



**NATIONAL INVENTORY
OF
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE
OF GREECE**

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ELEMENT BULLETIN

THE TRADITIONAL FESTIVAL – *PANIGYRI* – OF SYRRAKO

I. Brief Presentation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Element

Name: The traditional festival – *panigyri* - of Syrrako

Identity: The traditional festival of Syrrako is a social - ritual practice and a music and dance event which is recognized by all of us inhabitants of Syrrako as an important element of our cultural heritage, It is a living and contemporary tradition, linking the present both to the past and future. Knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another, at the same time strengthening the feeling of shared identity and continuity. It is a timeless link to the landscape, nature and our history and is a unique opportunity today to renew the bonds of “belonging together” of all the dispersed Syrrakiotes.

ICH Field:

- Oral tradition and expressions
- Performative art
- Social practices – festivities
- Knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe
- Other - traditional dance - dance event

Location:

The festival takes place in Syrrako, a Vlach (Aromanian)-speaking village in the region of Tzoumerka of Epirus, built at the foot of Mount Lakmos (Peristeri) at an altitude of 1,200 m, 53 km from Ioannina. Its inhabitants, in the past, were bilingual, speaking both Vlach (Aromanian) [1] and Greek, which they used for oral and written communication with central authorities and business transactions and

activities, as evidenced by the numerous files that can be found in the Archives of the community of Syrrako (Dalaoutis, 2009).

The festival takes place on the *horostasi* (dance floor) of Syrrako main square, which is the nucleus of the community's social, religious, cultural and economic life. It consists of a complex of buildings of particular architectural interest, in harmony with the natural environment, as the steep slope on which the village is built and the uneven ground have been utilized elaborately to an advantage, thus creating three different levels, with the dance floor at the third, lower level.

Key words: Syrrako, festival (panegyri), Greek traditional dance, music and dance event

II. Identity of the bearer of the ICH element

Bearers of the ICH element are all those who empirically and experientially learn to participate and follow the ritual practices of the festival; to dance the Syrrako dances, following the sequence of the dance, the pattern of the double or triple circle and requesting "our" songs. Following the founding of the Syrrakiotes' Associations, the teaching of dances and of the festival's customs code, largely take place within the framework of the dance groups of the Associations, particularly for the younger generations.

The bodies dealing with the promotion and dissemination of this ICH element, having formed a five-member Committee, in which all bodies are represented, are the following:

- **Local and Regional Authority Community of Syrrako. Northern Tzoumerka Municipality**

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III. Description of the ICH element

1. Description

The festival of Syrrako consists of an entity of symbolic acts with an established ritual, integrated in the cycle of time, which strengthens the collective expression of the Syrrakiotes community. It is associated with the community public dance, which is organized in two or more concentric open circles. Women dance in the inner circles and men in the outer circles. The lead position of the dance, is taken in turn by everyone in the order in which they are positioned in the circle, each with a dance-song of their own choice, selected from what is recognized as a “Syrrakiot” repertoire.

2. Detailed description

The festival takes place in Syrrako, until recently an autonomous community, which today belongs to the Municipality of Northern Tzoumerka of the Prefecture of Ioannina. In 1975, by decision of the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works, it was designated a “traditional settlement which, due to its architectural, spatial natural beauty and its historic past, merits special state protection” (F.E.K. [Government gazette] A, 31/3824/182/22.07.75, Gov. decree). In the past, it enjoyed great economic and cultural growth, due to the capitalization of livestock farming products and crafting, but also due to the development of trade, reaching its heyday at the end of the 18th century.[2]. The inhabitants’ variety of professional activities contributed towards the development of two distinct social groups, the *Raftades* (Tailors), who were the village’s ruling class and were mainly traders, and the livestock farmers. The growth of commercial exchanges with a number of centres abroad, especially Italy (Venice, Malta, Palermo, Livorno, etc. [Avdikos, 2003]) led to economic growth and the emergence of philanthropy, facts that were reflected in the organization of space, with elaborate stone structures and the concern for meeting all community needs (aqueduct, churches, school, square, fountains, mansions), where one notes a perfect match of the built and natural environment.

Syrrako is home of well known poets Kostas Krystallis and Giorgos Zalokostas, as well as of the first parliamentary prime minister of Greece, Ioannis Kolettis.

In 1821, Syrrako participated with neighbouring Kalarrytes in the uprising against the Turks, which resulted in its being almost completely burnt to the ground. Its inhabitants dispersed; however, many returned later and rebuilt their homes and churches (Karatzenis, 1988) Following the liberation of Epirus in 1913, a period of economic decline starts for Syrrako and it is gradually abandoned by its permanent residents. [3] The Syrrakiotes gradually move to the urban centres of Athens, Ioannina, Arta and particularly Preveza, which had always been the locations where livestock breeders spent their winters and were commercially active, while several of them continued to go up to Syrrako with their flocks during the summer months, almost until the '70s. [4] In their new places of residence, the Syrrakiotes founded associations which they named Unions (*Syndesmoi*). Such associations are still in operation today in Athens, Ioannina, Preveza, Filippiada and Patras; they publish the paper *Antilaloi tou Syrrakou* (Echoes of Syrrako), whereas the community's cultural capital is transferred to the younger generations through their various activities.

