

WORLD MUSIC

GREECE

REBETIKO MUSIC

Introduction

All the selections here are rebetiko, an urban Greek folk music. Centered around Piraeus and other Greek harbor cities, the cradles of rebetiko were likely to be the taverns, the ouzo bars, the hashish dens, or the prisons. The core instruments of rebetiko, from the mid-1930s onwards, have been the bouzouki, the baglamas and the guitar. (Anon. n.d.)

Ref: Anon; n.d., Rebetiko, [Wikipedia](#)

VARIOUS VERSIONS OF **ΝΥΚΤΕΡΙΔΑ** In chronological order

WD-GR-REB1 Greece ca.1935-36

Ἡ ΝΥΚΤΕΡΙΔΑ (THE BAT)

WD – Rebetiko – Laika – Vocal & Instrumental

Comp: BAYANDERAS ([LY-WD25](#))

Rts: (BIEM)

Perf: (Unknown woman singer)
(with bouzouki & baglama)

Prod. Co: Athens, Greece

Time: (?)

1. Original **78:** (?)

2. Reissue on compilation **LP:** ΠΑΠΑΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ – ΜΠΑΓΙΑΝΤΕΡΑΣ (Bayanderas) – ΧΑΤΖΗΧΡΗΣΤΟΣ – ΚΑΠΛΑΝΗΣ (1970?)

Regal (EMI) 14C 048-70310

12" 33rpm (stereo) (Sd 2 – Bd 2)

2. Reissue on compilation **LP:** ΠΑΠΑΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ – ΜΠΑΓΙΑΝΤΕΡΑΣ (Bayanderas) – etc.

Regal (EMI) XREG 2016

12" 33rpm (stereo) (Sd 2 – Bd 2)

Notes: The original of this bat song was recorded and released on 78 records around 1935-36. Additional information and the original Greek lyrics could not be obtained. But the French translation of these lyrics is given with the English translation (see [LY-WD25](#)). (Lacarrière & Volkovitch 1999) The first stanza tells it all:

- | | |
|--|--|
| I. Sur les chemins de la vie je soupire
devant ta belle maison je tourne et vire
comme une chauve-souris pour avoir
un peu de bonheur, un peu d'espoir. | I. On the road of life I sigh
Before your beautiful house I turn and swoop
Like a bat, to have
A bit of happiness, a bit of hope. |
|--|--|

This is the second song in a medley of four well-known songs composed by Bayanderas, performed here solo or in duet by Grigoris Bithikotsis, an unknown woman singer, and other singers.

Ref: Matsoukas, Kostas & Tsiamis, Christos, Communication, Sept. 11, 2005, Music Emporium, Athens

WD-GR-REB2 Greece (Date unknown)

ΝΥΚΤΕΡΙΔΑ

WD – Rebetiko – Laika – Vocal & Instrumental

Comp: BAYANDERAS ([LY-WD25](#))

Rts: (BIEM)

Perf: Dimitris **GKOGKOS** (vocal)
(with bouzouki & baglama)

Prod: Arguro Surigga

D. GKOGKOS

Prod. Co: Lyra; Athens, Greece

Time: 3:25

1. Original recording: (?)

2. Compilation **CD:** ΟΛΟΙ ΟΙ ΡΕΜΠΕΤΕΖ ΤΟΥ ΝΤΟΥΝΙΑ – No. 1 (1994)
Lyra CD 3012 (Tk 5)

Notes: This version of the Bayanderas bat song includes the complete lyrics. Gkogkos repeats the two-verse chorus that mentions “the bat” and then the bouzouki takes a chorus.

Ref: Gkogkos Dimitris i Bagianteras, Biography, [Dimitris Gkogkos](#)



WD-GR-REB3 Greece 1974

ΝΥΚΤΕΡΙΔΑ

WD – Rebetiko – Laika – Vocal & Instrumental

Comp: BAYANDERAS ([LY-WD25](#))

Rts: (BIEM)

Perf: Loukas **DARALAS** (vocal)
(with bouzouki & baglama)

