

Globalization and its effects on the lullaby of Greeks from the city of Constanța

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Abstract: *In the last decades, the reduction of technological differences between the city and the village contributed to the disappearance of the cultural specificity and favored the ethno-cultural uniformity of the ethnic groups in Dobrogea. Nowadays, through globalization, people are not bound by their geographical origin and have access to a wealth of information that was previously unavailable to them. The researches that I have carried out over time on the ethnic groups of Dobrogen have highlighted the gradual abandonment of customs, traditional clothing, lifestyle, the abandonment of some creations belonging to musical folklore and have reveal the adoption of close or universal cultural models. From an ethno-musicological point of view, the globalization of traditional culture in the Dobrogean space led to the gradual disappearance from the musical repertoire of some creations belonging to different folk genres, as is the case with the lullaby. The purpose of this study is to highlight the way in which the lullaby genre from the repertoire of the Greeks from Constanța County was affected by globalization, and the adoption of universal cultural models or from the country of origin.*

Keywords: *globalization; Greeks; Lullaby; musical folklore; traditions;*

Introduction

Music, traditional or cult, has always had the ability to cross borders, connecting people from different cultural backgrounds. In recent years, researching the repertoire of musical folklore practiced by the Greek community in the city of Constanța, I have noticed the following aspects:

- in some creations, elements of different musical styles from the space of origin of this ethno-culture were incorporated - I am referring here to the song proper² and the musical dance repertoire³;
- that some creations have disappeared - I mean the ritual songs from the calendar repertoire;
- that some creations were replaced by others, of foreign origin (mainly from the original territories), being considered nowadays as part of the own repertoire - I mean the lullaby and the ritual songs from the family repertoire.

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² The songs proper are taken from the original repertoire, but there are variants of them (minor changes occur in the melodic line or the rhythmic design of the songs).

³ Dances are performed by young people from traditional dance ensembles on various community occasions. They are trained by dance instructors from within the community who are invited to Greece annually to learn as authentically as possible dances from different regions of Greece.

The dynamics of society and the folkloric musical repertoire have determined throughout time and in the Greek community the phenomenon of cultural abandonment, and we are currently seeing the disappearance of creations from musical genres valued as anachronistic.

Dobrogea is currently considered by the Greeks, along with all the other ethnic groups established here over time, as the territory of origin. The Dobrogean urban environment, characterized by social heterogeneity and "modernized" inhabitants from an educational and professional point of view, led the Greeks to adapt to the defining coordinates of urban life - multi-ethnicity and interculturality. The research undertaken in recent years revealed to me that throughout time this adaptation led to ethno-traditional abandonment, inter-ethnic cultural alterity, acculturation, bilingualism and cultural reciprocity.

Globalization is a current topic due to the phenomena it generates in all aspects of social life, becoming a term that has gone beyond the strictly academic sphere and is frequently used by the mass media and the population. The concept of globalization was imposed only in the 90s, primarily as a consequence of the broad political and socio-economic changes that affected Europe in the years 1989-1990. In the approach to the globalization process, the term "globalization" has a positive and a negative meaning. From a cultural point of view, globalization has negative consequences, as it leads to a homogenization and a loss of local or regional values. From other points of view, the consequences can be positive, leading to the general increase in the standard of living, to the saving of economies affected by the crisis, to a technological and informational transfer, etc.⁴

From the point of view of spatial analysis, all the conclusions regarding the process of globalization lead to the idea of considering the entire Planet as a unitary whole, as a single place, so that people are not bound by their geographical origin and have access to a multitude of information that previously were not available to them.⁵

At the local level, as a result of international exchanges, products and ideas foreign to the respective community enter more and more frequently, which are usually assimilated and integrated, becoming commonplace. The "computer revolution", the generalization of radio and television networks, later the Internet and satellite communications, created the premises for the irreversibility of connections and interdependencies between all the states of the world and the emergence of a key phenomenon of postmodernity: global culture. Therefore, the products of global consumer culture can be defined as those products that transcend cultural spaces.⁶

