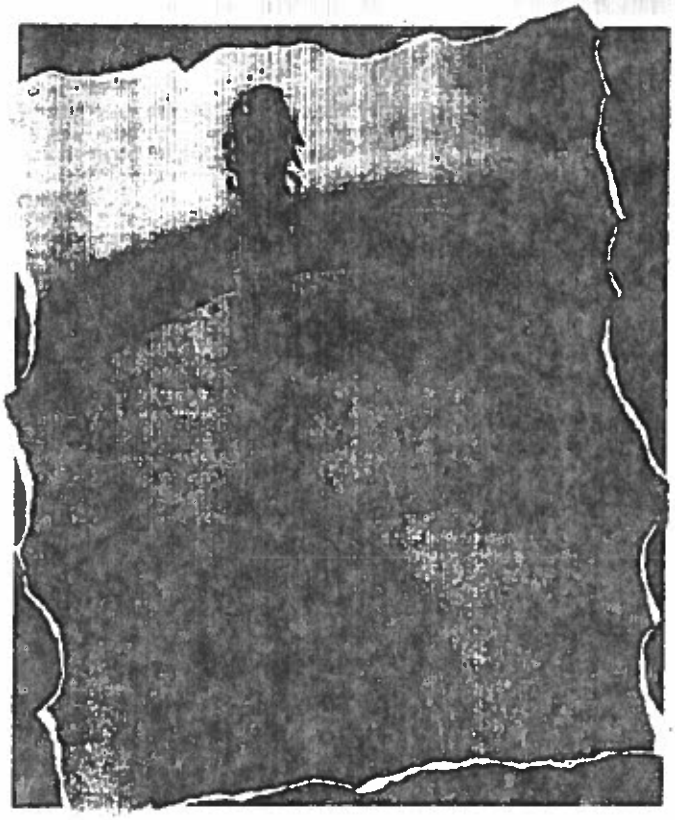
THE MANY TRADITIONS OF GREEK MUSIC

Record Collectors and the Historical Record



By Steve Frangos

Where are musical traditions preserved? Not necessarily in public institutions. Often the only source for popular and traditional music are the holdings of private record collectors. Even the most casual survey of any archive's collections reveals that the holdings are composed not merely of academic field recordings but also the often extensive donations of amateur collectors. We tend to forget that private curio cabinets were the seeds from which the largest archives and museums in the world first grew.

Researchers seeking information on world music soon discovered that historical events beginning in the 1890s led to a situation where commercial records are often the only evidence remaining for musical traditions destroyed by war, outlawed by political edict, or displaced by rapid social change. From our perspective in history these past events elevate commercial records from cheap mass-produced popular consumer items to invaluable cultural documents. Circumstances of history require that the researcher explore large holdings of commercial records not readily available in public institutions.

Amateur record collectors are not often sought out by academic researchers. Ironically, the amateur record collectors are disregarded by academics for the very same reason they would be sought out in the first place: the collector's willingness to talk about their vast knowledge concerning his/her area of musical interest. The interactions, whenever they do take place, between academics and amateur collectors are reported, by both groups, as almost inevitably ending in open argument.

For the academic focusing on particular musical, historical, or cultural problems evident in music, the record collector's attention to collectable detail is simply too removed from their own set tasks to be taken seriously. The collectors are usually labeled "too difficult to work with." For many collectors the academics are reported to be totally ignorant of whole areas in the history of commercial music. Collectors contend academics simply don't listen very well. The academics are also said not to adequately credit the collector's contributions in the scholars' final printed essays.

Certainly many researchers do in fact seek out and successfully work out relationships with amateur collectors. Still, by all accounts long-term interactions with collectors are the exception, not the rule. The music and the information these amateur collectors hold is too valuable to be summarily dismissed. Consider, also, that academics intent on a specific research problem tend to overlook that collectors very often know far more than just the records. Collectors were and remain witnesses to the social and cultural transformations heard on these records.

The role of large record collectors in investigating Greek, Balkan, and Anatolian musical tradition is especially crucial. Particular historical circumstances exist where the United States was the location for the first appearance of literally hundreds of thousands of traditional Greek songs on commercial records and not Greece or Anatolian Turkey. Ten, and sometimes twenty years before such songs were recorded in Greece and Turkey they were being recorded and released in New York City and Chicago. Culturally speaking the Balkan and Anatolian peoples have much in common. For political reasons beginning in the 1890s some of these forms of traditional music were totally forbidden and never released in Greece. Archival holdings in public institutions contain only a fragment of these musical traditions. This series will use the experiences of one key informant on Balkan music, Dino X. Pappas, as a case study in the roles of record collectors and their potential contributions to the historical record.

The Pappas record collection

Dino X. Pappas of St. Clair Shores, Michigan, is one of the largest collectors of Greek, Balkan, and Anatolian recorded music. The Pappas collection has a core group of seven thousand Greek 78rpm records and three thousand Turkish and Armenian 78rpm records. Aside from these 78rpm records there are two thousand 45rpm records as well as two thousand-plus long playing albums, all a mixture of Greek and Turkish music. Making up a small, but important, segment of the collection are miscellaneous Ladino, Macedonian, and Syrian records. The collection is not restricted solely to Balkan music. There are also several hundred American popular 78rpm records. Pappas has followed the whole spectrum of available music forms. No form is too obscure. There is even a collection of eight-track tapes with Greek music. A striking feature of the overall collection are the three hundred piano rolls with Greek, Turkish, and American popular songs.

It does prove hard for Pappas to number various parts of his collection. Aside from the core collection of seven thousand 78rpm records there are literally thousands of "doubles." When Pappas can not buy or trade for a record missing from his collection then he makes a taped copy. Pappas estimates he was well over two hundred reel-to-reel boxes and an equal number of cassettes filled with re-recorded music.

Judging the contents of the overall collection is further complicated by the fact that Pappas doesn't have just music. Over the years Greek sheet music, record catalogs dating from 1918 to the 1960s, music store advertisements, articles on Greek and Balkan music gleaned over the years from journals, magazines, and newspapers, taped interviews with traditional musicians, seven victrola machines, and even a player piano have all somehow managed to find their way into his collection.