Since the '90s, a new creative period started for Syrrako, supported through highlighting the unique architecture of the village and the beauty of its natural surroundings. Its designation as a listed settlement in 1975 played a decisive role in its new development. It became the norm, to fight the resistance of anyone attempting to circumvent its traditional character, thus gradually developing a collective mentality for the protection of the village's architecture and environmental heritage. Over the past years, the Syrrakiotes have built many new houses, following the traditional architecture, transforming the economic prosperity they achieved in their lands of installation into a symbolic capital, thus demonstrating their love towards their land of origin. Today, the village has guest houses and tavernas and welcomes visitors, not just Syrrakiotes, year-round, from the urban centres of Epirus, as well as tourists from Greece and abroad. Within the framework of folklore and mentality of "returning to one's roots" (Nitsiakos, 2004: 40), of nostalgia for the past, of the local and "authentic", Syrrako became a destination for city-dwellers and Syrrakiotes everywhere [5].

3. Location and equipment associated with the exercise of the ICH element

The festival is held at the *horostasi* (dance floor) of Syrrako's main square, with its two, until recently, centuries' old plane trees [6]. On the upper tier

is the church of the village's patron Saint Nicholas with its tall belfry, next to it is the *hayati* (loggia) and beyond that are the main fountains of "Gourna", the settlement's oldest edifice. Below, a second tier increases the square's available space and permits the uninterrupted viewing of the dance floor activities. The present-day appearance of the square was finalized following two building interventions by the community. In 1937, the primary school building, which was on the northern side of the square, was demolished and in 1996, the square was expanded over the space taken up by a building belonging to the Syrrakiote benefactor, Leonidas Pallios (Dalaoutis, 2005). A paved path, with two arched bridges, which, until a few years ago constituted the sole entrance to the village, leads to the square, whereas all the cobbled alleyways traversing the village also start from the square.

Before the conference centre "K. Krystallis" was built, the dance floor was the space used for all community public festive events. At the festival, in particular, in older days, spectators would sit dispersed over the three tiers and were distinguished by the seriousness with which they watched the dance. As eloquently described by Avdikos, "the men would be seated on the terrace of St. Nicholas, the women on the ledge below, where the babbling of the Goura stream accompanied the violins. And, naturally, they all had something special to watch. To admire and take pride in their sons and daughters, their sons-in-law and their daughters-in-law and, above all, to discreetly note the matchmaking targets" (Avdikos, 2005: 89) Nowadays, the festival is held in the same space, on the *horostasi* (dance-floor), the difference being that neighbouring tavernas place tables along the lower tier and part of the square, where drinks and food are served.

The location of the festival, the *horostasi*, is inextricably connected to the history of Syrrako and plays an important part in the Syrrakiotes' cultural self-definition. This is the space that bears the imprint of the timeless seal of community culture, the space that has acquired an almost "sacred" aura for today's Syrrakiotes who are dispersed worldwide.

Festivals used to be held in Syrrako on all the local summer religious celebrations, such as the Holy Apostles (*Agioi Apostoloi*), the Prophet Elias (*Profitis Ilias*), the Transfiguration of Christ (*Metamorfosi tou Sotiros*), and the Dormition of the Virgin Mary (*Koimisis tis Theotokou*). [7]. In the past, they provided an opportunity for the gathering of all Syrrakiotes, following a hard winter at their winter pastures or in foreign lands, at the same time providing opportunities for marital exchanges, strengthening of family bonds,

entertainment, etc. They all took place following the same ritual practice; the festival of the Virgin Mary on August 15th, however, was of the greatest importance.

All festivals at Syrrako follow the same ritual. In the mornings a service is held at the church of the saint whose feast is being celebrated, whereas later on, in the old days, visits were paid to the houses of all men celebrating their name-day, to exchange wishes and share a family meal. The festival commenced immediately after, and people would gather in the main square, on the dance-floor, to take part in the public dancing or to watch from the terraces and the surrounding area. Nowadays, the festival starts in the evening, by listening to the "sedentary" songs (*kathistika*) performed by the musicians who, with the aid of loudspeakers, can be heard throughout the village. Along the lower tier and on part of the square, neighbouring tavernas, serving drinks and food, place tables and the upper tier, in front of St. Nicholas' church remains free for spectators.

In the old days, married and newly married couples would dance at the festival, as well as young men and girls at a marriageable age. Not only did they all have to know how to dance, but also how to lead the dance and be coordinated in the double and triple dance. Each dancer would join the end of the circle and would dance, waiting for his/her turn to lead. Adherence to the order of the circle was, and is, strict, and changes might be made on occasion only amongst women, after agreement, so that couples or close relatives might find themselves in the first position. Everyone would participate in two dances and the duration of each dance was twice round the square, so that there would be equal treatment by the musicians. Women would make arrangements and the male lead dancer would place an order for the dance of their choice; he was also the one to pay the musicians. The dances that were common at the festivals were *syrtos-patitos* (*syrtos* in three-beat time) and *syrtos* in two-beat time, *tsamikos* and five-beat dances, like *Giann' Kostas*, *Balatsos*, *Kato stin Aspri Plaka*, etc., whereas not many songs in the Vlach (Aromanian) language, were played, like *Voul' maeri Voul'*, *Nou ti ar di* (Don't be fooled), *Vini ouara si foutzim'* (It's time to go), etc. The request refers to both the dance move and the song. The Syrakiotés are very proud of both, and they believe that the loveliest songs are heard and danced to at their festivals (Dimas, 1989; Gartzonika, 2005, Gartzonika-Kotsika, 2008).