Cultural globalization contributes to the exchange of cultural values between different countries, as well as the convergence of cultures. The effect of globalization on the creation, dissemination and reception of cult or traditional music began with the emergence of the mass media (radio and television), which favored cultural exchanges and the flow of information between countries, and musical globalization has recently intensified due to the emergence of the Internet, which made it easier for people around the globe to access music from around the world.⁷

⁴ Radu Săgeată. 2009. *Cultural Globalization and Global Culture. Global and local in cultural geography*. Bucharest: University Publishing House, pp. 16-17.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 38.

⁷ Delia Suiogan. 2011. „Cultural Identity Within the Framework of Globalization”. *Memoria etnologică*, 38-39, Anul XI: 83-91, p. 83.

For the ethnic Greeks of Constanța, a group with a bicultural identity, as are all ethno-cultures in the Dobrogean space that have different origins, globalization has as its main effect the phenomenon of integration into the cultural flow represented by the culture of the country of origin. They currently identify with a mostly "imported" musical repertoire from their country of origin, capable of providing them with uniqueness in an allogeneic environment.

The culture of the Greeks complements the traditions and culture of the city of Constanța, offering an overview of how, over time, traditions have influenced and strengthened each other. Multiculturalism is a reality in Dobrogea, and this aspect implies, in addition to the recognition of pluralism and cultural variety, and the affirmation of the ethno-cultural identity of any ethnic groups.

The present work starts from the hypothesis that the maintenance and perpetuation of an ancient community practice, such as that of the lullaby, even through borrowings from the original culture of the Greeks of Constanta, can minimize the effect of globalization. Only by collecting, analyzing and disseminating the creations belonging to this lyrical genre can we contribute to the revival of interest in cultural identity.

From the outset the theme of this paper limited the selection of subjects, so we benefited from a smaller sample. As research methods we opted for both indirect (bibliographic research, analysis, synthesis) and direct (semi-directive interview, conversation, observation) methods. The information obtained was recorded in a digital system (audio and video) and transcribed in order to be disseminated to all those interested.

1. General considerations about the role and function of the Lullaby

Worldwide, there have been permanent concerns among researchers from various fields - anthropologists, philologists, ethnologists, ethnomusicologists, psychologists and therapists - regarding the importance of lullaby in the development and evolution of children, from birth to preschool ages.

Manisha Aggarwal-Schiffellite, citing the article "Lullabies in any language relax children", highlights the conclusions reached by researchers Constance M. Bainbridge and Mila Bertolo:

1) infants, regardless of culture, may be predisposed to respond to common characteristics of lullabies found in different cultures.

2) for this folkloric genre, the melody is the component that stands out, being in an interdependent relationship with the text. This statement starts from the fact that the repertoire of lullabies that formed the basis of the research were in unknown languages from sixteen foreign cultures, half sung by men, half by women, all eminently vocal.⁸

In the study "Examining infants' preferences for tempo in lullabies and playsongs" the authors examined the tempo preferences of infants when performing lullabies or play songs.⁹

In our country too, researchers have studied lullabies from a literary and musical perspective, so that in 1986 Ghizela Sulițeanu published an extensive monograph entitled "Lullaby".

⁸ Manisha Aggarwal - Schiffellite. 2020, October 19. "Lullabies in any language relax babies". Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/10/research-shows-lullabies-in-any-language-relax-babies/> <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/10/research-shows-lullabies-in-any-language-relax-babies/>.

⁹ Nicole J. Conrad, Jennifer Walsh, Jennifer M. Allen, Christine D. Tsang. 2011, September. "Examining infants' preferences for tempo in lullabies and playsongs". Retrieved May 3, 2023, from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21639609/>.

