fact that the title refers to the bouzouki, an instrument-symbol of the Rebetiko and the Romeic identity (see 2.5 *Rebetiko: the definitive Romeic music*), presages the film's positive attitude towards the more familiar Romeic identity.

In the introductory scene, the Hellenic and the Romeic identity are explicitly associated with night and day respectively. The first shot of the film is a long shot of the Parthenon, Greece's diachronic sign of recognition (figure 60) that guides the Greeks through the ages and, as it is also suggested at the end of the film, acts as a unifying symbol for both identities in the film. The majestic shot of the ancient monument illuminated at night marks the start of the Hellenic identity's presentation in the introductory scene. It heads off with a tour of Athens by night: huge buildings lit with flashing neon lights surround Omonia central square's impressive fountain, the trademark theatre hall "Orfeas" hosting the spectacular play *One Thousand and One Nights* (again, the association of the night with the Hellenic), modern cinema theatres, fancy cars, etc (figure 61). In other words, trademark images that comprise the capital's world of modernity and reflect its westernised, Hellenic dimension.



Figures 60 and 61: The Parthenon and the Hellenic Athens by night
(*Diplopennies*, 1966, 00:01; 00:38)

It is worth noting that a number of these shots presenting the Hellenic aspect of Athens had been seen in the film revue *Athens by Night* (*H Athina τη Νύχτα*) produced four years earlier (1962). The revue is essentially a documentary-like comedy about the Athenian nightlife of the 1960s. The introductory speech of the film encapsulates its attitude towards the Hellenic identity, celebrating the modern look and westernisation of contemporary Athens. The commentator is ecstatic over the modern appearance of Athens and is delighted that the development of new buildings is an ‘everyday’ process. His attitude towards the Romeic identity is also made apparent; underscoring repeatedly the word ‘new’, he is particularly proud to claim that the ‘old’ Athens with its ‘conservative values and humble looks’ is gone.

Once there was a time when images like these (panoramic air shots of Athens), were from Paris, New York, London...Today, what you see is nothing but Athens by night. Take a stroll – lights everywhere. Nowadays it is not the old Athens that we used to know with its conservative values and its humble looks. Now, at night, it (Athens) bejewels the flashing gems of the colourful globes. It winks roguishly to the people and it offers presents! It has created so many new corners, unknown taverns, so many weird spots that one sees and wonders at; and every day new ones are born, new, new! The city has its own anxieties, it expands...

(Athens by Night, 1962, 0:00:05)

Establishing the association of the two identities with night and day, the second half of the film’s introduction presents shots referring to the Romeic identity, all in broad daylight. It starts with a shot of the local tavern “Erotokritos”, with Erotokritos being a historic character representing some of the most popular elements of Greek rural tradition. A series of still shots that follow are distinctly ‘Romeic’ (2:02): men dancing to the Syrtaki on stage with

the accompaniment of a guitar, sailors dancing to the Syrtaki directly below the Parthenon (this is the second shot of the Parthenon in the film, this time in daylight, thus intertwined with the Romeic), a man playing the laterna (see Chapter Four) on the street – typical trait of Athens’ old neighbourhoods – and a close shot of a string of beads, an essential accessory that the Rebetis would carry with him (figure 62).

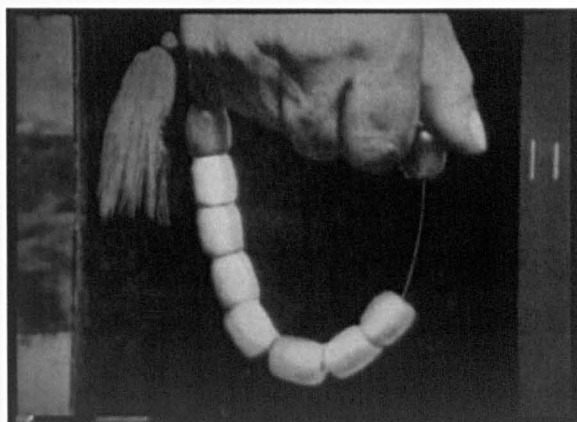


Figure 62: String of beads –accessory of the Rebetis and a Romeic symbol
(Diploennies, 1966, 02:12)

The series of close shots concludes the second half of the introduction with the definitive trademark symbol of the Romeic – the bouzouki. The Rebetiko’s principal instrument appears on a wooden chair commonly used by the lower class milieu in the taverns of the time. Next to it, on a table, lies its smaller ‘brother’ in the Rebetiko orchestra, the baglamas. This shot is followed by one of a painting which shows a young man (his moustache testifies to his proximity to the Rebetis) playing the bouzouki (figure 63). Next to him, the wooden chair appears once again. A close shot of the bouzouki in still motion acts as the link to the first scene of the film as it starts with a close shot of a bouzouki played in real time by the Maestro in the tavern (02:17, figure 64). Hence, after the mainstream presentation of the Hellenic world of Athens – a typical tactic of Greek film musicals up to that time, Skalenakis stirs up the still waters by vigorously exposing a purposefully hidden ‘giant’ – the world of the Romeic. The fact that the Romeic identity is introduced *after* the Hellenic in the introductory credits, hints that the Romeic identity will finally prevail in the

film. Moreover, it suggests that Greek musicals can, indeed, project the Romeic identity, which has been characteristic of comedies and melodramas throughout the history of Greek Cinema (see 2.1 *Greek Cinema and primacy of the Romeic*).



Figures 63 and 64: The bouzouki – played by a Rebetis in sketch and in real motion (*Diploennies*, 1966, 02:17; 02:18)

The association of night and day with the Hellenic and the Romeic identity respectively that first appears in the film’s introductory scene, becomes even more evident later on in the film and represents an additional method of juxtaposing the two identities and portraying fundamental characteristics of each. The association of the Hellenic identity with night and, more specifically, the nightlife exposes the identity’s flaws and suggests that the Greeks should be warned of the negative consequences that a potential adoption of the Hellenic lifestyle may bring. Therefore, we see Eleni warning Marina that her husband also used to be a great singer (27:16). Due to the “war that was declared against him” (27:21) by other night workers, Eleni’s husband, became fed up with the uncertainty and deception of the night and left his work to be a house painter like Gregoris – a profession practised only by people of the lower milieu. Seeing Gregoris asleep on the scaffolding after a late night at the tavern, Gregoris’ boss refers to “the night’s debaucheries” (25:23). Furthermore, due to the night and its Hellenic temptations, the formerly happy couple crash their brand new motorcycle into boxes full of ornaments (32:52). The motorcycle was purchased with earnings from Gregoris’ night work, while the ornaments refer to the decorative and frivolous nature of the night. The intended message

is obvious: the night, and effectively the Hellenic identity, brings disorder and results in unhappiness. In the same scene, Marina, realises this ‘fact’ and urges Gregoris to quit his night job and return to his old day job with the “meagre 120 drachmas per day”; because, as she tells him, “back then”, at least they “loved each other” (33:49) – hence the clear implication that only the day/Romeic lifestyle brings happiness. In this scene, behind the two heroes, and beyond the dark and the broken ornaments that surround them, a luminous, ancient monument stands out (figure 65). Associated with ancient Greece and the Hellenic identity, the ancient luminous temple restates the association of the Hellenic with the night and its negative effects.



Figure 65: The two heroes after their crash with the luminous ancient monument in the background (*Diplo pennies*, 1966, 33:37)

Black, as the colour of night, is also associated with the Hellenic in the film. Marina’s revolution started with her performing at night in a spectacular black dress (figure 86, 54:19). Up until that moment in the film, Marina did not wear black (at 24:34, 39:55 and at 44:59 she wears a grey coat; at 27:15 a striped blouse; at 36:30 a grey shirt; at 49:58 a light coloured woollen stole). From that moment on, with the heroine’s evident proximity to the Hellenic identity and the night, black prevails as the colour of her clothes. Right after her huge success in the club/tavern, Marina goes to a modern shop to buy a new evening dress which, not surprisingly, is black in colour (58:16). Not only this

but, as Lefteris admits, “this is the fashion – can we change the fashion?” Gregoris, as a defender of the Romeic, objects to the prospect of Marina wearing the black, trendy dress and predicts that if she appears with that dress on the stage the audience “will boo her” since, to the Romeic world, the westernised fashion trends seem provocative and vulgar. Yet, Gregoris *is* allowed to wear black. Defending his choice to wear his black costume, even as he paints, he responds to Marina: “It is my right to wear anything I like!” (1:12:35). In contrast to Marina, the man, according to Romeic customs, is entitled to black, hence the night life. When Marina reappears at night, this time in her dressing room, she wears a black blouse on top of a black skirt – thus, still as a Hellenic advocate (1:07:20). The furs (1:05:25), the fashionable hairstyle (1:00:52) and her luxurious apartment with the modern paintings (1:06:00) complete the picture of the modern Greek woman of the late 1960s.

On the other hand, the film suggests that just as the Romeic identity brings harmony and peace to the Greek people, so does the morning light (45:25). Marina made her revolt at night time while drunk. The morning light, however, restored order and balance. The next morning, being sober, Marina is back in her Romeic role: submissive to her husband, as she is supposed to be. The morning light’s positive effects become obvious earlier in the film when Gregoris, avoiding Rita’s advances to kiss him, rushes out of the car (44:59). Right at that moment the dawn begins to break (figure 66), suggesting that Gregoris’ refusal to submit to Rita and her Hellenic world infuses an air of hope for Romeic values as well as for the Romeic couple of the story.



Figure 66: The first light of day finds Gregoris rejecting Rita
(*Diploennies*, 1966, 45:01)

The musical accompaniment of the day breaking illustrates the morning light's use as a Romeic element in the film. The morning light is accompanied twice by a calming and simple theme, played by the bouzouki and the piano (45:25, 1:05:43). Although written in 4/4 meter, the theme's slow tempo and the rubato performance cover up the sense of pulse. The serene sound of the bouzouki, delivered in legato phrases, effortlessly blends and becomes unified with the natural sounds of the Romeic world – a rooster's cackles in Gregoris' old neighbourhood and birds singing – thus creating a sense of naturalness. The music in both scenes in the film assists in intimating that the Romeic identity is a natural part of the Greek reality – as natural as the sunrise and a rooster's cackles.

The juxtaposition of day and night, and of their corresponding identities, reaches its climax musically when Marina performs a song at the tavern, quite remarkably named after the dichotomy, "Night – Day" (1:02:40). In the song, via the divided screen, the two Marinas appear – the Marina of the day and the Romeic world with blonde hair and the Marina of the night and the Hellenic world with dark hair. While the introduction is in straight 5/8, a meter most often used in traditional folk Greek music, the verse has an unexpected 4/8 meter in the third bar. The major rhythmic upset occurs in the chorus where the basic 5/8 meter is succeeded twice by a 7/8 and once by a 9/8 meter (figure 67). This highly unusual metric progression, with its unsettling and hectic rhythmic changes, can easily be heard as a signifier of disorder and turmoil with which the Hellenic and night burden the Romeic world throughout the film.

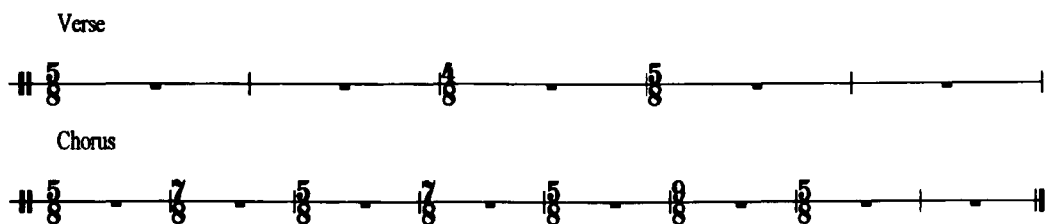


Figure 67: Rhythmic irregularity in the verse and chorus of "Night – Day"

Using split screen shots, the director manages to concisely mark the differences between the two Marinas, by which the two identities are distinguished. On the left hand side, the blonde Marina is depicted with joy and

innocence (figure 68). On the right hand side, the dark Marina of the Hellenic world appears sensual, independent and self-confident.



Figure 68: The two Marinas perform “Night – Day”: dark-blonde, night-day, Hellenic-Romeic (*Diploennies*, 1966, 1:03:02)

The song’s lyrics vividly describe the Greek’s search (‘I will look out to find you’) for the ‘light’ that will brighten up the night and ease the ‘pain’ that the ‘separation’ caused:

Night – day, night – day,
I will look for you light of thunder
I will look out to find you, night – day

The night brings pain
for this separation...

The second part of the song is an instrumental interlude which explicitly exhibits the Hellenic identity. The shot that links the vocal part of the song to the Hellenic identity is, quite consistently, of the ‘Hellenic’ Marina of the night (figure 69). The brunette Marina, with a playful expression and a welcoming smile, invites the audience to a musical feast of the Hellenic world: the Rebetiko orchestra is magically transformed into a Rock’n’roll band by the addition of a trumpet and a tenor saxophone, while electric guitars replace the

bouzoukia and the baglamas. Rock'n'roll as a musical genre was twice presented earlier in the film via an energetic theme in twelve-bar blues form. On both occasions, it is associated with Rita and the Hellenic, as it is heard while Rita is driving her shiny convertible at night time. Once again, with the night, the car and the city lights – all distinct traits of the Hellenic culture, Rita is reconfirmed as the absolute feminine symbol of the Hellenic in the film.



Figure 69: The ‘Hellenic’ Marina invites us to the musical world of the Hellenic (*Diploennies*, 1966, 1:03:43)

This scene satirises the American lifestyle through music (in this occasion, Rock'n'roll), which is the case in the vast majority of Greek films. According to Delberoudi, the transmission of the American lifestyle in the 1960s is more noticeable in cinema and music (2004:175). The fact that Rock'n'roll originates from the West largely explains the satirical approach to the portrayal of the tavern band since, in Greek comedies of the time, there was a general negativity towards the West and its ‘new’ ideas (Delberoudi, 2004:411).¹⁶⁵ Moreover, considering that *Diploennies* belongs to a film genre that generally celebrates the Hellenic identity, this approach appears even more striking (see 2.2 *The Greek film musical: a Hellenic territory*). The band performs Marina’s Hellenic theme which is heard earlier in the film when

¹⁶⁵ For more on the negativity towards the West, see 1.2 *Greek national identity*.

Marina heads out to shop for modern clothes (57:59). All the members of the band, in order to satirise their role as modern musicians who perform modern music, wear funny wigs, trying to resemble the youth's Rock'n'roll bands of the 1960s (e.g. the Beatles). The sight becomes more comical when the trumpet player accidentally pulls off the Maestro's wig with his instrument (1:03:56). Moreover, the three guitarists swing from left to right in their attempt to imitate the classic movements of the members of the English Rock'n'roll group The Shadows (figure 70).