What kind of music is found in the Pappas collection? Traditional Greek folk songs abound: *Klefitika* (mountain freedom songs), *demotika* (popular songs), *kandathes* (choral songs), the urban style of music first called *smyrnaika* then *rebetika* and/or (after the location where they were performed) *cafe-aman* songs. Traditional dance instrumentals (with and without vocal accompaniment) appear such as the *kalamatiano, syrto, tsamiko, hasapiko, ballos, cifte telli, Cretiko sousta, zeybekiko, tik, pentozales*, in other words, music for literally every dance performed by Greeks.

The range of dance and music genres that document Western influences are also amazingly diverse. We find Greek waltzes, light fox trots, rhumbas, mambos, and tangos. The Hawaiian guitar was not only a popular instrument in the 1920s, when that instrument first began to appear on Greek records, but had a major resurgence in Athenian clubs during the late 1960s and early mechanized musical forms such as piano rolls are found in the collection with both Greek and Turkish songs. The less obvious forms of "Greek" recorded music, the operettas, traditional calendar custom songs, Italianate sentimental songs, Greek military band music, and popular American songs of the 1920s and 1930s sung in Greek, are also abundantly available.

The holdings of the Pappas collection reveal that Greek oral performances known on record also include the traditional ethnic comedy form known as *karaghiozis* (performed in Greek, Turkish, and Ladino or mixtures of those languages sometimes even with English) as well as other comedy-styles. The highly popular comedic stage reviews, which are a mixture of dialogue and song, is one further comedy genre found on record. Modern Greek drama in America is also preserved on records with many variations of popular songs from stage plays, epecially the tragedic melodramas. Another traditional music genre readily available are the commercial recordings of Byzantine chant and church music dating from the early 1900s till present.

Since the Pappas collection is an unbroken stream of recorded music we can find imported Greek rock-and-roll as well as the very popular Greek-American sing-a-long albums of the 1960s and 1970s. No change in musical form is missing from the Pappas collection as compact discs and videos of Greek music have become available, Pappas has added them to his collection. □

THE MANY TRADITIONS OF GREEK MUSIC

Dino X. Pappas: The Golden Greek of Detroit

By Steve Frangos

Dino Pappas is far from a recluse collector. The "Golden Greek of Detroit" is what The Detroit Free Press calls Dino whenever it runs a story on him and his collection. Dino has lectured for community group, private clubs, and academic audiences in California, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Utah. As a guest speaker Dino has appeared on numerous radio programs, all around the country, lecturing with extensive musical examples. At the request of local scholars Dino prepared a taped lecture with music to accompany the National Endowment of the Humanities exhibition *The Greek American Family: Continuity Through Change* when it toured to Wayne State University in 1983. Dino has compiled a discography entitled, *Greek and Turkish Commercial Recordings in America: 1900 to 1956*. This discography is the result of five years' worth of investigations and cross-referencing. Negotiations with publishers are now underway to have this discography published.

Scholars have long respected Dino's expertise and so recordings of interviews with Dino, lectures, and re-recordings of 78rpm records from his collection are accessioned in five locations: Rapids Public Library, the Greek Collection the Wayne State Ethnic Archives, the of the Archives of the West at the Grand Marriot Library in Salt Lake City and two of Indiana University's archives the Uralic-Altaic Archives of Traditional Music.

But who is Dino Pappas? Dino once wrote out the following auto biography:

My name is Constantinos V. Papakonstantinou or better known Dino Pappas. I was born in Detroit, Michigan, August 1, 1931, of Greek immigrant parents. My father came to the United States, in approximately 1905, from the Roumeli region of Greece. My mother came to the United States from Constantinople, Turkey, but of Greek parents, in 1921...

My interest in Greek and Turkish music came at an early age. I used to love playing the records and look back and see the enjoyment on people's faces as they either sang along or danced to the music. I made myself a vow, at an early age, that I would always try to collect something new and different constantly. My collection is quite extensive...

I am a retired Detroit policeman. I retired in 1974 of a duty-connected disability. This gave me more time to seriously devote to my collection.

Because of my little bits of knowledge and through listening to the songs, I have been able to follow Greek American history through the recordings. I had the honor also of taking part in the making of the Hollywood movie, "The Postman Always Rings Twice," with Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lang. The Greek records played in the movies are out of my collection.

Photo: Andrew T. Kopan record collection at Indiana University (Bloomington) Archive of Traditional Music

Dino's "little bits of knowledge and through listening to the songs" has him constantly sought out by Balkan music lovers and scholars all over the world. Dino always has someone staying over at the house. Most of the time is spent down in the basement listening to music. Musicians, scholars, Greek community groups, movie producers, folklore and dance clubs regularly contact Dino to learn about modern Greek and Balkan music. Dino's accessibility, and his generous nature, have led to this seemingly endless stream of visitors. It is these contacts, over the past ten years, that have established Dino's reputation in Greece and the United States as a leading authority on modern Greek and Turkish recorded music.

Various people have contacted Dino for information and music aimed at producing re-released albums on Greek and Turkish music. *Greek Oriental: Smyrnaic-Rebetic Songs and Dances The Golden Years, 1927-1937* (Folklyric Records 9033) by Martin Swartz, the linguist cites Dino in the credits. Dino chafes somewhat at being cited just as another name in the list of credits. Aside from the time he spent visiting with Dr. Swartz in California, the two men spoke frequently for several months over the telephone. On one occasion Dino spoke to Dr. Swartz three times, in one day, going over details in the liner notes. James Palis, the producer of *To Ellinika Laiko Tragoudi Stin Ameriki 1917-1938 (Greek Folk Songs in America 1917-1938)* spent days in Dino's basement listening, often for the first time, to the earliest commercial records of Greek music available in America.

A number of individuals have encouraged Dino to work on his own re-release album. Ilhan Bosgoz, (who has deposited several tapes drawn from Dino's collection into the Indiana University Uralic-Altaic Studies Archives) has urged Dino to work on a re-release album of Turkish music recorded in America. Thomas Jacobson, the Classical archaeologist and long time afficionado of Greek jazz is another who has suggested that Dino re-release an album devoted to modern jazz recorded by Greek musicians.

Steve Demarkopoulos, the noted Greek lexicographer has a running conversation with Dino. In his academic writings as well as his immensely popular syndicated newspaper column "Do You Speak Greek?" Dr. Demarkopoulos has documented, with considerable help from Dino, the appearance of "Gringlish" on the early 78rpm records. Gringlish or Greenglish (indicating a 'green horn' a term applied to many immigrant Greeks in the early 1900's) is a merger of Greek and English words that follows Greek grammatical forms. "Gringlish, like all patois, thrives because either there is no exact counterpart in the standard language or the counterpart is too complicated for the Greek-American to remember or too cumbersome to bother to reproduce (Demakopoulos 1979)." The use of Gringlish is not only quite widespread among Greek American communities but some witnesses believe its use is increasing.

