

CHAPTER 20

Jews and rebetiko

Alberto Nar [Thessaloniki] *

INTRODUCTION

The presence of Jews in the Greek popular tradition can be noted in popular songs, proverbs, shadow theatre, etc. This phenomenon is of course natural, since one can find Jewish communities in Greece during the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman domination periods. These communities, with the exception of the Jewish community in Thessaloniki, were usually small, and were closed, conservative societies, concentrated in particular districts. They differed from the surrounding communities not only in their religion but also in their language and rituals, and generally in their way of life. However, and especially in big urban centres, the societal divisions were not always so marked. As indicated by C. A. Kokolis in an unpublished article, the contact was:

[A]bsolutely acceptable and very deeply enjoyable [...]. Points of contact that everyone is familiar with, is happy with, and automatically cultivates with his neighbours at home, at work, or in the neighbourhood. The contact therefore takes place without the interference of religion, nationality or tradition. And it takes place at multiple levels, in culture, and of course in songs.

In the songs of the Sephardic Jews, these points of contact with Greek song, the sharing on both sides, and the melodic “loans”, are distinct. And in Thessaloniki especially, they begin to multiply after 1912 and particularly after 1917 and 1922, expanding in all types of Greek songs – popular song, island song, serenades, operetta, light music, and also rebetiko.

However, the relationship between rebetiko song and the Jews of Thessaloniki is best explored in a later phase. The main time frame is the decade of the 1930s, the third decade after the Liberation. As far as Jews are concerned, that is the period when they completed their linguistic assimilation (especially for the younger ones who were born after the Liberation); now they were studying in Greek schools rather than in foreign schools, and they were also serving in the army.

In the history of rebetiko, it was precisely in that period that, in 1933/4, a tavern in Piraeus took the bold step of putting up a musical programme performed solely by a bouzouki band, the famous Piraeus Quartet consisting of Markos Vamvakaris, Yiorgos Batis, Stratos Payioumtzis and Anestis Delias. Shortly afterwards the first records were recorded. These were the first (and really important) steps in rebetiko’s “disengagement” from what up until then had been its natural haunts, namely the prison and the *tekke* (opium den). From 1934 onwards almost all the well-known *rebetes* would appear in the music venues and taverns of Thessaloniki. And from 1936, with the arrangement of 4th August, since it was supported, the epicentre of rebetiko would move to Thessaloniki, thanks to the protection provided to the musicians on the run from Piraeus by the city’s chief of police Nikos Mouschoundis, later to be best man at Vassilis Tsitsanis’s wedding. The dictatorship, together with the imposition of extremely strict censorship, contributed to the extrication of rebetiko from its stereotypical position as a music of social outcasts. Thus rebetiko slowly assumed a popular urban character, and came to be much loved by the wider public.

I suggest that all this provides sufficient elements to explain the familiarity of the Jews of Thessaloniki with rebetiko. This familiarity was expressed in a number of songs. They are relatively few in number – a fact explained by the shortness of the period of contact.

The deportation and extermination of the Jews abruptly interrupted this contact and wiped out those who had maintained it. Fortunately, the few people who survived managed to preserve some of the elements that were left; we have collected them, and we present them here.

A. SONGS OF THESSALONIKI THAT ARE SIMILAR TO REBETIKO

Yedi Kule

Yedi Kule veras en paseando
de altas murayas s'aradeado.
En la prizion esto por ti atado,
en el budrum yoro dezmazalado.
Me kitaron la luz, esto sufriendo
i la muerte venir, ninya, 'sto viendo.
Yo 'sto en la prizion, tu en las flores.
Sufro de korason, kiero ke yores.
Por el Yedi Kule ven paseando,
mira en ke hal yo 'sto pasando.
Aman, no me mandes kartikas tristes.
Va kemate kon gas, por mi no existes.
Guerfana era yo, me abandonates.
Ya te pago el Dio, porke pekates.
Tomates ambezi un riko ombre.
No kero mas saver ni de tu nombre.
Fostaniko preto kale azerte
i a la keila echar azeite.

Yedi Kule [Seven Towers]

As you go around you will come upon
Yedi Kule, circled by its high walls.
There I am bound in prison, for you,
and in my dungeon I weep, helplessly.
They have deprived me of light and I am suffering.
and, my girl, I see death
approaching me.
I am in prison, but you are among the flowers.
My heart is in pain; I wish that you were crying.
Come to Yedi Kule as you walk by
So that you can see the wretchd life I lead.
Aman, do not any longer send me soulful letters.
Ach, go get burnεδ with gas; for me you no longer exist.
I was an orphan girl, and you left me.
God has paid you back for that, because you sinned.
I have learned that you have made it with some guy with money.
I don't want to hear even your name.
Make yourself a black dress,
and bring oil in the synagogue.

According to C. A. Kokolis's liner notes, there is a recorded version of this song and two unaccompanied performances: one with Luna (Natan), on the record *Laikoi organopaiktes kai tragoudistes tragoudoun ti Thessaloniki* (dir. G. Melikis, independent production C. Bakalakos – C. Bakogiorgos, Thessaloniki 1985), and one with David Saliel. The song was revived recently by Savina Yannatou on the album *Spring in Salonika* (LYRA 4765). The words *budrum* (basement), *hal* (pitiful condition or situation), *aman* and of course *Yedi Kule* (Seven Towers) are Turkish. The word *mazal*

(luck) contained in the word *dezmaçalado* is Hebrew, as is *keila* (synagogue). The expression *echar azeite a la keila* (literally: throw oil in the synagogue) implies sacrifice or vow. The word *fostaniko* comes from the Greek *foustani*, which is Byzantine, perhaps of Italian origin.

The song must have been composed after 1898, when, as part of the urban improvements to the city centre, the prison was moved from the White Tower to the Eptapurgio (Seven Towers). In my opinion it preserves within it elements from previous “prison songs”, which are also present in other published variants of it. It is interesting to note that it was published in an anthology of Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) songs (*Los Kantes de la Gata*) that was circulated in Thessaloniki in 1927 by the satirical newspaper *La Gata*. The writer, who signs with the pseudonym “Gilda”, believes that *Yedi Kule* borrowed its melody from a Turkish song entitled *Sabahtan kalktum* [I wake up in the morning]. [See Appendix]

A Turkish şarkı and its Ladino variants

Ke ermozo t’akishea
este vistidiko blu
pareses una donzea
kuando sales del tutun.

How beautifully it suits you,
that little blue dress.
You look like a princess
when you come out of the tobacco warehouse.

