

**MANOLIS KALOMIRIS'S *ROMEIC SUITE* (1907/1910) AS
AN INITIATORY SEMANTIC SIGNIFIER OF THE COMPOSER'S
IDEOLOGY AND CREATION. A MUSIC-ANALYTICAL AND
INTERTEXTUAL APPROACH**

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**РОМЕЈСКА СВИТА (1907/1910) МАНОЛИСА КАЛОМИРИСА
КАО ИНИЦИЈАЦИЈСКИ СЕΜΑΝΤИЧКИ ΟΖΝΑΧΙΤΕΛ
ΚΟΜΠΟΖΙΤΟΡΟΒΕ ΙΔΕΟΛΟΓΙЈΕ Ι ΣΤΒΑΡΑΛΑШТВА.
ΜΥΣΙΧΚΟ-ΑΝΑΛΙΤΙΧΚΙ Ι ΙΝΤΕΡΤΕΚΣΤΥΑΛΝΙ ΠΡΙΣΤΥΠ**

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ABSTRACT

Manolis Kalomiris (1883–1962), the leader of the Greek National School of composers, continuously sought to express his ideas through both music and words. This paper examines the formation of his ideology up to 1910, focusing on his writings (articles, the 1908 “program-manifesto”) and his orchestral *Romeic Suite* (1907/1910). Musical and textual co-examination under semantic codes reveals external influences, symbolic meanings, and ideological identity of the composer and his work. It is asserted that within the historical context of the early 1910s, Kalomiris used intertextual discourse to convey his ideological codes to Greek literary, political, and musical audiences of the time.

KEYWORDS: Greek art music, Manolis Kalomiris, intertextuality, ideology, semantics.

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АПСТРАКТ

Манолис Каломирис (1883–1962), предводник Грчке националне школе композитора, непрестано је настојао да своје идеје изрази и музиком и речима. Овај рад испитује формирање његове идеологије пре 1910. године, с посебним освртом на његове списе (чланке и „програм-манифест” из 1908) и на његову оркестарску *Ромејску свиђу* (1907/1910). Истовремено музичко и текстуално испитивање у оквиру семантичких кодова открива спољашње утицаје, симболичка значења и идеолошки идентитет композитора и његовог дела. У раду се истиче да је, у историјском контексту почетка друге деценије XX века, Каломирис користио интертекстуални дискурс како би своје идеолошке кодове пренео грчкој књижевној, политичкој и музичкој јавности тог времена.

Кључне речи: грчка уметничка музика, Манолис Каломирис, интертекстуалност, идеологија, семантика.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of national identity components in the early twentieth-century Greek art music was mediated through the exploration of indigenous folk tradition as primary raw material, accompanied by references to the moral, religious, and mythological symbols of folklore, as well as to the ethno-ideological concepts surrounding the cultural formation of modern Greek urban society. Within this context, both poetic and prose literary discourses – shaped by the socio-political debate over the “language question”¹ – assume a particular significance.

The relationship between music and written word not only represents a common thread of ideological expressions within the context of national narrative but also creates a semantic framework of intertextuality, reflected over a

¹ The “language question” comprised a major cultural issue in Greece that eventually became highly political. It revolved around the debate between those who supported the everyday spoken language of the people (*demotic*) and those who favored a more formal, purified version (*katharevousa*). Over time, this debate grew into a deeper social and political divide, reflecting tensions between different classes – such as the elite and the working class – as well as between liberals and conservatives. The controversy also involved the Orthodox Church, literary circles, and the press, and lasted for several decades, from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century (Mackridge 2009). The culmination of the controversies caused by the language question was the “Evangelika [Ευαγγελικά],” a series of bloody riots that took place in Athens in November 1901, after the publication of the version of the New Testament translated into the demotic idiom by Alexandros Pallis [Αλέξανδρος Πάλλης] in the newspaper *Akropolis* (Carabott 1993, 128–130).

long period of time. Here, I provide two characteristic examples, published half a century apart. In 1901, in his article “National Music [Ethniki Mousiki],”² Georgios Lambelet [Γεώργιος Λαμπελέτ] (1875–1945), a composer and a critic, envisions his twofold perspective for Greek art music (1901, 86): “[...] It is indisputable that the folk muse, both in poetry and music, presents the entire modern Greek soul. What it has produced in our poetic art with Solomos, Krystallis, Palamas, Porfyra, etc., it must also do for our composers.” He further concludes (Lambelet 1901, 87): “[...] Folk poetry and folk music are the purest, most beautiful, most original, and truest that modern Greece has to offer in art.”