Many musicians and several academics have asked Dino for specific re-recordings on technical aspects of Greek and Turkish music. One example is Michael G. Kaloyanides, the ethnomusicologist who asked for a whole series of cassettes with musical examples of Turkish modes, called *makams*. Dino spent days with his collection gathering and then sending that information to Dr. Kaloyanides. Richard K. Spottswood author of the discography, *Ethnic Music on Record. A Discography of Commercial Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States 1894 to 1942* was another visitor to Dino's basement. Mr. Spottswood spent many days with Dino in extended conversation about Greek records released in America.

Dino undoubtedly stimulated by

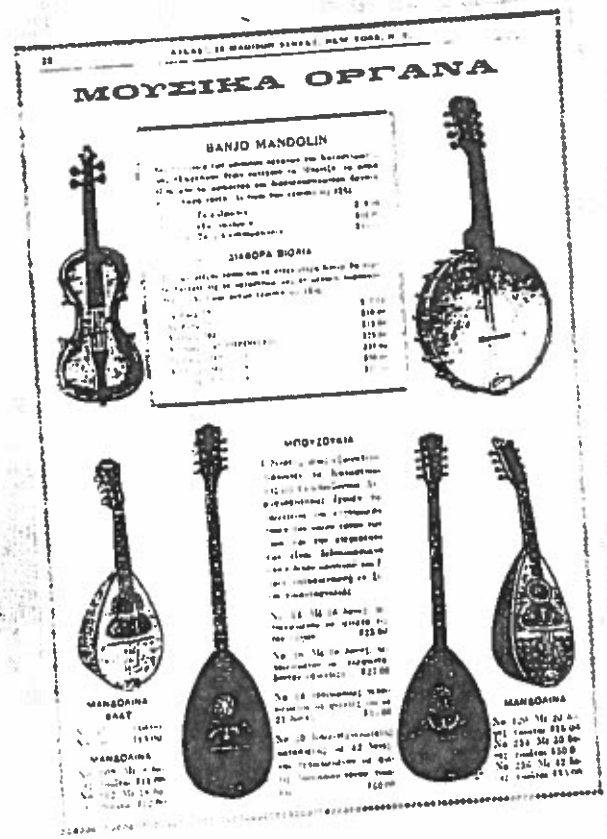


Photo: Atlas General Catalogue, 1927-1928, courtesy of Helen Zeese Papanikolas.

all this interchange with musicians, scholars, and other collectors, has co-authored with Helen Zeese Papanikolas, one of the foremost Greek American historians, two articles on "Greenglish" heard on commercial records (1988a and 1988b). Steeped as he is in the Greek language, Dino has a strong interest in oral traditions other than music. This has lead to an as-yet-to-be-published article, again written with Helen Papanikolas, entitled *Proverbs and Sayings In Greek Immigrant America*.

While a host of other names could be included, perhaps the most important recent event has been with Fotios K. Litsas, the Byzantine and Modern Greek scholar. As part of the twelve hour series on Greeks in America Dr. Litsas made a special trip to Michigan with his video crew to interview Dino on the history of Greek and Turkish music recorded in America for this National Greek Television and Eurovision-sponsored documentary.

In the most profound sense Dino Pappas is a tradition-bearer for an entire body of music. Given his vast cross-referencing of data Dino's ability to recognize performers on records when credits do not appear is not an ability to be taken lightly. Born into this musical tradition and an avid collector for nearly half a century, whenever Dino discusses Greek and Turkish music and musicians he demonstrates his observations by simply reaching out and putting the record on the phonograph. This method is frequently the way Dino conducts telephone consultations with musicians and scholars. Specific musical examples are played so the person on the telephone can "hear" what Dino ng.

Dino's experiences with Greek and Turkish music are not restricted to commercial recordings. Dino's mother used to sing him to sleep as a small child with, what for years he thought was simply the Greek lullaby, *Paramana Kouna Kouna (Rock The Cradle)*. Informal gatherings in the living room or kitchen were scenes where his mother and aunts would sing songs they learned growing up in Constantinople. Dino would come home to find his father and a group of men laughing and singing the kleftika, e.g. the mountain freedom songs of the Roumeli region of Greece, around the kitchen table.

Even the presence of mechanical music was not something new to his family. Dino recalls that "Mom said they had a Victrola *me houni* (with a horn)" so he asked "was it a disc with a horn?" "No", she said "Makerades" (spools). "She also said they would put a piece of foil over the cylinder...and recorded their own (songs)." In Constantinople, before 1921, Dino's mother and her sisters would gather around the cylinder machine. One aunt would play the mandolin, another took a spoon and a plate to keep time as they all sang into the horn. These "home-made" cylinders would last two or three re-playings.

Sometimes, Dino refers to his family as "glenjedes" or "party people" for their obvious love of music, dance and commensality. Dino recalls that in his youth "some homes were like museums" with dust on the victrolas. Victrolas in these homes were status symbols, nothing else. This was certainly not the case in Dino's home. The first record Dino was ever given was on his ninth birthday as a present. Dino still has his parents' 1925 Brunswick Victrola with the family's original record collection inside. The loss of the Depression placed many once prosperous immigrants, such as Dino's father, back into poverty again.

The way I remember...my dad had lost everything...we were actually on welfare when I was a kid. My aunts would come over. My mother's sisters. We'd sit in the kitchen. A pot of coffee would go on. If there was something to snack on maybe some Greek bread...a little feta, some kasseri, halva...or something. They'd sit and talk. They'd tell stories about Turkey. And my Dad would tell stories about Greece. My Uncle Paul would tell stories about the island of Kos 'cause that's where he was from. They'd compare stories about when they were young. We kids would sit and listen...or they'd say "ah, den vazoume cansa plaka. ("ah, why don't we put on a record") Let's go and dance." You have to remember we lived in flats. You dance hasapiko and it sounded like the whole house was caving in. But we managed to enjoy ourselves. No T.V.s. If we had money we bought a radio. All we really had were those old crank up Victrolas (side A #26,14)."