Dime ninya, onde moras?
Yo te kiero vijitar.
Moro en kalejika eskura
no se ve a kaminar.

Tell me girl, where do you live?
I want to visit you.
I live in a dark little alley,
you can’t see your way to walk.

No mires ke esto kantando
es ke ya kiero yorar.
Kuando bueno, kuando malo
la vida kiero pasar.

Don’t see me as I am singing;
I really want to cry.
Sometimes well, sometimes badly,
somehow I shall get through life.

We have only an unaccompanied performance of this song, performed by David Saltiel. Its melody is taken from an old Turkish song called *Aç kollarını* or *İndim havuz başına* [I went down to the cistern]. The writer of the original song is probably referring to the stone cisterns that are close to spring-heads and fountains in Anatolian villages. Here are its lyrics as translated by Thomas Korovinis:

İndim havuz başına bir yar çıktı karşıma
Sevda nedir bilmezdim o getirdi başıma
Sevda nedir bilmezdim o da geldi başıma

Gelemem ben gidemem ben, her güzele gönül veremem ben
Aç kollarını sar boynuma, üşüdüm üşüdüm saramam ben [x2]

Havuz basında burma çapkın karşımda durma
Kırpiklerin ok olmuş yeter kalbime vurma [x2]

I went down to the cistern
and I met a girl.
I did not know what love meant,
and she put it into my head.

Open your arms and embrace me.
I have become cold, and cannot embrace you.

Refrain: I can neither sit nor flee,
I cannot give my heart to every
beauty.

Love struck me at the cistern.
Young girl, do not stand before me.
Your eyes have become arrows.
That’s enough now – do not oppress my heart.

In David Saltiel's variant the words *t'akishea* (from *yakış-*, to be suitable or becoming) and *tutun* (tobacco and figuratively the tobacco warehouse) are Turkish. The word *blu* derives from the French or Italian.

In this urban popular song, a rather common, at least for the newer songs, dialogue is developed. The man, who appears to be wealthy, admires the beauty of the young tobacco worker. This element allows us to locate the writing of the song post-1884, when the first Reji tobacco factory was founded in Thessaloniki. After that date, new tobacco factories came into operation. A guidebook in 1938 reported that in that period there were 18 tobacco factories in Thessaloniki, ten subsidiary companies of big tobacco companies, and seven tobacco dealers-experts. Those factories had hundreds of Jewish tobacco workers, both men and women, and, according to Markos Vafeiadis, they participated in all the strikes with a great fighting spirit. A song inspired by the mobilisations of tobacco workers has been preserved by Bienvenida Mano:

<p>Ayos Vasilis kumardjis izieron grev los tutundjis, porke avia pina. No se eskrive kon lap ni kon penina.</p>	<p>Saint Basil, a gambler, the tobacco workers went on strike because there was a hunger that cannot be described by pencil or pen.</p>
--	--

The song probably refers to one of the two big tobacco workers' strikes in 1914 and 1936. It takes its melody from a New Year carol. Remarkable, and indicative of the numerous components periodically absorbed by the Ladino of the Jews of Thessaloniki, is the presence of so many foreign elements in a mere four lines of verse: Turkish words: *kumardji* (*kumarci*, player of games of chance, gambler), *tutundji* (*tutunci*, tobacco worker); Greek words: *Agios Vasilis*, *pina* (hunger); French words: *grève* (strike); and Italian words: *penina* (pen).

As far as *Aç kollarını* is concerned, it appears that the song was fairly popular, since Bienvenida Mano also preserves another variant of it, completely different in content and style from the previous one.

<p>Revolver kon sesh kroshumes al bel ya me lo meti. Vo a matar a tu ermano ninya, por sibeb de ti.</p>	<p>A pistol with six bullets I am going to put into my belt. I am going to kill your brother, girl, all on account of you.</p>
<p>No lo mates a mi ermano ni te komes la halva. Te vo a meter en prezio i te vo a'char djeza.</p>	<p>Do not kill my brother, watch out and be careful. I am going to put you into prison and I am going to have you punished.</p>

In this song, which approaches the "heavy" popular kind, we have a dialogue. The man reminds us of the "tough guys" and the girl – the "liberated women" of the rebetiko. The impacts are therefore most obvious. The words *kroshumes* (*kurşum*, bullet), *bel* (belt), *sibeb* (cause, reason), *djeza* (*cesa*, sentence of imprisonment) are Turkish. The word *revolver* (pistol) is English. The idiomatic expression *No te komes la halva* is literally "don't eat the halva". However, the meaning is "be careful", "watch out", "don't make mistakes". Finally, it is notable that the well-known song by Yiannis Papaïoannou *Ti ta theleis ta lefta* [What do you want with money?] is based on the melody of *Aç kollarını*. The lyrics, as written by B. Papadopoulos, are as follows:

Τι τα θέλεις τα λεφτά, τα λεφτά σου τι τα θες;
 Χέρια αλλάζουν τακτικά, μήπως τά' χες κι από χτες;
 Τα λεφτά είναι δανεικά. Να τα κάψεις. Τι τα θες;
 Γλέντα τη ζωή. Όλοι δύο μέτρα παίρνουν γη.
 Τα λεφτά είναι δανεικά, χέρια αλλάζουν τακτικά.
 Να τα κάψεις. Τι τα θες; Μήπως τα' χες κι από χτες;

What do you want with money? Why do you want your money?
Burn it. Why do you want it? Did you maybe have it from yesterday?
Money is borrowed. Burn it. Why do you want it?
Enjoy life. Everyone gets only two metres of grave-space.
Money is borrowed. It changes hands regularly.
Burn it. Why do you want it? Did you maybe have it from yesterday?

A los banyikos de la mar

Deke me das rotas,
tus ojos aboltas
i me miras kon yilor,
de kolor te trokas?
Ven, ven en mis brazos, Roza.

A los banyikos de la mar
yo te vide enadar,
yo te vide lo mejor ke tu lo kerias guadar.
Tan ermozo kuerpo i tan henozo sesto.
Tanto yo te kiero i por ti me muero.

Swimming in the sea

Why do you reject me,
you turn your eyes away
and you look at me coldly,
and you change colour?
Come, come into my arms, Roza.

Bathing in the sea
I saw you while you were swimming.
and I saw the most beautiful thing that you want to hide,
your beautiful body, and your lovely bottom.
I want you very much. For you I am dying.