As late as 1949, in his lecture titled “World or National Music,” Manolis Kalomiris [Μανώλης Καλομοίρης] (1883–1962) elevates musical creation to the realm of poetic expression. His collective perception of tradition acquires an “organic” nature, as a past that is lived-through, recreated, and transformatively operating in the present (Siopsi 2003, 24). On the other hand, this combinatorial view of Kalomiris on folk muse and modern poetry appears to align with Lambelet’s model under a purely Herderian perspective (Kalomiris 1953, 17): “[...] I dream of something analogous for our music, similar to what poetry achieved in modern Greek literature. Something that has as much relation to the folk motif as the verses of Palamas, Solomos, Valaoritis, and Sikelianos have to folk poetry.”

INTERTEXTUAL REFERENCES IN THE SEMANTIC CONTEXT OF KALOMIRIS’ IDEOLOGY BEFORE 1910

From 1900 to 1910, during Kalomiris’s formative years – spent in Constantinople, Vienna, and Kharkov before his final relocation to Athens

² Lambelet’s article was published in issues nos. 27 and 28 of the Athenian journal *Panathinaia* (15 and 30 November 1901), including both a theoretical and a systematic (analytical) section. In the title “National Music,” the author added “Folk,” to distinguish the subject of his inquiry from Byzantine music, which was considered a separate field of study by historians in the early twentieth century (Romanou 2006, 117). Lambelet highlights Greek folk melody and its modal nature within the concept of historical continuity, while the connection that he established between poetry and music allows him to incorporate the nineteenth-century Ionian literary and musical tradition as part of the national heritage, through his references to the poet Dionysios Solomos [Διονύσιος Σολωμός] (1798–1857) and to the composer Niccolò C. Manzarò (1795–1872) (Sakallieros 2023, 32). Lambelet and Kalomiris shared a Herder-inspired vision that Greek art music should draw on folk tradition and poetry along with Western models, with Lambelet providing a more theoretical blueprint noting what a composer “should do,” while Kalomiris further explored these ideals in actual compositional practice (Romanou 2006, 138–142).

– were marked by intensive exposure to European compositional methods, the study of Western and Russian masters, and engagement with contemporary literary and nationalistic debates, all of which profoundly influenced his emerging ideological and musical vision for a distinctly Greek art music. The artistic focal point of this period was the Athenian concert of 11 June 1908, consisting solely of Kalomiris's works and accompanied by his text "A Few Words" in the printed program, which was later acknowledged as the manifesto of the Greek National School. Through both written and musical discourse, fully embedded in the prevailing cultural trends of the period (tradition, identity, language), Kalomiris's ideological statement aimed at establishing a dual relationship: on one hand, linking Greek folk tradition with Western European art music and the Romantic national schools of the nineteenth century; on the other, connecting the *demotic* (vernacular) language with modern Greek art-music creation.

The standout work at the 1908 concert was undoubtedly the *Romeic Suite*, for symphony orchestra in its arrangement for two pianos. A combined examination of the composer's written documents from that period ("A Few Words," testimonies in his *Memoirs*, and several articles) alongside the score of the *Romeic Suite*, reveals semantic contexts within Kalomiris's ideology that serve in a complementary manner. Decoding these elements through the semiotic lens of "signifier" and "signified" – terms borrowed from linguistics and widely used today – allows for textual and music-analytical interpretations of the ideological meanings, both literal and metaphorical. These meanings are viewed within the political and social ferment of the time, encompassing issues such as the formation and perception of the national past, the concept of the *Great Idea*,³ the language question, and the ever-growing domestic ideal of Europeanization.