Prod. Co: Athens, Greece

Time: 2:41

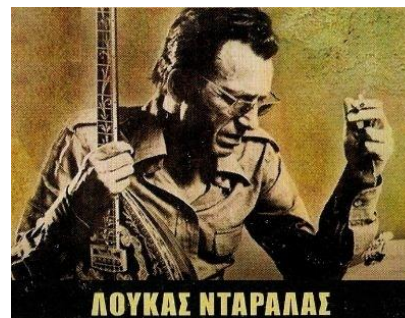
L. DARALAS

1. Original **LP:** ΕΝΑΣ ΡΕΜΠΕΤΗΣ

Sonora SNR-571 (stereo) (Sd 2 – Bd 2)

2. Compilation **CD:** ΛΟΥΚΑΣ ΝΤΑΡΑΛΑΣ – Το Βουβό – No. 1
Legend 2201153212 (Tk 7)

Notes: A shorter treatment of the Bayanderas bat song inspired by the Dimitris Gkogkos version.



WD-GR-REB4 Greece ca.1947

ΠΕΝΤΕ ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΣΤΟΝ ΑΔΗ

(FIVE GREEKS IN HADES)

WD – Rebetiko – Vocal & Instrumental

Mus: Yiannis PAPAIOANNOU

Lyr: Kosta MANESI (LY-WD9)

Perf: Yiannis PAPAIOANNOU (vocal)

(with bouzouki & baglama)

Prod. Co: Athens, Greece

Time: 3:00 & (No. 6) 3:04

1. Original **78:**

Nina (?)

2. Original **45:** (1960-61)

3. Reissue on compilation **LP:** ΣΕ ΑΥΘΕΝΤΙΚΕΣ ΕΚΤΕΛΕΣΕΙΣ (1973)

Sonora SNP 401

12" 33rpm (Sd 2 – Bd 2)

4. Reissue on compilation **LP:** ΤΑ ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ (1991)

Alfa Mi 748-1

12" 33rpm (stereo) (Sd 2 – Bd 4)

5. Compilation **CD:** ΓΙΑΝΝΗ ΠΑΠΑΪΩΑΝΝΟΥ – No. 3 –

12 ΜΕΓΑΛΕΣ ΕΠΙΤΥΧΙΕΣ (2002)

MBI (Music Box International) 10949 (Tk 6)

6. Compilation **CD:** Η ΕΛΛΑΔΑ ΤΟΥ ΓΙΑΝΝΗ ΠΑΠΑΪΩΑΝΝΟΥ (2002)

Minos EMI 7243 5 38763 2 (CD 1 of 2 CDs – Tk 15)

7. Compilation **CD:** ΠΑΙΞΕ ΓΙΑΝΝΗ (2004)

Alpha 856 (CD 1 of 2 CDs – Tk 8)



Notes: In Greece two regions claim to provide the entrances to Underworld of the Dead, Hades. One is in the northwestern region of Epirus where at the confluence of the Acheron and the Cocytus, the River of Woe and the River of Wailing, is a rock where a pit entrance can be found. Then there are three caves at the southern tip of the Mani Peninsula in southern Peloponnese, each of which is pointed out as the entrance to Hades. One is a small shelter cave near the Poseidon temple at the ancient Tenarian Settlement, another is a 20-meter-long marine cave on the west coast near this site, and the third is a stalactite cave at the mountain pass east of Marmari, the last town at the tip of the peninsula.

The original Greek lyrics could not be obtained. But the French translation of these lyrics is given with the English translation (see LY-WD9). (Lacarrière & Volkovitch 1999) The song tells of five Greek musicians meeting in Hades to party (see drawing above). They played their bouzoukis and baglamas and got everyone dancing. The devil himself stood with his mouth open, amazed at the audacity of these Greeks, and everyone cheered at their skill. The illustration showing five Greek musicians playing in the cave of Hades is by Corrine Syros.

Ref: Matsoukas, Kostas & Tsiamis, Christos, Communication, Sept. 11, 2005, Music Emporium, Athens

Fermor, Patrick Leigh 1958, *Mani – Travels in the Southern Peloponnese*, Chap. 10

Lacarrière, Jacques & Volkovitch, Michel 1999, *La Grèce de l'ombre*, Christian Pirot, St. Cyr sur Loire, p. 47, 84

Michel, Michèle 2005, Un panorama du rébetiko, *Le lien Desmos*, n. 18/19, 2005, Paris, p. 42

Papaioannou Yannis, Biogaphy, [Yiannis Papaioannou](#)