I have not so far located other published versions of this song. However, it is preserved in an unaccompanied performance by Iakov Halegua. The idiomatic *deke me das rotas* is interpreted: “why do you reject (or refuse) me?”; however, it also means “why don’t you care for me?”, “why you are not OK?”. The word *sesto* means basket and figuratively, according to Mr. Halegua, the sit-upon. The melody of the song which is not identical to any other, is similar to the “heavy” style of rebetiko and its verses are faintly reminiscent of a song of Markos Vamvakaris that was recorded in 1937, *Sto Faliro pou plenesai*. [See Appendix]

Στο Φάληρο που πλένεσαι
περιστεράκι γένεσαι
σε είδα χτες με το μαγιό!
Γεια σου, τσαχπίνα μου Μαριώ!

In Faliro where you swim
you become a little dove.
I saw you yesterday in your bathing costume,
Yia sou, my charming Marió.

No amo las ijikas

No amo las ijikas
freskas i delikadas.
Amo las aedadikas
ke valen para koladas.
La chika a la kama
demanda muchas kozas.
Ama la aedadika
vale i para ventozas.

I don't love young girls,
fresh and delicate.
I prefer older ladies,
who are good for doing the laundry.
Young girls in bed
demand a lot of things.
The older woman
also treats you with cupping glasses.

This song, which is also preserved by Iakov Halegua, is published here for the first time. The word *aedada* (old), with the diminutive “-ika”, is Ladino, the word *ventoza* (cupping glass, used in traditional medicine comes from the French word *ventouse*. [Note: one of the translators thinks that there is a possible sexual quibble here.]

Mr. Halegua attributes the music of the song to Sadik Gershon and the verses to Moshe Kazes, two people who were killed in Auschwitz. Gershon was blind, played the santouri and 'ud, sang long-drawn-out love songs “with a rare perfection”, and served as a religious minister in the “Beth Israel” synagogue of settlement 151. Both the associations of chanters in Thessaloniki, the Halel Vezimra and the Neim Zemiroth, regarded him as a unique teacher. Kazes was an active member of the Federation (the workers union) and a contributor to many Jewish satirical newspapers in Thessaloniki. [See Appendix]

El enkalador [The whitewasher]

Kon la kuva i la furcha
va pregonando el enkalador.
Salio una madam.
Enkalador, me kieres enkalarme,
antes ke venga el balabay
i nos tope en este hal?
Kiero ke me enkales la kuzina,
la kuzina i la oda,
Osman aga.
Kiero ke tu me la des dos manos.
Por adelante i por atras
yo te la vo enkalar.
Por adelante i por atras,
Osman aga.
Vamonos detras de la kuzina.
Por adelante i por atras
yo te la vo enkalar.
La furcha komo la tienes godra ...
Antes ke venga el balabay
I nos tope en este hal.

We have two unaccompanied performances of *El enkalador*, with David Saltiel and Bienvenida Mano. This double-entendre song [Whitewasher, would you like to whitewash me?] is also performed by Savina Yannatou on the album *Spring in Salonika*. A Greek translation was done by C. A. Kokolis and was included in the booklet accompanying the recording. In the same booklet Kokolis comments that: “The subject is reminiscent of the ‘obscene’ Italian popular song *Lo spazzacamino* [The chimney-sweep]”. *Furcha* is the Greek for brush and the word *balabay* (head of the family, owner of the house) is Hebrew, while *hal* and *oda* are Turkish, as is the name Osman Aga.

Salonik ya se troko

Salonik ya se troko.
 Non avia gramofon,
 reonix i telefon,
 ni el tram kon elektrik.
 Non avia “asidorik”.
 No ay mas Karvasara,
 kazas kon musandara,
 diez vezinas a la sira.
 Tenemos aire de Vardar
 ke mos alevanta el faldar.
 Las ijas salen sin kalsón
 i arapadas a la garson.

Salonica has changed.
 There didn't used to be gramophones,
 X-rays and telephones
 or electric trams.
 There was no Asidorik.
 There is no longer the Karavan Saray,
 nor houses with an attic,
 ten neighbour women in a row.
 Now the *vardaris* wind blows,
 and lifts our skirts.
 The girls go out without any stockings,
 with *à la garçonne* haircuts.

This song is also sung by Iakov Halegua. We do not know who wrote it. However, it must have been written in the 1930s. The words *gramofon*, *reonix* (X-ray), *telefon*, *tram*, *kalsón*, *elektrik*, *a la garson* are French. The word *sira* is of course Greek, and the *vardaris* is a Salonican wind. *Asidorik* was a medicine for ophthalmia that circulated during that period. The word *musandara* is Turkish, as is *Karvasara*, relating to the Karavan Saray, built on Venizelou Street and Vamvaka Street, behind the mosque of Hamza Bei that was later transformed into a cinema with the name “Alkazar”. The Karavan Saray burned down in 1917, but its name passed on to the newer building. [See Appendix]

B. SONGS THAT BORROWED THEIR MELODY FROM REBETIKA

Jako / Ελενίτσα μου

– Alevanta Jako
 en bodas i en beris.
 No te amostres flako
 ke tienes mushteris.
 – Chalgidji de meana
 yo les kanto sin kedar,
 me maneo komo un barko
 a mi ya me yaman Jako.
 Mushteri de meana
 kon entojos i parpar,
 yo me vo komo piola
 para les yevar la bolsa.

– Get up, Jako
 in weddings and in joys.
 Don't show yourself to be lazy
 because you have customers
 – In the tavern I play the instrument
 and I sing without rest
 and I move like a boat.
 They call me Jako.
 The customers in the tavern,
 who are chic and smart-looking,
 I stick to them like a tick
 so as to take their wallets from them.

There are two unaccompanied performances of this song, one with David Saltiel and one with Bienvenida Mano. The latter also adds the following verses:

Mushteri de meana,
 yo me amoistro muy kornas.
 Se las tomo al ke beve
 les kanto komo se deve.
 Kuarto linguas se avlar,
 les enklavo mil i un mantar.
 Me meto komo piola
 para les tomar la bolsa.

In the taverns I pull many
 tricks on the customers.
 I take money from those who drink
 and I sing well to them.
 I know how to speak four languages.
 I tell them a thousand and one stories,
 become like a tick with them
 so as to take their wallets from them.