Along with other creations of popular culture, musical, choreographic or literary, the lullaby has as its main characteristic orality, and that is why it possesses special characteristics related to its performance. According to the ethnologist Narcisa Alexandra Știucă, the organization of texts according to the criterion of tradition divides them into: community and individual, the latter presenting the quality of an open or limited reception depending on the sender and receiver (community texts are, par excellence, open). The text of the lullaby falls according to the criterion of tradition into an individual text, the mother having the role of sender and the child the receiver. Regarding the folklore creation, the ethnologist draws our attention to the criterion of the communication situation which gives us a tripartite classification: texts in the situation of necessary exchange, texts in the situation of forced exchange, and, finally, texts in the situation of listening. Extending these criteria to the lullaby genre, we notice that it falls within the listening situation.¹⁰

In the research that I have carried out in recent years among the various ethnic groups in Dobrogea, I have noticed both in the rural and urban areas, that some creations belonging to musical folklore have kept their traditional functional character, others have changed their functionality or disappeared in accordance with society's requirements. And among the Greeks in the urban environment of Constanta, globalization has determined the gradual abandonment of part, lifestyle, some customs and genres of musical folklore, and the adoption of universal cultural models or from the places of origin. Among the genres that have disappeared is the lullaby, and this work, as already mentioned, aims to highlight the effects of musical globalization and the disappearance of a millennial community practice, that of the mother rocking and singing the baby to sleep.

The genre of vocal music is predominant in the folklore of all Dobrogean ethno-cultures, because melody and rhythm are organized in vocal singing in the spirit of ethnic sensitivity, the national specificity being more evident in these creations. In the vocal genre, an indissoluble connection is made between text and melody, the symbiosis between the versification system and the resulting musical intervals based on the preference for a certain interval from the spoken language.

And among the Greeks of Constanța, the lullaby was created and performed exclusively by women, and this aspect highlights the important role of women in composing and transmitting it orally from generation to generation. This folk genre is indispensable to human existence, because it represents for the baby a first attempt to become aware of the reality of the surrounding world.

The most important function performed by the lullaby is that of falling asleep, and this determines not only the rhythmic-musical structures, but also the particularities of interpretation (tempo and nuances). It's conceived with the help of repetitive melodic-rhythmic formulas and accompanied by similar kinetic movements (rocking), and the simplicity, archaism and style of interpretation are the main features of this unique genre in the folklore of all peoples.¹¹

Ghizela Sulițeanu, in her work "Lullaby" emphasizes that the functionality of the lullaby does not consist only in the simple triggering of the child's sleep, but also represents the first way

¹⁰ Narcisa, Alexandra Știucă. 2001. *At the threshold of the white world* [În pragul lumii albe], Cultural Seasons Collection, vol. 2. Bucharest: Semne Publishing House, p. 74.

¹¹ Ghizela Sulițeanu. 1986. *The lullaby* [Cântecul de leagăn]. Bucharest: Musical Publishing House, p. 13.

to facilitate the formation of the child's perception, regarding the knowledge of both musical and verbal languages, as well as of the environment".¹²

Here are some of the main characteristics of lullabies and the effects they generate on the baby:

1. repetitive melodic-rhythmic structures due to the binary grouping of verses - creates a state of relaxation;
2. slow tempo - favors rocking with reduced intensity;
3. the closeness and connection created between mother and baby during the performance of the lullaby - creates the feeling of safety;
4. singing and rocking generate physical, mental and emotional benefits.

The lullaby, species of popular lyrics, is the vocal genre in which the mother directly expresses her own thoughts, ideas, emotions and hopes for the future of the baby she is putting to sleep. The poetic text highlights the following distinctive features:

- stylistic procedures: direct expression, which is achieved with the help of an expressive language, and in which we find stylistic figures;
- artistic procedures: onomatopoeia, sleep formulas, invocation formulas, diminutives;
- intentional deviation of linguistic norms.¹³

2. Structural analysis

Music, traditional or religious, represents a social phenomenon that evolves along with the way of thinking of the members of a society. In the case of lullabies, both the melody and the poetic texts have undergone important changes. From the field research undertaken in the Greek community in the city of Constanța between April 2021 and March 2023, I did not manage to collect any lullaby.