At the festival, the dance pattern is that of a double, triple and quadruple, sometimes concentric, open circle. Men dance in the outer circle, and women, whose participation in

the dance is always greater, dance in the inner circles. Dancers hold hands, their arms stretched downwards; they dance non-stop for so many hours, and only bend their elbows once they reach the 3-4 first positions in the circles. They all perform the basic move motifs, except for the leaders of the dance each time, who may improvise; this particular pattern, however, does not provide unlimited room for improvisations. Observing the festival's double or triple dance, one notes that the dancers move as a well-coordinated whole, taking small steps, as the dance pattern does not allow for deviations in movement. And it is this image that allows the Syrrakiotes to declare the success or not of the festival (Dimas, 1989).

The music ensemble that plays at the fair is the one customarily participating all over Epirus, consisting of clarinets, violin, lute, tambourine and song. At times, depending on the community's resistance, a guitar and harmonium would join the ensemble, but they eventually did not catch on, as the Syrrakiotes prefer the traditional troupe. Syrrako never had its own musicians, but for many years - over fifty - members of the Gerodimos family play at the festival, a fact that is bound to the Syrrakiotes' music and dance tradition. There are the older Kostas and Mitsos with their violins, George with clarinet and song, Giannis with the lute and song, Nikos with violin and song, and, nowadays, Kostas with his song. The Gerodimos family originated from Pramanta of Ioannina, but they settled in the village of Kipina, where they live until today. In contrast to the majority of folk musicians in Epirus, the Gerodimos family are not Gypsies. They started playing at Syrrako around 1950 and for the Syrrakiotes, even today, they are an integral part of their music "tradition". As the Syrrakiotes claim, Gerodimos can "capture" the timbre of "our" songs. Indicative of this convergence is the plethora of published songs by the Associations of Syrrako and the unpublished recordings from weddings or festivals, where we note that, at times, all the musicians of the group change, with the exception of the singers, who are always members of the Gerodimos family. The singers are none other than Nikos, Giannis and, nowadays, Kostas Gerodimos. [8]

The selection of songs for the *panigyri* is also of interest, as, with a few exceptions, mainly with reference to the five-beat songs - *pentasima* - and certain *tsamika*, at times, it is those prevalent songs that have become widely known through recordings from previous decades and that were primarily broadcast through radio programmes. They are all played with a slower rhythm, and "heavily", while they are rendered in a specific manner by the Gerodimos family, thus contributing in the formation of what is today recognized as the

“Syrrako“ musical style. Kostas Gerodimos has a very characteristic vocal timbre, due to yodeling - which would also occur to a lesser extent in the past - and which, according to the Syrrakiotes, matches perfectly the musical “style” of Syrrako. Therefore, for any newly introduced song to be accepted, its rendition has to be adapted to the local manner. Over the past two decades, almost, the musical repertoire of the festival has been consolidated, as Syrrakiotes are persistent in their love of the traditional and do not accept the inclusion of new songs, such as the neo-demotic (*neodimotika*) which they consider to be “*gyftika*” (gypsy songs) (Ziogas et. al., 2004, Doulias, 2009).

The *panigyri* always starts with *kathistika* (sitting) songs. At first, people wanted - and still want - to hear a *dibanti* (sitting song) to get into the mood for the festival and to prepare for the dance. *Kathistika* songs, common in Syrrako are: *Se touti tavla poumaste* (At this table that we’re sitting), *Thelte dendram n’ anthesisete* (Trees, do you want to blossom), *Panagiotoula*, etc.

The festival’s dances are *syrtoi -patitos* (three-beat time *syrtos*) and two-beat time *syrtos*, *tsamiko* and five-beat ones (*pentasimoï*), which are recognizable by the entire community as the genuine Syrrako dances, such as: *Giann’ Kostas*, *Balatsos*, *Kato stin aspri plaka*, *Nou ti ridi*, etc. Each lead dancer dances twice. Usually, the first dance is from the category of five-beat ones or *tsamikos* and the second is a *syrtos-patitos* or a two-beat *syrtos*. The *syrtos-patitos* is danced with the known three-beat *syrtos* move motif, whereas *syrta*, and even *kalamatiana*, are danced to a six-beat time motif as is common in other regions.

