

## **Folk Musicians in the Position of Teacher: The Case of a Santouri Player and Teacher in Greece**

By

**Aristidis Apostolis**

Music Secondary School of Mytilene

**Antonis Ververis**

University of Ioannina, Greece

### **Abstract**

*As a topic, folk music inclusion in the European school system dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has continued throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the inclusion of other “non-classical” genres such as popular and world music. In Greece, the inclusion of traditional instruments in the curriculum of public Music Secondary Schools occurred in 1988. This happened for the first time officially in a state educational institute. This fact led researchers to investigate how folk musicians of the past learned and transmitted their art. This article explores the teaching methods used by a 70-year-old santouri (Greek hammered dulcimer) player on a Greek island in the North Aegean Sea. Although the musician mentioned above had learned his art through the traditional oral method of apprenticeship, he held a teaching position in an educational institute of formal music education, a very different context from the one he learned. The authors aim to investigate how the context of an organized music lesson may affect how a folk musician of the past generation tries to transmit his art to youngsters by teaching. Furthermore, the record of his teaching methods can be useful to younger teachers of Greek traditional instruments, but it can also contribute to the broader discussion of informal music learning.*

**Keywords:** Orality, traditional music, informal music learning, folk instruments

## Introduction

As a topic, the inclusion of folk music in school music education has long attracted European music educators' interest, even as far back as the so-called "national romantic period" of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that coincided with the establishment of European nation-states and the formation of national identities (Folkestad, 2002). This trend continued in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: an indicative example being the embedding of folk music in Zoltán Kodály's method (Chosky, 1981; Houlahan, & Tacka, 2008), which preceded the "popular music movement" that took place during the 1970s and 1980s, and the "world music movement" of the 1990s (Green, 2008). As a result of these movements, secondary and higher education institutes throughout Europe, particularly in Scandinavian countries, now incorporate popular music –to a significant degree– in their curriculum (Väkevä, 2006; Georgii-Hemming & Westvall, 2010; Allsup, 2011).

In Greece, the founding of public Music Secondary Schools in 1988 and the inclusion of traditional instruments in their curriculum resulted in the hiring of professionally active folk musicians to teach these instruments (Dionyssiou, 2000). This innovation caused significant changes in traditional music. As several researchers noted, the extensive use of scores in the teaching and performance of traditional music in these schools, an element foreign to its oral nature (Skoulios, 2006; Andrikos, 2018), resulted in its "formalization" and the loss of its improvisatory character (Dionyssiou, 2000; Ververis, 2019). Campbell (1991) reported many similar musicians-carriers of oral world music traditions, who started transcribing music into notation, especially when they accepted teaching positions in formal education institutions, such as music schools and conservatories universities etc.

This article explores the teaching methods used by a 70-year-old *santouri* (Greek hammered dulcimer) player on a Greek island in the North Aegean Sea. The data presented in this article derive from an ethnographic research study that lasted six months. One of the two

researchers had the chance to attend santouri lessons with the musician mentioned above weekly and observe him as he taught children in his village. The researchers aimed to investigate how the "formal context" of a music lesson may affect how a folk musician of the past generation tries to transmit his art to youngsters by teaching. Furthermore, the record of his teaching methods can be useful to younger teachers of Greek traditional instruments, but it can also contribute to the broader discussion of informal music learning.

## **Background**

### **Greek folk music: Methods of transmission and teaching**

Ethnomusicologist Sotirios Chianis (1981) divided Greek folk musicians of the past into two main categories: (a) amateur village people “who provided dance music for most festive occasions” (p. 14) and possessed a repertoire limited to that of their area, and (b) professional musicians. Musicians of both categories learned their art orally through a *peer-oriented* process that resembles what Green (2008) described as “enculturation and extended immersion in listening to, watching and imitating the music and the music-making practices of the surrounding community” (p. 6). For example, according to Mazaraki (1984), most folk clarinetists gained their first music experiences during their early childhood, by playing a small *souravli* (shepherd’s flute) –a toy in their eyes– together with their friends.