**Figure 70: The Rebetiko orchestra transformed into a Rock'n'roll band
(*Diploennies*, 1966, 1:03:49)**

Immediately afterwards, Marina's transformation into a Hellenic Greek is made complete when an unrecognisable Marina appears. She has a very short, fashionable hairstyle. Her white flashy dress formally reaffirms her conversion to the Hellenic: until this scene, only Rita wore white in the film. Thus, following in the steps of Rita, the 'new' Marina also acts as a Hellenic representative in the film, associating the Hellenic once again with femininity. Marina's presence and aura is enough to bring the crowd to its feet and they follow the singer as she begins to walk and dance. Marina's Rock'n'roll Hellenic theme is then succeeded by a Shake dance, with the Maestro

performing a solo on his electric guitar. Significantly, Marina's 'followers' in the dance are all women: modern, liberated women like Marina with fancy evening dresses and all with short, fashionable hairstyles (figure 71). As happens in *Stella*, music once again acts as the expressive medium of revolution and change.



Figure 71: The Hellenic Marina and her female 'followers'
(*Diplo pennies*, 1966, 1:04:27)

Marina's transformation into a Hellenic woman could only bring extra problems to a marriage which existed under a social status quo bound by the Romeic ideals. Therefore, during this scene, a bunch of huge balloons burst, signifying a further diversion from the path of marital happiness and the Romeic.¹⁶⁶ As if this is not enough, as soon as the balloons burst and right on the coda of Marina's theme, Marina appears in a black revealing leotard. Watching this sight, Gregoris throws a glass of water into the face of one of Marina's admirers (1:05:03).

¹⁶⁶ As explained in the next subchapter, balloons are extensively used in the films as a symbol of happiness.

5.2 The Romeic element in *Diploennies*

Despite the coexistence of both Greek identities in the film, Skalenakis, as he admits, emphatically projects the Romeic form (Soldatos, 1999, vol.1:229). His eagerness and conscious attempt to create a purely Romeic musical result in an unbalanced presentation of the two identities and in the overshadowing and eventual casting out of the Hellenic identity. Distinctive traits of both identities are dispersed throughout the film at multiple levels – cultural, sociological and political. In this section I examine the ways in which the Romeic element is presented and exposed in the film. Moreover, I investigate how this process leads to the representation of gender in the film through the heroes' association with a particular identity.

5.2.1 The Romeic couple

The couple in the film are representative of a typical couple of Romeic identity. Firstly, they belong in the lower class milieu – the predominant realm of the Greek Romeic identity – and live in a small house, a “hut” (as Gregoris calls it (57:30)), in an underprivileged neighbourhood. The use of particular kinds of camera shots, the attention to detail in internal decoration (figure 72) as well as exterior shots which locate the house in the poor neighbourhood (figure 73), offer a carefully constructed image of this milieu. Such a depiction of the social space further enhances the film's attempt to construct a Romeic Greekness (Papadimitriou, 2006:94).



Figures 72 and 73: Interior shot with detail in decoration and exterior shot which locates the house in the old neighbourhood

(Diploennies, 1966, 19:07; 17:39)

The couple's ultimate ambition is to obtain enough money to raise a child and buy their own apartment (15:00) – a typical ambition of members of the lower class of the time who wished to climb the social ladder. However, their wish appears unfeasible because, financially, the couple are entirely dependent on Gregoris' meagre salary from his job as a painter on construction sites. Realising that they are grasping the Romeic dream of a better life when Gregoris is offered a highly paid job, Marina cries with joy (24:34).¹⁶⁷

5.2.2 Gregoris and the Romeic

Considering the gender roles attributed to Gregoris and Marina, the couple represent a typical man and woman of the Romeic culture. Gregoris is designated as a “leventis”, an honorary Romeic title (see Chapter Three). Watching him sing the Hasapiko song “Down at the Piraeus” (“Κάτω στον Πειραιά”), the Rebetiko musicians are stunned by his “leventia” (9:30), while his manliness is highlighted by some young women who stare at him in admiration (12:29).¹⁶⁸ Gregoris abides by the norms of the Romeic and the Rebetiko domains whose fundamental trait is patriarchy. Accordingly, the behavioural models traced in the film serve and maintain the power system; Gregoris' behaviour towards Marina in the couple's house is quite indicative of this (37:50). From the moment Gregoris wakes up (at three o' clock in the afternoon), he gives orders to Marina: to prepare hot water so that he can take a bath, to iron a new shirt so that he does not wear the same shirt twice, to make coffee and even to prepare fresh underwear for him because he is going to sing at Rita's house. Although he seems to care for Marina, he does not treat her as equal and does not respect her.

¹⁶⁷ This is neatly described by the Maestro to Gregoris: “You moved into a nice flat, you bought a car, you bought nice clothes, you turned yourselves into a lady and a gentleman, you have all your comforts, and instead of being grateful you are still not happy?” (1:00:13).

¹⁶⁸ The lyrics of “Work makes men” (“Η δουλειά κάνει τους άντρες”), a popular Greek song written by famous Greek composer Manos Loizos, two years after *Diploennies* (1968), underline the association of the leventis - also known as ‘palikari’ - with the labouring jobs found on a construction site: “Don't play with the beads, work makes men, the building skeleton, the mortar carrier, the trowel. Don't play with the dice, only palikaria spend their lives on the scaffolding”.

Gregoris does not want his wife to work, but to stay at home and ‘behave’; this was a common phenomenon of the cinematography of the time: any wish on the part of middle and lower class women to seek employment in order to financially support their family was always against the will of their husband – leader of the family (Delberoudi, 2004:245). In *Stamatis and Gregoris* (*Ο Σταμάτης και ο Γρηγόρης*, 1962), for example, the two husbands forbid their wives to work even though their families’ economic situation is in crisis. And many years later, in films where the wife does eventually manage to go out to work, the resulting abandonment of the wife’s previous duties has unpleasant consequences for order within the household (e.g. *Seven Years of Marriage* (*Επτά Χρόνια Γάμου*, 1971). In *Diploennies*, not only does Gregoris feel offended by his wife’s need to work in order to improve the family’s finances, but he sees it as a disgrace watching his “wife dancing Tsifteteli on the table!” (59:28). When Lefteris – the owner of the tavern where Gregoris sings – offers Marina a job as a singer, Gregoris strongly objects: “No way Mr.Lefteris...are we going to make her a *theatre girl*?” (57:17) (*Θεατρίνα*). The term *theatre girl* was frequently used at the time and it was a derogatory term for any woman who worked in the arts – actress and/or dancer in films, theatres or taverns. In *Koritsia gia filima* (1965), for example, the successful businessman scolds his son for having an affair with a “theatre girl” (an actress) who cheats him. In the finale of the same musical, Athens is referred to as a “seducer” and as a “theatre girl” associated with the night and entertainment. Later on, when in *Diploennies* Marina shows her talent in singing, Lefteris changes his mind in view of the financial profits yielded by her employment and Gregoris gives his consent, having in mind the couple’s dream of prosperity and having a family. However, Marina’s success as a singer (she eventually earns more money than Gregoris does) and the fact that she attracts men’s glances offends Gregoris’ Romeic dignity. Not being able to cope with this new reality, Gregoris leaves Marina and quits his job at the tavern.

5.2.3 Marina and the Romeic

Marina is a typical married woman who belongs in the Romeic domain and, as such, also abides by the norms of the patriarchal Romeic and Rebetiko

domains. She is Gregoris' wife and she respects him, obeying her husband's orders and submitting to his bossy attitude, as the norms dictate. Not only this, but she appears to accept without any protest the patriarchal system. As it appears from Marina's conversation with Eleni – also a typical woman of the lower class milieu, sharing the Romeic way of thinking – Marina accepts without protest Eleni's assertion that men are polygamous and that it is a common phenomenon in their social circle for men to have extra-conjugal relationships (37:10). A woman's place according to the Romeic and the Rebetiko norms is at home. When she is offered a job she submissively answers: "Me? What can I say? Whatever Gregoris says..." (57:39). Although she recognises Gregoris' 'rights', Marina has difficulty accepting the fact that her husband is being courted by another woman. Therefore she wants to be at the tavern every night, even at the most distant table. When Lefteris advises her not to do this, she wonders where she should go. The answer she receives underscores the crude reality: "Home – where all the women in the world belong!" (34:45). Like the Rebetiko domain (as seen in Chapter Three), the Romeic domain dictates women's restriction to the private sphere; the public sphere is men's privilege alone. Marina's restriction to the house 'fits' with her utmost desire: to raise a family. This is made obvious early in the film as, when she appears for the first time sitting in her kitchen cleaning onions, she confesses to Eleni that the couple's dream is to have a child (figure 74).



Figure 74: Marina cleaning onions with children – her dream – in the background (*Diploennies*, 1966, 14:01)

It should be noted that the concept of Alekos Sakellarios, the script writer, to have someone like Marina – a typical Romeic woman – singing for money, was quite uncommon in films since singing as a profession for women was unusual at the time and generally frowned upon. As stated earlier, any woman who worked in the entertainment field was considered of low morals. Typical professions for women as they appear in Greek films up until the mid-1960s were tailors, hat makers, secretaries, typists, saleswomen, workers and servants (Delberoudi, 2004:329 – 335). In other words, all were low-profile, mundane professions that did not threaten the patriarchal order but, instead, preserved it; hence they were acceptable. It should be noted that disapproval of women's professions that were related to notions of 'display' and 'exhibition' seemed to be prevalent across a variety of cultures (e.g. actresses in Victorian England).

Later on, however, when women began to aspire to professions for which high levels of skill and specialisation were needed (for example, scientists, journalists, business women), an imminent threat to the patriarchal social system was posed. Reflecting this threat, the films in which such situations occurred, presented the dangers that arose from the aforementioned women's fervent attitude towards a career. In the first place, the women's personal lives and their relations with their families were severely jeopardized. Moreover, the transfer of the household's responsibilities to the men seriously threatened the sense of family security. In films like *Divorce in a Greek Way* (*Διαζύγιο α λα Ελληνικά*, 1964) and even later on in *Seven Years of Marriage* (1970) and *Get Back and We are Getting You!* (*Πίσω και Σας Φάγαμε!*, 1972), the transfer of all household burdens to the husband because of the wife's work brought chaos to the family order. The moral lesson in these films is that a woman's employment creates a lot of problems within a marriage and, as a result, the audience could well feel threatened by these representations. Thus, in the scripts, not surprisingly, a woman's devotion to her profession usually would draw her away from her 'femininity' and could well result in loneliness since no man would be willing to share her world. Indicatively, in *The Brightest Star* (*Το Πιό Λαμπρό Αστέρι*, 1967), although not married, Katerina is punished

for her successful singing career by her boyfriend Antreas. He, a classical musician and less successful, threatens Katerina that he will leave her, sabotages a shared business trip to the United States and carries out his threat by engaging someone else. The message is clear: a woman needs to choose between a successful career and personal happiness. Even when the woman eventually gets what she wants (in other words a business career), at the end she admits her 'inferiority' to the opposite sex. In *The Stubborn* (*Ο Ξεροκέφαλος*, 1970), for example, hairdresser Dora is offered a job as a singer. Despite her husband's intense objections, the heroine has a successful career as a singer. She acknowledges, however, that "a woman cannot act for her own good". According to Delberoudi, the film makers consciously avoided presenting a progressive evaluation of the female sex or introducing new approaches towards the two sexes, because they feared that such a practice would not only not be welcomed but would also alienate their audience (2004:357). This resulted in the perpetuation of the conventional patriarchal approach that was compatible with the existing social system.

Delberoudi also suggests that the patriarchal perspective of the filmmakers of the time reflects the dominant views of Greek society, since, through this cultural discourse, the concept of family comes out with flying colours (2004:424). I would also add that this notion complies with the Romeic mentality which, examining Greek Cinema, seems to be consistent throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Indeed, in the Romeic comedy films of the 1950s, as soon as the option of marriage appeared, women were ready to quit their jobs; essentially, for women, work appears as a necessity and not as a medium of independence (*Jenny-Jenny* (*Τζένη Τζένη*, 1966), *Seven Years of Marriage* (1972), *Let the Cobbler Stick to his Last* (*Κάθε Κατεργάρης στον Πάγκο του*, 1969)). Korina's conviction in *The Womaniser* (*Ο Γυναικάς*, 1957) that "Work makes life sweet...sweet..." proves to apply only before a woman's wedding. After marriage, it is the husband's duty to support the woman. For sure, not much changes in the next two decades in Greek Cinema. In the 1960s and 1970s, children entered the picture with the female protagonists being willing to quit their jobs as soon as they become pregnant. In *Oh! If I was a Man* (*Αχ! Και νόμουν Άντρας*, 1966), for example, the heroine Stella is well qualified for a

business career but does not seem to settle in any job since sooner or later she is sexually assaulted by her bosses. Her scheme to disguise herself as a man proves to be quite successful; in her male guise she is noticed only for her diligence and devotion to her work, qualities which otherwise she would not be able to reveal. She ends up working with her husband-to-be Antreas in a family enterprise. However, as soon as she becomes pregnant, she withdraws to her maternal duties and leaves her husband to run the company. It becomes apparent in films, that despite women's self confidence and their struggle to pursue with persistence whatever work they desire, their chief goal is still to marry and have children, as the Romeic values dictate.