The *syrtos* dance songs are *Voula*, *Kitrolemonia*, *Afta ta matia Dimo m’* (These eyes, Dimo). *Paidia tis Samarinas* (Children of Samarina), *Mou pane ta gioulia, Aristeidis, To vlepeis keino to vouno* (Can you see that mountain), *Dontia pykna, Militsa* (Little apple tree), and others. The *tsamiko* would, in old times, be danced in 10 moves whereas for several decades now, the eight-move type is prevalent, as one triple move backwards has been eradicated. It is accompanied by several songs, such as: *Gia mena vrechoun ta vouna* (The mountains rain for me), *Giati einai mavra ta vouna* (Why are the mountains black), *Vlachothanasis, Asimokoupa* (Silver cup), *Dyo poulakia* (Two little birds), *Apopse den koimithika* (I didn’t sleep tonight), *Aggelo, Kostam’ ta chionia liosane* (My Kosta, the snow has melted), *Tzoumerka mou perifana* (My proud Tzoumerka), etc. The special category of *pentasima* (five-beat time), like *Giann’ Kostas, Kato stin aspri plaka, Balatsos, Nou ti ar’ di* (Don’t be fooled), etc., are danced with 12 steps. Other Syrrako dances In the

manner of five-beat dances are *Vasilarchontissa*, *Konstantakis*, *Bolonassaina* and *Virginada*. *Giann' Kostas*, which is considered to be the main Syrrako dance, has a second movement motif, the well-know dance “*mesa- exo*” (in-out) or “*kleidotou*”. Although it makes reference to a historical person [9], it is only rendered instrumentally as, most probably, the verses, for a number of reasons, have been forgotten. At the *panigyri* it is also quite common to have dances with a two-part movement form, which alternate between *patitos* and *syrtos-kalamatianos*, like *Gia mia fora ein' i leventia* (Pride is for one time) or between *tsamikos* and *syrtos*, like *o Giannis o Peratianos* (Dimas, 1989; Gartzonikas, 2005; Gartzonika-Kotsika, 2008).

To sum up, for the Syrrakiotes, who now live dispersed in various urban environments, the traditional *panigyri* is a means of expressing a feeling of community with the groups forming it and is one of the most valuable cultural/symbolic chapters for its self-definition. In spite of the various events disrupting continuity and communication amongst its members, the *panigyri* manages, by incorporating social and cultural changes of the community, to be a basic differentiating factor, which distinguishes the community from the “others”, the outsiders, thus constituting one of the most important indicators of the cultural identity of the people of Syrrako.

The festival of August 15, in its entirety, as a ritual practice and dance event (dance pattern, dance motif, style) has been, and still is, a symbol of particular identity, bringing together the Syrrakiotes in a common feeling and expression of collective “belonging”. Through the *panigyri*, in the space of the square, which is full of symbolism, the Syrrakiotes renew their cultural identity and ensure the continuity of social memory. Participation in the Syrrako *panigyri* of August 15 is felt to be the immersion in the community’s collective past, offering a unique opportunity for renewal of bonds amongst the Syrrako diaspora. Through their concentration and attentiveness to the double dance pattern (two or three concentric circles), the choice of dances and songs which are thought to reflect the Syrrako tradition, the mid-August *panigyri* has evolved as a means for highlighting and simultaneously forming the special local cultural identity. [10]

The dance at the festival offers young Syrrakiotes, who insist on returning to the village of their forefathers, the opportunity to experience their shared origins and the initiation to the ritual elements of the *panigyri*, through the repetition of moves they have mainly learnt in the dance groups of the Unions. [11] Through the *panigyri*, the Syrrakiotes seek to connect

to their shared cultural past. It is a past, which, following the 60s, they persistently try to revive through the *panigyri*, when relocation to the new lands becomes permanent and the desire for a “return to the roots” is prevalent. In contrast with the gradual oblivion caused by their daily needs in the new locations, the dance move patterns, registered in the carriers’ bodies, appear to retain, to a great extent, their initial form (Spiliotopoulou, 2001)

4. Transmission process from one generation to another

In the past, families would devote their attention to the younger members of the family, ensuring they learnt the customary code and the *panigyri* dances. Anyway, their participation and the festival dance were triggers to begin matchmaking, while it was also an important criterion for evaluation of the youngsters’ personality. This is why all families would try to prepare their children for their first festival participation. Furthermore, children attended the festivals as spectators, paying attention to all the action, while teenagers would join the end of the circle and try to imitate the adults. Thus, they also learnt how to dance, which is something that continues to this day. Nevertheless, nowadays, the dances and the customary code of the festival are mainly learnt within the dance groups of local Associations.

Nowadays, the festival dances are presented within the framework of Greek traditional dance performances, not only by the dance groups of Syrrakiotes’ Associations, but also by cultural associations all over Greece. However, online research suffices for one to note that, frequently, the musical and dance renditions differ from the style and ethos of Syrrako tradition.

IV. History and genealogy

Until the 1980s, the festival would start at noon and end at sunset. Later, following a community decision, it was changed into an evening festival.

The traditional festival plays an important part in the lives of Syrrakiotes and is inextricably bound to all phases of their history. In the village’s heyday, which reaches the end of the ‘50s, participation in the festival is universal, lead originally by the Tailors (*Raftades*) and, later on, transhumant shepherds, dancing double, triple and frequently quadruple dances.

As Dimas characteristically notes, people from the social class of transhumant shepherds danced for the first time in the main square at the end of the 19th century (Dimas, 1992: 9).



(Φωτ. αρχείο Κ. Μιχταίου)

1930, 15αύγουστος στο Συρράκο

1930, 15th August at Syrrako

When the village's decline begins and it is gradually abandoned by its inhabitants, the Tailors (*Raftades*) leaving first, spatial boundaries change. Transhumant shepherds take on positions of authority, hold wedding celebrations on the *horostasi* (dance floor), and take on the leading role at the festival, validating their social position with generous contributions to the instrumentalists [12] and by selecting mainly “Vlach” (Aromanian) songs, etc. (Ziogas, et al. 2004,v.2: 206).