In linguistics, the "signifier" is interpreted as the physical form of a sign (something that can be seen, heard, touched, and even smelled or tasted), while the "signified" is acknowledged as a codified mental concept (Davies and Hunt 2017, 135). The signifier may represent an image or a sound (phonetic, lingual, musical), while the signified acquires the notion of its perception,

³ The *Great Idea* [*Megali Idea*], an irredentist vision of Greek nationalism, aimed at establishing a greater Greek state that would unite all regions inhabited by ethnic Greeks still under Ottoman or other foreign rule. This envisioned state would encompass former Byzantine territories, stretching from the Ionian Sea in the west to Asia Minor and the Black Sea in the east, and from Thrace, Macedonia, and Epirus in the north to Crete and Cyprus in the south, with Constantinople (now Istanbul) as its capital. The *Great Idea* concept shaped Greece's foreign policy and domestic affairs from the conclusion of the War of Independence in 1821 until the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, and the devastating Asia Minor Campaign of 1919–1922 (Koliopoulos and Veremis 2007, 249–250).

use, or interpretation (Chandler 2017, 18). According to fundamental views of linguistic semiotics, such as those of the French School of Ferdinand de Saussure, Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Roland Barthes, or even of Charles Sanders Peirce and Umberto Eco, the signifier and the signified can be psychological terms in the study of signs, combined with cultural embodiment and historical contexts as factors of literal or metaphorical meaning (Berger 2014, 25–26). The classificatory (or distributive) empirical semiotic investigation of musical sound and musical works, through studies by Jean Molino, Jean-Jacques Nattiez, and Nicolas Ruwet, provides us with analytical tools relevant to the domain of creation (the “poietic”), reception (the “esthetic”), and, in between, form and content (the “neutral”), as the physical trace left by the first two (Molino et al. 1990, 105; Sakallieros 2003, 90–91). Here, it is not my purpose to extensively delve further into the issues of linguistic-philosophical or music-analytical semiotic methodology, as in this paper, an introduction and understanding of some fundamental concepts in the field are mainly required. However, I will attempt to transpose these issues into an intertextual perspective between written and musical discourse in certain phases of the development of Kalomiris’s ideology, before the composer’s arrival in Athens in 1910, and by focusing on his *Romeic Suite*.

In Vienna, where he resided between 1901 and 1906, Kalomiris acquired a solid academic theoretical training with Herman Grädener, who was influenced by Johannes Brahms (Jones 2001). He then became interested in the teachings of Wagner, the dense contrapuntal texture of Reger’s works, while studying Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky [Πέτρ Ιλβιχ Τχαικoβσκιβ] at the piano and approaching the music of Anatoly Konstantinovich Lyadov [Ανατολιβ Κoνσταντινοβιχ Λυαδoβ] and Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky [Μoδεστ Πετροβιχ Μυσοργσκιβ]. He quickly realized the importance of poetry in his musical thought, which is evident in his early works (*Three Songs* [Τρία Τραγούδια]; *From Countries and Villages* [Από χώρες και χωριά]; *From the “Hours”* [Από τις “Ωρες”], from 1902–1907, all for voice and piano, to the poetry by Miltiadis Malakasis [Μιλτιάδης Μαλακάσης] and his own), and by his intense studying of the lieder cycles of Franz Schubert, Franz Schreker, and Hugo Wolf (Frangou-Psychopedis 1990, 125–126). In Kharkov, he became acquainted with the theoretical views of César Antonovich Cui [Цεζαрь Антонович Кюи] on the role of contemporary poetry in national music, although he did not fully adopt his positions concerning Wagnerian models – at least not before 1910 (1990, 64–65). In his article “Life – Language – Music” in the progressive (demoticist) Athenian literary journal *Noumas* from 1908, his view on the relationship between music and language seemed quite solid (Kalomiris 1908, 1): “From history, we also learn this: that a great national

literature without a corresponding national music can be found in several nations (England, Spain), but a strong national music without a strong literature cannot be achieved.”

In Kharkov (1906–1910), he studied the oeuvre and ideas of the Mighty Five, a group of Russian composers, as well as Berlioz’s *Orchestration* treatise in its revised version by Richard Strauss, emphasizing its artistic and educational importance for many years, from his 1910 article “My Art and My Desires” in *Noumas* to his own *Orchestration* textbook in 1957 (Afthentopoulou 2022, 26–27). Furthermore, the timbral elements of Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov’s [Николай Андреевич Римский-Корсаков] meticulous orchestration in his famous symphonic suite *Scheherazade* (op. 35, 1888) left deep marks of ideological and aesthetic weaving of the Kalomiris’s early compositional identity of his Vienna years. He frequently recalled the “first” performance of Rimsky-Korsakov’s work which he attended in the spring of 1906, conducted by Ossip Solomonovich Gabrilowitsch [Осип Соломонович Габрилович] (Kalomiris 1988, 97–98), although the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra’s concert archive (Wiener Philharmoniker 2025) shows that the Austrian premiere of *Scheherazade* was given on 6 February 1898, under Hans Richter, while the work’s first performance during Kalomiris’s stay in the city was given on 22 November 1903 under Vasily Ilyich Safonov [Василий Ильич Сафоно́в]. In his *Memoirs*, Kalomiris enthusiastically and metaphorically describes his impressions of the mentioned concert and the *Scheherazade* (1988, 98): “I didn’t know what to admire first. The musical light of the work, its saint-like and spontaneous melodic inspiration, its highly admired technique, or its original harmony, its brilliant and transparent orchestration, or its entirely novel, poetically architectural form!”