WD-GR-REB5 Greece 1977

ΠΕΝΤΕ ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΣΤΟΝ ΑΔΗ

(FIVE GREEKS IN HADES)

WD – Rebetiko – Vocal & Instrumental

Mus: Yiannis PAPAIOANNOU

Lyr: Kosta MANESI (LY-WD9)

Rts: BIEM

Perf: Odysseas **MOSCHONAS** (vocal)

(with bouzouki & baglama)

Prod: Kosta Hatzidoulis

Prod. Co: Athens, Greece

Liner Notes: (CD) Panos Yeramanis

Time: 3:06

1. Original Tribute **LP:** AFIEROMA STO YANNI
PAPAIOANNOU – No. 1 (1977)

Regal (EMI) 14C 034-70388

12" 33rpm (stereo) (Sd 1 –Bd 3)

2. Compilation Tribute **CD:** Η ΕΛΛΑΔΑ ΤΟΥ ΓΙΑΝΝΗ ΠΑΠΑΪΩΑΝΝΟΥ (1995)

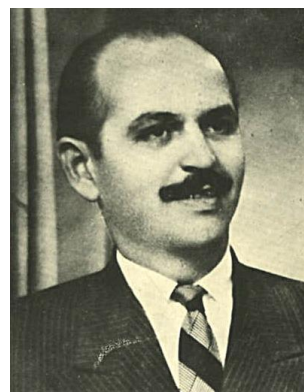
Minos EMI 7243 4 80626 2 8 (2XCDs) (Disc 1 – Tk 15)

Notes: This is a cover version, which appeared on two different various-artist albums recorded in tribute to the famous rebetiko artist, Yianni Papaioannou.

Ref: Η ΕΛΛΑΔΑ ΤΟΥ ΓΙΑΝΝΗ ΠΑΠΑΪΩΑΝΝΟΥ CD 1 – Tk 15, [Yiannis Papaioannou](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Lacarrière, Jacques & Volkovitch, Michel 1999, *La Grèce de l'ombre*, Christian Pirot, St. Cyr sur Loire, p. 47, 84

Michel, Michèle 2005, *Un panorama du rébétiko*, *Le lien Desmos*, n. 18/19, 2005, Paris, p. 42



O. MOSCHONAS

WD-GR-REB6 Greece ca.1934

ΣΤΗΣ ΑΡΕΤΟΥΣΑΣ ΤΗ ΣΠΗΛΙΑ *

(STIS ARETOUSAS TI SPILIA)

(DANS LES GROTTES D'ARETOUSA)

WD – Rebetiko – Vocal & Instrumental

Comp: Sotiris GAVALAS (LY-WD35)

Perf: Ρίτα **Αμπατζή** (Rita **AMBADZI**) (vocal)

(with bouzouki & baglama)

Prod. Co: HMV (His Master's Voice);

(CD 2) Lyra Records

Time: 3:13

1. Original **78:**

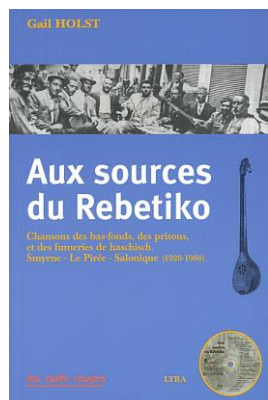
His Master's Voice (?)

2. Reissue on Compilation **CD:** Η ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΤΟΥ ΡΕΜΠΕΤΙΚΟΥ ΣΧΟΛΗ 3 (Ι ΜΕΓΑΛΗ
ΤΟΥ ΡΕΒΕΤΙΚΟΥ ΣΗΛΙ 3) (2001)

ΑΘΗΝΑΪΚΗ ΔΙΣΚΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ (?) (Tk 14)

3. Reissue on Compilation **CD:** AUX SOURCES DU RÉBÉTΙΚΟ (2001)

Lyra CD 99184 (Tk 1)



Notes: Rita Ambadzi (in French spelt, Abadzi) was one of the pioneering recording artists of rebetika songs in the 1930s.

Many of the early rebetika songs talked of prisons, hashish parlors, and troubles with the police. This one is entirely devoted to the story of some fugitives from the law who took refuge in the Aretousa Caves where the Cretians lived near the Prophet Elias Church on the hill overlooking Piraeus.