The great importance of the festival for the Syrrakiotes is obvious when it becomes difficult for the summer congregations of all Syrrakiotes to take place, due to difficulty of access - the road was completed in 1976 - and while their professional activities, for the greater part, are held in the lowlands. The festival (*panigyri*) is transferred to the site of Agia Faneromeni in Preveza, where the greatest number of Syrrakiotes have settled. Although the venue for the dance changes, the entire ritual remains unchanged, with the participation of all dispersed Syrrakiotes, in a double or triple circle, with Syrrako dances and “our own” instruments reproducing familiar sounds and reminding participants of the village festival. The necessity to participate in a common cultural past is present. As Avdikos notes in his study on the Syrrakiotes of Preveza, the dance is spontaneous and the festival serves the same functions as of old: the coming together of dispersed Syrrakiotes, the renewal of old ties and the continuation of in-breeding through matchmaking (Avdikos, 2000: 378-380).



Πανηγύρι στη Φανερωμένη Πρέβεζας. 1950

Festival in Faneromeni, Preveza, 1950

Photograph 2.[13]

Nevertheless, nostalgia for their own festival location, led them to quickly abandon Faneromeni, which, to them, was nothing but an impersonal place. Faneromeni with its olive-trees could in no way replace the dance-floor in the stone-paved square with its plane-tree. All those “signs” of the place, which reactivate memory and allude to the common cultural past were missing. The festival, far from its own place, simply served the community at some phases of its historical course. From the end of the 70s, the festival returns to its original historical space, the village *horostasi*, around the plane tree. For several years, the Syrrakiotes’ participation in the dance continues, following the same ritual, meeting needs such as that of entertainment, getting together and matchmaking.



Panigyri at Syrrako in 1976 [14]

Soon, however, the new social conditions of Syrrakiotes' city life created new needs, replacing the old, and the dance groups from the Unions are the first to dance at the village *horostasi*, giving the tone of the "authentic" and "pure" Syrrako dance.

Nowadays, although the *panigyri* has lost its old functions, it remains at the forefront of village social life, since changed conditions have clearly assigned it a new character. The festival may no longer be an organic part of the Syrrakiotes daily life and the village has now become a refuge from homogenized city life, offering them an opportunity to experience a special cultural heritage, whose elements are mainly relayed, "for lack of space", through the varied activities of local Syrrakiotes' Associations.



Σύνδεσμος Συρρακιωτών, παράσταση στο χοροστάσι

Syrrakiotes Association, performance at the horostasi

Over recent decades, now that the village no longer has any permanent residents, the *panegyri* of the 15th of August offers participants the opportunity to state, through their presence, their faith in their common origin, and their dedication to the cultural tradition of Syrrako, through their dance.

Maintaining a stable dance pattern and consolidating its musical and dance content, over the past decades, the *panigyri* has functioned at many different levels, at every transformational phase of Syrrako society. Dimas, in his paper on Syrrako traditional dance, has recorded the novelties the Syrrakiotes have incorporated in their dance over the past decades, which mainly concern the more liberated movements of female dancers and the improvisation of the lead dancers (Dimas 1989: 142-143).

Gradually, over time, changes are noted in the interpretation of the public dance's songs, such as the slower rhythmic beat when it comes to *tsamiko* dances, but also dancers' slight preference for the *syrtos* dances (double-beat and triple-beat), which, in the past, were necessarily the second dance of the lead dancers at the *panigyri*. These changes are accompanied by similar alterations not only to the dance itself, but also to the general "style" of the *panigyri*. They lead to more "individual" performances, greatly emphasizing the lead dancer's improvisation, thus detracting from the collective expression of the public dance. In recent years, young people's participation in the dance has become noticeable, with dances and songs from the main Syrrako repertoire, a fact that clearly reflects the influence of Associations in this area. Frequently, young villagers come together to dance in the *panigyri* in the early morning hours, after the older people have left. Thus, they maintain the distinction which has prevailed regarding entertainment in general, between the different age groups (Gartzonika-Kotsika, 2008).

V. Importance of the element for Intangible Cultural heritage

1. Means of making optimal use of the element

Syrrako is considered to be a historic village and is well-known for its architectural heritage and the beauty of the surrounding nature. In recent years, the great publicity in the media has sharply increased the number of visitors to the village. The village's touristic development, with respect for the environment, is a constant preoccupation to Syrrakiotes, a fact reflected in the organization of conventions and in collaborations with experts and scholars [15]. Nevertheless, the *panigyri* is an exceptional event for the Syrrakiotes, inextricably bound to village architecture, its natural surroundings and the inhabitants' cultural identity.

Their participation in the *panigyri* gives them strength for the entire year. This also offers them a feeling of belonging to the large community of Syrrakiotes. That is why they all wish, not only today, but also in the future, to have the opportunity to come into contact with the living experience of the traditional *panigyri* and to get to know the way people used to dance and continue dancing in their land, on the Syrrako *horostasi* (dance-floor). This would be feasible through video recordings of the *panigyri*, to be used in seminars and as training materials in schools and clubs, in addition to lectures, conventions and conferences.