All the interviewees knew and performed my song "Fengaraki mu lambro", taken from the youtube platform. Today this song is considered "lullaby", and accepted by the whole community as representative of this genre. However, regardless of age, they all regret that they no longer know, or remember, any of the songs that their grandmothers or mothers lulled them to sleep with when they were children.

My interlocutors expressed their regret for the disappearance of this genre from the community repertoire, and, supported by the Territorial Community of Greeks from the city of Constanța, they are making efforts for the revival of traditions, customs, port and folk music repertoire, being aware that these values give ethnic cohesion. Currently, the lullaby is a category of folklore that cannot be recovered, disappearing irreparably from the musical treasury of this ethnic group.

The song that I recorded is actually a song in the "like a swing song"¹⁴ category. If for the poetic text all the interlocutors affirmed that it has its origin in children's literature from Greek folklore, for the melody the opinions were divided. Some considered it to have its origins in Greek musical folklore, others stated that it would be universal (due to similarities with the first theme of the second part of symphony number 94, called Surpriza, composed by J. Haydn).

¹² Ghizela Sulițeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

¹³ Gheorghe Oprea. 2002. *Romanian Musical Folklore* [Folclorul muzical românesc]. Bucharest: Music Publishing House, pp. 288-290.

¹⁴ Ghizela Sulițeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

Φεγγαράκι μου λαμπρό/Fengaraki mu lambro (Moon my Light)

Largo ♩ = 56

Fen - ga - ra - ki mu lam - bro, fen - ghe mu na per - pa - to

Na pi - ghe - no sto hor - ghio, na ma - the - no gra - ma - ta,

Gra - ma - ta spu - dag - ma - ta, tu The - u ta prag - ma - ta.

Fen - ga - ra - ki mu ghe - ma - to, sa flu - ri Kon - stan - ti - na - to,

Fe - ghe mu to - ra sti star - ta, sto sho - lio na ka - te - vo,

Na ma - the - no gra - ma - ta, gra - ma - ta spu - dag - ma - ta.

Fen - ga - ra - ki mu lam - bro, fe - ghe mu na per - pa - to

Na pi - ghe - no sto hor-ghio, na ma - the - no gra - ma - ta,
 Gra - ma - ta spu - dag - ma - ta, tu The - u ta prag - ma - ta.
 Tus go - nis mu n'a - ga - po, ke tra - no na - ho sko - po.

I. *My bright moon let me walk
 to go to school, to learn letters
 letters, studies, God's things.*

II. *My little full moon, like a Constantinian flower,
 join me now in the army, to get off at school
 to learn letters, letters, studies, God's things.*

III. *My bright moon let me walk,
 to go to school, to learn letters,
 letters, studies, God's things,
 my parents to love, and to have a purpose in my life.*

The melodic-rhythmic, formal and stylistic analysis revealed the following aspects of the collected lullaby:

- vocal performance;
- the Largo tempo with the fourth at 56 M.M., in accordance with the function of the lullaby;
- the rhythm is giusto-syllabic;
- it is composed in G major key;
- the profile of the melody is crenellated, combining the gradual march with leaps of perfect ascending fifth (sol-Re) and perfect ascending fourth (la-Re);
- the climax of the song is placed on the Mi1 sound;
- the ambitus is a minor seventh (fa#-Mi1);
- the inner cadences are made by descending major second as follows: for the first phrase on the tonic, and for the second phrase on the second step;
- the final cadence is performed on the tonic, also by descending major second;
- the poetic text has the same prosodic characteristics as those of the lullaby;
- the trochaic lines of 7-8 syllables are isometric on the octosyllabic metric pattern;
- isorhythm, a characteristic feature of lullabies;
- the same octosyllabic pattern of the verse is maintained;

- the rhyme is sufficient, according to the degrees of coincidence at the end of the lines;
- the use of the divisional system framed in binary measure;
- the architectural form is fixed, and the pattern is binary (ABAAv).