Being the first truly 'National', Romeic musical, *Diploennies* has a story line that faithfully 'obeys' the Romeic values in terms of gender and work. Marina is also offered a major contract as a singer, not due to her pursuit of this goal but because circumstances lead her to it. As a result, from a typical housewife who cleans onions and washes her husband's underwear, she now sees her name in lights flashing on a tavern's sign; and next to it, her husband's name in smaller letters. Success, however, does not alter her fidelity to her husband. She remains loyal to him throughout the film, as the Romeic code dictates. On the other hand, the code permits men to be unfaithful to their wives. Eleni expresses her complaints to Marina about how her husband cheated on her (37:30) and advises her to accept the fact that Gregoris may well cheat on her since "this is how all men are" (37:14). A scene earlier, Lefteris suggests Marina accepts another fact: that her husband is her "husband at home; this (at the tavern) is a different thing" (34:25). In the low class milieu of the Romeic sphere, infidelity was a usual phenomenon among men. In Greek comedies of the 1950s and 1960s it is common for a man to tell lies to his wife: to say that she "is the one", while he sets up evening dates with his mistress.¹⁶⁹

In the Romeic comedies, the husband's hypocrisy, as far as faith is concerned, is not necessarily considered a flaw. However, when Marina resorts to wealthy Rita's strategy with dances and coy manners, she receives entirely

¹⁶⁹ The excuse is usually work, business trips, meetings, etc. When he goes on business trips to a different city he takes his mistress (*No Harm Done* (*Όύτε Γάτα Όυτε Ζημιά*, 1955) or he may leave his wife altogether for the sake of his mistress (*The Woman From Smyrna* (*Η Σμυρνιά*, 1969)).

different treatment from the people around her. This is largely explained by the fact that flirting and infidelity are socially prohibited for women and a respectable wife resorts to them only to excite her husband's interest (Delberoudi, 2004:379). On the other hand, Gregoris is entitled to be furious and shout at his wife just because her admirers send her flowers. Marina expresses her bitterness at Gregoris' extra conjugal affairs with tears, while Gregoris expresses his jealousy with threats: threats which he turns into actions in the end, as did Antreas in *The Brightest Star*. Marina, as Katerina in *The Brightest Star*, is punished by her man for her successful singing career. She too has to choose between a successful career and personal happiness. It is worth mentioning that the actress Alikì Vougiouklaki, who played Marina and Katerina in these films, was married to Demetris Papamichael who played Gregoris and Antreas in the same films. What is more, the marriage lasted for ten years, eventually ending in divorce in 1975. It is said that this was primarily due to Papamichael's jealousy of Vougiouklaki's huge success which, he felt, was overshadowing his reputation and damaging his career.¹⁷⁰ In other words, history repeated itself in real life as this is exactly what happens in both of the aforementioned films; however awkward it may appear, this ironic coincidence stands as another verification of the close relationship that cultural discourses such as films have with real life. What is more, it highlights the fact that *Diploennies*, whose story could well have been taken straight from the daily life of Greek society, is indeed a Romeic musical as reality constitutes one of the Romeic's identity prime features.

The paradox of the story line is that when Marina is eventually forced to quit her job, this is done willingly; she even appears to be very happy at the final outcome since she gets what she desired for so long: children. Gregoris' plot to keep Marina away from the stage, as it appears in the end, simply entailed keeping her occupied with eight children. This is yet another Greek film production in which children are a 'tool' in the writer's hands, bringing an acceptable resolution to the script. The film explicitly suggests that Marina does not need to work to make her content – she is happy enough with the traditional satisfaction that maternity yields. The fancy fur coats, the luxury apartment and

¹⁷⁰ Officially it was cited as "incompatibility in cohabitation".

the modern car were not enough to make her happy. For, whatever changes may have happened in the 1960s in terms of women's rights and better working conditions for women, the system revolves around the stable nucleus known as 'family'. As Delberoudi suggests, the makers of the Romeic comedies praise those young people who are aligned with the traditional values of the family (2004:426). The basic purpose of marriage is to raise children and so family should be protected at all costs. It is no coincidence that the vast majority of the couples that face troubles in their relationship are childless and the problems are solved as soon as the woman becomes pregnant (for example, *Diploennies* and *The Jealous Woman* (*H Ζηλιάρρα*, 1968)). The boy holding a large balloon in his mouth at the beginning of the last scene epitomises the restoration of family peace, Marina's return to the private sphere and the couple's reunion.

It should be noted that balloons are used as a Romeic symbol of happiness throughout the film. The balloons first appear in the film in the scene in which Gregoris sings at the construction site. Listening to the song "Down at Piraeus", we see various scenes characteristic of the low class milieu that depict Romeic idiosyncrasies to match the backdrop – the low profile, underprivileged Athenian suburb, Piraeus. One of these scenes shows a bunch of lottery sellers playing with a large balloon (figure 75). The lottery is the low classes' only hope of immediate escape from poverty and guaranteed happiness – symbolised by the balloon. Soon after, while they are in the clothes shop, the heroes happily embrace each other as a hope of a better life emerges. As they look blissfully out of the window, a group of balloons passes by, testifying to the couple's gratification (figure 76). What is more, Marina puts her fingers on the window glass trying to touch one of the balloons, as if it were a real child. This action confirms the mission of the couple coming from the lower milieu of Greek society, as analysed earlier: to have children.



Figures 75 and 76: Balloons symbolise happiness – for the lottery sellers and Marina and Gregoris (*Diploennies*, 1966, 12:22; 21:02)

As balloons represent happiness, the bursting of balloons marks the beginning of the couple's problems. Towards the end of Gregoris' first singing and dancing performance, a number of balloons burst (24:20), acting as a prophecy of the problems soon to arise in the couple's relationship. Balloons also burst while Marina performs her first show at the tavern, an appearance which would mark the beginning of the end – at least in the short-term – of the couple's relationship. The more clothes Marina takes off in this scene and the more provocative she appears, the more distant is the dream of a happy family. The balloon in the last scene, however, reinstates the Romeic dream and the couple's happiness.

Finally, in the aforementioned last scene, the shot of the couple pushing the pushchair (with the eighth baby lying inside, figure 77) was quite popular at the time since a lot of films ended in this way.¹⁷¹ The pushchair with the baby stands as a definitive symbol of reconciliation that brings peace to the relationship of the parents and, moreover, to the grandparents, who did not approve of the wedding (Delberoudi, 2004:267).

¹⁷¹ *Happy Beginning* (*Χαρούμενο Ξεκίνημα*, 1954), *Mrs Midwife* (*Η Κυρά Μας η Μαμμή*, 1958), *Poverty Needs Living Easy* (*Η Φτώχεια Θέλει Καλοπέραση*, 1958), *Good morning Athens* (*Καλημέρα Αθήνα*, 1960), *The Lucky Trousers* (*Τα Τυχερά Παντελόνια*, 1963), *The Playful* (*Η Παιχνιδιάρα*, 1967)).



Figure 77: The pushchair, symbol of reconciliation
(*Diploennies*, 1966, 1:17:06)

5.2.4 The use of Rebetiko in *Diploennies*

5.2.4.1 Rebetiko and the Romeic

Apart from the aforementioned representation of the male and female characters of the film by a typical couple of the Romeic world, the director makes sure the Romeic element is also well established in the film in other ways. The film's music has the primary role in this task. In order to convincingly transmit the Romeic spirit, the director and the composer had to choose a specific music genre that would appropriately diffuse the Romeic spirit: Rebetiko is the unambiguous diachronic favourite of the urban lower classes. In addition, although they are not one and the same, the Rebetiko realm is well integrated into the Romeic sphere and constitutes an important part of it (see 2.5.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic*). It is my firm belief that through the filmmakers' choice of relating the male character with the Rebetiko and the female with foreign music genres, the association of the male with the Romeic and the female with the Hellenic identities is made even more apparent in the film. Gender is represented through this correlation.

A direct association of the Romeic with Rebetiko is explicitly made right from the first scene of the film. As mentioned earlier, the opening titles present the two Greek identities – first the Hellenic and then the Romeic. The

last shot of the latter – a drawing of a Rebetis playing the bouzouki (2:16) is preceded by shots of sailors dancing to the syrtaki, a man playing the laterna, a string of beads, a bouzouki and a baglamas, i.e. definitive Romeic icons. This shot leads to the first scene, which starts with a close shot of a bouzouki held by the Maestro, accompanied by his Rebetiko orchestra on the stage. In other words, the first thing that the audience sees in this Romeic film musical is the Rebetiko's ultimate symbol – the bouzouki. It is worth remembering, that *Never on Sunday*, another film that celebrates the Romeic identity (discussed in the previous chapter), commences in exactly the same manner. In addition, the Rebetiko orchestra in *Diploennies* performs the introduction of the song “Down at Piraeus” (also known as “Eyes filled with tears” (“Μάρτια βουρκωμένα”) which acts as a central theme to the film. Soon after it appears that the choice of this opening song is not accidental. It refers to Piraeus, its precincts and its port, in other words, the setting in which the story takes place. Piraeus is the core district of the Romeic identity in the Athenian suburbs, something like the Romeic ‘kingdom’. It is Greece’s main port and, as such, it is the place where major industrial activity occurs. It is the area of the lower class day-labourers. Significantly, Miltos, Ilia and Gregoris, i.e. the heroes that bluntly project the Romeic identity in each of my case studies, live in Piraeus. Phrases like “magkas Piraeuotis”, which is still used in Greece, testify to the fact that Piraeus is still connected to Rebetiko and magkia.¹⁷² Moreover, all three films studied have specific reference to the Piraeus football team *Olympiakos* – a team-symbol of the working class. In *Diploennies*, as we see the Maestro and his musicians talking at the tavern by the sea, the floodlights of Olympiakos’ stadium are clearly shown in the background (3:40). Most importantly, Piraeus is the place where the Classical period of the Rebetiko era started, and it is there that it continued to prosper. It is not accidental that composers like Tsitsanis lived and worked in Piraeus. It becomes apparent that Piraeus brings together in all their glory both the Romeic and the Rebetiko entities in all three films. In Piraeus, essentially, the one is an indispensable part of the other.

¹⁷² For *magkas* see chapters on 2.5 *Rebetiko: The definitive Romeic music* and Chapter Three.

Despite the early association of the Romeic with the Rebetiko, the director continues his film by devoting no less than five minutes (3:45 – 8:55) to a series of scenes that could well be part of a documentary about Greece and its Romeic character. After the first scene, which takes place in the Rebetiko tavern with its orchestra on the stage, the audience is ‘taken’ to an atmospheric tavern located directly in front of Piraeus port. Immediately after, Gregoris appears for the first time in the film as he starts his daily routine (03:50). He heads off for work at the break of dawn (the street light turns off), he takes the bottle of milk from the milkman, he hastily runs down the stairs in the street and runs off to catch the bus. He looks vibrant, in high spirits and seems to love his lifestyle. This detailed description of the daily routine further enhances the Romeic in the film. As Papadimitriou suggests, this emphasis on the everyday life manages to construct a Romeic vision of contemporary Greece and Greekness (2006:85).

Skalenakis’ focus on Rebetiko – the music of the working class – is also appropriate to the creation of a ‘National’ film musical. Indeed, starting with Gregoris’ early morning routine, we hear a cheerful tune in F# major with flute, bouzouki guitar and bass, in 5/8 – a meter most common in traditional folk music. As the hero runs for the bus, the tune transforms momentarily into a Tsifteteli with the help of a harp glissando. The Tsifteteli, a genuine Rebetiko dance, links the Greek folk music with the Rebetiko. The tonality remains in F# but the scale turns into *Rast*, one of Rebetiko’s *dromi* – modes (see 2.5 *Rebetiko: the definitive music of the Romeic* and Chapter Four). The Tsifteteli’s melody is the introduction of the song “Lefteri-Lefteraki” (“Λευτέρη-Λευτεράκη”) which is performed later in the film. As we move on to the song’s chorus, the rhythm turns into a Hasaposerviko – one of Rebetiko’s prime rhythms – and shots of the port and fishing boats entering the sea appear. This musical palette, with the same instrumentation, continues with the instrumental Hasapiko “Down at Piraeus”, as we watch three fishermen dancing to it on their boat whilst it is in motion. The variation within the dances, the daily tour of the city, the port, and even the sea, lead us to the conclusion that no matter the Greek rhythm used, all Greece is identified with the Romeic and Rebetiko.

The association of Gregoris with the Romeic is further established, through music, in the following scene. As we see him picking up his guitar and entering the lift on the construction site, we hear the instrumental version of “Be Patient” (“Κάντε Υπομονή”), a song in *Kalamatianos* rhythm (7/8 meter) in the verse and *Antikrystos* rhythm (9/8 meter) (see 3.2.2 *Stella and Rebetiko – the musical domain*) in the chorus. With *Kalamatianos* being a trademark dance of Greek folk music and the *Antikrystos* extensively used in folk music as well as in *Rebetiko*, the folk and the *Rebetiko* genres are brought together and promote Romeic ‘Greekness’ in the film. The song’s lyrics (performed near the end of the film – 1:13:40) appropriately convey the Romeic idiosyncrasies:

Neighbourhood, your street is narrow
It is freezing and the sky is grey
Dark life, day and night
Cloudiness for company
Patience, patience, patience

Be patient and the sky will be bluer
Be patient and a lemon tree is blooming in the neighbourhood

The song describes the endless difficulties (“dark life, day and night”, “it is freezing and the sky is grey”) that characterise the life of the poor (“neighbourhood, your street is narrow”). Urging “patience”, the chorus expresses the working class’ unquenchable hope for better days to come (“be patient and the sky will be bluer”). It is a song of hope and of rejection of despair, symbolised by the lemon tree (“be patient and a lemon tree will bloom in the neighbourhood”). It is worth remembering that the lemon tree is used as a symbol of hope in *Never on Sunday* as well. Ilias’ song dedicated to her brand new barrel-organ refers to the way in which the instrument manages to make the lemon tree blossom in the middle of winter. On that occasion the tree also acts as the knight in shining armour of the Romeic world that signals the arrival of brighter days.

Directly after, the connection of Gregoris to Piraeus and its port and to Rebetiko is shown. Reaching the top floor of the construction site, Gregoris looks at the view – of Piraeus port – with pride (figure 78). It is evident that the protagonist is proud of his Romeic origins since, as mentioned earlier, Piraeus may well be considered the most representative suburb for the Romeic culture. Quite significantly, Gregoris sings “Down at Piraeus” shortly after (9:22):

Down at Piraeus, at Kaminia¹⁷³
poverty, good heart, but nagging as well
I gathered the boys one night
and I came once again to let you know of my old blues

The verse of the song refers to Piraeus and its community – with poor living conditions (“poverty”) and complaints (“nagging”), yet with “good heart” – typical features attributed to the Greeks in the Romeic world.¹⁷⁴ As with the Rebetes, the brotherhood among the Greeks in the Romeic is indispensable. Hence, in the song’s lyrics, the male company gathers to comfort their friend in his yearning and sadness (“old blues”). The choice of the Hasapiko rhythm – the rhythm used to express the dancers’ solidarity in Rebetiko – underscores and supports the song’s lyrics.



Figure 78: Gregoris looks at the Piraeus port with pride
(Diploennies, 1966, 05:48)

¹⁷³ A district of Piraeus.

¹⁷⁴ For the association of “good heart” and “soul” with the Romeic, see Xanthopoulos in 2.1 *Greek Cinema and primacy of the Romeic*.

The director's 'documentation' of the Romeic Greekness continues via the shot of the fishing boats in Piraeus port, which returns the audience to the Piraeus sea. Most importantly, this scene clearly substantiates Skalenakis' vision of a Romeic musical. The still boats in Gregoris' point of view shot are portrayed in motion as the fishermen gather their nets from the water. Watching the fishermen in their daily routine, pulling out the net's rope in a constant, rhythmic movement, brings to mind Skalenakis' words in the chapter's introductory quote, when he spoke of his dream to create a 'National' musical, referring to this as 'Romeic':

For me, rhythm is generally the expression of life and reality. You will rarely see me use a ballet unexpectedly and without a reason in my films. On the contrary, I try to expose every time the close relationship of dance with the everyday human movement: the fishermen as they pull the mesh and their legs imitate the known movement of the Hasapiko; a child who is flying a kite and is jumping to keep his balance in the rock'n'roll rhythm. Everyone's movement expresses one's era, age, reality. A national musical is the one that will be able to present the rhythm of a specific place and its people, not just in the way they sing or dance, but in their daily routine as well: as one walks on the street, as one works, as one makes a gesture talking...