The following discourse explicates Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade* as a twofold model for Kalomiris, both of Western-European symphonism and of Orientalist substance, that esthetically, morphologically, and orchestration-wise contributed to the conception and creation of his own orchestral *Romeic Suite*.⁴

⁴ Here, it is interesting to note that other Greek musicologists have also highlighted aesthetic and textural music relations between the works of Rimsky-Korsakov and Kalomiris, showing the influence on the latter by the Mighty Five Russian group of composers in the shaping of the Greek National School. Romanou (2005, 109–110) refers to the influences of Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera, *The Golden Cockerel* (1907), to the creation of an unfinished opera by Kalomiris, *Mavritanos and the King* (1909–1910), from which the Greek composer used motives in his well-known opera *Mother’s Ring/To Dachtylidi tis Manas* (1917). The influence of Russian operatic tradition, especially through Rimsky-Korsakov’s and Mussorgsky’s works, on the last and most modernist opera of Kalomiris, *Konstantinos Paleologos* (1961), is also remarked by Levidou (2024, 27, 31).

ROMEIC SUITE AND *SCHEHERAZADE*. MUSIC-ANALYTICAL
ANALOGIES, SEMANTIC CODES, METONYMIES

The first version of the work in Kharkov marks Kalomiris's first encounter with both the orchestral scoring and the large-scale musical form. Following its two-piano arrangement that was presented in the 1908 concert, the first full orchestral performance of the *Romeic Suite* took place on 20 December 1910, with the Athens Conservatory Symphony Orchestra conducted by the composer himself (Tsalachouris 2003, 77). This performance established Kalomiris's music credentials as a symphonic composer, not only to the Athenian audiences – which included the notable demoticist poet Kostis Palamas [Κωστής Παλαμάς] (1859–1943) and the just elected prime minister Eleftherios Venizelos [Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος] (1864–1936)⁵ – but also to the Athens Conservatory, musical institution in which, the following year, he would be appointed as a professor of piano and advanced music theory. *Noumas* reciprocated Kalomiris's support to demoticism, describing the work as “[...] inspired by a poem by Palamas that concludes with an exaltation of the people's language” (Anonymous 1910, 279). It was to be expected that a concert review in such a literary progressive journal of the time would point out the reinforcement of the contextual contiguity between music and words; paradoxically, in this case, this concert included one of the composer's few orchestral works that does not involve any vocal setting (solo voice, chorus, or even a narrator).

The second, revised version of the work was conducted by Leonidas Zoras [Λεωνίδας Ζώρας] on 24 May 1937 in a concert featuring works by Kalomiris at the Olympia Theatre in Athens. The ideological connection between the *Romeic Suite* and the text “A Few Words” from the 1908 concert was particularly emphasized by Kalomiris, as he included the latter in its entirety in the 1937 concert program, framing it with extracts of music analysis.⁶

⁵ In the early 1900s, Eleftherios Venizelos emerged as the leading architect of modern Greek politics, combining national consolidation with progressive reforms. In foreign policy, Venizelos prioritized territorial expansion and national unification, leading Greece through the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) to significant gains in Epirus, Macedonia, Crete, and the East Aegean islands. During World War I, he aligned Greece with the Triple Entente to secure territorial advantages in Asia Minor. Domestically, he pursued constitutional and administrative reforms, and supported democratic governance, civil and military reform, and the promotion of liberal values. Venizelos's political agenda combined a vision of a Europeanized, modern Greek state with nationalist and irredentist ambitions, promoting both social-political reform and the expansion of Greek sovereignty, until the catastrophic Asia Minor Campaign (1919–1922) undermined his achievements and reshaped Greek politics and society (Llewellyn-Smith 2006).

⁶ I would like to thank musicologist Myrto Economides for providing me the full program of the 1937 Kalomiris's concert.