The Mounichia Hill (Prophet Elias' Hill) is only about 87m above sea level and located on the eastern side of the Piraeus Peninsula. The pre-Hellenic tribe of Minyes settled here around the end of the 13th century B.C. and the Aretouse Caves are said to have been carved by them. (Anon. n.d.) The cave is located on the slopping west side of the hill off the road leading to the top where there is the Prophet Elias Church, a municipal open-air theater, and a café. An entrance door

has been installed and permission is required. Various sources mention that the cave heads north and is about 40 meters deep and 50 meters long. (Karakostanoglou 2006)

The song is a sad plea with slow bousouki theme and a deliberate strong rhythm. (See lyrics in French in [LY-WD35](#) listed under the Greek title in Roman alphabet) The first stanza situates the cave very well –

Dans les grottes d'Aretousa, qui surplombent la Pirée, Là-haut, où vivent les Crétois, près de l'église du Prophète Elie.	In the caves of Aretousa, that hang over Piraeus, Up there, where the Cretans live, near the church of the Prophet Elias.
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The lyrics go on to tell how they had done a robbery in Athens and gone underground there, but had to come down to Piraeus to a secret hideout. Then they were betrayed and arrested by the cops.

Ref: Anon. n.d., Municipality of Piraeus; [Balkan Cities Network](#)

Ambadzi Rita, Biography, [Rita Ambatzi](#)

Holst, Gail 1975, *Road to Rembetika*, Denise Harvey Editions, Limni, Greece

Holst, Gail 2004, (French translation) *Aux sources du Rebetiko*, Éditions Les nuits rouges, p. 52, 102

Karakostanoglou, Iakovos 2006, Letter dated 10 Mar. 2006, Melissa, Greece

Michel, Michèle 2005, Un panorama du rébétiko, *Le lien Desmos*, n. 18/19, 2005, Paris, p. 38

Rebetiko Online, [Rebetiko History](#)

Sotiriou, Yannis 2000, *I gitionia mou-I gitionia tou Kosmou*, Piraeus, p. 118-120

Tsiklidis, Menelaos 1998, *Attiki-Magiki Gi*, Athens, p. 151, 160

VARIOUS VERSIONS OF ZEÏBEKANO SPANIOLA (ZOULA SE MIA BARKA BIKI)

In chronological order

WD-GR-REB7 Greece 1936

ZEÏBEKANO SPANIOLA (ZOULA SE MIA BARKA BIKI) *

WD – Rebetiko – Vocal & Instrumental

Comp: Yiorgos Batis ([LY-WD44](#))

Perf: Stratos PAYIOUMTZIS (vocal)

Yiorgos Batis (baglama)

Markos Vamvakaris (bouzouki)

Anestos Delias [Artemis] (bouzouki)

Prod. Co: Falireas

Time: 3:19

1. Original **78:**

(Label ?)

2. Reissue on Compilation **CD:** THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
YIORGOS BATIS

Falireas (?) (Tk 8)

Notes: This Greek quartet was one of the most famous of the early rebetiko recording artists. Sometimes referred to as “the Legendary Four from Piraeus, the group that created the Rembetiko style of Piraeus in the 1930’s” (Anon. n.d.) “Batis owned a café and worked as a dentist, second-hand trader and usurer. Nonetheless, his passion was music. The Four would gather every morning to rehearse in a small room next to his place, which he called a music-school probably in order to camouflage it from the police... He composed and wrote lyrics in a unique style. He would not describe the sufferings and injustice of his and his friends’ lives in a painful tone as most of the rebetiko composers. Instead, he adopted a humorous yet compassionate approach to the life in the Piraeus ghetto of the 1930’s.” (Anon. n.d.) The photo shows I. to r. Stratos, Markos, Batis, and Artemis (Delias).

The song title translates as “The Spanish Zeimbekiko Dance” and the subtitle is the first verse of the song “I secretly embarked on a boat.” The song tells of a group of friends smoking hasish together in the Drakou (Dragon) Cave, located “near the coast of a suburb west of Piraeus.” (Karakostanoglou 2006) This gay piece rollicks along in a happy-go-lucky manner. (For the full lyrics in French see [LY-WD44](#))

The first stanza pretty well sets the scene –

Je me suis embarqué en douce sur un bateau,
Que je n’ai quitté qu’aux grottes de Drakou.