Skalenakis, in *Ta Nea, 1966* (Soldatos, 2004, 4th Vol.:540)

For Skalenakis, the Greek national identity is the Romeic. The director's devotion of large amounts of time in the film to showing the Greek people carrying out their daily activities serves to accomplish his main purpose – to create a national – Romeic musical. Moreover, it highlights once again the Romeic's close relation with reality and the everyday. Therefore, we see the

fishermen pulling in the nets as we hear the song “Be Patient” in 7/8 meter and, later on, as some workers in the port pull out the rope, their feet move – in an entirely natural manner – to the 2/4 meter of the Hasapiko “Down at Piraeus” (12:15).

The director’s depiction of the Romeic identity in his conscious effort to delineate a national musical continues in the food market. The instrumental version of “Be Patient” gives way to another instrumental piece, from the song “Bright day”. In this section of the film we are introduced to the core of the Romeic world. The food market is where all the low class, working people walk around doing their shopping or just spending time. Accordingly, we hear grocers advertising their products at low prices as we watch fish and grapefruit being carried in baskets, and all amongst the Romeic Greeks: men and women of different ages make up this self-designated group of Greek society which constitutes the majority of the Greek population; people who work hard to make their living and hope that one day their fate will change. The lyrics of the song “Bright day” that we hear (its instrumental version) throughout this scene, echo the atmosphere of the scene:

I will water the weather with salt tear
Bitter summers I learnt to spend with you
The dawn filled the sky with dead pigeons

I will come back sad Madonna, farewell
Don’t cry, learn not to keep grief as a lucky charm
Just say “It doesn’t matter, there will be a bright day for us as well”

The song’s popularity and its association to the Romeic testify to the fact that it could well be considered as an anthem in the Romeic world; a world filled with “bitter summers”, “tears” and unrealised dreams (“dead pigeons”). Once more, hope, the only support and comfort for the Greek in the Romeic world, is never-ending; the long-awaited hope that someday – however far that day may be – the troubles and the despair will disappear and a new, “bright day” will emerge on the horizon. The reference to the “sad Madonna” underscores again the

Romeic's identification with the Byzantine era and the never-ending yearning that, someday, Constantinople (which fell to the Turks in 1453) might be in Greek hands again (see *1.2 Greek national identity*). "Bright day" blends in smoothly with the visuals as we watch the Maestro in his fruitless search to find a good singer among the grocers, butchers and fishermen – all typical characters and jobs of the low urban class.

The mini 'documentary' on the Romeic culture and its music does not end here. As the Rebetiko orchestra moves away from the central market and walks on a less busy street, the audio returns to the instrumental version of "Be Patient". The song appears to be the link to Gregoris since the group of musicians is now walking in the neighbourhood where Gregoris works. As they walk, the musicians find themselves among florists, grocers and refuse-collectors – again, occupations associated with the lower milieu of the urban society. Most importantly, they come across a lottery-ticket seller; the element of luck and fate is fundamental in the Romeic world. As the songs disclosed, something radical needs to happen in order for one to escape from the life one leads; and the lottery can deliver this. Indeed, for Gregoris, the chances of someone discovering him as he sings on the scaffolding and offering him a 'fat' contract as a singer are the same as those of winning the national lottery. Indicatively, once he announces to Marina that he will sing for money she bursts into laughter (17:00). She cannot believe that she no longer has to 'be patient': because the 'bright day' has come.



Figure 79: The three musicians with their bouzoukia signal the celebration of the Romeic (*Diploennies*, 1966, 09:58)

The scene in which the Maestro's quest for discovering new singing talents is answered (as soon as he hears Gregoris singing "Down at the Piraeus" at the construction site), recapitulates in a festive manner this mini excursion to the Romeic world. It is a scene that celebrates the Romeic Greekness and honours its musical genre, the Rebetiko. We see men and women incorporating the Rebetiko Hasapiko rhythm into their routine as if it were a natural thing, an indispensable part of their everyday life. The shot of the three musicians playing their bouzoukia as they raise their heads up in the air acts as an introduction to this celebration (figure 79). We see Gregoris, as he sings, brushing the banister, following the Hasapiko rhythm in quavers. The "boys" he sings of in the lyrics, i.e. the rest of the painters, sing in synchronisation to exactly the same motion (figure 80).

During the second introduction of the song some sailors, as they walk, make Hasapiko dancing figures and then continue to walk in the most natural way. The same happens with the butcher. As he walks to hang the piece of meat he is carrying, he performs a dancing manoeuvre. The choice of profession in this case is not at all accidental. In Greek, the 'butcher' is called *hasapis* (χασάπης). The scene of a hasapis dancing to a Hasapiko is the utmost

verification of the fact that Rebetiko is an indispensable part of the Romeic: even the name of the dance is the same as this low-class profession.



Figure 80: Gregoris and the “boys” brush in rhythm
(Diplo pennies, 1966, 10:02)

In the same scene, some male workers at the port pull out a rope and some little girls jump and walk in their school uniforms; in keeping with the director’s notion of presenting “the rhythm of a specific place and its people...in their daily routine ... as one walks on the street, as one works” (Skalenakis, 1966), both the workers and the little girls are completely in sync with the song’s rhythm. What is more, the presence of the little girls acts as a definite statement that Rebetiko, the Romeic and all the system values that they both represent, will be perpetuated for years to come. This is also underlined by the editing of the song. While the film generally uses shots from different cameras within a scene, during the chorus – the song’s high-spirited moment – only one camera is used the first time it is heard and another one at the repetition. This static approach creates a calm yet solid impression that the Hasapiko and the Romeic are unshaken and cannot be altered or removed. Towards the end of the song, the issue of fate and luck in the Romeic frame of mind is once again stated. Some lottery-ticket sellers play with a balloon. The message is clear: in

the world of the Romeic (Piraeus port with the Greek flag in the background), the chances of achieving happiness through a better life (balloon) depend on luck (lottery-ticket).

The Romeic's dominion as the one and only Greek identity is extolled through Gregoris' first song as a singer at the Rebetiko tavern. It is a Syrtaki (22:22), hence the first section of the song is a Hasapiko in medium tempo which then turns gradually into a fast Hasaposerviko.

Verse 1:

...at Monastiraki¹⁷⁵, Bavarian constables dance to the Syrtaki
in front of the King...

Chorus:

In Crete and in Mani, we will send a decree
In cities and villages...

Verse 2:

Down at the port, the policemen sing...

The song is entitled "In the years of Othonas" and refers to the period 1833 – 1862 in which, following the Greek revolution against the Turkish dominion, the newly formed Greek state was ruled by *Othonas* – the Bavarian prince chosen (and controlled) by the Western Great Forces to govern Greece. During the early years of his reign, Othonas' regents arrested and imprisoned many of the fighters of the Greek Revolution of 1821 who protested against the enforcement of kingship in the country. It is worth remembering at this point that many of these fighters later joined the fringe Rebetes (Petropoulos, 1990). According to Herzfeld, the severe conflict between the two identities, the Romeic and the Hellenic, emerged during this period (2007, See 1.2 *Greek national identity*). Othonas' regime strongly favoured a Hellenic Greece that would abide by the Western values and idiosyncrasies. Hence, in order to accomplish this, it tried to oppress the Romeic elements in Greek reality.

¹⁷⁵ An area in Athens.

However, the lyrics of the songs testify to Othonas' defeat. Not only did he fail to exclude and isolate the Romeic element but instead his own "policemen sing" and his "constables dance to the Syrtaki in front" of him. The Romeic element is made obvious again in the chorus. It uses the Greek word "firmani" which means a decree. Firmani was a royal decree sent from the Sultan during the Ottoman Empire. Words like 'firmani' or 'dragoumanos' (the sultan's translator) used at the end of the film (1:13:00), are striking examples of the Eastern hangovers found in Greek spoken language and testify to the Greek reality's proximity to the East and thus to the Romeic (Herzfeld, 2007).

5.2.4.2 *Rebetiko and the Romeic couple*

Throughout the film – excluding the subversive part in which Marina puts on the 'Hellenic' mask and is associated with the Hellenic identity – the Rebetiko is used to express both heroes' feelings: individually, and as a unified couple. In particular, the Zeibekiko song "How can my heart refuse the world?" stands as the medium via which the couple express their feelings towards each other.

We first hear the song when Gregoris sings it at the tavern, after Rita has made a 'paragellia' (to 'order' a song from the Rebetiko orchestra – see Chapter Three). The music, the rhythm, the lyrics, the camera shots, the atmosphere, all contribute to a scene infused with the Rebetiko aura. Crucially, the song is a Zeibekiko which is considered the most masculine and prestigious dance in Rebetiko. It starts with a taximi (see Chapter Three) – quite popular for Rebetiko – on a *tzouras* (τζουράς).¹⁷⁶ Despite its small size, the instrument is filmed in a very close shot, giving it a hegemonic dimension. The same taximi is heard two minutes earlier in the film, accompanying shots of boats in Piraeus port, and hence reinforcing the association of Rebetiko with Piraeus. We hear this taximi one last time towards the end of the film, when Marina visits Gregoris at the construction site in Piraeus. Once again, the Rebetiko as a musical genre connects the world of Romeic with Piraeus (1:11:35). As we hear the taximi, the camera turns away from the *tzouras* and moves towards the orchestra. It comes to rest on Gregoris' dominant figure which appears out of

¹⁷⁶ Tzouras is an instrument like bouzouki, only smaller.

the darkness. Only his face stands out as he is dressed in black – a colour generally expressing introversion and often grief. This is explained soon after, since in his song Gregoris weeps for his imminent separation from Marina. As soon as the taximi finishes, the song’s intro starts and Gregoris stands up. The low angle shot as well as the way he holds and smokes his cigarette add to his manly demeanour (figure 81).



**Figure 81: Manly Gregoris just before singing the Zeibekiko
(*Diploennies*, 1966, 28:20)**

How can my heart say goodbye to you
How can my heart sing you a song
In the sky I will live with the dream
In the sky I will be lost like a star

Gregoris, abiding with the stereotype of a Rebetis, chooses to grieve and reveal his pain through the most direct medium of the Romeic world – Zeibekiko, the most masculine rhythm of Rebetiko. During the first two lines, he looks towards Marina and wonders how to “say goodbye to” her, making it clear from the start to whom the song is addressed. Notably, in the soundtrack’s album the song is referred to as “Farewell” (“Αποχαιρετισμός”). When Gregoris sings the phrase “In the sky”, he spreads his hands as if they are wings

(figure 82) while the tonality shifts from the ‘feminine’ minor to the ‘masculine’ relative major scale (McClary, 1991). This is a very typical dancing figure in the Zeibekiko; the dancer, spreading his hands, with his head down and making a circle around himself, tries to imitate the eagle who looks down on earth to spot its prey before it swoops down for the kill (in this case the dancer comes down to his knees) (see Chapter Three).



Figure 82: Gregoris imitates the eagle in his Zeibekiko
(Diploennies, 1966, 28:59)

The song reaches its climax at the chorus. Its tonality remains in the major scale, associating the major tonality with Gregoris and masculinity. This connection becomes more obvious later in the film when Gregoris is infuriated with Marina and cannot bear to watch her sing in public, and Maestro urges him to be more compromising and conciliatory towards Marina: “Wait a minute Gregoris! You say everything in C major! Take a minor scale to discuss things a bit!” (59:23). However, Gregoris is unyielding. Thoroughly and extensively discussed in numerous books on gender as a musical code (e.g. Gorbman, 1987; McClary, 1991), the major scale is once again associated with masculinity and order, and the minor with femininity, disorder and compromise. On this occasion, the major tonality, as a defender of order, represents the Romeic identity and its morals while the minor scale is related to the Hellenic, with its

modern and ‘dangerous’ notions. In the chorus, which consists only of the tonic, the dominant and the subdominant chords – all major in the major scale – Gregoris, looking again towards Marina, urges her:

Cry out so that I come back to you
Cry out so that I can remember the earth

The association of the ‘earth’ with Marina is evident. Gregoris, the eagle in the sky, longs to return to his nest down on earth. However, ‘earth’ may also have another connotation; it may refer to the Romeic world which is solid, stable and reasonable. Trying to find balance in the ethereal yet wavering and unrealistic world of the Hellenic world which he will soon enter (via his courting with Rita), Gregoris is uncertain and in pain. Indeed, as soon as the song’s intro is played again, Rita, dressed in a revealing white dress, stands up. She smashes a plate right in front of Gregoris, disrupting the Rebetis’ moments of solitude and articulation of his feelings. What is more, she dances before him in a very sexual and provocative manner, breaking all the laws and mores of Rebetiko which forbid anyone (let alone a woman) to disrupt a Rebetis from his Zeibekiko.

In the second verse, we return immediately to the minor mode and Marina. The direct close shot of the heroine further enhances the song’s power as a medium of expression between the couple:

How can my heart leave your eyes
How can my heart refuse the world
On a dark bridge I will sit
On a dark river I will stand

While listening to the word “eyes” we see Marina’s eyes starting to blink as the camera starts moving away from her, reaffirming the upcoming separation of the couple. Away from the Romeic ‘world’ and his beloved, which are “hard to refuse”, Gregoris lives in darkness (“dark bridge”, “dark

river”). Suffocating in this disposition, in the second chorus he calls out to Marina:

Give me fire to extinguish the night
Give me fire to go to the sun

In his despair, his only hope for salvation lies in Marina. She is the link that will bring him back to the bright world of the Romeic (the ‘sun’) and liberate him from the darkness and misery of the Hellenic abyss (‘night’). However, seeing him stepping on his cigarette trying to extinguish the fire, we are convinced, at least for the time being, that he is drawn towards the Hellenic – the night and Rita. Once more in the film, the association is made of day and night with the Romeic and Hellenic respectively.

The song – both with lyrics and its instrumental version – continues to reflect Gregoris’ and Marina’s feelings towards each other throughout the rest of the film. We hear it in its instrumental version when Marina, sitting at the tavern, longs for the past and wishes her husband would return to his old job as a painter, and – as the song’s lyrics suggest – to his old world of the Romeic (35:09). Watching Gregoris moving towards the telephone to talk to Rita and metaphorically and physically moving away from Marina, the song’s reference to separation is made more emphatic. Furthermore, the point of view shot of Marina suggests that this time the song acts entirely as a reflection of Marina’s feelings. Similarly, we hear the song again – this time with Gregoris’ voice – when Marina, through the glass window, watches Rita’s figure leaning to kiss Gregoris (41:26). As we hear the phrase “How can my heart say goodbye to you?”, the close shot of Rita and Gregoris gradually gets longer and longer and cuts to Marina’s weeping eyes; on this occasion the song’s lyrics distinctively express both heroes’ feelings. Both belonging in the Romeic world, the couple’s common background enables them to have a mutual means of communication through a cultural discourse such as music and, most importantly, through Rebetiko, the Romeic’s music.