This song is also performed by Savina Yannatou on *Spring in Salonika*. In the liner notes C. A. Kokolis points out: “The melody is identical to the pre-war rebetiko song *Elenitsa mou* or *Ta matakia sou ta dhyo* (recorded on *Oloi oi rebetes tou dounia*, 2, LYRA, 30160, 1977). The composer was Ioannis Ragatsis (Dragatsis or Ogdontakis) and the singer was Roza Eskenazi. Jako, whose surname we do not know, was a popular singer in Thessaloniki in the interwar years.” The words *mushteri* (customer) and *chalgidji*

(member of popular orchestra) are Turkish; *parpar* (imposing appearance) is also of Turkish origin, and so is *meana* (tavern); *beri* (the cheerful feast of circumcision) is of Hebrew origin, *entojos* (eye glasses), *piola* (owl, and here annoying person) are Ladino. [See Appendix]

Here are the verses of *Elenitsa*, which have nothing in common with the verses of *Jako*:

Τα ματάκια σου τα δυο
δεν τα βλέπω κι αρρωστώ.
Σαν τα βλέπω με τρελαίνουν
και στον Άδη με πηγαίνουν
Αμάν, αμάν, όπλες, κούκλα μου, κουκλίτσα μου,
αμάν, αμάν, συ θα με τρελάνεις, Ελενίτσα μου. [...]

Dechidi de me kazar / Εγώ θέλω πριγκηπέσσα

Dechidi de me kazar, ma debes de embezar ke para tomar mujer kale bueno de eskojer. Vo bushkar ke sea rika, de edad ke sea chika, ke tenga muchas drahmes i boda fina un mes. Kon esfuegro repotron, el ke me aiga patron de su gruta i su buron por bivir komo un baron. Ke aze siempre meza franka i la dota a la banka. I esfuegra kon djilvez ke brie de mansevez.	I have decided to get married, but you should know that in order to get a wife one has to choose carefully. I shall look for a rich woman, and she will also be young. She will have plenty of drachmas and our wedding will be in a month. I will have a fun-loving father-in-law who will make me the boss of his shop and of his money box, so that I can live like a baron. He will pay for my expenses and deposit the dowry in the bank. I will have a charming mother-in-law who sparkles with youth.
---	---

We have located a published recording of this song and an unaccompanied performance by Rabbi Moshe Halegua, who attributes the verses to Moshe Kazes. The melody comes from the song *Ego thelo prinkipessa*, which was recorded in 1932 under the name of Panayiotis Tountas and performed by Stellakis Perpiniadis. Elias Petropoulos does not exclude the possibility that the creator of the song was Yannis Etzeiridi [Yiovan Tsoulos], who plays bouzouki on the record. Here are the verses:

Στην Ελλάδα δεν μπορώ
μια γυναίκα για να βρω,
έχει όμορφες πολλές
μα είναι μάνα μου φτωχές.
Εγώ θέλω πριγκηπέσσα
από το Μαρόκο μέσα
να' χει λίρα με ουρά,
να γυναίκα μια φορά. [...]

In the Ladino song the word *drachmes* (drachmas) is of course Greek; the word *djilvez* (charm) is Turkish. The idiomatic phrase *ke me aze meza franka* (to give someone a free table) refers to a custom in the Sephardic community, where the father of the bride pays for the groom's living expenses for few years, as part of the engagement agreement.

In the Ladino song, like in the Greek one, a young man dreams of finding a bride of a rich family. However, the bride is not being sought "in Morocco" as in the Greek version but in a more familiar environment. Thus, the exotic atmosphere, and also the element of drugs, are missing, since the Ladino song is more interested in the upper classes. [See Appendix]

Onde topo una que es plaziente? / Πού να' βρω γυναίκα να σου μοιάζει;

Onde topo una ke es plaziente,
ke tenga el gusto esmoviente,
ke alegra mi korason
i me avle kon pasion
i are mi vida mas kontente?

Where shall I find a woman who pleases me
who has tastes that entice me
who will bring joy to my heart
and will speak with me passionately
to make my life happier?

Ke tenga ojos dulses i alimentados,
lavios freskos ke non son bordados
lavios ke avlen la verdad
ke no sepan de olvidar
i de otro ke non son bezados.

May she have sweet, almond-shaped eyes
and fresh lips that are not painted,
lips that speak the truth,
but are not used to forget
and that are not kissed by others.

This Ladino song, according to information on the cassette given to us by Dr Martin Schwartz of the University of Berkeley in 1986, was recorded in the USA (1948) by Jack Mayesh, who was born in Kuşadası in Asia Minor and died in Los Angeles. The melody is from the song of Antonis Diamantidis [Dalgas] *Pou na vro gynaika na sou moiazei?* which was recorded in 1936. [See Appendix]

The Ladino song does not have many differences with its Greek original, the verses of which begin as follows:

Πού να βρω γυναίκα να σου μοιάζει
να' χει μάτι και καρδιά να σφάζει,
να' χει το καμάρι σου,
κι όλη αυτή τη χάρη σου
και τη βελουδένια την ελιά σου; [...]

Kanaraki

Kanaraki es tu nombre,
pasharo de ermozura.
Tanto, tanto es tu brio!
Bendicha tu figura!
Venga a mi lado
onde yo bivo,
te are un palasio
entero de vidro.

Canary is your name,
bird of loveliness
What a lovely presence you have!
Blessed be your shape.
Come close by me
there where I live,
so that I can make you a palace
all made of glass.

We have a performance of this song in a recording of a concert by Joe Elias in New York in 1992. The melody is identical to that of *Kanarini mou glyko* which was recorded in 1931, under the name of Panayiotis Tountas, by the singer Roza Eskenazi. According to Tasos Schorelis the melody is an old Asia Minor one and the words of the song were written by Roza. Elias Petropoulos believes that the song was composed by Agapios Tomboulis, who also “copied” an old popular one. Following are the Greek verses. [See Appendix]

Καναρίνι μου γλυκό,
συ μου πήρες το μυαλό.
Το πρωί που με ξυπνάς
όταν γλυκοκελαϊδάς.
Έλα κοντά μου στην κάμαρά μου.
Αχ! ένα βράδυ στην αγκαλιά μου.
Βρε ζηλιάρικο πουλί,
συ θα με τρελάνεις
με τη γλυκιά σου τη φωνή
σκλάβο σου θα με κάνεις.

My sweet canary,
you have taken my mind.
In the morning when you wake me
you sing sweetly.
Come close to me in my bedroom
Ach, one evening in my arms.
You jealous bird,
you will drive me crazy
with your sweet voice,
you have made me a slave.