Interestingly, Rice (1994) referred to an almost identical practice according to which folk *gaida* (bagpipe) players from neighboring Bulgaria gained early music experiences through learning a similar toy wind instrument called *svirka* from/with their peers (Rice, 1994).

Returning to Chianis' (1981) division between amateur and professional folk musicians, although musicians of both categories shared a common starting point, those wishing to engage professionally in music, after a certain point, had to take lessons from a master teacher (performer), usually an older relative. This fact had great consequences on all

decisions regarding the young musician's future as they had to satisfy the needs of the family music group. For example, a father would possibly teach santouri to his son so that he himself could play another instrument, often the violin or vice versa. The fact that the student was a relative and a future –if not current– partner blurred the boundaries between peer-oriented and teacher-oriented learning. The unlucky ones, who did not have musicians in their families, had to ask a musician living in their area to accept them as apprentices (Chianis, 1981; Kofteros, 2005). However, most professional musicians refused to teach in fear that their apprentice would someday "steal their art" and become their competitor (Mazaraki, 1984).

Again, the transmission of knowledge in these lessons occurred exclusively through oral methods as the teacher would play his instrument. At the same time, the student tried to listen, see, and finally imitate his teacher. The term *oral* inevitably leads to Ong's distinction between oral and literate cultures, a theoretical model that musicologists have applied to the study of music cultures. Ong (1982) maintained that orality is a different means of transmission and a factor that shapes culture itself differently, compared to text in literate cultures. To better understand this proposition, one could think of a composer creating works for literate or illiterate musicians. In the first case, the composer can create more extensive forms than in the second case, in which musicians may find difficulties in memorizing the music without music scores. Furthermore, to assist musicians, composers may use techniques such as repeated motifs and phrases, a practice that Ong noticed in the lyrics of extensive poems, such as the Homeric epics and exemplars of Balkan epic poetry.

According to Liavas (1996), a student could obtain technical information such as playing the instrument's playing positions. However, most importantly, he would have to acquire the standard motifs of the local repertoire and, by using them, learn how to improvise to create rhythmic and melodic variations. According to Chianis (1981),

Most of the instruction consisted not of repertory development, but of learning methods of ornamenting a given skeletal melodic structure with melodic and cadential formulas characteristic of the stylistic traditions of the performer's particular region. Only after years of study and apprenticeship is an instrumentalist considered a true professional (p. 15).

Apart from these lessons, the young beginner musician spent many hours practicing daily. As learning did not take place in a strictly organized context, it occurred subconsciously. As Mazaraki (1984) described, folk musicians could not remember how they had learned how to play their instrument. It just happened. “One day, the sound grew on them, as the plant sprouts in the plowed soil, without being able to understand how” (p.62). This inexplicable and “mysterious” way of learning resulted in myths that attributed musicians’ virtuosity to supernatural causes. According to an indicative old belief of Crete Island, any musician wishing to excel at the *lyra* (a three-stringed rebec) had to go to a crossroad before midnight and draw a circle on the ground. Then the ambitious *lyraris* (the lyra player) would step into the circle and start playing his lyra. His playing would attract fairies, who would ask him to step out of the circle, an invitation that he would have to refuse as they intended to kill him if he obeyed them. After his refusal, the fairies would ask him to at least hand them his lyra so they could teach him how to play, a promise that they would keep by playing all night until finally disappearing at dawn (Sarris, 2003).

So far, the authors had described the process through which Greek folk musicians used to learn their art in the past and, more specifically, before 1988, when a major change took place after the emergence of a new type of school, that of the Music Secondary Schools. According to Dionyssiou (2000), one of these schools' innovations concerned the inclusion of traditional instruments in the curriculum, something that happened for the first time officially in a state educational institution. During the first three decades of their existence, Music

Secondary Schools made an important contribution to the field of Greek traditional music, as the significant number of graduates who became professional performers or teachers suggests (Kapsokavadis, 2017). However, this fact had another important consequence. It gradually modified the learning of traditional music from a mainly peer-oriented to a solely teacher-oriented process where organized lessons and music notation held a prominent position replacing the element of oral learning through enculturation (Ververis, 2019).