It should be noted that in *Diplo pennies*, music foretells not only the couple’s separation but also their reunion. Just before the scene of reunification

in which Marina visits Gregoris at the construction site, Marina sings a soft ballad and pictures herself holding hands and embracing Gregoris again. Significantly, the ballad is in major tonality, underlying the restoration of order. Marking the prospect of the couple's reunification, Marina's ballad emphatically takes place in authentic Romeic surroundings: on a hill facing the sea and Piraeus port, away from the modern buildings and flashy signs of the modern Hellenic world (figure 83).



Figure 83: Marina imagines her reunion with Gregoris in a Romeic setting
(Diploennies, 1966, 1:09:43)

During the song, Gregoris plays the guitar: the instrument acts as a symbol of reconciliation and happiness in the film on many occasions. For example, Gregoris is exuberant with joy when he goes to work and picks up his guitar (4:58). And in the last scene of the film, surrounded by their eight children and a balloon (another symbol of happiness), Gregoris takes his guitar out of the pushchair to reaffirm the celebratory return of the couple to the Romeic world where they both live in harmony.

5.2.4.3 *Bouzouki and the Romeic*

Apart from the given objective to project Rebetiko in the film and present it as the Romeic's musical genre, the director further attempts to unite the Romeic with the genre by making conspicuous efforts to have the genre's principal instrument-symbol, the bouzouki, in the foreground as much as possible. Aside from the aforesaid primary role that the instrument has at the end of the introductory titles and in the first shot of the film, the director continues to project it from there onwards.

From the very first scene of the film, it becomes apparent that the popularity of the bouzouki is extremely high. Lefteris, the tavern owner, refuses to accept the high economic demands of his singer/bouzouki player. When Maestro and the rest of the orchestra discuss possible alternatives, it is evident again that their task is not at all easy, as the considerable popularity of the singers/bouzouki players is reflected in their fees. In their quest for a singer who would work for a relatively small salary, we see the bouzouki being carried to the port, to the sea, to the market, into the streets, even to the construction site. It is visually blended with the Greek sea, the fishermen and their mobs, with hundreds of people in the market and its potatoes, bananas, pineapples and fish as well as with cars and scaffolding. In all these places the bouzouki has a visually prominent place (figure 84). Through its harmony with the entire visual environment shown in this Romeic musical, the instrument constitutes an indispensable part of the Romeic way of life and a trademark sign.



Figure 84: The bouzouki in the market blends with the Romeic
(Diploennies, 1966, 08:14)

Having said this, the bouzouki is not restricted to the domains of the Romeic environment. The director chooses to make another short tour in his film, this time portraying modern Athens and its suburbs. Hence, we see Gregoris with his guitar and two bouzouki players on a truck travelling around tall, modern buildings, famous historic sights, mountains and suburban areas. The bouzouki has a commanding place in most of the shots of this scene. The low angle shot of the standing musician playing his bouzouki, instils a hegemonic attribute to the instrument (figure 85). The director's attempt to relate the bouzouki and, in general, the Rebetiko with visual surroundings which are associated with the Hellenic identity due to their proximity to modernism and the West, is patently obvious. As a result, he creates the impression that the Romeic identity and the cultural values it carries are flourishing within the modernised urban space of the capital. It also suggests that it is feasible for the bouzouki, and hence Rebetiko, to transcend the Romeic and Hellenic worlds as a pan-Hellenic symbol.



Figure 85: Standing musician plays the bouzouki surrounded by the tall
buildings of modern Athens *(Diploennies, 1966, 16:01)*

5.3 The Hellenic element in *Diploennies*

After firmly establishing the Romeic identity of the native Greeks in the film, the script introduces the Hellenic identity through immigrant Greek Rita and then strengthens and accentuates its presence with Marina's transformation. The association of the Hellenic identity with representatives strictly of the 'weak' gender has considerable connotations in the film. On the one hand, it results in the representation of the female gender in such a way as to appear unimportant, dependent and inferior to the male. On the other hand, it suggests that although both identities can coexist in a relationship between a Greek man and woman, the Hellenic identity is and will always be subservient to the Romeic, since this is an established fact in the patriarchal Greek society of the Romeic identity and of Rebetiko. In this section I examine the ways in which the Hellenic identity is portrayed via the two women. Moreover, I investigate the extent to which *Diploennies* is based on the Hollywood film musical and I show that, as in *Never on Sunday*, all similarities and, particularly subversions, contribute to the reinforcement of the Romeic as well as to gender representation in the film.

5.3.1 The Hellenic identity and women in *Diploennies*

Rita is the absolute representative of the Hellenic in the film and, as such, is characterised with all the basic traits that depict the Hellenic identity. First of all, she does not live in Greece and, as a result, her characteristics and way of living are quite different from those of the native Greeks. She lives in one of the major capitals of Western Europe: Paris, and consequently, her ideas of Greece, as an outsider, are 'made up'. This is one of the major arguments against the Hellenic identity: it is an identity that reflects the ways in which the Europeans view the Greeks and not how the Greeks believe themselves to be, which, as the argument suggests, is embodied by the Romeic identity (Herzfeld, 2007).

Rita, as an 'outsider', does not abide by the Romeic norms which dominate most of Greek society and thus her behaviour is distinctly different and, at times, provocative. Being very wealthy, Rita came to Greece to have fun and experience Athens' nightlife. As already concluded from the opening titles,

the Hellenic is directly associated with nightlife and the night in general. She longs to see the Greeks dancing the Syrtaki, which is extremely popular in Paris (26:15). She makes a paragellia for a Zeibekiko and completely ignores (or is entirely unaware of) the Rebetiko norms of the Zeibekiko, smashing a plate in the middle of the dance (29:33). Moreover, she dances provocatively in front of the singer and emphatically distorts the order by transgressing the Romeic norms. Rita's persona is consistent with the presentation of provocative women in contemporary Greek films as usually coming from either the artistic world ("theatrina") or from upper social classes (as does Rita) (Delberoudi, 2004:175). Apart from the fact that Rita's conspicuous sexuality is not unrelated to her social status, foreign women in Greek films generally appear to have far fewer taboos than the local Greek women and their loose sense of morality stands as their main difference. Rita is dressed in brilliant white when she dances to the Zeibekiko, just as on the other occasion when she dances to a Tsifteteli rhythm in a sexual manner (52:54). This choice of colour is noteworthy since the white clashes with the dark – primarily black – clothing of the Rebetes and of the atmosphere of the tavern in general.

In contrast to the Romeic notion, in Rita's mind woman is absolutely equal to man in all aspects. Therefore she can be either the 'hunter' or the 'prey': "When the mountain doesn't go to Mohammed, Mohammed gets in his car and goes to find out why you [Gregoris] didn't call me" (36:30). As an emancipated woman she goes after the man she wants and does not wait for him to conquer her. On the other hand, being wealthy, Rita exposes a major negative trait of the Hellenic norms. Via her riches, Rita thinks that she can 'buy' Gregoris' love, ignoring basic virtues which reign in the Romeic world – love and pride. When Gregoris refuses to continue and advance their flirting to another level, she throws him out of the car (44:59), thus projecting the Hellenic's 'merciless' nature. Rita's brutality is even suggested through her gastronomic preferences: she wants her steak 'raw' (49:00). Her drinking habits also vary; Rita drinks luxurious whisky, while Maestro and Gregoris drink the cheap, local *retsina*.¹⁷⁷ Rita is the definite representative of the Hellenic 'evil'

¹⁷⁷ Retsina is an authentic Greek drink. European Union laws forbid the production of retsina by any other European country.

in the film, bringing disorder and disregarding all the codes of the Romeic world. Therefore, in a Romeic musical such as *Diploennies*, at the end of the film the 'threat' is excluded and rejected.

As well as Rita's imposing presence, Marina's transformation midway through the film is an even more emphatic way of portraying the Hellenic identity and contrasting it to the Romeic. Interestingly, it was Marina's Romeic pride that was the initial cause of her behaviour shift towards the Hellenic norms. Watching her husband being courted by another woman, her sense of pride and egoism was irrevocably offended. It is worth noting, however, that without the help of four brandies she would not have proceeded in her actions. Sunk in liquor and jealousy, Marina puts aside Rita and then sings and dances to the Tsifteteli and the Hasaposerviko. Eleni, whose husband was also courted by another woman, acts as if this is something normal and urges Marina not to do anything irrational. In other words, it is the loose thinking and blurry mind caused by the alcohol that led Marina to her actions. In a more sober state, she would still have been offended but would not have proceeded to do anything drastic. When the next morning she is sober again, she returns to the compliant, submissive attitude that characterises the women of the Romeic identity: "Me? What can I say? Whatever Gregoris says..." (57:39).

Marina's Hellenic revolution is signalled by the trumpet (53:52). Declaring "I dare!" (53:32) as a transformed, Hellenic woman, Marina reinforces Eleni's opinion that the Romeic women "do not dare" (53:51). The heroine firmly knocks her hand on the table and rushes to the stage in utter dizziness. After she has put aside and disposed of the threat posed by Rita, she reinforces this, not only by dancing, but by singing as well. Moreover, the heroine's transformation is not restricted to her actions but also affects her looks. From the ordinary inconspicuous woman of the low milieu world, Marina is transformed into a strikingly feminine and sexual blonde, the centre of attention of everyone at the tavern (figure 86).



Figure 86: Marina is transformed and attracts everyone’s attention at the tavern (*Diploennies*, 1966, 54:19)

Marina’s expressions and body postures are quite similar to those of two of the most popular blondes of World Cinema – Brigitte Bardot and Marilyn Monroe (figures 87 and 89). Vougiouklaki has often been compared to them because of her childish manner and her naïve sexuality (figure 88). In fact, a natural brunette, she launched the blonde hair in her first colour film *Aliki in the Navy* (*H Aliki sto Navtikó*, 1961), maintaining it throughout the rest of her career. The actor’s dyed hair can clearly be read as “intentionally signifying the adoption of a modernised and Westernised identity” (Papadimitriou, 2006:124). Following Rita and her association with the Hellenic, the ‘new’ Marina is also related to the Hellenic through her actions and her looks, thus further reinforcing the identity’s association with the feminine.



Figures 87, 88 and 89: Vougiouklaki's striking similarities with the most popular blonde actresses of the time – Marilyn Monroe and Brigitte Bardot (*Diploennies*, 1966, 54:44)

In the aforementioned scene, Marina's behaviour is distinctly changed. She shakes her head in the manner of the Beatles – who were at the peak of their popularity throughout Europe at the time; she breaks a plate like Rita did earlier in the film and she presents leadership traits as she coordinates everyone on the dance floor while she stands on a table (56:48). All these speak for the fact that the 'new' Marina, now behaving as a Hellenic Greek woman, is emancipated, full of confidence and independent (figure 90). As a result, she brings disorder and poses a major threat to the patriarchal world of the Romeic. The lyrics of the Tsifteteli "Lefteri, Lefteri" she sings are indicative:

Be sensible, make me this favour
Be sensible my golden palikari
Stop already, everyone sees through you
Stop, don't pretend to be a lion

With the alternating shots of Marina and Gregoris, it is clear that Marina addresses the song to her husband. The lyrics of the song indicate that Gregoris, although a "palikari", has lost the upper hand as far as power between the couple is concerned. Now, he may "pretend to be a lion" and roar as much as he wants but Marina completely ignores him ("be sensible", "stop already"), as the chorus' line audaciously maintains, "I snap my fingers at you!"

The effect that the song has on everyone in the tavern makes it even more threatening to the Romeic norms. The whole of the second verse is sung in unison by all the clients of the tavern as a sign of general acceptance of the 'transformed' Marina and what she represents. The huge turmoil is transferred outside of the tavern as many young dancers – youth being associated with modernity in all of the Greek film musicals (see 2.2 *The Greek film musical: A Hellenic territory*) – perform the Hasaposerviko in the streets. As soon as the song ends and with everyone applauding her, Marina, collapses in Gregoris'

arms and murmurs to him: “Did I manage to seduce you?” (57:12). With seduction being a distinctive trait of the Hellenic woman (Rita’s seduction of Gregoris is a typical example), Marina’s question is the icing on the cake for her transformation.



**Figure 90: The ‘new’ Marina on stage – a Hellenic female representative
(*Diploennies*, 1966, 54:41)**

5.3.2 The Hollywood film musical and *Diploennies*

Having already directed two film musicals prior to *Diploennies*, Skalenakis is well aware of the American film musical structure and techniques when directing a Greek film musical for the first time.¹⁷⁸ As a result, *Diploennies* is influenced by and, to a large extent, based on the American Hollywood musical. Having said this, in his conscious attempt to produce a ‘national’, ‘Romeic’ musical, Skalenakis subverts significant elements of this American film genre. Bearing in mind the intense Hellenic features of the Greek musical as a film genre (see 2.2 *The Greek film musical: A Hellenic territory*), in this section I argue that Skalenakis’ approach nullifies the Hellenic element in the film; instead, the already intensely Romeic character is enhanced. What is more, I maintain that these conspicuous subversions maintain strong gender connotations which, along with the heroes’ associations

¹⁷⁸ He previously directed *Prazské Blues* (1963) and *Aphrodite’s Island (To Nησί της Αφροδίτης)*, (1965).

with the two identities, also contribute to the representation of gender in the film. In order to assess the film's similarities and subversions regarding the American film musical, I focus my analysis on two of the most recognisable features of the American film musical - the dual focus narrative (also discussed in Chapter Four) and the dream sequence.

5.3.2.1 *The dual-focus narrative*

In contrast with the majority of Greek musicals, *Diplo pennies* complies with Altman's syntactic criteria that define the musical: the relationship between couple and plot, music and plot, narrative and number, image and sound and, the most distinct feature, the narrative strategy (1987). The latter criterion refers to the dual-focus narrative structure which is distinct from the linear structure of stereotypical classical and mainstream Hollywood films. Whereas Hollywood musicals adopted the work/entertainment dichotomy as their thematic focus (Altman, 1987:49), in most Greek musicals the primary dichotomy – sexual duality – overlays the secondary dichotomies of old/new, tradition/modernity and Romeic/Hellenic identity (Papadimitriou, 2006:39). *Diplo pennies* is one such film.