Το γελεκάκι / Two Ladino variants: En vano viertes lagrimas; Kien te va ver kon kacharas

Το γελεκάκι που φορείς
εγώ στο 'χω ραμμένο
με πίκρες και με βάσανα
στο 'χω φοδραρισμένο.
Άντε, το μαλώνω, το μαλώνω
άντε κι ύστερα το μετανιώνω.
Άντε, το μαλώνω και το βρίζω,
άντε την καρδούλα του ραίζω.

Φόρα το μικρό μου
φόρα το μωρό μου
γιατί δε θα το ξαναφορέσεις άλλο πια.

Φόρα το για να'σαι
και να με θυμάσαι
για μετάξι έχω τα σγουρά σου τα μαλλιά.

Με πήρ' ο ύπνος κι έγειρα
στου караβιού την πλώρη
και ήρθε και με ξύπνησε
του καπετάνιου η κόρη.
Σήκωσε το γιλέκο μου
να δεις τη μαχαιριά μου
για σένα μου τη δώσανε
πεντάμορφη κυρά μου.

This highly popular song of Spyros Olandezos, I. Theodoridis and G. Konstantinidis was recorded in 1930. According to Elias Petropoulos, the verses of the song are traditional. There are two variants in Ladino, that have nothing in common with the verses of the Greek prototype. The first one was circulated in two recent performances (Liliana Treves Alkalai – an Italian-Jewish singer with the Los Pasharos Sefardis ensemble) in Constantinople. Here are the verses:

En vano viertes lagrimas
i djuras ke me kieres.
Dizes ke mucho me amas,
i ke por mi te mueres.
Basta tu ermoza, enganyarme
i kon tu sorniza, enflamarme.
Saves ke te kiero, ke por ti me muero
ke tu sos vida, mi iluzion.

No point in shedding tears
and swearing that you want me
You say that you love me
and that you are dying for me.
Beautiful girl, enough of cheating me
and burning me with your smile
You know that I love you and die for you
that you are my life and my dream.

There is an unaccompanied performance of the second variation, by Mois Eskenazi from Thessaloniki. [See Appendix]

Kien te va ver kon kacharas
i klencha reluziente,
de mi tomates las paras
no tenias de vente.
Aide, vate, vate, no te kiero

Chupates mi sangre i mi sevo.
Vate a la bonora,
ya paso la ora
de kuando dizias ke
por ti me vo a murir.

Los ocho dias de hupa / Μικρός αρρεβονιάστηκα

Los ocho dias de hupa
pasi buenos momentos!
Kon la moneda de papa
aregli todos los kuentos.

Eight days newly married
I had good moments.
With father's money
I paid all the bills.

Bienvenida Mano has preserved only one couplet of this song. Of course, there were others, but unfortunately, she cannot remember them. The melody comes from the well-known song *Mikros arrevoniasatika* of Markos Vamvakaris, which was recorded in 1938, of which the first two verses are as follows:

Μικρός αρρεβονιάστηκα
κορόιδο που πιάστηκα,
και πήρα για μπεμπέκα
μαγκιόρα για γυναίκα.

Στο γάμο, μάγκα, να 'σουνα,
να δεις καλαμπαλίκι,
Σα νάμουνα υπόδικος
και περιμένω δίκη.

From the preserved 4-line verse we can presume that the Ladino song has a lot in common with Markos's song. The word *hupa* is Hebrew. That is how the first eight days

after the wedding are known, during which, according to the laws and rules of the Jewish religion, the couple abstain from all kind of labour.

Mil i kinientas liras / Ομολογίες

Si tu papa no me va dar
mil i kinientas liras,
lo vo tomar yo el papel
lo fago tiras-tiras.

If your father does not give me
One thousand five hundred liras
I'm going to take the paper
And tear it up.

We do not have any performance or recording of this song. The author remembers that his mother used to sing it, but he can only remember the first couplet. The melody comes from the old traditional song *Omologies* that was sung in many different ways in the period 1925-1933. In 1926 by Antonis Diamantidis (Dalgas) and Pol (Πωλ Γαδ); in 1928 by G. Angelina; in 1929 by Kyria Koula; in 1930 by Kostas Roukounas and Vangelis Sofroniou. Here is what Dalgas sang:

And if your mother doesn't give me forty bonds
and an equal amount of money we will be in trouble.
And if your mother doesn't give me a house at Podarades,
and be proud of you, so you can feed the cows.
And if your mother doesn't give me a house at Alexandra
and a car, I won't be your man.
And if your mother doesn't give me the house at Kokkinia,
I will marry Maryo from Podonifti.
Damn the bank, where you buy those bonds
instead of giving your money, so that the widows can get married.

Part of a Thessaloniki variant of the song is preserved by Giorgos Ioannou in his novel *Psila sto Eski Delik*:

And if your mother doesn't give you forty bonds
Oh, forty bonds...
and a shop in Mevlane, they still are a few.
Oh, they still are a few...

Mevlanes is of course Mevlevi Hane, the *tekke* of the Mevlevi dervishes found in the northwestern part of Thessaloniki. The Ladino variation has many similarities with its prototype, since the main subject here is also the problem caused by the groom's demands. The *papel* in the Ladino song is the engagement agreement, agreed upon by both the bride's and the groom's families. [See Appendix]

C. REBETIKO SONGS WITH JEWISH SUBJECTS

Bochoris / Ο Μποχόρης

[Partially translated]

Άιντε, τον Μποχόρη τον εμπλέξαν
στα στενά και του τη βρέξαν,
και του κάναν το γκιουλέκα άιντε,
και του πήραν κι άλλα δέκα.
Άιντε, το να μήλο τα' άλλο ρόιδο,
άιντε, του τη σκάσαν σαν κορόιδο
και του πήραν τα ψιλά του
άιντε και τον στείλαν στη δουλειά του.

Oh, poor Bochoris,
oh they cheated him in the alley,
and they knocked him about, *aïde*
and took from him another ten.

Aïde, one's an apple, the other a pomegranate.
Aïde, they stripped him like a mug
and took his coins.
Aïde, and sent him about his work.