### **Informal music learning in formal settings**

As mentioned earlier in this article, folk music and other "non-classical" genres in the European school system dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the authors would like to emphasize that their inclusion focused more on their content –as a source of school repertoire– ignoring the context or their oral nature. This led to the "formalization" of these genres. For example, Gatién (2009) referred to the "formalization" of jazz music that took place in American educational institutions mainly after the 1960s, while Woody (2007) noted the tendency of American educators to teach popular music in the same way they taught classical repertoire. The case of traditional music in Greek schools seems to be similar. Although traditional music possessed an important place even in the first public-school curriculum that followed the establishment of the modern Greek state in 1830, it seems that its inclusion in the school system was superficial, just to support official government policies, the aim of which was the formation of a new national identity (Zoubouli & Kokkonis, 2016).

The interest in the ways non-classical musicians learn dates back to the early 2000s, especially after the publication of Lucy Green's research on "how popular musicians learn" and how these learning processes can enrich music teaching in formal settings (Green, 2002, 2008, 2014). Green based her conclusions on data collected through interviews with British popular musicians, according to which, when informal music learning takes place, learners:

(1) choose the music they want to play and therefore, they are using music that they know, love and identify with; (2) play by ear; (3) learn alone as well as alongside friends, (4) learn in an idiosyncratic and personal way; (5) tend to integrate listening, performing, improvising and composing throughout the learning process (Green, 2008).

Lucy Green's ideas on informal music learning created high expectations among music educators around the world. For example, Wright and Kanellopoulos (2010), drew parallels between the student-centered nature of informal music learning and Critical Pedagogy, as well as Paulo Freire's work. Similarly, Georgii-Hemming and Westvall (2010) criticized the belief that embedding informal music learning practices in the Swedish music curriculum could further democratize the Swedish school system.

To further discuss informal music learning, the authors would like to mention some concerns that researchers expressed about Green's model. For instance, Allsup (2008) noted that music educators should not "make equivalent the notion of informal learning ipso facto with that of popular music" (p. 3). Towards this direction, other researchers investigated informal learning practices in music genres other than popular music. More specifically, Waldron and Veblen (2009) explored the ways through which adult musicians learned to play Celtic traditional music in Canada, while Söderman and Folkestad (2004), as well as Kruse (2018), researched how hip-hop musicians learn.

The other issue related to informal music learning practices concerned their embedding in formal contexts such as schools, universities, conservatories, etc. Karlsen (2010) used the phrase "in-between" to describe whether a higher education music program for young rock musicians in Sweden was a program of formal or informal music learning. In Greece, the inclusion of traditional instruments in the curriculum of Music Secondary Schools in 1998, and later, in two undergraduate music programs in 2000, caused a similar

discussion. Musicologist Giorgos Kokkonis (2007), a professor in one of these programs and a leading figure in the design of the first curriculum there stated:

This traditional method by which methods and techniques are handed down from generation to generation, mainly through a strong empirical relationship, is certainly not applicable to an academic context, because such context cannot ensure the long empirical contact between teacher and student. There, knowledge, structured knowledge, organized knowledge precedes experience (p. 33).

Kokkonis' above statement suggested that the only position of traditional music in an academic program can be "somewhere in between" formal and informal music learning since the context of a school or a university is by definition different from the context in which folk musicians of the past learned their art.