The most significant of Altman's syntactic criteria that *Diplo pennies* satisfies and holds in common with Hollywood musicals is the narrative strategy. The film is one of the few Greek musicals to faithfully base its narrative structure on the dual-focus tradition. The film, whose scenes offer interchanging depictions of the male and female heroes, avoids focusing on a single character. Marina and Gregoris also share the film's musical time by singing solo for approximately the same amount of time in the film (they also perform a duet). The dual-focus approach becomes even more evident after Marina's transformation into a Hellenic representative, since, in addition to the fact that the film's structure is built around stars of the opposite sex, these stars are depicted with radically divergent values (Altman, 1987:16 – 58). As it is made apparent via the description and analysis of the Hellenic and Romeic elements, all of these secondary values/dichotomies traced in the film – old/new, tradition/modernity, indigenous/foreign, Rebetiko/foreign musical

genres – are part of, and are essentially formed by the most significant secondary dichotomy, the Romeic/Hellenic.

It is of particular interest that *Diploennies* is the only Greek film musical to adopt the dual-focus narrative that puts the work/entertainment – the Hollywood musical's only secondary dichotomy – side by side with all the other secondary dichotomies in the film. Namely, Gregoris' dilemma in having to choose between his daily *work* as a painter and his night performances as an *entertainer* is significant to the film. When Marina first hears from Gregoris that he will sing and get paid for it, she bursts into laughter (17:00) since, for her, singing, like any other kind of entertainment, is merely for personal satisfaction.

It is also worth mentioning that Papadimitriou, although she recognises the dual focus structure of *Diploennies*, refuses to accept the existence of any secondary thematic dichotomies which might underlie the formal duality. Based on the logic that the husband and wife represent the same cultural values, the scholar is led to the conclusion that only one identity is present in the film and wonders whether it is Hellenic or Romeic. This position, however, contradicts her earlier stance that the couple belongs to the Romeic sphere (2006:90 – 95). As already discussed, the Romeic element is abundantly present in the film, with Gregoris as its chief representative. The Romeic vies with the Hellenic element personified by Rita and stressed even more by Marina. Inevitably, the formal duality does create secondary thematic dichotomies, the most significant being the Romeic/Hellenic.

5.3.2.2 *The dream sequence*

The dream sequence, an indispensable part of the Hollywood film musical, is present in Greek film musicals which faithfully follow the Hollywood tradition. This section of the film is of distinctly Hellenic character due to its portrayals of escape from the routine and the everyday and an unrealistic and unattainable situation for the heroes (see 2.2.5 *The Greek and American film musicals: the dream sequence and the grand finale*). Skalenakis did not neglect to include such a sequence in his film; after all, *Diploennies* is a musical and, as we have already seen, the director closely follows the

Hollywood syntax. However, the film's dream sequence utterly subverts the typical celebration of the Hellenic identity commonly seen in Greek film musicals. As a truly Romeic film, *Diploennies* presents a dream scene in which the Hellenic is presented as the Other in the world of the Romeic, and consequently the sequence, which is supposed to be a dream, turns out to be, literally, a nightmare.

After she sees her husband being kissed by Rita, Marina takes refuge in a car outside Rita's house (42:23). Physically and psychologically exhausted, she soon falls asleep, as the instrumental version of "How can my heart refuse the world?" – the song via which the couple expresses their feelings to each other – is heard. In Marina's dream the same melody continues, suggesting that the heroine's emotional state persists even as she sleeps. In the dream, the Romeic element is subverted through the four female dancers who dance to the couple's theme. The Zeibekiko, symbol of masculinity and expression for the Rebetis who dances to it only by and for himself, in Marina's dream is treated as a female dance performed in numbers. Zeibekiko's primary distinctiveness is that the dance does not have any specific order of moves and steps and thus does not restrict or block the male dancer. Being treated as a number in which all the movements of the female dancers are synchronised (figure 91), the "dance of all dances" (Tsarouchis, 1963) is 'sabotaged' and undermined in the world of the Rebetiko and the Romeic.



Figure 91: In the dream sequence, the Zeibekiko is danced by women in synchronised movements (*Diploennies*, 1966, 43:19)

What appears to be a nightmare for the Romeic persona turns out also to be a horrendous dream for Marina. Suddenly the Zeibekiko shifts to a Tsifteteli, primarily a women's dance. Behind the four dancers, a bright light stands out in the dark which helps the audience discern the figures behind the white screen (figure 92). Earlier, in real life, Marina had watched Gregoris kissing another woman behind a glass window; now, in her nightmare, she watches him being 'worshipped' by two female dancers. The two women dance before their 'master' as he sits on a chair smoking a cigarette in a macho manner. As the four dancers continue their dance on stage, the two women behind the screen lean in front of Gregoris as if they are members of his harem. Indeed, the choice of Tsifteteli encourages such a correlation. It was originally an oriental dance and is extensively used in Rebetiko songs that refer to the exoticness and mystery of Arabia and Arabic women (see Chapters Three and Four). As a true sheikh, Gregoris remains calm, smoking his cigarette and deriving satisfaction from his status.



Figure 92: Gregoris is worshipped by female dancers in dream sequence
(*Diploennies*, 1966, 44:05)

Marina's anguish reaches its peak when Gregoris is suddenly seen on stage, again seated on his chair. This time the female and, by and large, Hellenic threat becomes even more real as the four dancers on the stage closely surround the representative of the Romeic – Gregoris, creating a tight cluster

around him (figure 93). As it appears from the dream sequence in *Diplo pennies*, even a purely Hellenic part of the Greek film musical, the dream sequence, gives substance to Skalenakis' attempt to create a Romeic musical, turning it into a nightmare: not only for the heroine, but for the Romeic world in its entirety.

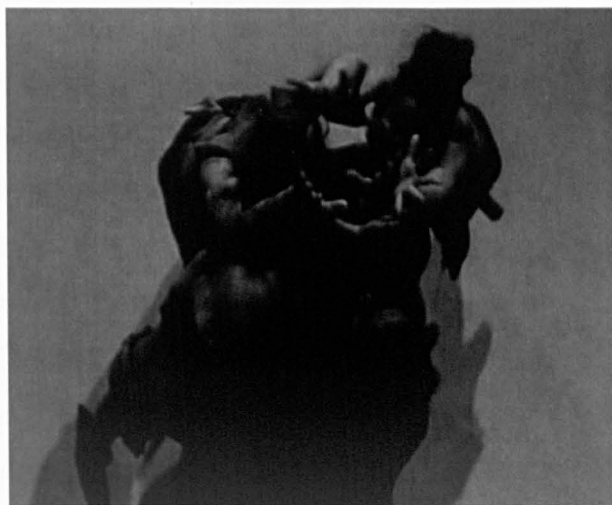


Figure 93: Gregoris is surrounded by the four dancers in dream sequence
(*Diplo pennies*, 1966, 44:23)

5.4 The Ending: A Romeic celebration

As analysed earlier, Marina's pregnancy has a catalytic role in the plot's resolution since, in the Romeic hierarchy of cultural values, the concept of marriage and family is at the top of the list. This is the case for the vast majority of comedies and melodramas from the 1940s to the end of the 1970s (see 2.1 *Greek Cinema and primacy of the Romeic*). Therefore, Gregoris is thrilled to hear the news and is very pleased to know that his wife, being pregnant, will quit her job as a night singer and return to her daily, domestic duties. Besides, women singers were most uncommon, and the Rebetiko orchestra was desperate to find a male singer, having never sought to hire a woman as a singer in the first place. Four years earlier in another musical *Something that Burns* (1963), a woman in a band was "a decorative element". Hiring a woman to do a traditional 'man's' job would pose a serious threat to the patriarchal system. Indeed, in *Sea Beads* (1967), a women's rock band intimidates a Rebetiko

orchestra playing across the street. This motif of conflict between artists of different gender is commonly found in the Hollywood musical tradition, for example, *The Barkleys of Broadway* (1949), *Sweethearts* (1938), *Broadway Serenade* (1939), etc. However, whereas in the aforementioned Hollywood musicals and in *Sea Breeze* the conflict is resolved by the reunion of the warring couple but, most significantly, with each member maintaining his/her artistic status, in *Diplo pennies* this is not the case.

Marina is more than happy to leave the public domain and return to the private sphere of her house since, on numerous occasions in the film, she admits that all she wants and dreams of is to have a family. Consequently, her transformation to a modern, liberated woman and a representative of the Hellenic identity proves to be short-lived. Such endings indicate that the male decision-makers of the film business avoid going against the prevailing mores and values that depict the Romeic identity; inevitably, the existing patriarchal social system perpetuates.

The film's ending further diverts from the standard Hollywood musical format which, following the dual-focus narrative, mediates the values that each of the heroes represents (Altman, 1987:50). If *Diplo pennies* were to remain faithful to the dual plot strategy throughout, then one would expect a compromise in the beliefs and values between the couple; for example, following the Hollywood musical's logic, a possible resolution would be to have Marina sing with Gregoris side by side at the tavern in the last scene, as is the case with *Sweethearts* (1938). Instead, with Gregoris' return to his singing job and Marina's return to her domestic duties, the values of Gregoris and thus the Romeic are well embedded and reinforced. Moreover, to the Athenian audience of 1966, this film's ending is far more truthful and realistic, and an ending following the logic of the Hollywood musical would only seem unreal and fake.¹⁷⁹ The ending reaffirms the film's proximity to the Romeic suggested throughout the film.

In *Diplo pennies* the Greek family is extolled, is put on trial and at the end comes out triumphant. This is the most characteristic trait of the unqualified

¹⁷⁹ For example, in films like *The Love Parade* (1929), opposing values are compromised through the success of the protagonists' love affair.

representatives of the Romeic world at that time: the melodramas. The absolute star of these melodramas is Nikos Xanthopoulos (see 2.4 *Rebetiko and Greek Cinema*). *Diploennies*' unmistakable similarities with the majority of his films – celebration of the family and family values, low social status of the heroes as well as rejection of foreign trends or anything that could distort the Romeic Greekness, reaffirm the film's strong proximity to the Romeic identity.

It should be noted that after the couple's reunion, the film suggests a 'marriage' of the two identities – the male Romeic to the female Hellenic – via music and the song "Be Patient" (1:13:40). However, once again, this coexistence does not alter the director's favouring of the Romeic over the Hellenic throughout the film. The scene shows Marina and Gregoris singing the song in old Athenian neighbourhoods under the Acropolis, with a number of young people holding the Romeic bouzoukia and classical guitars (both part of the Rebetiko orchestra) and Western electric guitars. The stone walls and narrow streets, along with the old neighbourhoods depicted by their traditional architectural features, give a strong sense of tradition and proximity to the Romeic identity in the scene. This is counterbalanced through the Acropolis: as mentioned earlier, the ancient monuments – and particularly the Parthenon, signify the Hellenic identity when they are shown by night. However, the Parthenon appears in the previous scene in daylight, where the couple are reunited on the roof of a construction site (figure 94). Considering the earlier associations of the two identities with day and night, the fact that this reconciliation scene occurs in broad daylight emphatically suggests the prominence of the Romeic as the only true Greek identity. When the reasons that brought the couple back together are taken into account, this becomes even more apparent.



Figure 94: The shot of Parthenon in daylight marks the reunion of the couple and confirms the Romeic prevalence (*Diploennies*, 1966, 44:23)

Despite the ‘neutralising’ effect of the Acropolis and the Parthenon in the scene in which the two identities seem to coexist in harmony, with men and women singing “Be Patient”, the Romeic element once again stands out. First, the mere choice of the song overtly discloses the prevailing identity. As already discussed, the song’s lyrics explicitly refer to the Romeic identity. Moreover, its rhythmic meters of 9/8 and 7/8 are also associated with Greek folk music and the Rebetiko – both genres being unambiguously associated with the Romeic. In addition, even though we do hear the electric guitar in the song, its role is minor and submissive to the bouzouki and the classical guitar since the lead melody is given to the bouzouki (and not the electric guitar which is often the case), accompanied by the classical guitar strumming the chords. As a result, the electric guitar’s presence in the scene proves to be only decorative.

Towards the end, the film portrays the Romeic dream, the reason for which Marina completely turned her back on her independence, emancipation, and on all the values related to the Hellenic identity, and instead, chose to reunite with Gregoris and, metaphorically, the identity he represents throughout the film. The exaggerated number of family members (8 children) stresses the family and marriage values which are central in the Romeic world (figure 77). Moreover, the childish waltz theme of the Rebetiko “Down at Piraeus” hints at

the perpetuation of the Romeic values, not only for the story's couple but for their children as well. It is a Romeic feast, the Greek definition of happiness. The children's clothing acts as the link to the film's closing scene. All dressed as sailors, the children connect the audience to four impressive sailors dancing the syrtaki on an old stone wall. The sailors' connection to the navy, and thus to national security, suggests that the Romeic is an identity that the Greeks need to cherish as if it were a national treasure. It is, therefore, not accidental that a few shots later a national military parade appears below the sailors (1:18:23).

As if these were not enough, the sailors are later joined by three *evzones* (also known as *tsoliades*) – members of a select infantry corps in the Greek army, wearing the traditional uniform of the Greek warriors of 1821: yet another symbol related to tradition. During the closing scene the composer draws on all the themes which musically mark the Romeic identity in the film. Appropriated to the syrtaki style, the aural capstone to this Romeic feast is one last performance of “Down at Piraeus” and “Bright day”.¹⁸⁰

Skalenakis purposefully avoided the grand finale, an ending typical of Greek musicals, especially those of Dalianides (as discussed in Chapter Two). The grand finale constitutes an indispensable part of Epitheorisi (see 2.2.5 *The Greek and American film musicals: dream sequence and grand finale*), which is distinct for its modernisation and westernisation traits and is a strong opponent of the Hellenic identity (Papadimitriou, 2006:24). Potential use of such an ending would infuse a strong Hellenic element in the film and would ruin the director's meticulous re-creation of the Romeic world within the Hellenic musical.

For the same reason, the director chose to produce his film in the conservative black and white format, like all the Romeic comedies of the time, despite the increasing use of colour and widescreen with Cinemascope in Greek film musicals of the time. Both these features formed part of the broader cultural tendency towards modernisation and westernisation and were novelties related to the desire to keep up with the recent stylistic trends in American and

¹⁸⁰ It should be noted that both of these songs as well as the rest of the songs heard in the film (or their instrumental versions) are still sung today by the Greek people and feature on Xarhakos' very successful album “One noon” (“Ένα Μεσημέρι”) which was released in 1966, the same year as the film *Diplo pennies*.

