

Nick Poulakis

*Popular Music as Film Music: Giorgos Mouzakis and the Vibes of Old Greek Cinema*

“Old Greek Cinema” is a term that denotes a major Greek film production era from the mid-1950s to the early 1970s. Film music in Old Greek Cinema served a pivotal role not only in shaping the narrative context but also in establishing a unique musical and cultural style. This unique combination of popular music genres characterized the Greek film music scene of those times, leading to cinematic soundscapes with their unique atmosphere, where popular music and songs shared numerous commonalities with film scores. Giorgos Mouzakis was a prominent Greek composer renowned for his contributions to light popular music for theatrical and dance performances, who maintained his personal ensemble starting in 1940. Based on material found in the composer’s archive, housed at the Music Library of Greece Lilian Voudouri, under the ownership of the Friends of Music Society, this paper will commend on the general practices and aesthetics concerning Old Greek Cinema music with particular emphasis given to the scores and songs of Giorgos Mouzakis. The scope of the paper is to highlight the diverse dimensions of popular music fusions that serve as Greek films’ music and, consequently, draw attention to the performative aspects of audiovisual representation within this specific mode of production and reception.

Cătălin Cernătescu

*Ciprian Porumbescu (1973): A Cinematic Biography of a “Passionate Patriot Artist”*

Embodying the romantic revolutionary artist with poor health and a premature end, the musician Ciprian Porumbescu (1853-1883) was perceived throughout the 20th century as an inspirational model of patriotism. During the communist era he was intensely promoted as a cultural hero of the Romanian nation, his biography becoming a landmark for younger generations. Perfectly mirroring the ideals advocated by nationalist communism, such as nostalgia for the glorious past, the struggle for freedom and national unity or exacerbated patriotism, Porumbescu’s life, presented through an ideological lens, oscillated between historical truth and mythologization. Gheorghe Vitanidis’ screening from 1973 turned Ciprian Porumbescu into one of the most famous Romanian musicians of the time and a propaganda tool with a charismatic allure.

## Abstracts

**Olguța Lupu**

*Accessibility and Avantgarde in Tiberiu Olah's Music for Osânda*

Considered by film critic Tudor Caranfil to be one of Sergiu Nicolaescu's finest achievements, *Osânda*, completed in 1976, is based on the novel *Velerim and Veler Doamne* by Victor Ion Popa (1933). For Tiberiu Olah, *Osânda* is his 27th experience in film music, having composed music for almost 40 films over four decades. In *Osânda*, the dramatic arc of the music is constructed in a flexible and effective way, with a constant concern for the balance between unity and diversity. On the one hand, the same musical structure is used to highlight certain congruencies between different moments of the film and to give cohesion to the whole. On the other hand, diversity is ensured through the use of the variational principle, different variations of orchestration and, last but not least, the integration of the concept of open form, specific to the avant-garde – consisting in the selection and/or different ordering of fragments within a structure. The music in *Osânda* is a demonstration of how Olah has been able to combine the modern and the traditional, unity and diversity, and has succeeded in creating music that is aimed at the general public, but which incorporates techniques and procedures specific to radical modernism.

**Antigona Rădulescu**

*The Music for Moromeții*

Based on the book *Moromeții* (the first volume, printed in 1955) by the writer Marin Preda, director Stere Gulea made the film with the same title more than 30 years later (in 1987), which won critics acclaim and awards, including for the film music written by Cornelia Tăutu. This was not the composer's first experience in this field when she created *Moromeții's* music. Her working method followed the principle of knowing in detail the production essential data before composing the musical part. For Cornelia Tăutu, her music played the role of a faithful accompaniment, supporting the overall construction. Given the subject of the film – Romanian village in between world wars – the music sought a certain specificity, without falling, into folkloristic pastiches, according to the composer. At the same time, it followed the director's vision, with the yearning for authenticity and a certain tendency towards objectivity in narration, with the balanced rhythm of the filming and the black and white plasticity of the images. My analysis takes into account several factors: determining the episodes of the narrative in which the music is present; the

relationship with other music with a diegetic function and with the ambient sounds; examining the score (complete, orchestral version) and establishing the correspondence between the moments of the film and the fragments of music from the score; identifying the main features of the music in close connection with the “poetics of the Romanian ethos” (Dan Dediu); establishing its functions (according to Siegfried Kracauer’s taxonomy). The music of *Moromeții* is deliberately not spectacular but its aspects change becoming secondary narrator, background or translator of the characters’ moods. Intimate links are identifiable in the very intrinsic substance of the various pieces of written music, which thus give them a certain unity.

**Costin Moisil**

*Orthodox Church Chant in Romanian Communist Films*

Orthodox church music did not receive much interest in communist Romania, for well-known reasons. It is therefore to be expected that Orthodox chant would be rather absent from Romanian communist films or associated with negative or ridiculous characters.

On the other hand, musicologists have shown that the national-communist regime used medieval church music for propaganda purposes. It would be interesting to study the extent to which the publication of the earliest creations of Romanian cantors in volumes and LPs was paralleled by the presence of these pieces in films of the 1970s and 1980s. But would be such a correlation a clear evidence of the intervention of power in the creation of films or could it have other causes?

My paper brings together three different approaches, none entirely false, yet none entirely true.