## **Methodology**

### **The field of research and the participant**

At the time of the field research, the participant, whom we will refer to as "Panos" throughout the rest of the paper, lived in a mountain village of a North Aegean island. Known for its picturesqueness, which the quaint brick buildings and stone-paved alleys create, this village is the birthplace of a significant number of folk musicians. Its approximately 2300 inhabitants rely mostly on agriculture for their livelihood, producing mainly olive oil. The village has a good reputation throughout Greece for its handicrafts, textiles, pottery, and wood carving (Savelou, 2005). Founded at the end of the 19th century, the village's cultural nucleus, the *Anagnostirio* (reading room) has a Library, a Folklore Museum and a Theater (Hadjivassiliou, 1975), where, among other activities, lessons of traditional music instruments take place.

At the time of the research, Panos was seventy years old, and he had already been teaching santouri at the Anagnostirio for fifteen years. Thanks to the large number of children learning santouri there, he created the Santouri Ensemble, which performed at events within the island and other parts of the country. This ensemble also broadcast on state television and released a CD with local traditional tunes (Koromilas & Koutskoudis, 2013). Apart from his role as a teacher, researchers of traditional music recognize him as one of the "last folk musicians of the past generation" and a leading figure in the traditional music scene of the island in the last fifty years.

## **Methods**

The authors chose the participant observation as the main research method to understand the way Panos taught and the context in which his lessons took place. According to Daoutopoulos (2011), through direct observation, a researcher can "obtain scientific data on several commonplace issues" (p. 107). The observation method allows the researcher to constantly review and modify the research objectives due to the constantly emerging new data, achieving a more dynamic and less static study of social action (Daoutopoulos, 2011). This seemed to happen in this research study, too, as many new elements emerged during data collection, leading to a continuous modification of its original design, as is often the case in qualitative research (Kiriazi, 2011). According to the original design, one of the researchers would observe several Panos' lessons to students of the Anagnostirio, playing the role of an "external observer," and then both researchers would interview Panos.

In the present study, however, an element that threatened the validity of the research process concerned Panos' high degree of familiarity with giving interviews. He had already participated as an informant in various ethnomusicological studies on the traditional music of his island and village. This agrees with Sudman and Bradburn's (1983) view, according to

which interviewees tend to give false information to present –often subconsciously– a good image of themselves or simply to give answers, which they believe will satisfy the interviewer. The researchers became aware of this fact from the early stages of their research, as Panos seemed to provide many standardized and mediated responses. Therefore, they decided to avoid any actions that could resemble an interview.

To that effect, the observer-researcher decided that in addition to the observation of lessons, he himself would have private santouri lessons with Panos, not only to gain better understanding of Panos' teaching, but also for triangulation purposes. According to Magos (2005), the use of various research methods is important since the data collected by different methods complement each other, giving the researcher the opportunity to check their reliability. In our case, this choice also changed the researcher's position in the field, causing a shift in observation from "non-participant" to "participant." More specifically, during these six months, besides observing Panos teaching eight lessons to a 16-year-old girl, whom we refer to as "Maria," the researcher experienced his own six private santouri lessons with Panos. Thus, the researchers collected their material mainly through observations and discussions that took place during these lessons, which the observer logged by writing a reflective journal right after each session.

The participant observation method proved particularly useful, as it led to the extraction of information about Panos' teaching methods. The authors would like to note that a researcher's apprenticeship with a teacher and carrier of musical culture, as a way of approaching this culture, is not a new method in ethnomusicology. Examples include the work of ethnomusicologists Timothy Rice (1994) and John Baily (2001), with the former attending gaida lessons during ethnographic research in Bulgaria and the latter attending *dutar* (two-stringed lute) lessons in Afghanistan.

Another important issue that arose from the first meeting of the researcher-observer with Panos concerned the participant's obvious feeling of insecurity. Although Panos had not objected to the researcher observing his lessons, it was not long before it became clear that Panos saw him more as an "external judge" of his work. According to Roulston (2006), teachers often feel suspicion and a lack of trust, especially when they participate in research projects designed with a "top-down" orientation. Johnson (2005) highlighted this phenomenon in educational research as the "Moses Effect." It seems that when research subjects are teachers, they frequently feel threatened by the "theory" that comes from a group of "outsiders" who claim to be "experts" but have never taught in an actual classroom (Elliot, 1991).