We believe that the inclusion of our festival in the national Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Greece will be of crucial importance for the recording and the preservation of the festival, especially the mid-August *panigyri*, which is endangered by the introduction of urban customs eroding its traditional ethos. We hope that this will work, together with the designation of Syrrako as an architectural monument worthy of preservation, thus boosting self-esteem and the effort to maintain the traditional framework.

We hope that the inclusion of our festival in the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage will become the motive for the realization of all the above.

Below, you may find the verses of some songs from the festival's repertoire.

Panagiotoula

(*kathistiko* - sitting song)

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>Ore, piren o Martis dodeka, Panagiotoula mou</i> | (March took twelve, my Panagiotoula) |
| <i>Ki Aprilis dekapente</i> | (and April fifteen) |
| <i>Vgikan oi vlachoi sta vouna</i> | (the Vlachs are out on the mountains) |
| <i>Ore, vgikan oi vlachoi sta vouna, Panagiotoula mou</i> | (Oh, the Vlachs are out on the mountains) (my Panagiotoula) |
| <i>Ola ta tseligata</i> | (all the flocks) |
| <i>Tou Panagiot' ta provata</i> | (Panagiotis' sheep) |
| <i>Ore, tou Panagiot' ta provata, Panagiotoula mou</i> | (Oh, Panagiotis' sheep, my Panagiotoula) |
| <i>The fanikan narthoune,</i> | (they have not been seen coming) |
| <i>Meinan stous kampous monacha</i> | (They've remained in the plains, all alone) |
| <i>Ore, meinan stous kampous monacha, Panagiotoula mou</i> | (Oh, they've remained in the plains all alone) (my Panagiotoula) |
| <i>Kai dichos ta koudounia,</i> | (Without their bells) |
| <i>Pige ki Panagiotaina, Panagiotoula mou</i> | (Panagiotaina also went, (my Panagiotoula) |
| <i>Ore, pige ki Panagiotaina, Panagiotoula mou</i> | (Oh, Panagiotaina also went,) (my Panagiotoula) |

Me to paidi sta heria (Holding the child in her arms)
Nychta epire t' alogo (She took the horse at night)
Ore, nychta epiret' alogo, (Oh, she took the horse at night)
Panagiotoula mou (my Panagiotoula,)
Nychta to kaligoni (She shoes it at night))
Kai nychta kavalikepse (And mounted it at night)
Ore, kai nychta kavalikepse, (Oh, and she mounted it at night,)
Panagiotoula mou, (my Panagiotoula)
Sta provata na paei, (To go to the sheep)
Apo makria tous rotise (from afar she asked them)
Ore, apo makria tous rotise, (from afar she asked them)
Panagiotoula mou (my Panagiotoula)
Kai tous kalimerizei (And she greets them good morning)
Paidia mou ti sas leipetai (Guys, what's missing)
Ore, paidia mou ti sas leipetai, (Oh, guys what's missing)
Panagiotoula mou (my Panagiotoula)
Ti eiste leromena, (Why are you dirty)
O Panagiotis leipetai edo kai deka meres (Panagiotis has been missing for ten days)

Di kou nika (From a young age)

***Patitos* dance in four-beat rhythm in the Vlach (Aromanian) language**

Di kou nika ti astiptai (I was waiting for you from a young age)
Si ti kresti, si ti liaou, Vaggelitsa ni (so you may grow and I may have you)
Si ti kresti, si ti liaou, (so you may grow that I may have you)
po-po mar' nika ni (Oh, my little one)
Apa aratsi di la goura (cold water from Goura)
si ti basou mes tou goura (and kiss you on the mouth)
Ti kriskous di ta analtas (you've grown and are taller)
si ti fiatsis tri martari, Vaggelitsa ni (and you're at a marrying age, Vaggelitsa)
si ti fiatsis tri martari (and you're at a marrying age)
po-po mar' nika ni (Oh, my little one)
Fritzi vearnti di mir'tsinou (green leaf from a gorse bush)
si ti basou m'esou tou sinou (and kiss you on your bosom)

Voul' maeri Voul' (Voula, oh Voula).

Syrtos dance in seven-beat rhythm in the Vlach (Aromanian) language

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Voul' maeri Voul'</i> | (Voula, oh Voula) |
| <i>Souora ni Paraskevoul'</i> | (my sister Paraskevoula) |
| <i>tsi ai kousitsa ts' galbin'</i> | (with your yellow pigtail) |
| <i>s' fatsa ts' ka damaskin'</i> | (and your face like a plum.) |
| <i>Maeri lets'pounou tou kali</i> | (Come out to the street) |
| <i>its' daou oun' pourtoukali</i> | (so I may give you an orange.) |
| <i>lets' pounou la Gour'</i> | (Come out to Goura) |
| <i>i n' mit' saemou tou gour'</i> | (so we may kiss on the mouth) |
| <i>Lets' pounou la vitsinou</i> | (Come out as far as the neighbour's) |
| <i>i ti basou tou sinou</i> | (so I may kiss you on the bosom) |
| <i>lets' punou la mouar'</i> | (Come out to the mill) |
| <i>i ti basou nigka oun' aour'</i> | (that I may kiss you one more time) |
| <i>S' ama nou mi veri maeri Voul'</i> | (and if you don't want me, my Voula) |
| <i>souora ni Paraskevoul'</i> | (my sister Paraskevoula) |
| <i>lets' pounou la Peri</i> | (Come out to Peri) |
| <i>tr' i ti tragkou di tou pieri</i> | (so that I may pull your hair). |