Classic Greek- Americana

THE MANY TRADITIONS OF GREEK MUSIC
Part 3 of 8

By Steve Frangos

Greek commercial records from the early 1900s to the 1950s contain many unique historical documents. Political conditions and esthetic sensibilities during this period eventually led to a situation where many examples of traditional Greek music are, today, found only in the United States.

The political factors are diverse. The gradual downfall of the Ottoman Empire between 1911 and 1922 initially curtailed, then stopped, all export of records from anywhere in the Balkans or Turkey. The dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I was only the political not the final cultural outcome. Every Balkan nation state following the war sought to completely disavow any connection to the Ottoman past. Among the cultural manifestation this ideologically inspired position took was the total and systematic eradication of anything Ottoman: architectural sites (including mosques and graveyards), language, place-names, written script, music genres, and dances.

To stabilize the newly formed political nation states in 1921 and 1922 exchanges of populations occurred throughout the Balkans. The greatest exchanges of populations occurred between Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey. Secondary exchanges and later movements also took place between Albania, Greece, and Yugoslavia. These exchanges were meant to bring together disparate members of the same ethnic groups. Unspoken in the background of these events was the feared reoccurrance of a massacre similar to the 1915 genocide of over a million Armenians by the Ottomans. During the 1921-1922 population exchanges over one million to one-and-a-half million Greeks were removed from what is today the Turkish nation state, most from the western Anatolian region. Academic attention has focused most directly on the forced exchanges following World War I.

The secondary structure of internal movement and travelers has not been given nearly enough attention. Which is odd. No one considers those individuals who moved regularly and freely throughout the Ottoman Empire. After 1922, transhumanent shepherds, the traveling merchant class, the caravans of muleteers and camel drivers, army troops, and religious pilgrims were completely cut off from their previous travels. While much needs to be studied in this area, for our purposes here it is enough to point out that these travelers existed and that political events in the early 1920s cut off musicians from audiences and co-celebrants from each other.

The Balkan political and cultural leaders deemed these actions crucial to their very survival as distinct sovereign nations. Politically dependent on the Great Powers, the Balkan statesmen realized that cultural forms often determined the geo-political boundaries agreed upon at Versailles. The military dictator of Turkey from World War I to 1938 Mustafa Kemal's (Ataturk) entire career stressed the cultural Westernization of the geographical area that the Great Powers designated as Turkey. All major political figures of the region believed real politik conditions following World War I meant not simply political changes but cultural transformations.

In Greece, the cultural sanctions on music were rigorously enforced. Recording studios did not make their appearance in Athens till mid-1920s. By the late 1920s government restrictions completely excluded certain musical genres from being recorded commercially. Entire musical genres such as the *smyrnaika* or as it developed in the under world of Athens at this time into the form known as *rebetika* were targeted for supression.

The *rebetika* was deemed too Turkish in its musical form. The subjects dealt with in the lyrics, eg free love, drugs, the hypocrisy of the political and social systems found in Greece were also too challenging for the middle class bureaeracy. All such songs were outlawed. Instruments as symbols of this musical genres were recognized by law. Automatic imprisonment faced anyone for the mere possession of a *baglama*, a small fifteen inch musical instrument similar to a *bouzouki*. Consequently, while these songs were immensely popular with the working classes and widely performed in clubs *rebetika* records were not recorded for release in Greece, till the mid-1950s.

Esthetic tastes also converged with these political sanctions. Greek *demotika* (popular) music was first recorded in its fullest expression in the United States. By the mid-1920s, the time when recording studios were just starting to operate in Athens, literally hundreds of *demotika* songs had already been recorded and released in Chicago and New York. These American-Greek records were not popular in Greece. The reasons involved in this were largely due to esthetic sensibilities. Athens at the turn of the century was self-titled the "Little Paris". Music from Europe was sought after, not traditional Greek music. Greek traditional music was simply declasse. While, eventually, traditional *demotika* were recorded in Greece, they certainly were far from among the first records made.

American *demotika* never sold well in Greece. Complicated stylistic differences are often cited as the central complaint with these early American *demotika*. Many of these criticisms focus on the position that the American records did not document the best singers of the day. These arguments do not take technical issues into account. Electric recordings were not made in the United States till late 1925. For eighteen years, between roughly 1907 till 1925, when hundreds of Greek *demotika* were produced in America the singers all recorded through a megaphon. The fidelity of sound under those conditions was far from perfect. Add to this the strain of singing through a megaphon and some of these criticisms seem ill-placed. Even under these recording handicaps, today, Greek-American singers such as Madame Kula (eg Kulajevra) and Marika Papagika are acclaimed as preeminent interpretors of *demotika*.

An unexpected reluctance on the part of many traditional musicians to be recorded commercially prevented much of the *demotika* from being documented. Writing about the experiences of the traditional clarinetist Pericles Halikas, James Stoynoff (himself a renown clarinetist) provides us some of the reasoning for not being recorded, in Greece, during the 1920s. "...Nikola Batzi, Demos Brahos, Dino "Koulos" Batzis and, in fact, all the players from Konitsa refused to be recorded. Pericles (Halikas) tells us that Koulos and the others feared rival clarinetists would 'steal' their style and further that people would no longer engage them to perform live if records were available." Not all examples of *demotika* were recorded even in America. Steve Zembellas, the noted vocalist and producer of Grecophon Records of Gary, Indiana, claims one of the main reasons certain performers did not record, or record more often, is that many of the Greek musicians in America were simply hard to do business with.

Even in the efforts to preserve traditional Greek music all sorts of genres and instruments went in and out of fashion. Mary Vouras, the noted dance and music scholar recently reported that "...I visited *Harhalls*, the Society of Cretan Musicians in Chania...[The walls of its coffee house-meeting room are covered from top to bottom with photographs of present and past famous and lesser known Cretan musicians. The morning we were there the place was lively with musicians...Among those were the past and current presidents of the society, Constantinos Papadakis and Miltiades Yiatroudakis.... The former brought up the subject of Greek National Radio in the Fifties and Sixties, whose folk music programs promoted lyra as the Cretan traditional instrument to the exclusion of the Cretan violin. As a violinist, he was still bitter for having been deprived of a large radio audience at the height of his playing ability.