In Panos' case, his inexperience in teaching "under observation" may have moved him entirely out of his "comfort zone," especially in contrast to how he felt when giving interviews, a process that he knew well. The authors believe that the crucial turning point regarding the research's progress coincided with the researcher's decision to become Panos' student. After the researcher's first lesson, Panos' initial feeling of discomfort and insecurity gradually gave way to a sense of intimacy and trust based on the evolving teacher-student relationship. In fact, in the last lessons with him, Panos revealed his true self, a good-natured man with a fine sense of humor, which helped him create a pleasant and happy atmosphere in his lessons and social interactions.

## **Results**

In this section of the article, the authors present the collected data, divided into the following four categories: (a) Panos' apprenticeship, (b) Panos' lessons: Student's level and teaching material, (c) Introduction to the instrument and elements of the theory, and (d) Teaching of repertoire.

### **Panos' apprenticeship**

Typically, for a folk musician of the past generation, Panos grew up in a family of musicians, as his father played the *klarino* (folk clarinet) professionally. When Panos was eight, his father encouraged him to learn the santouri, giving him the first "practical lessons" –as Panos called them– even though his father was not a santouri player. According to Panos, it was his father to whom he owed his knowledge of the local island repertoire. Apart from that, however, it became clear that Panos could not recall any other detail concerning the content of these lessons, which reminded the researchers of Mazaraki's (1984) reference to old folk musicians who could not remember how they had learned to play their instrument. Perhaps this indicates the fluid nature of transmission within oral music culture. It may explain why Panos, as we will see below, preferred to accompany his students during the lessons with his guitar, instead of playing the santouri alongside them.

Furthermore, Panos mentioned many other teachers, apart from his father. Interestingly, only one of them played the santouri professionally. The authors attribute this reference to the different meanings of the word "teacher" had for past generations of folk musicians. They considered teachers as something more than a person offering organized music lessons. Panos showed great respect for these musicians recognizing their contribution to his musical development by calling them "teachers," a title of honor for the members of rural communities in the Greek province. From the discussions with Panos, it appeared that he attached great importance to his contact with other musicians, especially of the older generation, whose joint performances with him counted as valuable "lessons." According to Rice (1994), folk musicians indeed learned their art mainly "from/with peers." In the following indicative excerpt, Panos referred to his apprenticeship period, during which he also worked as a musician in the music group of his "teachers-partners":

In the morning, we would have a lesson, and, in the evening, we would play professionally, together on stage. Even if you were stupid, you would learn... we would practice [the music] in the morning and in the evening, we would play it.

The fact that Panos initially learned to play the santouri from his father so that they could perform together, and later on from/with musicians with whom he played professionally supports the idea of the vague boundaries between peer-oriented and teacher-oriented learning, even in cases where there is a master and an apprentice.

### **Panos' lessons: Student's level and teaching material**

Panos classified each student into a "grade," a level that depended on whether the student would participate in the Santouri Ensemble. In the first grade, the students started with scales "to strengthen their hands," while the teaching material, not strictly predetermined, followed each student's progress. The individual students learned depended on the degree of their progress and the teacher's personal judgment about the student's readiness to assimilate new information. For example, Maria, who had had five years of lessons, belonged to the "advanced" student level according to her teacher's assessment, so she participated in the Santouri Ensemble.

The authors would like to note that for Panos, the term "grade" had a rather fluid meaning, as his quote shows: "You are doing well for the third lesson. Others in this grade are only practicing scales." Here, we notice that the term "grade" indicated the time spent with each student rather than their level of knowledge; however, these two elements did not necessarily relate to each other, as in the case of conservatory grades where each year of study corresponds to specific material that the student has to cover.