The change in spelling, using the Greek diphthong *αι* instead of the strongly demoticist *ε* in the adjective *Romeic* (*Ρωμαϊκή/Romaïki*, instead of *Ρωμείκη/Romeïki*), observed in the program's written form, may align with the conservative lingual requirements of the Metaxas's authoritarian regime (1936–1940).⁷ This shift is also evident in the use of the formal *katharevousa* version of the language in the educational textbooks that Kalomiris published in collaboration with music theorist and conductor Philoktitis Oikonomidis [Φιλοκτήτης Οικονομίδης] in the 1930s (Afhentopoulou 2022, 34). The difficulties in translating the title are apparent, e.g. in the performances of the work in the United States by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra under Dimitris Mitropoulos [Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος] in 1939,⁸ as well as in the private edition of the work in 1958 entitled in both Greek and French.⁹

From the 1908 version to the 1936 revision, the work retained its five-movement structure (see Table 1). It was revised into a four-movement version in the final 1958 edition, with the omission of the second movement, “Like a Game and a Lullaby [San paichnidi kai san nanourisma].” The metonymies (“like a...”) semantically refer to the analogy between the signifier and the signified, as well as the shared properties that allow for their comparison or connection through a link of relevance in space or time (Broni 2017, 10). In the movement titles of the *Romeic Suite*, metonymies refer to the aforementioned “language

⁷ State control, censorship, the regime's contempt for intellectuals, interventionism in arts and letters, anti-communist propaganda and the persecution of dissidents, as well as the mandatory conscription and ideological indoctrination of adolescent Greeks in the National Youth Organization (EON), were defining features of the “New State” and the so-called “Third Hellenic Civilization” imposed by General Ioannis Metaxas [Ιωάννης Μεταξάς] (1871–1941) who became a self-declared prime minister on 4 August 1936. These policies drew ideological influences and practices from Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany (Koliopoulos and Veremis 2007, 128–129).

⁸ As *Suite from Modern Greece*, the work was conducted by Mitropoulos in its original five-part version on 2 February 1939, marking its first performance in the United States, alongside works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Johannes Brahms, and Claude Debussy. A few months later, at the concert of 14 April 1939, the work was listed as *Hellenic Suite*. Three of its movements were performed alongside Georgios Sklavos's [Γεώργιος Σκλάβος] symphonic fantasy *Aetos*, five of Nikos Skalkottas's [Νίκος Σκαλκώτας] *36 Greek Dances*, as well as works by Édouard Lalo, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and Hector Berlioz. Program materials sourced from: Dimitris Mitropoulos Archive, American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Box 27 (Programs), Folder 2. Programs of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (1937–1949).

⁹ The dual full title of the publication is: “Manolis Kalomiris, *Romeiki Souita* for Orchestra, Opus 5 (Composed 1906–1908) / *Suite de la Nouvelle Hellade* pour orchestre, Opus 5 (Composée 1906–1908). Athens, 1958. Composer's property.” Tsalachouris (2003, 77) notes that this is a handwritten copy of the score by the copyist Sotiris Lazos [Σωτήρης Λάζος], in a small and rather impractical format given the scale of the work. For the purpose of this paper, a copy of the work kept in the Library of the School of Music Studies at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki was studied.

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of the people,” concerning their spelling idiom, but also to Western forms; the “lullaby [nanourisma]” is designed in a lied form and the “jest [chorato]” serves as the scherzo. The intertextual nature of both language and music is expressed in the subtitle of the first movement “*From the Tales of the Old Lady* [Apo ta paramythia tis grias],” while the reference to the metrical novel *Erōtokritos* by Vitsentzos Kornaros (1553–1613/1614) cites the latter’s exact verses nos. 661–662 in the handwritten score, as a rare reference by Kalomiris to the poetic heritage of the Cretan Renaissance (Tsalachouris 2003, 77).