Compounding all the political and esthetic issues at play in Greece is an unexpected turn of events in America. The documents kept on the Greek and Turkish music produced by the two largest American manufacturers—RCA Victor and Columbia—are today virtually non-existent. Foreign records were perceived by all the large American record companies as essentially "lost leader items" meant to entice the emigrants into first buying record players and then American records. Of the two largest producers of Greek records RCA Victor has only a fraction of their business files documenting the production of Greek records. In the case of Columbia records all the documents have been completely destroyed. With the lack of popular and academic interest, till the late 1960s, unless you physically have the records in front of you there is simply not much documentation to base research upon. □

Note: The eight part series "The Many Traditions of Greek Music" by Steve Frangos is based on academic work which has appeared in *Resound*, a quarterly magazine of the Archives of Traditional Music.

THE MANY TRADITIONS OF GREEK MUSIC
Part 4 of 6

The First Records In America

By Steve Frangos

Commercial recordings of Greek music in America date from 1896 with the appearance of vocalist Michael Arachtingi on eight Berliner seven inch discs. Even at this early date songs such as *Smyrana Serenade* (BER 1002), the *Great Constantinopitan Song* (BER 1005), and *Cozaghki Song* (BER 1004) cited as being sung "in Turkish" all suggest an Asia Minor origin or at least musical exposure to Arachtingis' musical repertoire. On May 4, 1896 with *To Ta L'Ami Zo Singlino* (The Cat and the Dog) the last of the eight recordings was recorded. Clearly, even with this first group of Greek and Turkish commercial records, we see Westernized musical influences rather than strictly traditional Greek and Turkish musical genres.

With only an estimated 15,979 Greeks immigrating to the United States between 1891 and 1900 it is not surprising that the Arachtingis records did not sell very well. What demographics has always failed to note is persons of Greek ethnic stock coming from outside of Greece, say, Turkey, North Africa, or Bulgaria—but even then the number could not have exceeded 20,000. So where was this music ultimately recorded, when, and by whom? As one might expect by a number of individuals and organizations but oddly enough all within a very short period of time.

In the early 1900s all the major record companies were using the techniques in the production of foreign language products they had learned earlier in the century with the successful innovation of target marketing in the sales of old time and race records. "All companies used the same business strategy they manufactured both recordings (discs and cylinders) and record-playing equipment (gramophones, phonographs), and tried to market them worldwide." While from our perspective in history the music documented on those records is the main historical legacy of these companies preserving rare and obscure music traditions was far from their original intent. "Recordings of the smallest groups were not made in the hopes of large sales, but to help the sale of gramophones, which were manufactured by the same companies."

By 1907 the largest companies had divided the world between them. "Victor got the Americas, China, Japan, and the Philippines, while Gramophone got the rest of the world." Commercial companies even before this date had sent engineers around the world to record virtually every musical tradition on the planet. As far as traditional Greek and Turkish traditions are concerned we find that "[T]he Gramophone company in England sent an engineer, W. Sinkler Darby, to Constantinople in July 1900. The company sponsored further visits in 1903, 1904 (twice), 1905, 1907, and 1911. Another expedition is known to have stopped in Smyrna in 1910. Records made on these trips served the company well. Not only were they available in Greece and Turkey, but the best were routinely reissued on Victor in the United States, forming the bulk of that company's early Greek catalogs." To gain some perspective on what all these field trips generated in terms of Balkan and Anatolian music between 1900 and 1910, the Gramophone Company alone made 1,925 recordings in Constantinople and Smyrna.

How did target marketing affect the American market? All accounts to date agree that after Michael Arachtingis' 1896 eight Berliner discs Greek commercial records were not recorded or at least sold in any quantity in the United States again till 1907. From 1907 to 1917 the American market on Greek, Balkan and Anatolian music was predominately imported. Domestically made commercial records featuring Greek-American performers were not actively produced till the beginning of World War I.

It is with the outbreak of World War I that the American-Greek record artists and companies gradually take over the market. Between 1917-1930 literally hundreds of Greeks songs were recorded in American predominately in the *demotika* genre. The growing record sales are in close keeping with the peak years of Greek migration to the United States 1907 and 1912. The steady rise in record sales from 1917 to 1930 is not surprising. That brief thirteen-year period marks the appearance of the first Greek immigrant bachelor laborer's arrival. Then, throughout the 1920s-1930s, the young picture brides came to America to marry these men. It was these same newly married young couples who faced the Great Depression together.

Rita Abatzi

Target marketing did not simply mean recording traditional music in the Balkans and Anatolian and then shipping it off to America. Music recorded in America by popular ethnic musicians in New York or Chicago made its way back to the cities and villages. Songs were recorded with the American ethnic audience in mind. Many songs could be cited. One of the most interesting, *Mi Me Stellnis Mana Stin Ameriki* (Mother, Please, Don't Send Me To America), was recorded in Greece around 1936. This RCA record cites George Kambisi as having written the lyrics with Dimitrios Semzi on violin and Rita Abatzi on the vocal. This song was widely known as The Picture Bride song. The lyrics have a young woman pleading with her mother not to be sent away to marry a Greek-American who has secured an arranged marriage with this village girl.

Don't send me to America, Mama,
I'll wither and die there.
I don't want dollars—how can I say it?
Only bread, onions and the one I love.

I love someone from the village, Mama,
A handsome youth, an only son.
He's kissed me in the ravines
And embraced me beneath the willows.

George, my love, I'm leaving you and going far away.
They're marrying me off into the strangeland (ksentia).
They take me like a lamb to be slaughtered
And there, in my grief, they'll bury me.

Rather than just a matter of oral tradition alone, the sheet music that eventually appeared for this song used the *Picture Bride* title. Obviously, this record did not have a ready market in Greece but this extremely popular record sold in America and sold very well.

Records played in the home was only one component of the "market." How did these records become popular in the first place? Gatherings in the home and even community events such as picnics or church dances would not have "made" a performer famous. To ask questions about who bought the records, who were the Big Star Performers, and which records were most popular, we must first ask where this music was most often played in public. □

Note: The eight-part series "The Many Traditions of Greek Music" by Steve Frangos is based on academic work which has appeared in *Resound*, a quarterly magazine of the Archives of Traditional Music.

