

An Explanation

In 2004 I prepared a paper for the Hydra Rebetiko Conference, regarding the work of Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray, and in particular his *Mélodies populaires de Grèce et d'Orient*, being the songs that he collected at the behest of the French Ministry of Education during a four-month stay in Smyrna in 1874.

At the time I proposed that we might do a concert of the songs contained in that collection. I also proposed to publish a translation of the book, together with a critical introduction.

Seventeen years down the line, this project is finally edging towards fruition. The spur to its completion has been the Bourgault-Ducoudray Colloquium, to be held at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse in Paris on 2-3 December 2021.

As a small contribution to the conference proceedings I am posting my translation of Bourgault-Ducoudray's song files in these web pages, along with downloadable PDF files of his original notations.

During the intervening period the songs have also been the subject of a fascinating recording project, organised by the Hellenic Music Archives Ensemble, in which the songs contained in the book were issued on two CDs – one contained a set of recordings of the songs as transcribed and harmonised by Bourgault-Ducoudray; the other offers a realistic reconstruction of those same songs in their native idiom, to give an idea of how they might have sounded in the 1870s.

I am requesting permission to post those recordings in these present web pages, for the purposes of comparative research.

If you are interested in pursuing this research further, I can be contacted at the address below.

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As you will see, my posting of the various materials on this site is a work in progress.

Athens
19 November 2021