West-European cinema (Papadimitriou, 2006:72). For example, in musicals such as *Something that Burns* (1964) – the ninth colour film produced – colour is used to project a modern image of Greece and is associated with spectacle rather than realism (Papadimitriou, 2006:74). It is, therefore, not surprising that colour ‘entered’ the Romeic comedies many years later. As in *Diploennies*, the Romeic comedies’ main trait was realism and the everyday; any opening up to the colourful world of the Hellenic would estrange the audience from the familiar Romeic environment long established in Greek films.

5.5 *Diploennies*’ critical reception and influence as a Romeic musical

Diploennies was the first film that Skalenakis made in Greece on his return from Czechoslovakia. His prior experience with the musical (*Pražské Blues*, 1963 and *Afrodite’s Island*, 1965) and the documentary (*Pojistovna*, 1957) explain both his choice to make a musical on his return to Greece and the realist aesthetic that depicts his films. The latter constitutes the distinctive trait of films which project the Romeic identity: *Diploennies* is one such film. Looking at the generally positive current critical reception of the film, one realises the extent to which *Diploennies* was considered significant for Greek Cinema through its projection of a ‘genuinely’ Greek national identity. The film was received by the critics more positively than any other musical, having won three awards from the Union of Film Critics of Athens (EKKA) in 1966. It was entered in the Cannes and San Sebastian Film Festivals in 1966 and was shown in theatres worldwide under the name *Dancing the Syrtaki*. Reviewer and filmmaker Tonia Marketaki (1966) notes that the film marks a step towards the renewal of Greek Cinema, outstanding due to its aesthetic risks, and challenge to standards of mass production. In the newspaper “Ta Nea” a critic characterises the film as “the first relatively successful attempt at creating a Greek musical”, while the reviewer in “Mesimvrini” also stresses the importance for Greek Cinema of Skalenakis’ attempt to create a ‘National’ musical (1966). Giannis Bakogiannopoulos (1966) lays emphasis on the differences in his approach from that of Dalianides and recognises Skalenakis’ success in producing a ‘National’ musical. Despite critical acclaim, however, *Diploennies* was only sixth in the box office charts, something that can be

largely explained by the fact that Skalenakis did not make *Diploennies* a star vehicle, in contrast to the other, more successful films (Papadimitriou, 2006:127).

The film's resolution, with the triumph of the Romeic over the Hellenic, had an impact on the script of film musicals to follow. This is evident in *Ah! That Wife of Mine!* produced by Skalenakis a year after *Diploennies*. The film could well be considered as a sequel to *Diploennies* due to the fact that, in addition to the director, the film's main protagonists also remain the same. In this film, Skalenakis' male protagonist appears as authoritarian as in *Diploennies* and at times even bossier. As soon as they get married he forbids his wife from working: "From now on you will be *my* wife and not a model for automobiles" (2:28). Moreover, he explicitly orders his wife to stay out of his business (35:41). As in *Diploennies* he reminds her that the woman should stay at home as a housewife and that *he* is the man with the responsibilities (26:10). Following the Romeic values, the wife appears even more submissive than Marina: "You are my eternal master" (1:02:10). Adhering to the *Diploennies'* formula which diminishes any Hellenic traits in a musical, Skalenakis once again avoids the grand finale and any element of Epitheorisi. The film's ending is distinctively different from *Diploennies'* in terms of its moral meanings. The couple, after materialising their long term dream of buying a convertible car, now add a boat to their wish list. This intemperate consumerism, a definite trait of the Hellenic, largely 'neutralises' the Romeic perception of the Greek identity and instead, results in a hybrid concoction in which the two identities bizarrely seem to coexist.

Released seven months after *Diploennies*, *My Daughter the Socialist* (*Η Κόρη μου η Σοσιαλίστρια*, 1966) has a strikingly similar plot structure and resolution. Again with the same protagonists and script writer, the film also follows the dual-focus narrative and draws extensively on the structural and stylistic elements of the American musical. In this film, Vougiouklaki plays the daughter of a factory owner with socialist ideas, while Papamichael plays one of the workers. Despite belonging to different social classes, Vougiouklaki's friendly and supportive attitude towards the workers allows the romance between herself and Papamichael to develop. The daughter's socialist

ideas, as well as her 'feminist' emancipation, are presented in the film as ideas coming from the West and they represent the foreign, the new and the modern: in other words, the Hellenic identity. On the other hand, the male protagonist's notions, particularly concerning gender roles, represent the values of tradition and a Greece associated with the working classes; in other words, a Romeic notion of identity (Papadimitriou, 2006:129). By allowing the two heroes to marry at the end, the script attempts to reconcile modernity and tradition and mediate between Hellenic and Romeic values, thus differentiating this film from the earlier *Diploennies*. Yet, it is a fictitious mediation; married with two children, the factory owner's daughter with the socialist values returns to her 'proper' place in the nuclear family and thus the traditional order is restored.

Finally, *The Most Shining Star* (*To Πιο Λαμπρό Αστέρι*, 1967) and *Our Love* (*Η Αγάπη Μας*, 1968), in which once again the same duet star, although written by different men, both seemingly celebrate modernisation and westernisation. However, it is a superficial celebration of the Hellenic, with the deeper structures of the films reasserting the traditional Romeic values; both films have an explicit message: a woman needs to be less ambitious and successful than her man in order to succeed in her relationship.

This chapter illustrated the various ways in which the Romeic identity is projected and prevails over the Hellenic within the Greek film musical – the only genre in Greek Cinema which pays tribute to the Hellenic identity (see 2.2 *The Greek film musical: a Hellenic territory*). As was the case with the previous two case studies, the chapter showed that the Romeic identity is established through the use of Rebetiko – both the musical genre and social domain. Rebetiko represents the low milieu couple and their feelings towards each other and, with the use of the bouzouki as a means of unification of the Romeic with Rebetiko, the genre is established as the one and only musical medium of the Romeic identity.

The chapter reinforces the findings of the previous case study and emphasises the significance of the American film musical as a way of explicitly portraying the Romeic identity and its dominance over the Hellenic. By subverting distinct elements of the American film musical such as the dream sequence, the film essentially subverts the Hellenic nature of the film, which is

generic to the vast majority of Greek film musicals, and contributes to the establishment of the Romeic. Moreover, the chapter indicated that through the personification of the Romeic and the Hellenic through the male and female lead respectively, these subversions maintain strong gender connotations.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

The debate on Greek national identity has been long-lasting and complex. Upon the establishment of the new Greek state in 1832, the controversy about the *Romios* and the *Hellene* and, more generally, the Romeic and the Hellenic identities re-emerged, and persisted with growing intensity throughout the twentieth century. The dichotomy within Greek national and cultural identity is irrevocably reflected in cultural discourses such as film. However, despite the explicit manifestations of each of the two viewpoints of Greekness in various film genres throughout the history of Greek Cinema, this thesis is the first to provide an in-depth examination and analysis of the ways in which the two identities are expressed in Greek Cinema. Chapter One provided an overview of the two identities through historic facts and the associated appellatives which embody the most distinct characteristics of each: the Romeic identity has been indissolubly linked with tradition, introversion and the East, while its Hellenic counterpart has been associated with modernity, extroversion and the West. Analysis of the history of Greek Cinema, undertaken in Chapter Two, demonstrated that the Romeic identity has enjoyed almost uninterrupted supremacy throughout. This was found to be particularly evident in drama and comedy, the two predominant film genres of Greek Cinema. In addition, a thorough exposition was conducted of the only exception to this rule, the Greek film musical, which explicitly celebrates the Hellenic identity. To support my arguments, I incorporated the collective approach of case studies, based on examination of three films from the Golden Period of Greek Cinema (1955-1970) representing the genres of drama, comedy and musicals.

The social constructionist theory of gender asserts that representations construct places wherein individuals map their identities. Central to this thesis is the assertion that various representations of gender occur in music and film which lead to the perception and adoption of gender role models. In accordance with this premise, I found that the expression of the two notions of national and cultural identity gave rise to gender representation through the personification of the male and female leads' identities. In *Stella* and *Diploennies* the male

characters Miltos and Gregoris are traditional patriarchal figures acting as unequivocal agents of the Romeic in the films. Miltos' association with tradition is greatly enhanced by his Cretan origins and the folk dances. Both men abide by the patriarchal code and expect the women they are with to do the same. Modernity is further stressed in *Stella* through the depiction of the female protagonist as the exotic 'Other', which imbues the film with unambiguously feminine traits.

The social constructionist view also emphasises that cultural representations construct the meanings and characteristics which are given to masculinity/femininity rather than being a reflection of pre-existing gender attributes. The gender roles in *Never on Sunday* confirm this vividly. In contrast to the other two case studies, in this film the Hellenic identity is personified by the male lead and the Romeic by the female. American Homer is unmistakably the Hellenic agent in the film, embodying the 'Hellenic' vision which struggles to resurrect the ancient Greek spirit in modern Greece (Herzfeld, 2007:3). As was the case with the Hellenic vision in the 1820s and 1830s, in *Never on Sunday* this is expressed also by a non Greek. On the other hand, the female agent Ilia personifies the Romeic spirit, stressing her (and Greece's) unwillingness to change. Consequently, masculinity and femininity are attributed with traits virtually opposite to those depicted in the other two films. As the widely accepted socialisation perspective maintains, gender, being an outcome of social factors and conditions and not predetermined solely by biological predispositions, is neither fixed nor unchangeable, and the same gender roles can be assigned to a man as to a woman (Butler, 1990; Turner 1995; Burr, 1998).

The musical genre Rebetiko is indissolubly related to the Romeic identity. Commonly occurring in comedies and dramas in Greek Cinema up until the end of the 1960s, Rebetiko constitutes the primary source of expression of this particular notion of 'Greekness'. Despite this being the case, a thorough examination of this relationship had previously been lacking. In addition to examining and explaining Rebetiko's relation to the Romeic identity and the use of the genre in films in Chapter Two, this thesis illustrated that Rebetiko, both the musical genre and the social domain, largely contributes to

the representation of gender in Greek films. On the one hand, its intertwinement with the Romeic identity forges the protagonists' association with that identity. On the other hand, the norms and musical codes carried within the genre, as well as the extremely patriarchal nature that characterises the social domain of Rebetiko, lead to the representation of gender.

In all three films under study, the use of Rebetiko was found to exert a hugely pervasive and diverse influence. Fundamentally, through music and the norms of the social domain, Rebetiko highlights the deep-rooted patriarchal system of values under which the protagonists lived. In *Stella*, Rebetiko brings to life Stella's musical behaviour as well as her daring attempts to circumvent the restraints imposed on her by the system. Moreover, the subversive representation of femininity in the film becomes possible largely through Stella's depiction as a female Rebetis.

Meanwhile, in all three films, the Rebetiko musical genre and its strong Romeic flavour is counterbalanced by Western music, signifying the Hellenic's proximity to Western culture. Accordingly, we see Stella expressing her modernity in a trendy jazz club, dancing to Jazz, Latin and Twist tunes: an action which is echoed by Marina in *Diploennies*, dancing in the tavern to an uptight Rock'n'roll tune, whereas Gregoris only sings and dances Rebetiko. In *Never on Sunday*, Rebetiko is contrasted to a Cello Suite written by the patriarch of Western classical music, J.S. Bach.

As was expressed in Chapter Two of the thesis, the influence of the American film musical in Greek film musicals extends beyond the celebration of the Hellenic identity demonstrated in the vast majority of Greek film musicals. In Chapters Four and Five, consideration of *Never on Sunday* and the Greek film musical *Diploennies* afforded the chance to reaffirm that the American film musical, through subversion of its basic elements, may be used to project the Romeic identity and, as exemplified by *Diploennies*, to create a 'Romeic' musical (this was the conscious intention of the director). The employment of the sexual dichotomy as the master of secondary dichotomies depicted in *Diploennies* – a fundamental trait of the American film musical (Altman, 1987) – is very apparent in the film. It is asserted by this thesis that all the secondary dichotomies are essentially a product of the national identity

dichotomy which itself is personified through the male and female leads and is therefore a result of the sexual dichotomy. These secondary dichotomies in fact epitomise the basic traits of the Romeic and Hellenic identities as depicted in the other two case studies, *Stella* and *Never on Sunday*: tradition-modernity, indigenous-foreign and Rebetiko-foreign musical genres. By means of detailed analysis this thesis has demonstrated that the association of the male and female leads with the Romeic and the Hellenic identities and their corresponding characteristics results in the establishment of clear-cut gender roles in the film. This study also highlights how the originality and innovative approach of *Diploennies*, which established it as the first 'Romeic' musical, influenced other film musicals of its time.

The thesis also elucidated how the Hellenic and Romeic identities are further heightened by the employment of specific musical instruments. In most cases these instruments relate to or symbolise the male or female hero, leading to transmission of explicit gender meanings. In *Stella*, for example, the piano stands as the symbol of modernity and the Hellenic; Stella adores her piano and protects it with her own life. The same applies in *Never on Sunday*: where Homer bought Ilia a piano as an essential part of her 'Hellenic' enculturation. Equally important is the use of the barrel organ in the same film, not only because the instrument directly relates the heroine Ilia with the Romeic identity, but also, through the instrument's association with Ilia, gender and sexual connotations are explicitly put forward.

In contrast with the stereotypical female model presented in Greek Cinema during the 1950s and 1960s (see Chapters Two and Five), the female protagonist in *Stella* refuses to conform to the contemporary Greek society's norms and pays the ultimate price of life. *Stella* is the first film in Greek Cinema in which distinct traits of the Hellenic identity – Western music and culture, extroversion and modernity – are contrasted to fundamental characteristics of the Romeic identity – Rebetiko, conservatism and tradition. The co-existence and, most importantly, the divergence of the traits personified in *Stella* within the identities of each of the leads and the consequent clashes between them were absent from Greek Cinema. This conflict of the Romeic with the Hellenic and the forms in which it was manifested in *Stella* paved the

way for other films that followed. The thesis demonstrated that the pattern found in *Stella* is recurrent in the film musical *Diplopennies*: masculinity/tradition/Rebetiko/Romeic and femininity/modernity/Western culture/Hellenic. Taking into account the inequality of the male and female characters as delineated in contemporary films – reflectors of power in gender relations within Greek society, these associations blatantly reaffirm the Hellenic's (female) inferiority to the Romeic's (male) dominance in Greek Cinema. What is more, the messages they transmit regarding their influence on the perpetuation of attitudes to women in contemporary Greek society of the 1950s and 1960s are compelling by reason of their unambiguity.

Future Research

Due to its interdisciplinary nature, this thesis could be influential across a variety of research fields. Moreover, whilst issues from a number of subject areas are considered, they are studied only to the degree that best serves the specific aims and objectives of the current study. Consequently, there is potential for further in-depth research in several areas.