I secretly embarked on a boat,
That I didn’t get off ‘til the Drakou Caves



Là, j'y ai vu trois hommes déjà bien "partis"
Qui s'étiraient sur la sable.
Là, j'y ai vu trois hommes déjà bien "partis"
Qui s'étiraient sur la sable.

There, I saw three men already well "gone"
Who were stretched out on the sand.
There, I saw three men already well "gone"
Who were stretched out on the sand.

The "three men" are all members of this Greek band: Batis, Artemis, and the "lazy one" Stratos. They ask Stratos to prepare a glass pipe and they smoke the "hash from Constantinople" and the "good Persian tobacco."

Gail Holst's important study on rebetiko music mentions that the "manges" or outsiders from Piraeus – "venaient dans les tékés pour trouver un peu de paix et écouter de la musique. Après, ils allaient dans les cafés pour manger, boire un coup et danser. Quand il devint dangereux de fumer dans les tékés, ils se replieront dans les grottes de bord de mer ou de la montagne, où ils pouvaient aisément dissimuler leurs narghilés dans un trou de rocher ou dans les branches des arbres." [The outsiders came to the smoke shops to find a little peace and listen to music. Afterwards they went to the cafes to eat, drink a bit, and dance. When it became dangerous to smoke hash in the smoke shops, they withdrew to the caves on the seashore or on the mountain, where they could easily hide their water pipes in a rocky hole or in the branches of trees.] (Holst 2004)

Ref: Anon. n.d., Falireas Productions, [Yiorgos Batis](#)

Dubin, Marc 2004, Considerations in the Compilation of a Rebetika CD, [Rebetology](#)

Holst, Gail 1975, *Road to Rembetika*, Denise Harvey Editions, Limni, Greece

Holst, Gail 2004, (French translation) *Aux sources du Rebetiko*, Éditions Les nuits rouges, p. 44-49, 106

Karakostanoglou, Iakovos 2006, Letter dated 10 Mar. 2006, Melissa, Greece

Michel, Michèle 2005, Un panorama du rébétiko, *Le lien Desmos*, n. 18/19, 2005, Paris, p. 38

Petropoulos, Elias 1968 (1972), *Rebetika Tragoudia*, Athens, p. 265

WD-GR-REB8 Greece ca.Mid 1930s

ZOULA SE MIA BARKA BIKA * **(PASSAGER CLANDESTIN)**

WD – Rebetiko – Vocal & Instrumental

Comp: Yiorgos Batis ([LY-WD44](#))

Perf: Γιώργος ΜΟΥΦΛΟΥΖΕΛΗΣ
(Yiorgos MOUFLOUZELIS) (vocal)
(with bouzouki & baglama)

Prod. Co:

Time: 3:19

1. Original **78:**

(Label ?)

3. Reissue on Compilation **CD:** AUX SOURCES DU RÉBÉTIKO(2001)

Lyra CD 99184 (Tk 9)

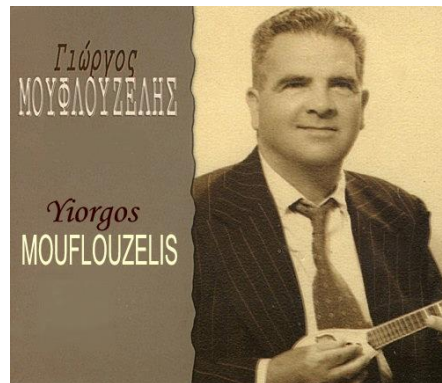
Notes: A cover of this rebetiko song recorded around the same time as the original version by Stratos Payioumtzis. The French title here becomes, "Passager Clandestin" [Underground Stowaway]. (For the full lyrics in French & English see [LY-WD44](#))

The last two lines of each stanza are repeated, but Mouflouzelis does not sing the last stanza. Yiorgos (Yorgos) Mouflouzelis recorded several 78s in the 1930s, which were later rereleased on CDs.

Ref Holst, Gail 1975, *Road to Rembetika*, Denise Harvey Editions, Limni, Greece

Holst, Gail 2004, (French translation) *Aux sources du Rebetiko*, Éditions Les nuits rouges, p. 44-49, 106

Karakostanoglou, Iakovos 2006, Letter dated 10 Mar. 2006, Melissa, Greece



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