In addition, students' individual preferences for specific pieces, which Panos usually took into consideration, led him to avoid following the lesson plan with the strictly defined material per class. That way, his lessons would become more interesting for the students. He also mentioned that with beginners, he insisted more on their practicing scales, and as a result, "their hands ran faster." Nevertheless, he progressed his more advanced students faster, making compromises in order to satisfy them. However, as he claimed, when students found difficulties and made mistakes, he would always correct them, even if this meant that they would cover less material. In his opinion, going through a problematic passage without correcting the mistakes does not help the student to progress:

If you sidestep one difficulty, another difficulty... you will only play easy stuff. You must insist on the difficulties in order for the student to learn... and not sidestep them [the difficulties]. When you find yourself in such a situation... if you sidestep one difficulty, the children will not progress, whereas if you correct it, everything will get easier.

Furthermore, Panos considered long hours of practice and the element of repetition very important for a musician, a concept that probably reflected his personal experience as a professional. This connection between Panos' experiences as a professional musician and his teaching also influenced the selection of the repertoire he taught. For example, in the case of the lessons with Maria –and possibly the other advanced students– there was a focus on pieces she had to play as a member of the Santouri Ensemble, such as the carols that the ensemble would present during the Christmas season. In discussion with Panos, he basically selected the repertoire of the Santouri Ensemble to please the audience, following the way of thinking that prevailed among professional folk musicians. For instance, during one lesson, he said, "Let's play *Amirsouda* (a local song) because the mayor wants it." In other words, it

appeared that the audience's opinion was a priority for Panos, since this was how people perceived the role of the professional musician.

Finally, another element that stemmed from his experience as a professional musician and influenced his teaching was that of the independence he wanted his students to have. It seemed that he wanted his students "to stand" on their own in an event as independent musicians, without constantly feeling the need to have someone help them. Referring to the famous santouri player Aristidis Moschos, Panos noted:

Moschos would stand by, so that, if a mistake occurred, he would intervene to save the situation. He never left them [his students] alone. That's why my students play like this [more confidently]. I let them take the initiative. They make it their own. If they do not take the initiative now, when will they?

This explains why Panos never played the santouri at events but preferred to accompany his students by playing the guitar.

### **Introduction to the instrument and elements of theory**

Considering the first lesson with Panos, it appeared that a beginner student first learned the layout of the santouri, that is, the chromatic sequence of notes on the instrument. In addition, he referred to the tuning of the santouri, which he regarded as one of the most important elements that a santouri player must know. Nevertheless, throughout the research, he never asked or let a student tune the santouri, which led to the assumption that his students did not learn this important element. Besides this, he would tune the only santouri used in the lessons at a relative, but not absolute pitch. In tuning by ear, he would first tune one note and then the rest in relation to it. According to the tuning pitch of the santouri, he would then tune the guitar, which he used to accompany his students.

During his lessons, Panos did not use any music scores. As mentioned above, he dedicated the first lessons to the teaching of scales, as happened in the researcher's lessons. An interesting element concerned how he taught time values; his way seemed to have a relative and fluid character, so the student learned them in a purely empirical way. For example, to describe a transition from a long to a shorter note, he used phrases such as "faster" or "in B, you will run." For long notes, he would give the instruction, "here you will stay." Likewise, he used phrases such as "D is alone" describing a dotted note or "in C, you keep a whole bar" describing a longer time value, while, to point out the existence of a rest, he would simply say, "leave it blank here." In one case, during the performance of a piece, to indicate a rest, he suddenly placed his hands on the strings of the santouri so that the student could not play and thus would realize the existence of the rest in that bar, as well as its duration by removing his hands from the santouri at end of the rest.

In a similar way, he used relevant references to describe tempo. In cases where the student had to reduce the tempo of an exercise to play it properly, Panos gave the instruction "slowly." Furthermore, in several cases, when the student was playing a piece, he hit objects inside the room to help the student better understand the tempo. In all the above cases, students could only use their acoustic skills to perceive the exact meaning of the instructions regarding time values or the tempo of pieces.