Cafe Amans: The Global Circuit

By Steve Frangos

THE MANY TRADITIONS OF GREEK MUSIC
Part 5 of 8

Writing about the folk music of Greek emigrant communities of the 1900-1930 period Sotirios (Sam) Chianis, the ethnomusicologist, reports on the existence of traditional Greek musical performance outside of Greece and Asia Minor. "By the 1920s there were many Greek emigrants, from both the mainland and islands, in the Congo and Abyssinia and especially in the Egyptian cities of Alexandria, Suez, Port Said, Zagazig, and Ismailia. The majority, however, settled in such cities as New York, Boston, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Where ever they settled, these immigrants established strong Greek communities, zealously guarding and perpetuating their religion, language, social customs and especially their regional folk music and dances. By 1920 each Greek community had several coffee-houses and at least one *cafe-aman*, where one could hear (and dance to) live Greek music. The nature and tradition of the music played in these *cafe amans* has been subject of much discussion and even greater dispute. Dr. Martin Schwartz makes these observations about the music typical in any of these *cafe amans*.

Martin Schwartz notes, "Under the Ottomans there was a complex two-way interaction of the music of the Greeks and of the Turks (whose urban music was meanwhile powerfully influenced by that of the Persians and the Arabs, themselves heirs of early Greek musical theory). In the early part of the century, Greek musicians of Turkey performed Turkish and Greek music and hybrids thereof. The Greek musicians of Asia Minor were also well-acquainted with music of Eastern Europe, particularly Rumanian, and European music in general.

From 1900 to the Great Depression all writers agree there was a thirty-year surge of performed and recorded music. What is left out of these scenarios is the logical extension that the Greek (and Albanian, Armenian, Sephardic, Turkish, etc.) musicians knew of this world network of clubs and consumers. Rosa Eskenazi, George Katsaros, Demetrios Salonikos, Nicholas Roubanis and many other popular Greek and Greek American musicians were what we would term, today, global musicians. So the above "surge" in music that all record companies experienced and all academics write about was not isolated to Constantinople, Smyrna, New York or Athens but was part of a worldwide circuit—a circuit the musicians knew well.

This global network of performers and record consumers is an extension of a Balkan argument for this musical tradition. Rather than a scenario of a late 19th century *diaspora* that creates these communities, each with their own newly established clubs, the locations cited in Chianis correspond to trading areas dating back to the Ottoman Empire. The citing of Abyssinia and the Egyptian cities of Alexandria, Suez, Port Said, Zagazig, and Ismailia only provide some of the key cotton trading areas that Greeks as business agents attended in that era. Fez, Morrocco, various towns in the lower Sudan and the East Coast of Africa were also locations of Greek trading and music. Accounts of the Greeks as administrative agents for the Ottoman Empire or as the "Conquering Balkan Merchant" only report on the European aspect of the role Greeks played throughout that's empire's extensive domains (Stoianovich and Vacalopoulos). The history and role of Greeks of the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East and across North Africa has yet to see discussion.

The influences cited by Martin Schwartz of Eastern European and Rumanian music on the Greek performers living in Asia Minor are equally understandable when the long history of the Ottoman Empire rule in Rumania and the Greeks' leading role as administrators and business men for that empire are recalled. The Phanariot Greeks, eg those Greeks living in the Phanar district of Constantinople, served from 1711-1821 as Ottoman officials in the Rumanian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. It is logical to assume that musical influences took place. The Phanariots were among the wealthiest Greeks to be found anywhere in the Ottoman Empire. Many accounts attest to their participation and support of the arts. The continuous cultural contacts between Greece and Rumania post-1821 are also well documented.

Other connections can be drawn from the Greek merchantile class's influences. Musical instruments and change in aesthetics can be drawn to class formation in Greece in the mid-1800s. The introduction of the clarinet is a case in point.

James Stoynoff writes, "Circumstances in Northern Greece around 1835 seem to have been more conducive to the clarinet's debut than in any other region. The emergence of a merchantile class in Western Macedonia—particularly in Kastoria and Siatista—was in direct contrast to the agricultural orientation of most other areas. These merchants were engaged in trade with Rumania and other neighboring countries, and represented a wealthier class having more refined tastes in folk music. Whereas the common folk celebrated weddings, saint days, and other festivals in the outdoors (generally with the whole village in attendance), the 'upper class' hosted private receptions in the salons of their grand Kastorian villas. This indoor environment, however, required musical instruments capable of expressing folk melodies with finesse and delicacy of tone. Consequently, a preference was shown for the nai, violin, laouto, and defi—collectively known as a zygia or koumpania. Clearly the European clarinet, a refined as well as 'contemporary' instrument, was also well suited to the tastes of this salon patronage. [T]he clarinet soon upstaged the nai...and took the melodic lead."

The class division I spoke of earlier is crystalized in the folk saying "the poor man dances to the zourna, but the rich man dances to the clarinet."

The Balkan and Anatolian people have a shared musical heritage. As might be expected from a region of the world that has seen four great empires from classical times to the First World War: the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman. The music reflects just one such social and cultural merger.

The pattern of publically denying a commonality to Balkan and Anatolian Ottoman culture forms is a panregional phenomenon. Again, as stated earlier because of political restrictions following World War I, commercial records fell through all the political rhetoric and the prison bars. No one can now deny what can be heard on an old scratchy 78rpm. Happily the Greek-Americans went about without a care for what was acceptable in Athens, Istanbul, or Smyrna. The significance of any Greek American family record collections is that they escaped all these sanctions and restrictions. Istanbul and Chicago nightclubs still have performers singing in Greek, Ladino, and other languages.

Ottoman history gives insight into American immigrant history. Especially when the issue is commercial records. While the 1940 US Bureau of the Census indicated that at 273,520 the Greeks were ranked as only the 13th largest ethnic group in America, they were the 5th largest in record consumption.

The actual number of Greek records in these tabulations does not count the Orthophonic label and so must be even higher. While the commercial record market fell along with every other business due to the Great Depression, Greek records sold well till World War II. Why? The argument can well be made because not only "Greeks" were buying them.

Evidence from family record collections can go a long way in explaining this disproportionate set of statistics. Collected as discrete units, the entire holdings of Greek and Sephardic Jewish family collections reveal a mixture of musics. Even with the often fragmentary documentation available, a strong case can be made for an American "Oriental" or Pan-Levantine musical tradition developed in part from the urban centers of America.

photo: Steve Frangos

Rosa Eskenazi in 1930 with Salonikos (holding the violin) and Toboulis (standing).

Note: The eight-part series "The Many Traditions of Greek Music" by Steve Frangos is based on academic work which has appeared in *Resound*, a quarterly magazine of the Archives of Traditional Music.

THE MANY TRADITIONS OF GREEK MUSIC
Part 7 of 8

The American Clubs: Cafe Aman or Speakeasy?