3. Conclusions

As we have seen, the relative freedom of the melody-poetic text relationship in the collected lullaby made it possible to take over a melody considered either as belonging to other folkloric species of Greek folk lyric - in this case a children's song, or as part of the music of other cultures - from the Western European one and its arrangement on the text of a folk poem for children. The adaptation of the collected song to the general rhythmic-melodic scheme of the lullaby was possible due to the similarities between the characteristics of the lullaby and those of the analyzed song. It is precisely these similarities that have helped to keep it in the community musical repertoire.

The symbiosis between the text and the melody works together to fulfill the main function of the lullaby, that of lulling the child to sleep, and we notice how a song becomes "lullaby" even if in its text there are no formulas specific to the lullaby, such as: the chorus specific or sleeping formulas.

For researchers, cultural loss is the abandonment of an existing practice, with or without replacement. In order to ensure the perpetuation of a community practice of identity, the Greeks of Constanța borrowed a modern song, from children's folklore, which can be considered suitable to become a lullaby. This song was considered appropriate due to the repetitive melodic-rhythmic formulas, the rhythmic-musical structures, but also the peculiarities of interpretation (tempo and nuances), features that ensure the fulfillment of the main function of the lullaby, that of falling asleep accompanied by kinetic movements similar to rocking.

The cultural heritage of the Greeks in the city of Constanța enjoys protection, and the way they define their values and ideals instills in each member of the community a sense of belonging to a cultural group with which they identify. Cultural identity is what for thousands of years has ensured all ethnic groups dignity and allowed them to assert themselves over time in hostile or disinterested environments.

For any ethno-culture, the lullaby, due to its musical-poetic content, fulfills the function of connecting and integrating the child into the community as an individual. This lyrical genre also satisfy aesthetic and ethical functions, and develops national consciousness, being a high-value element in traditional culture, in particular, and universal culture, in general.

In conclusion, we can say that the loss of the lullaby is due to modernity and globalization that have deeply penetrated both the urban and rural environments of Dobrogea. In the research undertaken, we found that the young mother, regardless of the ethnic group to which she belongs, currently has the possibility of accessing on YouTube lullabies or songs that soothe and induce sleep of the baby. To come to the aid of mothers, electric cradles have appeared in recent years with connection to the socket or with batteries, which provide in addition to vibrations and soothing songs. These products are easy to procure and have an affordable price, so that parents do not hesitate to purchase them, without thinking about the ethno-cultural consequences, in this case, the disappearance of the lullaby and the rocking itself.

Sociologist and professor Craig Calhoun, analyzing the writings of the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, mentions that any society requires more than the institutional

guarantees of the constitutional state; it also needs the sustaining spirit of cultural traditions and socialization patterns, of political culture, of a population accustomed to freedom.¹⁵

In this idea, the Territorial Community of Greeks from the city of Constața, with the support of the Hellenic Union in Romania, is making sustained efforts in terms of ethno-cultural conservatism and ethno-traditional revitalization. The Greeks are aware that the maintenance of the identity cultural heritage and the diminution of the effects of the globalization phenomenon are desired, which can only be achieved by adapting to the local context.

In conclusion, this research demonstrated the disappearance of the lullaby from the traditional repertoire of the urban Greeks of Constanta, and its replacement with children's songs from the territory of origin. The research undertaken highlighted the fact that the lullaby genre, a creation of oral tradition, responded to the requirements of modern society and community interests, adapting to new circumstances through changes in existing values and behaviors.

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¹⁵ Craig Calhoun. 1992. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The MIT Press.