Table 1. Structural layout of the *Romeic Suite* movements in the different versions of the work

Version 1907-08, Revision 1933-36	Published version 1958
I. From the Tales of the Old Lady [Apo ta paramythia tis grias]	I. From the Tales of the Old Lady
II. Like a Game and a Lullaby [San paichnidi kai san nanourisma]	II. From Erōtokritos and Aretousa
III. From Erōtokritos and Aretousa [Apo ton Erōtokrito kai tin Aretousa]	III. Like a Dance and a Jest
IV. Like a Dance and a Jest [Sa choros kai sa chorato]	IV. The Palace
V. The Palace [To palati]	-

Similarly, in the final movement, “*The Palace*,” Kalomiris includes the lyrics of the first stanza from the eponymous poem:

Upon the sea’s wide, rolling tide,
a craftsman, wise and deft of hand,
once fought a battle fierce and tried
to build a Palace proud and grand.¹⁰

The poem “The Palace” was said to have been written by Yannis Psycharis [Γιάννης Ψυχάρης] (1854–1929), an eminent figure of the Greek literary demoticism (Romanou 2006, 158), to whom the Kalomiris’s work is also dedicated.

¹⁰ The original text in Greek: “Στης θάλασσας επάνω τα νερά / ένας τεχνίτης με μυαλό και γνώση / μεγάλο αγώνα είχε μια φορά / Παλάτι ζακουστό να θεμελιώσει.” Translated by Giorgos Sakallieros.

However, the aforementioned first stanza comes from the poem “Solomos” by Palamas, included in his collection *The Songs of My Homeland* (Daka 2022, 302).

It is not known whether Kalomiris had in mind the form of a symphonic suite, a multi-movement symphonic poem, or even a programmatic symphony when composing the *Romeic Suite*, nor to what extent he was aware of the corresponding efforts of initiating a corpus of Greek symphonism by either Dionysios Rodotheatos [Διονύσιος Ροδοθεάτος] (1849–1892) (in the symphonic poems *Atalia* and *Lo Cid* from the 1870s) or Dimitrios Lialios’s [Δημήτριος Λιάλιος] (1869–1940) four-movement *Mitternachts Traum (im Süden)* [*Midnight Dream (in the South)*] from 1891 (Sakallieros 2023, 33, 41–42); most likely, he was unaware of them at the time. It is also uncertain whether the choice of the title *Romeic* instead of *Greek* (or *Hellenic*)¹¹ was intended to avoid associations with Dionysios Lavrangas’s [Διονύσιος Λαυράγκας] (1860–1941) *First Greek Suite for orchestra* (1903), whose three movements also function as ontological metaphors of qualities or features of locality: I. “Heroic March [Heroiko Emvatirio];” II. “Klephtic Serenade [Kleftiki Serenata];” III. “Village Dance [Choriatikos Choros].” What is certain, however, is that Kalomiris was eager to contribute to large-scale Western symphonic forms as early as 1908 (Kalomiris 1988, 145–46). Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade* had made a strong impression on him ever since the work’s Viennese performance in 1906, and the Greek composer, according to his own writings, continued to draw on the ideas, aesthetics, and techniques of the Russian composer even during his years in Kharkov (Romanou 2005, 108). Table 2 presents a comparative overview of the movements from both works.

¹¹ During the nineteenth-century ideological discourses in Greece, ethnological designations and definitions were also discussed: Adamantios Korais [Αδαμάντιος Κοραΐς] (1748–1833), a leading figure of the Modern-Greek Enlightenment, proposed the term “Greek [Graikos]” as early as 1801, derived from the Latin “Graecus,” as evidence of the connection between ancient Greece and modern Greece. The term “Romios,” as a popular contraction of “Roman” (including “Romeic” and its derivative “Romiosyni”), expressed the Orthodox identity of the Greeks during the Ottoman rule, the connection with Byzantium, and the Greek nation’s ties to the East (Mackridge 2009, 48–49, 55). The choice of “Hellenic [Hellenes]” was solidified in the Declaration of Independence of the First National Assembly (1 January 1822, which comprised the first Greek Constitution during the Greek War of Independence), reflecting the intention of the country’s progress towards the path of westernization while also resonating with the strong European philhellenism of that time (Sakallieros 2023, 37). According to Chardas (2024, 221), on an esthetic level, the “Romeic” identity was associated with the concepts of resilience, bravery, emotionality, spontaneity, and vitality, while the “Hellenic” identity was linked to the ancient Greek values of balance, moderation, clarity, and coherence.