This well-known song, for which many composers disagree on its origin, was recorded several times: by Maria Papagika in 1920, by G. Vidalis, and later by Prodromos Tsousakis and Sotiria Bellou. The word *bohor* (first-born) is Hebrew. Arising from the episode described in the Bible, where Jacob got the right of primogeniture from his elder

brother Esau for almost nothing, the first born has been considered to be metaphorically a stupid person. Here are some of the sayings which J. Nehama has added under the word *bohor* in his dictionary: *bohor no sos?* (Aren't you the first born? Well, then you are stupid!); *bohor de los bohores* (First born out of the first born, meaning the most stupid person); *no seas bohor* (Don't be the first born, meaning stupid). The word *bohor* was used as a first name and surname in the Jewish communities of Greece. In the Romaniot communities in fact, for instance in Yannina, the surname was Hellenised (Bochoropoulos or Bechoropoulos). According to a study of Asser Moisis: "In the past, people used to give to the first-born boys as a temporary name, and for only thirty days, Bohor (and to the girls the name Bohora or Bohoroula), and one day that name became permanent and people would forget their real name." The "bohoris" in the song means someone who was really stupid and got trapped by some crafty people. Iakov Halebua has preserved an unaccompanied performance and a Ladino variant of "Bohoris" that is quite similar to the Greek ones, especially in the first couplet. The melody is of course different. We cannot exclude the possibility that, in this case, the Ladino song was composed prior to the Greek one.

Bochoris

Poor Bochori, they took his wallet
And now he is broke
He didn't even have enough money for a raki.
Tra, la, la, la, opa.
All day long I am drunk, I am like Karaghiozis.
I leave my poor wife, without any food at all.
Tra, la, la, la, opa.
They got Bochori and took him to the army,
They cut his hair and he now looks like a monkey
Sitting in a corner.

The words *raki* (tsipouro) and *asker* (army) are Turkish. The word *ani* (poor person) is Hebrew. The word *zavali* is of Slavic origin. We can find it in a chapter of Stratis Mirivilis's book *I zoi en tafo*, titled "Zavali maiko".

Doudou

Oh Doudou, oh Doudou, oh,
Oh Doudou, oh Doudou,
Oh Doudou, oh Doudou,
you stole my mind.
Crazy Doudou, behave yourself,
Doudou, behave yourself,
Doudou, behave yourself,
or I will be in trouble.
Your lips and my friends,
tell me different things about you.
– Oh! My Vangelistra.
Go on Doudou, go on Doudou,
go on Doudou, hit me,
go on Doudou, hit me
and kill me, the murderer.

[Translation of a text from Tasos Schorelis, *Rembetiki Anthologia* (Athens 1977/8), pp. 93-96]

According to Asser Moisis: "In Thessaloniki and in other Jewish communities under Turkish government, this is what happened: If the mother-in-law and the bride had the same name and since the new born girl could not get the name of her mother, they gave her the name Doudou which is Turkish and means Flower. We do not know, though, if the Doudou of the Greek songs is Jewish or Turkish. But someone called "Hanum Dudu"

appears in a popular Sephardic wedding song. We have three recordings and two unaccompanied performances of it: one with Bienvenida Mano and one with Iakov Sadikario from Thessaloniki. The latter emigrated to Israel and sang on a record produced by Israeli state radio, edited by Moshe Shaul.

One night I passed by your neighbourhood.
You had forgotten to close the door
And the lamp was not shining any more.
Tirilaila hop, tirilaila opa.
Your windows are high up, with yellow curtains.
Tonight, I beg God to lift me up high.
Tirilaila hop, tirilaila opa.
The diamond in the ring you wear is mine.
The goldsmith who made it is my first cousin.
Tirilaila hop, tirilaila opa.
Good night, lady Dudu.
No response at all.
Tonight, I beg God to sleep in the same bed.
Tirilaila hop, tirilaila opa.
Lady Dudu I will call you
if you come into my home.
And as far as the harem is concerned, Dudu
tomorrow at dawn.
Tirilaila hop, tirilaila opa.

Mousourlou / Misirlou

The Greek song *Mousourlou(m)*, [The Egyptian woman], was recorded in the USA in 1930 by Michalis Patrinos. The creator of the song is unknown. Here are the verses:

My dear Mousourlou, your lovely eyes,
have lit my fire,
Aïde, habibi, aide ya-leli, och,
Aïde, so I can steal you from Barbary.
Oh, Mousourlou.
I will get crazy, I can't suffer any more,
Aïde, if don't have you, *po, po*, I will go crazy.
My dear Mousourlou, your lovely eyes,
have lit a fire in my heart.
Aïde, habibi, aide ya-leli, och,
honey drips from your lips, *och*.
Och, Mousourlou.
If I don't have you, my light, I will get crazy.
Aïde, so I can steal you from Arabia.
My dear Mousourlou, your sweet eyes,
have lit a fire in my mouth,
Aïde, habibi, aide ya-leli, och,
Aïde, if I don't have you, *po, po*, I will go crazy.
Och, Mousourlou.

Just after the war *Mousourlou* was renamed *Misirlou* and came out on a record under the name of Roubanis. Many different recordings followed, with Danai and Sofia Vembo during the 1950s, with Manolis Angelopoulos in the 1970s, and with many foreign singers and orchestras. Roubanis made many changes to the verses, as can be seen in Danai's recording, as follows:

My dear Misirlou, your lovely eyes,
have lit a fire in my heart,
Ach ya habibi, ach, ya leleli, ach,
your two lips, are like honey, *ach*.

Ach, Misirlou, magical, exotic beauty,
I will get crazy, I can't suffer any more,
Ach, I will come and steal you from Arabia.
My crazy black-eyed Misirlou,
my life can change with a kiss,
Ach, ya habibi, a kiss, *ach*,
from your sweet mouth, *ach*.
Ach, Misirlou, magical, exotic beauty,
I will get crazy, I can't suffer any more,
Ach, I will come and steal you from Arabia.

I believe that due to its international career, a Ladino version of Misirlou was also created, performed by Los Pasharos Sefardis ensemble. There is a similar performance with Liliana Treves-Alkalai. [See Appendix]

Don't pretend you still love me
And don't force yourself to cry.
I know you are trying to trick me.
That is true and you can't deny it.
Ach, ach, Misirlou,
It is so painful, *ach* so painful to suffer,
but one must not die for that.

I have waited for you so many years in vain,
believing that you really love me.
I withered because of you, like a flower
and you left me to live with all that pain.
Ach, ach, Misirlou
It is so painful, *ach* so painful to suffer.
But one must not die for that.

One day your heart will suffer
and you will then discover what it means to be betrayed.
Just like I cried, you will cry,
and you will never find consolation.