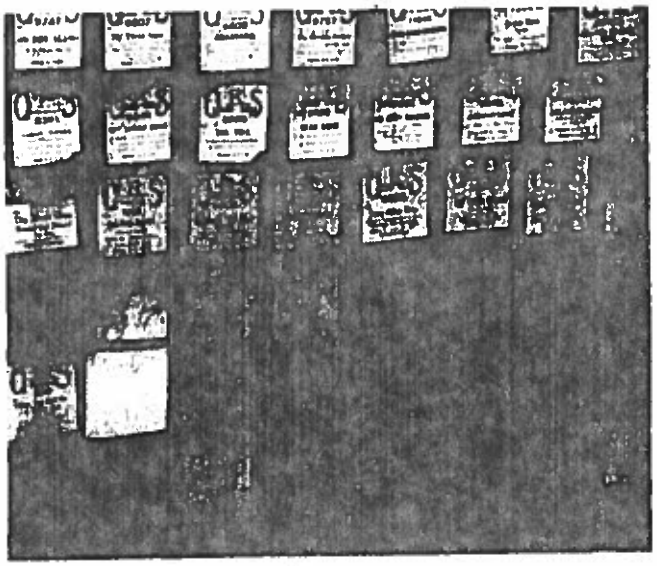
By Steve Frangos

The presence of the *cafe amans* as Greek, Turkish, or Oriental belly dance clubs in the large urban areas such as New York, Boston, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, has left a vivid impression on the collective consciousness of all Americans; scenes of flaming cheese, roasted lambs turning on spits in restaurant windows, and the belly dancer undulating between the tables as dollar bills are folded into her costume. These clubs have a historical development that is shared, but not examined, by all the Balkan/Ottoman people.

The famed Prohibition-era speakeasys of Chicago, Detroit, New York, Los Angeles, and elsewhere were not just American but ethnic, too. Elderly musicians such as John K. Gianaros recall that there was considerable mixture of ethnic populations present in these cafes. Gianaros recalls the first "Greek" walkup club in New York was Marika Papagikas's. This *Kafenion* speakeasy was noted for being the club sought out not just by Greeks but especially by Armenians. Marika Papagikas's smash hit song *Armenaki* (The Little Armenian) was first composed and sung in Armenian for the Armenian patrons.

The Prohibition did not escape the attention of Greek American musicians. In one popular song, *Pio Ein'to Giatriko* (What is this Medicine?), Ioannis Ioannides and Vrysoula Photopoulos answer the song's title question by singing that wine is the medicine. Recorded in New York in Janaury 1928, Ioannides and Photopoulos go on to ask *Giati ein e Ameriki dry?* (Why is America dry?). The couple go on to sing that you can get moonshine in speakeasies. While many more cases can be cited, the point here is not only did Greeks run and frequent their *cafe amans*/speakeasies, but that they actively incorporated the life and daily experiences of urban America into their song traditions.

An ethnic eyewitness provides a riveting account of what any visitor might see in one of these *cafe amans*: "In cities like Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, where there are large colonies of Balkan immigrants there are coffee houses for the different strata of immigrant society—dingy places for the menial workers and luxuriously appointed parlors that cater to the intelligentsia and the business class. A coffee house is generally located in a big hall either on the first or second floor of a building. It is furnished with marble-topped tables and chairs with wire-twisted legs. The walls are decorated with the pictures of old country statesmen with whose policies the patrons are in agreement...At the back of the hall there is a small kitchen where the proprietor brews the coffee and the tea which he himself serves to the patrons. 'Lokum,' baklava, and other Oriental delicacies are also served, in addition to bottled American soft drinks."



A small part of Dino Pappas' immense music collection.

Christowe, a Macedonian, uses his own region's term *kyotchek* for the dance found throughout the Balkans and the Ottoman empire called in Greek *tsifteteli*, or, as it is better-known to Americans, the belly dance. The emphasis in this article is that while the custom of *kyotchek* has all but been abandoned in the Balkans, it is the "commercially-spirited Greek immigrants who may boast credit for the importation of this bacchanal to the chaste shores of America."

"The *kyotchek* troupe consists of two girls and three men, the latter making the orchestra of a violin, a clarinet, and a xylophone. The girls, mostly American-born, schooled by the managers to sing obscene Turkish and Greek songs and to dance the sensuous *kyotchek*, are generally plump of body—a discernment on the part of the producers who have taken into consideration the tastes of their patrons...Unable to speak the languages of the Near East, the girls learn the songs by heart and sing them with zeal and animation. The troupes now form in Chicago and present themselves to the critical eyes of the Chicago Greeks. If the girls 'can do their stuff' and meet the approval of the blase Chicago firstnighters, they are instantly booked for long periods...with contracts for extended and profitable visits to Detroit, St. Louis, and other mid-west cities...Slightly altered from the original version, having yielded to such influences as American jazz has exerted upon it, the *kyotchek* has been elevated by the astute Greeks from a dubious pasttime to a highly profitable business with a semblance of respectability about it. It may well rank as one of the minor amusement enterprises in America, though the Americans themselves know nothing of it."

The cross-over or historical evolution of the disreputable Greek coffee house into the chic Grecian nightclub of downtown America has yet to be fully delineated. But what Christowe noted in passing about the "minor amusement" of the *kyotchek* would eventually become the Sixties' and Seventies' vastly popular downtown Greek restaurant where the suburbanites or the chic city people would go for a night of bouzouki and belly dancing.

Cross-cutting influences in Balkan music

Whatever the political restrictions in Greece, Turkey, or any Balkan country, America was the land of musical opportunity. The cultural and social commonalities of the Balkan and Anatolian people are clearly documented in recorded songs. It often seems as if there were no conceivable combination of languages or dialects not on record.

A short list of some of the most popular would include: *Koui Koui Atale* where we hear Rosa Eskenazi sing in Greek with the refrain in *Arvanitika*, a dialect of Albanian spoken in southern Albania and northeastern Greece; *Xanthi Evreopoula* (Little Blond Jewish Maiden), has Rita Abatzi sing in Greek, Arabic, and Ladino; Mary Steele in *Nara! Nara!* (Fire! Fire!) sings in a mixture of languages and dialects, including Turkish, Armenian, Syrian, and Kurdish; amd Rita Abatzi sings in alternating Greek and Turkish lyrics in *To Neo Hanoumaki*. Two more songs by Rosa Eskenazi are *Ah, Smyrna Kioroglou*, a mixture of Greek and Turkish, and *Horos Kioroglou* (The Kioroglou Dance) which has Kurdish, Greek, and Turkish.