Nou ti ar' di feat' niik' (Don't be fooled my young girl),

five-tone rhythm in the Vlach (Aromanian) language

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Nou ti ar' di feat' niik'</i> | (Don't be fooled my young girl) |
| <i>K' tsi' la noi nou gini</i> | (Why won't you come to us). |
| <i>Mounti analtou avemou tou mesi</i> | (there's a high mountain between us) |
| <i>S' nou v' pots' i lou tretsî</i> | (and you won't be able to pass it) |
| <i>Tr' ch'tira at'eou are tzoni</i> | (for your sake, you brave lad) |
| <i>S'tr'kripara altorou</i> | (and so that others may be jealous) |
| <i>Pitrouniklii v' mi fakou</i> | (I'll become a partridge) |
| <i>S' ieou la voi v'ginou</i> | (And I'll come to you) |
| <i>V' afli r'ouou moulou mari</i> | (You'll find a very big river) |
| <i>S'nou v' pots' i lou tretsî</i> | (and you'll not be able to cross it) |
| <i>Peskou mari v' mi fakou</i> | (I'll become a big fish) |
| <i>S' ieou la voi v'ginou</i> (| And I'll come to you) |
| <i>Tr' simpt'elou at'eou are tzoni</i> | (for missing you my proud man) |
| <i>S' tr' kripara altorou</i> | (and so the others may feel envious) |

V ' afli s' souakr ' moultou rau niveasti' mpoun' (you will find a very wicked mother-in-law)
S' nou v ' pots ' l fatsi (and you will never be able to have)
souakr' raou niveasti' mpoun' (a wicked mother-in-law, good bride)
gini v' tritsemou (we'll have a great time).

Kato stin aspri plaka (Down by the white paving stone
(pentasimo - five-beat time)

Kato stin aspri plaka, more plaka (Down by the white stone)
ore kai kato se gialo, mi klais Giannakaina (down by the seaside, don't cry
Giannis' wife)

Ekei itan mazemenoi olo genitsaroi (that's where many janissaries were
gathered)

Symvoulío ekanan ki olo syzitagan (They held a meeting and a discussion)
To Gianni na skotosoun ton armatolo (to kill Gianni the armatolos
Kai riksan dyo ntoufekia ton aniforo (and they fired two shots going uphill)

Thelo na riksei mia vrochi (I want it to rain)
(tsamiko)

Thelo na riksei mia vrochi ki ena vary halazi (I want it to rain and hail heavily)
Gia na sapisoun ta louria, na pesoun ta koudounia, (so the straps may rot and
the bells may fall)
Na chasei o nios ta provata, na xasei o nios ta gidia (so that the young man may
lose the sheep and the goats)
Gia na 'rthei apopse spiti mou mesa stin agkalia mou. (so that he may come to
my house tonight into my arms).

Giatí einai mavra ta vouna (Why are the mountains black)
(tsamiko)

Giat' einai mavra ta vouna giat' einai antariasmena (Why are the mountains
black, why are they stormy)
Vlepoun to Charo pourhetai sto grivan kavalari (They see Death coming, riding
his horse)
Pairnei tous nious ap' ta mallia gerontous ap' to heri (He grabs youth by the hair
takes old people by the hand)

Pairnei kai ta mikra paidia, sti sela kremasmena (He also takes little children,
hanging them from the saddle).

Apopse den koimithika (Tonight I didn't sleep)

(*tsamikos*)

Ore appose the koimithika kai simera nystazo (I didn't sleep tonight and
today I am sleepy)

Ore giati poly kouventiasa me mia geitonopoula (Because I spent a long
time chatting with a young neighbour-girl)

Ore na tis miliso ntrepomai na tiw to po fovoumai (I'm ashamed to speak to
her, I'm afraid to tell her).

Asimokoupa (Silver cup)

(*tsamiko dance*)

S' aftin tin asimokoupa, more, (In this silver cup,)
thelo na pio pent' eksi, (I want to have five or six [drinks]),
ki an the methyso kori mou, more, (and if I don't get drunk, my girl)
kerna m' oso na feksei, (offer me [drinks] until daylight.
Ospou na skas(ei) o Avgerinos, more, (Until the morning star appears,)
na paei h poulia gioma (and the Pleiades in the afternoon.)
Na katso na syllogisto, more, (I want to sit and think,)
na po ola ta kinteria (to tell all my sorrows.)
I ksenitia ki o thanatos, more, (Foreign lands and death,)
i pikra kai i agapi, (bitterness and love.)
Ta tessera zygistikan, more, (All four were weighed)
s' ena vary kantari. (on heavy scales.)

Militsa (Little apple tree)

(*patitos dance in four-beat rhythm*)

Militsa pousai sto gremo ta mila fortomeni (Little apple tree on the cliff, loaded
with apples)

Ta mila sou, ach militsa mou (Your apples, oh , my little apple tree)

Ta mila sou limpizomai kai to gremo fovamai. (I crave your apples and I'm scared
of the cliff).