Blonde Jewish girl / Ξανθή Εβραιοπούλα

These verses of Stavros Pantelidis (Smyrna 1870–Athens 1955) were issued on a 1934/5 recording with Rita Abatzi as the singer. In a publicity note of the period we find that there were two different versions of the song. The one referred to a “Jewish girl” and the other to an “Armenian girl”. The text of the song is as follows:

Όλο τον κόσμο γύρισα,
είδα όμορφα κορίτσια,
μα εσύ Εβραιοπούλα
μου πήρες την καρδούλα,
γιατί έχεις σκέρτσα και καπρίτσια.
Μα εσύ Εβραιοπούλα
είσαι πιο νοστιμούλα
γιατί έχεις σκέρτσα και καπρίτσια.
Για λέλ, για σελάμ,
αμάν ταχλέ, αμάν για σίτι
Αχ, εβραιοπούλα μου, μου πήρες την καρδιά
(te kiero bien mucho, ke no me mankes)
ωχ αμάν, Εβραιοπούλα δεν αντέχω πια,
Αμάν Εβραιοπούλα μου, τέτοια ομορφιά δεν είδα.
Με πλήγωσες ξανθούλα
βαθιά μες στην καρδούλα,
αμάν γλυκιά Εβραιοπούλα.

I have been round the whole world
but you, Jewish girl,
you took my little heart
because you have fun and caprices.
But you, Jewish girl,
are so tasty
because you have fun and caprices.
Ya leil, ya salaam
Aman tachile, aman ya siti,
Ach, Jewish girl, you took my heart
(te quiero bien moucho)
(que no me manques)
Och aman, Jewish girl, I cannot stand it.
Such beauty I never saw.
You wounded me, little blonde one,
deep in my heart.
Aman, sweet little Jewish girl.

The Ladino phrases *te kiero bien mucho, ke no me mankes* mean “I love you a lot, don’t leave me”. The Arabo-Turkish words *ya leil, ya salam, aman, tachile* etc. help create the necessary exotic atmosphere that is found in other rebetiko songs with similar style and content, referring to girls who may be African, Spanish, Black, Gypsy, Turkish, Armenian and ... English.

I believe that the “Blonde Jewish girl” originates from a song that is well-known in Greece folk song, and that can be heard in many different versions. This song is about the love between a Christian man and a Jewish girl. A tough love, since marriages between Christians and Jews rarely took place before the Second World War. The folk song was recorded by many rebetes also, such as L. Menemenlis, G. Vidalis and I. Papisideris and later on by Prodromos Tsaousakis and Sotiria Bellou. Here are the verses, preserved by the mother of Dinos Christianopoulos (Constantinople).

Ένα Σάββατο βράδυ, ντόμινα, γκόμινα,
γκαριοντέλα μια Κυριακή πρωί,
βγήκα να σεργιανίσω,
σ' οβρέικο μαχαλά.
Βλέπω μια Εβραιοπούλα, ντόμινα, γκόμινα,
γκαριοντέλα και ελουζότανε,
με διαμαντένιο χτένι, εχτενιζότανε,
Της λέω Εβραιοπούλα, ντόμινα, γκόμινα,
γκαριοντέλα να γίνεις χριστιανή,
να λούζεσαι Σάββατο, ν' αλλάζεις Κυριακή
και να μεταλαμβάνεις Χριστού και τη Λαμπρή;

In 1992, Joe Elias, in one of his concerts in New York, presented a version of the *Xanthi Evraiopoula*, which generally has a lot in common with the Pantelidis version. Elias uses the Greek word *paichnidiara* (playful one) which does not exist in the Greek song, and like a true Thessalonikian he says: *Ach Evraiopoula mou, me pires tin kardia...* Of course, the *Evraiopoula* of Elias is not blonde but dark-haired, like all the beautiful women in Sephardic songs. [See Appendix]

Entero el mundo ya konosi
ay muchos ke no se olviden.
Ma sos morena i grasioza
i el resto muy ermosa
ma *παιχνιδιάρα* i kaprichioza.
Yalel, yalel, ya selam, ya selam
Te kiero bien mucho, ke no me mankes
Αχ, Εβραιοπούλα μου, με πήρες την καρδιά.

Te kiero bien mucho, ke no me mankes
Oh, *aman*, morena siempre yo te vo amar.

I have travelled the whole world.
There are many unforgettable things.
But you are black-haired and you have grace,
And you are exceptionally beautiful in all your doings,
But playful and capricious,
Ya leil, ya leil, ya salam, ya salam
I love you very much, do not leave me.
Ach, my Jewish girl, you have taken my heart.
I love you very much, do not leave me.
Ach, aman, black-haired girl, I shall always love you.

Κατοχή (4-5-42) [Occupation]

Κατοχή 41
τα παιδάκια τα καημένα
τρεμουλιάζουν μες στους δρόμους
νηστικά και τρομαγμένα.

The occupation of '41
The poor children
are trembling in the streets,
hungry and traumatised.

Όλα τους σκελετωμένα
πεινασμένα και πρησμένα
απ' τα σπίτια τους τα παίρναν
και τα στοίβαζαν στα τρένα.
Στο Νταχάου τα πηγαίνουν
και τα κάνανε σαπούνι
και τα πιάτα τους επλέναν
όταν τρώγανε οι Ούνοι.

All of them reduced to skeletons,
hungry and swollen-bellied.
They took them from their houses
and stowed them onto trains.
They took them to Dachau
and turned them into soap
and they cleaned their plates
While the Huns ate.

This song by Marinos Gavriil (or Marinaki) was first published by Tasos Schorelis, and was republished by Elias Petropoulos. Petropoulos believes that the date of the subtitle is also the date on which the song was composed. I agree with his opinion, but I believe that the date refers to the first couplet only. I don't think that Marinaki in 1942 could have been familiar with such details, which were still unknown to the leadership of the Greek Jewish community. But Petropoulos himself, in one of his articles, "Pos to ematha", published in the *Enteuktirio* magazine, admits that he got to know everything about the genocide, initially from the English and Soviet "news of the time" that he would watch in the cinemas of Thessaloniki in 1945, and later from Jewish survivors who had started returning to their homes from June 1945. We must therefore presume that the last two couplets were composed in approximately that period, and most probably took the place of the previous ones. Schorelis and Petropoulos are unable to say whether this song was issued on a record; we believe that it was not recorded, because music companies at the time considered songs that were inspired by the Occupation to be anti-commercial. The same thing happened with Michalis Yennitsaris's song *Saltadoro*.

Χωρίσαμε ένα δειλινό [We parted one evening]

This zeibekiko by Vassilis Tsitsanis circulated in 1949; it was sung by Ioanna Georgakopoulou and the composer. The verses are by Alekos Gouveris.

