

To Dervisaki (choreographed by Lucia Stopper)

This song was composed by Evangelos Papazoglou and recorded by the musician Smyrniote Kostas Karipis in 1930. The first version of the video sung in the 1950s by the Armenian singer and composer of Smyrna, and by the great Lutanist Markos Melkon Alemsharian (1895-1963), it was very well known in his period. The second version was recorded by a Greek from Istanbul, Stelyo Berber, for Muammer Ketencoglu's album called "Smyrna Recollections".

Per profigaki (ο προσφυγάκι)

I'm a dervish, oh I'm saying that
where they expelled him from Smyrna
and I keep crying and throwing it into the drunk
and I smoke and hashish in the cafe - aman

Ah yavrum aman

Ah yadim aman

When I play class I get excited
I remember my homeland and I'm melting
when poverty, when wealth
I play oud with pleasure in aman cafe

Flamenco, fado and tango are staples of the world's music jukebox, but their close cultural equivalent, Greek, is late on the playlist. In Greece itself, artists and audiences are rediscovering tradition in a big way, and a new generation of singers and instrumentalists is emerging to carry the music forward.

Rembetika started on the fringes of society, particularly in the illegal but more or less tolerated hashish coffees, in the ports of Piraeus and Thessaloniki in the mid-1920s, when migrants, sailors and traders from the east (in particular from Turkey and the Lebanon) took their instrument with them. It was created by men and women who despised the righteous society

and its laws and conventions. A manga never wore a collar or tie, hated the police, smoked drugs constantly and avoided work, legitimate when possible. Like its Latin cousins, rembetika is blues in another form: music for the oppressed, the outlaw and the bohemian. It's visceral, rough, percussive and rhythmically out of place; possesses great melodic variety and charm, and in the midst of all the passion and pain, it is also capable of tenderness. On the double CD *Rembetika: Songs Of The Greek Underground, from 1925 to 1947*, marvelously evocative and set in time, subtitled, just like that there is no misunderstanding, sung by often untested voices, which make feeling and depth of experience for what is lacking in technique and polishing. The accompanying instruments are mainly the bouzouki, the lute and the tsura, double-stringed lutes of different sizes and sounds, and the sanduri, a close relationship of santoor of north India.

The first CD is devoted to the main recreational activities of the races, which were drugs, music and drugs. The vast majority of lyrics is about hashish. The rest deal with heroin and cocaine, which in the early 1930s had felt unwelcome presence. The second CD is a relentless call of cold reality, his songs portraying the negative aspects of the life of the manga: prison, petty crime and premature death.

In the late 1930s, manes and their culture were harassed and pushed deeper by the dictator Metaxas, and rembetika went almost completely off the radar until its recent rediscovery. Time to raise a glass, or whatever, to your tumultuous rebirth. - Chris May