First, the chronological period under consideration spans from the beginning of Greek Cinema until the end of the 1960s. Although there is brief discussion of the development of Greek Cinema from the 1970s to the present day, the thesis focuses particularly on the 'Golden Period' of Greek Cinema, the 'Old Cinema' (1955-1970). Therefore, the analysis and conclusions from this thesis could conceivably form the basis for a study extending into the period of the so called 'New Cinema'. It would be particularly interesting to investigate whether the Romeic and Hellenic notions of Greek national identity continue to be depicted in Greek Cinema and, if so, whether they are manifested in similar or different ways from those described in this thesis (for example, whether they also involve personification), the reasons for this and, most importantly, whether they also lead to gender representation. If the latter were found to be the case, this would open up new horizons for researchers on gender, film and sociology, and it would be fascinating to examine whether the well embedded gender roles, depicted in the 'Old Cinema' for decades, are perpetuated in the 'New Cinema'. If different gender roles were observed, then the potential

social, political and cultural reasons would need to be investigated.

The thesis could prove to be very influential for musicologists with expertise in Rebetiko as the study is unique in not only making specific reference to the use of the genre in Greek film, but also in explicitly documenting how the use of Rebetiko can transmit connotations of gender and Greek national identity. Moreover, this thesis lays the groundwork for further research on the use of Rebetiko in specific major genres of Greek film such as comedy and melodrama. It would also be worth investigating whether the use of Rebetiko in films has changed over the years and the forms in which it might currently be represented. Particular attention could be directed towards the use of a specific Rebetiko rhythm (e.g. the *Zeibekiko*) in films and its potential meanings, or to a comparative analysis on the use of two different rhythms (e.g. the *Zeibekiko* and the *Hasapiko*). In addition, the realisation of gender representation through a musical genre such as Rebetiko raises the possibility of investigation and comparison of other cases in film where a musical genre of a minor social group such as Rebetiko is used to represent female 'Otherness'. The results from such a comparison may prove useful to research into gender undertaken from a social constructionist perspective. It would also be interesting to examine whether the representation of the 'Other', which is realised in *Stella* by contrasting local to foreign musical genres, occurs in Greek film in relation to race, age and social status; this could be of particular relevance to musicologists focusing their research on the music of urban minorities. Finally, the examination conducted in this thesis of the expression of national identity through the film musical genre offers the possibility for researchers into film to investigate possible manifestations in other nations of the use of Cinema of this same genre as a medium for expressing nationalistic notions.

Appendix

Case Study: *Stella*

Timing	Narrative Synopsis	Music
0:00:00	Opening titles. Alekos walks through old neighbourhoods on his way to 'Paradise'.	Bouzouki and piano taximi. 'Love' and Alekos' themes.
0:02:45	Anneta sings with the Rebetiko orchestra at 'Paradise'.	"At the bouzoukia of Paradise" – Hasaposerviko.
0:06:07	Stella dances to a "Fantasie", in front of customers of 'Paradise'. Source music produced by a vinyl player.	Spanish-like tune.
0:08:39	Alekos and Maria try to calm down Stella in dressing room.	Hasapiko tune performed by the orchestra.
0:10:58	Stella on the back of truck guarding her piano.	Hasapiko tune by bouzouki and piano.
0:12:51	Wedding at Kastella. Stella and Miltos first glances.	Tsamikos – traditional folk dance.
0:15:20	Wedding at Kastella. Stella and Miltos quarrel in the middle of the amphitheatric stage.	Gaida – traditional folk dance.
0:19:03	Stella and Anneta at "Paradise" watching a Rebetis dance to a Zeibekiko.	Zeibekiko tune performed by the orchestra.
0:20:56	Maria sings at "Paradise".	"The thirteenth of the month" – Zeibekiko.

0:25:00	Stella challenges Miltos who threatens he will enter “Paradise” with his car.	Hasaposerviko tune performed by the orchestra.
0:26:55	Alekos and Anneta discuss Stella at “Paradise”.	Alekos’ theme.
0:30:00	Stella sings with the Rebetiko orchestra at “Paradise”.	“At the bouzoukia of Paradise” – Hasaposerviko.
0:33:03	Stella talks to Pipis as he plays on the piano.	Improvised melodic tune in harmonic minor.
0:35:52	Stella confronts Miltos as he threatens to blow up “Paradise” with dynamite.	Antikrystos performed by the orchestra.
0:38:04	Miltos expresses his love to Stella.	‘Love’ theme.
0:48:07	Excursion to the countryside.	“The moon is red” – song in 5/8 performed by Maria on the guitar.
0:51:46	Alekos heads to Stella’s room.	Alekos’ theme.
0:54:28	Alekos outside Stella’s room.	Alekos’ theme – climax.
0:57:57	Stella sings in despair at “Paradise”.	“Love, you’ve become a two-edged knife” – Zeibekiko.
1:00:35	Stella dances nervously under the fixed and intense gaze of Miltos.	Hasaposerviko performed by the orchestra.
1:20:37	Interchanging scenes – Miltos dancing at “Paradise” and Stella dancing with Antonis at a jazz club.	Alternating genres – Hasapiko (‘Love’ theme), Jazz-Swing (“Ochi Chernye”), Hasapiko, Latin, Hasaposerviko, Twist, Hasaposerviko.
1:29:31	Having killed Stella, Miltos holds his beloved in his arms.	‘Love’ theme in rubato.

Case Study: *Never on Sunday*

Timing	Narrative Synopsis	Music
0:00:00	Introduction. The Piraeus port. Ilia swims along with the male workers and meets Tonio.	Hasaposerviko.
0:03:10	Opening titles.	Instrumental version of the song “The children of Piraeus”.
0:04:06	Presentation of the tavern as Homer enters for the first time.	“It has been a misunderstanding” – Hasapiko performed by the tavern’s Rebetiko orchestra.
0:05:49	Giorgos dances alone to a Zeibekiko.	Zeibekiko tune performed by the orchestra.
0:10:24	Ilia discusses with Homer and Captain at the tavern.	Hasapiko tune performed by the orchestra.
0:15:39	Ilia in bed with a sailor from Manchester.	“Let’s take a walk to the moon” – Zeibekiko sang by Ilia along with the vinyl playback.
0:16:52	Homer walks up the stairs to Ilia’s apartment.	Instrumental version of the chorus of “Let’s take a walk to the moon” with accordion and electric guitar in swing, jazzy feel.
0:23:29	Ilia talks to the laterna boy about how she loves his job. She then explains to Homer about the wrongdoings of No Face.	The laterna theme performed by the laterna.
0:27:17	Ilia gets a laterna as a present for her birthday.	“The laterna” – Tsifteteli sung by Ilia and her male friends in the chorus, with the accompaniment of Ilia’s laterna.
0:31:41	Ilia narrates her own version of Medea to her friends with the accompaniment of her laterna.	Tsifteteli tune with Eastern character.
0:44:47	Ilia is angry with Homer and Giorgos tries to cheer her up by improvising a song.	“Ilia’s song” – sung by Giorgos with piano accompaniment.
0:50:10	Giorgos is inconsolable after Homer’s assault about his mother. The sound of the bouzouki puts back the smile on his face.	Hasaposerviko performed by Takis on solo bouzouki.

0:50:28	Homer, agrees with Ilia that he should go home.	Homer's theme – Zeibekiko in Sabah mode.
0:51:36	Homer accepts No Face's offer to sponsor Ilia's 'education'.	The laterna theme performed by the accordion and the guitar.
0:53:27	Ilia and Tonio talk about love at Ilia's apartment.	Instrumental version of "Let's take a walk to the moon" with electric guitar in relaxed, jazzy feel.
0:56:18	Homer, "down-and-out" is sitting on Ilia's doorstep at dawn.	Homer's theme, with the electric guitar playing the melody.
0:53:27	Ilia and Tonio talk about love at Ilia's apartment.	Instrumental version of "Let's take a walk to the moon" with electric guitar in relaxed, jazzy feel.
1:00:37	Homer persuades Ilia to give him two weeks to 'educate' her.	Homer's theme, again with electric guitar.
1:01:01	An overview of Ilia's 'education'.	Prelude from Bach's Suite No.3 in C major (BWV 1009).
1:04:32	Ilia at her apartment at night feeling bored.	Sarabande from Bach's Suite No.3 in C major (BWV 1009).
1:05:35	Ilia sings in ecstasy "The children of Piraeus".	"The children of Piraeus" performed by Ilia with vinyl playback.
1:09:58	Ilia is anxious to go and welcome the sailors of the fleet arriving at the port when suddenly she remembers her 'new' self.	Prelude from Bach's Suite No.3 in C major (BWV 1009).
1:10:11	Despo follows Garbage as he heads to find No Face.	Instrumental variation of "It has been a misunderstanding" with the bouzouki and the xylophone playing the melody in unison.
1:12:20	Despo heads to Ilia after discovering Homer's secret.	Repeat of the music used in the previous scene.
1:15:37	Ilia explodes with anger after finding out that Homer was sponsored by No Face.	Instrumental version of "The laterna" played on the laterna by Despo.
1:18:12	Ilia and the other prostitutes go on strike and are imprisoned.	"Mrs Maria" – children song performed by all the protesting women.
1:20:08	Release from prison and resulting joyfulness.	Hasaposerviko tune with distinct traits of the Syrtaki.

1:23:15	Merriment at the tavern. Homer accepts his defeat, drinking ouzos and dancing.	Instrumental version of “The children of Piraeus” performed by the tavern’s orchestra.
1:27:00	Tonio carries Ilia in his arms and walks away.	The laterna theme performed by the laterna.
1:27:05	Homer on ship waves goodbye to his Greek friends and throws his notes to the sea.	The Hasaposerviko tune used in the first scene of the film.
1:27:34	End titles.	Instrumental version of “The children of Piraeus”.

Case Study: *Diploennies*

Timing	Narrative Synopsis	Music
0:00:00	Opening titles. Presentation of Athens by night followed by photos relevant to Rebetiko and the Romeic.	Instrumental version of “Be patient” with Kalamatianos rhythm (7/8) on the verse and Antikrystos (9/8) on the chorus.
0:02:17	The Rebetiko orchestra rehearses at the bouzouki tavern.	Instrumental version of “Down at Piraeus” – Hasapiko.
0:03:43	Gregoris’ morning routine intertwined with scenes of fishermen at sea, and the Rebetiko musicians looking for a singer.	Light tune in 5/8 with bouzouki and flute performing the melody turns into instrumental versions of “Lefteri-Lefteri” – Tsifteteli and “Down at Piraeus”, concluding with “Be patient” with Rebetiko orchestra.
0:07:26	The search for a Rebetiko singer continues in the market and in old neighbourhoods.	Instrumental versions of “Bright day” – Hasapiko and “Be patient”. In both cases the melody is performed by the trumpet.
0:09:21	The quest for singer ends. The musicians hear Gregoris singing at the construction site.	Gregoris sings a cappella verse of “Down at Piraeus”.
0:09:38	The musicians accompany Gregoris in his song.	“Down at Piraeus” sung by Gregoris, accompanied by his co-workers at the chorus.

0:13:12	A bouzouki player takes the lift to find Gregoris at the construction site.	Instrumental version of the chorus of “Be patient” with bouzouki in the melody.
0:15:15	Gregoris with the musicians performing at the back of a truck.	Instrumental tune in 5/8.
0:22:24	Gregoris’ first performance at the tavern.	“In the years of Othonas” – Hasapiko which turns into Syrtaki at the end.
0:25:57	The Piraeus port at night.	Taximi on the tzouras.
0:26:09	Rita and her friends arrive at the tavern. The flower seller explains to Marina how her husband also worked as a singer like Gregoris.	Instrumental version of “In the years of Othonas”.
0:28:01	Gregoris performs the Zeibekiko that Rita requested.	Same taximi on the tzouras heard earlier. “How can my heart refuse the world?” – Zeibekiko.
0:34:04	Rita drives at night in her convertible car.	Rock’n’roll tune in twelve-bar blues form.
0:35:06	At the tavern Gregoris goes out to meet Rita secretly from Marina. When Marina discovers it, the couple quarrel.	Instrumental version of “How can my heart refuse the world?”.
0:41:27	Marina watches through the window Gregoris kissing Rita in Rita’s house.	“How can my heart refuse the world?”
0:42:47	Marina falls asleep in a car – dream sequence. She dreams of four women dancing to the Zeibekiko and then to the Tsifteteli while Gregoris is sitting behind the curtains being worshipped by other two women.	Instrumental versions of the Zeibekiko “How can my heart refuse the world?” (in faster tempo than the song) and the Tsifteteli “Lefteri-Lefteri”.
0:44:35	Rita and Gregoris in car. When Rita attempts to kiss him he jumps out.	The Rock’n’roll tune in twelve-bar blues form.
0:45:25	Gregoris returns home at dawn.	Harmonious tune with bouzouki and piano in rubato time. The intro of the song “Down at the old road” heard at 1:08:04.
0:51:01	Maestro tries to calm down Marina at the tavern.	Instrumental version of “Down at Piraeus”.
0:52:53	Rita dances Tsifteteli at the tavern. Marina takes over by pushing	Instrumental version of “Lefteri-Lefteri”, and song version sung

	Rita aside and singing the Tsifteteli.	by Marina.
0:55:33	Everyone dances to the song in and out of the tavern.	The Tsifteteli turns into a Hasaposerviko.
0:57:59	Marina tries on an evening dress at a boutique shop.	Marina's Hellenic theme – a Rock'n'roll tune.
1:02:40	Marina sings at the tavern.	“Night – Day” – song with alternating meters: 4/8, 5/8, 7/8, 9/8.
1:03:44	The Rebetiko orchestra transforms into a Rock'n'roll band.	Marina's Hellenic theme.
1:05:41	Aerial shots of Athens at dawn.	The tune with bouzouki and piano in rubato time used in 0:45:25.
1:08:04	Dream sequence – Marina and Gregoris walking along in the countryside. Marina sings and Gregoris accompanies her on the guitar.	“Down at the old road” – soft ballad with piano, guitar and bouzouki.
1:11:33	Marina seeks Gregoris at the construction site.	The taximi on the tzouras repeated for the third time.
1:13:40	Marina, Gregoris and their friends sing in old Athenian neighbourhoods carrying and playing bouzoukia and acoustic and electric guitars.	“Be Patient” – Kalamatianos rhythm (7/8) on the verse and Antikrystos (9/8) on the chorus.
1:16:50	Marina and Gregoris with their eight children stroll along Piraeus port.	A waltz variation of “Down at Piraeus”. At the chorus it turns into a Hasapiko (0:17:13).
1:17:31	Closing titles. Sailors dancing Syrtaki in various places – on old walls, on the roof of new buildings, fountains, military parade, stadiums and Piraeus port.	Instrumental Syrtaki that starts with the verse of “Down at Piraeus”, continues with the verse of “Bright day” and concludes with the chorus of “Down at Piraeus” in Hasaposerviko rhythm.

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