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Table 2. Comparative review of four movements of Kalomiris's *Romeic Suite* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*

Kalomiris, <i>Romeic Suite</i> . Published version 1958	Rimsky-Korsakov, <i>Scheherazade</i>
I. From the Tales of the Old Lady	I. The Sea and Sindbad's Ship
II. From Erōtokritos and Aretousa	II. The Story of the Kalandar Prince
III. Like a Dance and a Jest	III. The Young Prince and the Young Princess
IV. The Palace	IV. Festival at Baghdad; the Sea; the Ship Goes to Pieces on a Rock Surmounted by a Bronze Warrior

Beyond the four-part structure, the significance of the folk legend is emphasized in both works (“From the Tales of the Old Lady;” “The Story of Prince Kalandar”), and the love story of the two young characters is reflected in the corresponding cantabile slow movements (“From Erōtokritos and Aretousa;” “The Young Prince and the Young Princess”), while both final movements represent the description of the sea. For his finale, “The Palace,” Kalomiris denoted in the program of the 1937 concert (1937, 7): “It is, along with the ‘Tales of the Old Lady,’ the most important part of the work. With simple means, the sea is depicted, the waves continually rising, a simple motif in the horns grows louder and develops into a theme.”

Kalomiris places great importance on his themes, constructing them paratactically and avoiding a dense developmental approach. He mainly relies on a tonal-based architecture followed by subsequent transformative and modulating distinct thematic sections. Gradually, elements of modal locality and chromatic tetrachords emerge, with the use of augmented-second intervals intensely evoking an orientalist (or, here, “Romeic”-wise) musical atmosphere.¹² These Eastern-influenced melodic elements are endowed with a gently chromatic (though profoundly Romantic) harmonic language, layered across different groups of orchestral instruments and often comprising allusions to folk-like musical performance. These heterogeneous musical signifiers

¹² In Chardas's remark (2024, 221), in the context of modality in Greek art music, the distinctly Eastern interval of augmented second ensures an auditory connection with the “Romeic” identity, at least at an initiatory level. Furthermore, due to the appropriation of ancient Greek music theory by the West since the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the use of the so-called church modes seems to carry a multitude of connotations in the whole concept of Greekness by domestic composers up until 1950.

are semantically encoded as significations in the 1908 program-manifesto “A Few Words”: “Now, if the craftsman used foreign material in building his Palace, alongside the local, it doesn’t harm, as long as the Palace is founded on Romeic soil, made for Romeic eyes to first enjoy, so that it can be considered a purebred Romeic Palace” (Kalomiris 1988, 146–47).

According to Tsetsos (2011, 72–73), Kalomiris’s organicist nationalism holds the normative notion that nations and their music grow and sprout on national ground, as they are not constructs of history but products of the natural evolution of humanity. Greek nature is among the forces that shape the “national soul [ethniki psychi],” whose character defines the uniqueness of the national music (see above: “[...] as long as the Palace is founded on Romeic soil [...]”). Nature, in order to give birth to history, must itself be historical; it is asserted that for Kalomiris this position is already set as a precondition. It is also noted that in the 1908 “A Few Words” text (Kalomiris 1988, 145–47), as it reappears in the 1937 program, all the adjectival qualifiers of “Romeic” have been replaced by “Greek,” perhaps as a consequence of the lingual prerequisites of the authoritarian Metaxas’s regime at the time.

The grand and formal opening in both *Romeic Suite* and *Scheherazade* establishes E minor as the central key for their outer movements (I, IV), and D major / B minor for their middle movements (II, III, thus indicating a common macrostructural tonal design). Kalomiris initially introduces a dual function of the leading tone (as D and D#, Example 1a), while Rimsky-Korsakov seems to prefer a more “subdominant,” thus modal character (as D, Example 1b). However, in the transposition of the theme up a fifth – emphasizing the tonic-dominant relationship – Kalomiris also appears more willing to highlight its modal qualities. The pastoral character of the introductory theme is reinforced by the first solo of the English horn, an instrument Kalomiris is very fond of in his orchestral writing. At the same time, he seems not to overlook the characteristic orientalist quotation of the interval of augmented second (G–A#) in Rimsky-Korsakov’s theme, although he himself does not yet introduce it.

Example 1a. M. Kalomiris, *Romeic Suite*. I. Moderato non troppo lento. Introductory solo of the English horn, followed by the continuation of the theme in the upper strings, mm. 2–10.

Moderato non troppo lento

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for the English horn (Cor. Ingl.) and the bottom staff is for the upper strings (VI. I / II.). Both staves are in E minor (one sharp) and common time (C). The tempo is Moderato non troppo lento. The music begins with a rest for two measures, followed by a melodic line. The English horn part features a prominent augmented second interval (G to A#) in the second measure. The string part provides a harmonic accompaniment with a similar melodic contour.