The lyrics from one of these songs will illustrate the wider pattern:

To Neo Hanoumaki

Hanoumaki, hanoumaki, then foreis feretze
sa se vlepo me sklavoni
to oraio sou moutraki
hanoumaki, me trellainis

Aman, aman vandin, seni sevdim
aman hanoumi lybno
yavrum senin icin
Aman hanoumi lyono
gia sena...cisim

Hanoumaki, hanoumaki
tas Anatoles kaymaki
aman cicim ehai meli
to mikro sou stomataki
ah, hanoumi me magevi
t'omorfo sou tragoudaki

Aman tha trellatho
Lale mou de vasto
gia sena tha hathw
Sen...hanoumi
Tourkaki tha gino.

With only the exception of *Nara! Nara!* by Mary Steele all the above songs are cited as "Greek" in the record company catalogues. We could list another series of citations just for instrumentals. Dino X. Pappas says that records by the two great New York clarinetists, Kostas (aka Charlie) Gardinis, a Greek, and Dave Tertas, a Jew, were re-issued with the label changed to match the ethnic audience. In other words, the same instrumental song was simultaneously released as a "Turkish" song with a Turkish language label, as a "Greek" song with a Greek language label and so on. Dino knows this because he has many of the various "versions."

After all this discussion of mixed lyrics and borrowing between ethnic groups, the logical extension is what about the mixture of English with Greek lyrics one hears on many Greek records produced in America. Do the records produced by Greek American artists show assimilation, a continuance of the pan-cultural traditions learned in the Balkans and Anatolia, or a combination of the two filtered through a Greek American setting? Such questions prompt Greek Americans into whole new areas of research. How much of their creative artistic culture did Greeks bring to America? How much of that artistic culture was formed here in conjunction with other Balkan and Anatolian groups?

Note: The eight-part series "The Many Traditions of Greek Music" by Steve Frangos is based on academic work which has appeared in *Resound*, a quarterly magazine of the Archives of Traditional Music.

Informant as authority

By Steve Frangos

Dino Pappas's contributions in demonstrating Greek and Balkan music traditions are clear. One of the reasons everyone goes to visit Dino is that his overall collection is composed of the fullest holding of American-recorded *demotika* and imported music. Dino hears music where others see chronology. In his nearly fifty years of "careful listening" Dino's ability to compare a multitude of records, domestic or imported, has helped many scholars fill in the missing pieces to the historical puzzle concerning Greek and Turkish music.

This is especially the case with many of the forbidden *smyrnaika* or *rebetika* songs and many of the mixed language records. Still, as should be obvious to the reader, with the business documentation mostly destroyed by Columbia and Victor, unless you can physically see the records there is no way of knowing what was issued. Richard Spottswoods's extended visits with Dino as the only way he could confirm and expand his discography on Greek and Turkish releases in America. For the small, independent companies, in many cases, Spottswood has no clue but Dino's collection.

In all his lectures, Dino has long championed the music produced by Greek American performers. With all the debates on *demotika*, the *smyrnaika*, and *rebetika*, and all the other censored music forms, the transformations in Greek music in America are still widely ignored.

Dino's an old fox. He knows all the ins and outs of which records were reissued where. Here Dino provides a potential yet to be fully explored. Considering the statistic of Greek records as constituting the fifth in sales while the Greeks were only thirteenth in total population, we are left with the "missing" Orthophonic records in that statistical analysis. Complicating the mere introduction of the Orthophonic catalogue into the historical record is the fact that Tetos Demetriades did not release all of his 1930-1932 field collected music on Orthophonic but released some of it later in the Fifties on his Standard-Colonial label.

Tied to the question of record demographics is the full extent of the musical restrictions in Greece, an issue that has yet to be determined. All these questions of demographics and government restrictions, in turn, relate to questions of musical "influences." Here the family record collections, as individual case studies in musical influences will prove a great help in future research.

While the sheer bulk of the Pappas collection makes it an invaluable cultural treasure, it is still Dino's knowledge that is the most valuable. After fifty years of listening he can "hear" and compare instantly what it takes many people weeks of listening just to begin to recognize. Dino is especially quick to note the mistakes on the re-release albums from Greece on Greek music recorded in America. One example "Gringlish" speakers find quite funny once pointed out to them is from the Greek American song *Ergatis Timimenos (Worker's Honor)*.

Kostas Hadidoulis's liner notes on Worker's Honor found in the re-release album from Greece, *Istoria tou Rebetikou* (The History of Rebetiko) renders the following lyric: *tora me to ena 'vre tha se paro kanape* (Now with the one, man, I'll buy you a couch). What we have here is a case of "Gringlish." Dino loves to tell the story of "my uncle, Nick Zaivras, God rest his soul...we were listening to it at his house one day. He says 'do you know what he's saying?... *tora me to NRA*, the National Recovery Act.'" So, with a renewed sense of "Gringlish," the line now reads, "Now with the National Relief Act [which, among other things, initiated time payments], I'll buy you a couch."

Dino also knows all the pitfalls. Years ago Dino recognized that what one reads in the sheet music or finds in the printed lyrics of the record catalogues does not necessarily mean that is what you will hear on the original record. Even with the actual record in front of one, one has to be careful: is it the only version or release of that song? Is it one of the many misprinted labels Dino has found over the years?

Sometimes the problems are more basic. Several years ago a two-record deluxe album of George Katsaros, the man said to be one of the last great *cafe aman* singers still alive, was re-released in Athens. There were errors in the liner notes. Dino spotted the problem in a minute. The record produced in Greece gives the copyright dates printed on the various record lables as the release date for the songs.

A *merakli* is the Greek word for a consummate music lover. And no better term could be applied to Dino X. Pappas. Scholars and music lovers are contacting Dino in ever-increasing numbers. More and more people are writing about Dino and his collection. Dino was just awarded a Helen Zeese Papanikolas Charitable Trust award to deposit some of his music in a local archive. The future of research on modern Greek music will certainly be based on Dino and his collection.

But really, I'm sure, Dino just doesn't give a hoot. I can "see" Dino now. He's down in his basement. Dinner is cooking upstairs. And Dino? He has his latest "discovery" on the turntable. With his earphones on, he's singing and shouting to the music.

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