### **Teaching of repertoire**

Panos divided instrumental pieces into "parts" and songs into "introduction" and "words." He taught these pieces in the following sequence: "We are going to play a part from a *hasapiko* (folk dance) slowly; you will notice my hands." Panos would play the piece (or a part of the piece) twice, the second time slower. Then he gave his place to Maria letting her attempt to repeat it via memory. At points which she could not remember what to play, Panos

dictated the notes –usually in the form of a rhythmic recitation and sometimes sung– or played them again on the santouri, if necessary. This happened several times, until the student memorized the piece (or the specific part). In Maria's lessons, Panos often placed her hand on the string from which he wanted her to start playing, saying, "from here, you will start." In this way, he immediately gave the student much significant information, as he indicated the string of the note, from which she had to start playing, the desired octave, as well as the hand with which she had to start playing the phrase.

The researcher also observed the following practice: while the student was performing a piece, he stood next to her, showing her with his fingers what she had to play next, either to teach one note or whole phrases if these were particularly difficult for the student. The researchers would like to note that during the lessons, Panos did not have a santouri in front of him, despite the large number of other *santouria* that remained unused in the classroom. When he needed to play something, he preferred to play it on the student's santouri, by either bending over her to reach the santouri or after asking her to move aside.

As for his corrections, Panos seemed to intervene mainly in cases where the student was not playing in a steady flowing manner –but not when she was playing wrong notes– allowing her to continue playing without interrupting the flow of the music. The researchers attribute this choice to the priority that a folk musician gives to the continuous flow of music, even if this does not lead to a perfect performance. It seems that a professional musician regards stability in the flow of music in public performances as an important element, since the audience more easily perceives the interruption of a piece compared to a possible mistake in terms of notes. In the eyes of Panos' generation, for a folk musician, who earned his livelihood through his involvement with music, this priority played an integral role in the way he learned music, and apparently, in the way he taught it. During the research study, the researchers would like to mention that Panos corrected wrong notes only once, when the

student kept repeating the same mistake. Panos corrected her by saying the right note aloud, at the exact moment when he predicted the mistake would reoccur. He also made similar corrections at points where the wrong note resulted in a structural differentiation of the music scale.

Another issue that attracted the researchers' interest concerned the way in which Panos approached the teaching of *taximi* (musical improvisation), which in reality resembled the teaching of a pre-designed composition. In other words, Panos did not approach *taximi* as a form of musical improvisation that a *santouri* player creates at that very moment. Instead, he taught *taximi* as a pre-existing composition that the student could reproduce again and again. At this point, the authors should clarify that Panos approached *taximi* in this way only during his lessons, but not when he himself as a performer played *taximia*. In other words, although he could improvise following the rules of this particular form, he taught his students "ready-made *taximia*", each of which corresponded to specific pieces.

### **Discussion: The folk musician as a teacher**

One of the main objectives of this research regarded the investigation of Panos' teaching methods. This element differentiated it from others, which focused on his career as a musician but not as a teacher. First, the authors would like to emphasize that Panos learned to play the *santouri* in a different way compared to how he taught his students in the *Anagnostirio*. The more "institutionalized" context of the second case may partially explain this difference, since we are discussing organized music lessons conducted within a recognized organization such as the *Anagnostirio*. This fact resulted in a shift from the traditional model of informal learning "from/to peers" to a formal learning model that highlights the teacher-student relationship (Green, 2008). Furthermore, Panos' case seems to validate Rice's (1994) observation, according to which, when folk musicians teach in an

educational institution, they tend to adopt teaching methods that differ from the way they learned their art.

On the other hand, the oral way Panos learned to play the santouri also influenced the way he taught; a fact that positions his lessons "somewhere in between" formal and informal learning. Thus, while in his lessons he used notes in combination with some music theory elements, he did so in a purely oral way without the use of music scores. According to Stamou (2012), this teaching method can have very good results, especially with beginners, as the ability to perform an instrument develops faster than the ability to read music.