Χωρίσαμ' ένα δειλινό
με δάκρυα στα μάτια.
Η αγάπη μας ήταν γραφτό
να γίνει δύο κομμάτια.
Πονώ σα συλλογίζομαι
τα όμορφα τα βράδια,

όρκους, φιλιά και χάρδια.
Με μια λαχτάρα καρτερώ
και πόνο στην καρδιά μου,
ίσως γυρίσεις γρήγορα
ξανά στην αγκαλιά μου.

που μου 'δινες, γλυκά-γλυκά,

We parted one evening,
with tears in our eyes.
Our love was predestined
to become two pieces.
It pains me when I think
of the beautiful evenings

when, sweetly sweetly, you gave me
promises, kisses and caresses.
With a joy I wait,
And with pain in my heart,
perhaps you will come back
once again into my arms.

Tasos Schorelis has an account of this song, as related by Gouveris:

It was the year 1944. We used to start work at around noon and worked until 7 o'clock at night. At the club, blackmarketees and various other strange people and rebels used to come. The latter to make new 'connections' of course and not to have fun. Bakalis, who was still a kid, was in love with a Jewish girl. Matters started to get more and more difficult. It was clearly just a matter of time, before they would take our friend's girlfriend and turn her into soap. And of course, if anyone dared to touch the girl, we would react just as if they had insulted our mothers. After careful consideration, we sent the girl to the mountain. She was helped by the *syndesmos* that took her 'high up'. She is still alive. We managed to save a life.

Babis was very disappointed. What the hell did he lose anyway? A chicken? In the morning we met in a Trikala *kafeneio* called the *Mavros Gatos* [Black Cat]. During the night I had written the verses: 'We parted one evening'. Apostolis and Babis composed the music. Really wonderful music. Tsitsanis listened to it later, he liked it and composed his own music, but kept my own verses. Why my friend Vassilis won't admit it, that is another story! My witnesses are Kaldaras and Bakalis...

So, if we are to believe Gouveris's version, *Chorisame ena dheilino* was inspired by the persecution of the Greek Jews during the German Occupation. Dinos Christianopoulos prefers not to say anything about the author of the verses, but also does not include this song in the list of songs composed by Tsitsanis during the Occupation.

Οι Εβραίοι [The Jews]

In 1993, Giorgos Mitsakis, in one of his interviews for the magazine *El*, published a poem of his (without music), with the following comments:

"This is for the Jews. I'm not against those people, I feel for them. They say that the Jews did this and that... I took their essence, their spirit, and I wrote this..."

Τον Μεσσία προσμέναμε στον αιώνα το διάβα
πριν ρημάξει τη ράτσα μας η φωτιά και η λάβα.
Μα η μοίρα μας, ίσως, μας κοιτούσε με μίσος
κι είχε γίνει εχθρός μας κι ο φτωχός και ο Κρόισος.
Τον Χριστό κι αν σταυρώσαμε, τον Δαβίδ δεν προδώσαμε
ζωντανούς μας πετάζαν και σε φούρνους μας κάψαν.
Κι ακουστήκανε θρήνοι στου απείρου τα μάκρη
κι αν μας κλάψανε μάτια ήταν στείρο το δάκρυ.
Κι ο Μεσσίας δεν ήρθε... και το αίμα μας ρέει,
οι αιώνες διαβαίνουν, κι είμαστε όλοι Εβραίοι. . .

We waited for the Messiah with the passing of the ages,
before the fire and the lava destroyed our race.
But our fate, probably, looked upon us with hatred,
And both the poor man and the wealthy had become our enemy.
Although we crucified Christ, we did not betray David.
Alive they threw us and in furnaces they burned us,
And death songs were heard in the far distances of infinity
And if eyes cried for us, the tear was fruitless
And the Messiah did not come... and our blood flowed,
The ages pass, and we are all Jews.

“The Jews” appeared, together with other previously unpublished poems of Mitsakis, in the *Ependitis* newspaper, with this editorial note:

In November 1993, during the simple and sparsely attended funeral of Giorgos Mitsakis, we learn for the first time that just before he died, he had managed to complete a recorded autobiography, with his friend, the musician Nikos Oikonomou.

Today this material is heading to the press in an edited collection together with rare photographs, valuable information and chronologies. In the book – *Giorgos Mitsakis: Autobiography* one can find both and previously unknown – poems of Giorgos Mitsakis.

The ‘*E*’ publishes for the first time today some of these poems, together with an informative text by the author of the material, whom we thank for granting us the right to be the first to publish it.

EPILOGUE

All this information is enough, at least for now. I wish and hope that it won’t be the last. Saving a song, a rhyme, a story or even a single word, is both a requiem and resurrection. For those voices that were heard for the last time during difficult times, in locked houses during farewells, at the time of deportation and death; for those unforgettable and everyday people; for Jako, for blind Sadik Gershon, for the talented Moshe Kazes; for those on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, Victoria Hazan, Jack Mayesh and Jo Elias; for Roza, for Haskil, whom we lost too quickly, for the broad-minded Minos Matsas; for the accordeon player Mordechai Esdra; and finally for the “... *dos ijas djudias de Saloniko ke kantan en un kafé en la playa, serka a la Torre Blanka...*”

Translation: John Kouliantanos and Ed Emery

* The late Alberto Nar was the historian for the Jewish community of Thessaloniki. See the article by Nikos Ordoulidis, “The missing pieces to the puzzle that is Thessaloniki: The Alberto Nar recordings archive” [Τα χαμένα κομμάτια του παζλ της Θεσσαλονίκης: Το αρχείο ηχογραφήσεων του Αλμπέρτου Ναρ].

See: <https://www.ordoulidis.gr/el/academics/monographs/albertonar.htm>



Fig. 1: Alberto Nar

Translators' note: In the translations of these songs we came across inconsistencies in spellings and transliterations. However, αρρεβονιάστικα (“arrevoniastika”) is correct.

At the final stage of editing many intractable problems remained. At that point Rivka Havassy very kindly stepped in and did a thorough revision of the Ladino transcriptions, as well as providing corrections and an informative Appendix [published here as Chapter 21]. She has gone well beyond the call of duty, and we are very grateful for her contribution.

For the Greek originals of songs we have not given all of the verses. Those can be found in the excellent Greek song archives contained at www.kithara.to

Furthermore, a couple of the Ladino transcriptions are published only in the online version of this paper, at www.geocities.ws/soasrebetikoreader