Ki an to fovasai, ach militsia mou

(And if you're afraid, oh, my little
apple tree,)

Ki an to fovasai to gremo, ela ap' to monopati (And if you're afraid of the cliff,
come along the path).

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Record Publications

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- Πέτρος Μόκας: Μουσικό CD, Ζωντανή ηχογράφηση στο Συρράκο, Ιωάννινα 2010. [***Petros Mokas: Music CD. Live recording at Syrrako. Ioannina, 2010***]

Footnotes

[1] The Vlach (Aromanian) language is a Neo-Latin language of the Balkans. A significant part of its vocabulary, its grammar and its syntax mechanisms coincide with their counterparts of other Latin origin European languages, such as Italian, French and Spanish. Nowadays, the Vlach language is spoken by people aged over 60, whereas a gradual diminishing knowledge and usage is noted amongst younger persons (Maglaras, 2014).

[2] The great development of rural communities of Epirus during the 18th and 19th centuries was based on the possibilities offered by a long-term community autonomy within the framework of privilege establishment of the Ottoman Empire, in combination with the development of rural-pastoral, craft production and trade activities that required

intense geographical mobility (Damianakos S., Zakopoulou E., Kassimis Ch., Nitsiakos V. 1997:133).

[3] A number of factors bore an influence, gradually leading the rural communities to a crisis, such as, originally, the industrial revolution which affected craft manufacturing, the growth of transportation, the lack of road networks, etc., whereas with the change that affected communities after their integration to the national backbone, such as ring-fencing community lands and, later on, the expropriation of large lowland areas for the rehabilitation of refugees of the Asia Minor disaster, the situation worsened and the last wars completed the economic downfall (Avdikos, 2000: 282-283 – Damianakos S., Zakopoulou E., Kassimis Ch., Notsiakos V., 1997:164-165)

[4] A newspaper of those times states “Syrrako – two inhabitants – A place with a wealth of history and an unchanged character, until today, is at risk of becoming a dead town. With very few inhabitants in the summer and two watchmen in winter, it survives high upon the Pindos mountains...”; the quote is from the collective volume Ziogas I., Magklaras M., Mantzilas I., Bellos V., Gartzonikas I., 2004: 205, where further information on the history of Syrrako may be found.

[5] A lot of information on the history of Syrrako can be found in Ziogas I., Magklaras M., Mantzilas I., Bellos V., Gartzonikas I., (2004), *Syrrako: Petra-Mnimi - Fos [Syrrako: Stone – Memory –Light v.1 & 2*, Avdikos, G.E. (2003) *Syrrako: Oikonomiki kai koinoniki diachysi tou oreinou horou, I [Syrrako: Economic and social diffusion of rural space]*, Scholia se ena cheirografo tou mesopolemou [Comments on an interwar period manuscript], *Praktika Synedriou [Conference Proceedings]*, (2014), Ntalaoutis, S., (2005), *Syrrako – Toponymia, Ena takseidi sto choro kai sto chrono [Syrrako – Placenames. A journey through space and time]*, as well as in several publications in the Syrrakiotes newspaper, *Antilaloi tou Syrrakou [Echoes of Syrrako]*.

[6] Unfortunately, in 2015, one of the square’s plane trees caught a disease and started rotting internally, so eventually had to be cut.

[7] Over the last years, the festivals of the Holy Apostles (Agioi Apostoloi) and the Prophet Ilias (Profitis Ilias) are not held.

[8] Indicative of the Syrrakiotes’ identification with Gerodimos is the Community Council’s decision, under the presidency of Giannis Argyris, to bind Kostas Gerodimos by special contract, so as to ensure his participation at the village’s festivals and the cultural events of the Associations of Ioannina, Preveza, Filippiada and Kampos.

[9] Giannis Kostas was a 1821 warrior from the neighbouring village of Krapsi of the Tzoumerka region, who took part, with Ioannis Kolettis, in the Syrrako and Kalarrytes uprising against the Turks, which ended in the destruction of the two villages (Karatzenis, 1988).

[10] The existence of a common and lengthy tradition, not only expresses and confirms the existence of a collective identity, but also strengthens its formation, in spite of the slow or fast changes happening to the content of such a tradition over different historical phases (Intzesiloglou, 199:179).

[11] On the feedback relationship between the dance groups and the festivals from the “revival of tradition to its experience”, see Avdikos (2004:210).

[12] In public dancing events, the confirmation of wealth and social status is effected through practices that are related, amongst others, to tipping the musicians.

[13] All the photographs of the study are reproduced from Ziogas I., Magklaras M., Mantzilas I., Bellos V., Gartzonikas I. (2004), *Syrrako Petra – Mnimi – Fos [Syrrako Stone – Memory – Light.]*

[14] This particular photograph is reproduced from Dimas' book (1992:38).

[15] For example, in May 2006, a convention took place in Syrrako on the subject of "Residential Management of Traditional Settlements", while Syrrakiotes participate in a forum for the promotion of alternative forms of tourism, organized by a variety of bodies, such as the Pan-European Agrotourism Forum that took place in Ioannina in June 2006, and others. Ef. *Antilaloi tou Syrrakou [Echoes of Syrrako newspaper]*, No. 204, p.p. 1 and 5.