However, the authors would like to emphasize that, despite the oral nature of Panos' lessons, they observed a relative lack of creativity. Even in the case of taximi, students played "ready-made" taximia learned note by note. In this case, it seemed that despite the absence of musical notation, Panos' lessons ran within very *strong framing*: a term, coined by sociologist Basil Bernstein, which Swanwick (1988) proposed using to describe music lessons. Although Panos allowed his students to select pieces they wanted to learn—one of the five features of informal music learning according to Green (2008) but also an example of *weak framing*—this happened in a very limiting context since students learned to improvise and play folk tunes in a very specific way, without being able to create different variations using their ornamentation skills, a crucial skill for any folk musician.

Finally, an element that also attracted the researchers' interest concerned the close relationship between Panos' teaching and his experiences as a professional musician. Not only did this become apparent in the strictly specific way his students learned to play the local repertoire, but also, on the other end of the spectrum, in the student's freedom of repertoire choice. Even the type of mistakes he corrected and his avoidance of interrupting music flow seemed to relate to the concepts he had developed during his professional career

as a musician. The same applied in student concerts where he encouraged students to play on their own, thus, forcing them to get used to the audience.

### **Conclusion**

As already discussed, Panos' case is a typical example of what happens when a folk musician, who has learned his art through the traditional oral method of apprenticeship, undertakes teaching in an educational institution of formal music education, a context different from the one in which he himself had learned. However, the authors would like to stress the fact that his students not only learned in a different way as compared to their teacher, but also in a different context. According to Mavroidis (1995), one of the challenges faced by the early teachers of traditional instruments in Music Secondary Schools concerned the students' urban background. Basically, "children of the city," these students had very limited exposure to traditional music and culture. Although Panos' students were living in a village, a "generation gap" appeared between him and them. As Sarris (2007) pointed out, in cases where a "grandfather/teacher" teaches a "grandson/student," a lack of "common ground" usually appears, sincry to the "grandfarld", folk music comprises "just a small subtotal of t andn's soundscape among video clips and pop music" (p. 155). Furthermore, during the years that have passed since Panos' youth, apart from the context of music performance, the context in which one learns traditional music has also changed. For example, learning and playing folk music as a hobby is something that had never happened before. Panos seemed to be unaware of this fact, and, as a result, treated all his students as future professional musicians.

Finally, one may pose the question if we may consider Panos' way of teaching successful. When this research study took place, Panos had already been teaching at the Anagnostirio for about fifteen years and, at that time, had about thirty students –quite a

substantial number considering the population of the village. This fact alone indicated the quality of his work and the importance of his presence for the village. The result of his work was evident in his students, especially in the Santouri Ensemble, which had frequent appearances within the island and elsewhere.

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**Aristeidis Apostolis** was born in Lesvos, Greece in 1994. At the age of eleven, he started studying music. From 2006 to 2012, he was a student in the Music Secondary School of Mytilene. In 2019, he completed his bachelor's degree in the Department of Folk and Traditional Music of the Technological Institute of Epirus. During the academic year 2015-2016, he lived in Istanbul as an Erasmus+ exchange student in the Yildiz Technical University of Istanbul (Faculty of Art and Design, Department of Music and Performing Arts) and as a trainee in the Erol Ucer Music Library at the Istanbul Technical University. Today, he is a music teacher in the Music Secondary School of Mytilene.

**Antonis Ververis** (antonis\_ververis@yahoo.com) was born in Athens in 1982, and brought up on the island of Lesvos, Greece. He studied Musicology and Music Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and Sociology at the University of the Aegean. In addition, he received graduate degrees from Roehampton University, UK, and Lynchburg College, USA in Choral Education and Choral Conducting, respectively. He holds a PhD from Aristotle University where he carried out research on gender stereotypes in Music Education. His research interests also include children's vocal development and teaching methods of traditional Greek music. Since 2018, he has been teaching in the Department of Music Studies at the University of Ioannina, Greece.