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Example 1b. N. Rimsky-Korsakov, *Scheherazade*. I. Largo e maestoso. The introductory theme by the whole orchestra, mm. 1–6.

Largo e maestoso

tr~~~~~

The main theme of the first movement – and indeed of the entire *Romeic Suite* – emerges later, in m. 25 (Example 2a). Kalomiris describes it as being of a “leitmotivic” character in his 1937 concert program, which explains both its modulating variations in the first movement and its reappearance in the concluding fourth. In this way, this theme acquires an organic role, contributing to the cyclic structure of the work. Its fully harmonized, richly chromatic version, as seen in Example 2b, musically and semantically represents the “Palace” (that entitles the fourth movement) as early as in the first movement.

Example 2a. M. Kalomiris, *Romeic Suite*. I. Moderato non troppo lento. The main theme of the first movement, mm. 21–24.

Moderato non troppo lento

Example 2b. M. Kalomiris, *Romeic Suite*. I. Moderato non troppo lento. The harmonized version of the first theme in orchestral reduction, mm. 25–28.

Moderato non troppo lento

25

Analogies of the *Romeic Suite* to *Scheherazade* can also be found in the slow, nostalgic themes of the love-stricken young characters, Erōtokritos and Aretousa, and the prince and princess respectively, both in G major and with a suspended-rhythmic texture. Kalomiris’s arpeggio-style theme is introduced by the cellos’ section with the characteristic unresolved leading tone (F#) and the concluding embellishment around a diminished fourth (E♭ – B♭), while

the composer's modal intentions are deployed under an asymmetrical 5/4 meter (Example 3a). The upper strings (first and second violins) introduce, in a similar atmosphere, the theme in the third movement of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* with the characteristic 6/8 meter, allowing the melodic line to move languidly in the style of a barcarolle (Example 3b).

Example 3a. M. Kalomiris, *Romeic Suite*. II. Andante ma non troppo Lento.
Introductory theme by the cellos' section, mm. 2–4.

Andante ma non troppo Lento ($\text{♩}=66$)

Vc.

mf dolce cantabile

Example 3b. N. Rimsky-Korsakov, *Scheherazade*. III. Andantino quasi allegretto.
The main theme of the third movement by the upper strings, mm. 1–8.

Andantino quasi allegretto

p

VI. I & II

Similarities can also be observed in the main themes of the finale in both works, in Dorian mode (from $E\flat$ and E, respectively), introduced in a grandiose and solemn atmosphere. Each theme arises as a transformed version of the first theme of the first movement in both works, thus validating the cyclic nature of their four-movement structural design (Examples 4a and 4b, respectively). Kalomiris (1937, 7) describes it as the theme of the of the “craftsman’s labor,” who, “over the waters of the sea” – expressed by the harp-like undulations of the strings – builds his palace; alternatively and in a metaphorical/metonymic sense, this is the composer who creates the “Palace” of national music. Regarding orchestration, the horns are the obvious choice by Kalomiris for presenting this heroic theme.

Example 4a. M. Kalomiris, *Romeic Suite*. IV. Agitato.
The main theme by the horns, mm. 16–22.

Agitato ($\text{♩}=69$)

Cor. 1.2.

ff

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Example 4b. N. Rimsky-Korsakov, *Scheherazade*. IV. Allegro molto frenetico. The main theme of the finale by the whole orchestra, mm. 10–13.



Finally, there are also analogies in the improvisatory-like cadenzas assigned by Rimsky-Korsakov to the solo first violin and the first clarinet, with Kalomiris activating precisely the same instruments. The metaphorical reference to the Greek folk clarinet (*klarino*) is reinforced by the use of chromatic tetrachords, which are introduced by the Greek composer for the first time in these transitional passages of the first movement; concerning their role in the thematic development, they appear more frequently from the second movement onward. For Kalomiris, the augmented-second interval does not express the oriental background of the native “Romeic” character alone, termed “coloring [chromatia]” and often mentioned in his writings. He himself attributes equivalent significance to the presence of this specific interval in the (Western-oriented) harmonic minor scale, identified in well-known works of the Baroque and Classical European art-music tradition, while emphasizing the need for its intonation in their interpretation; thus, the sense of “Romeic” locality semantically acquires a Europeanizing connotation. In the article “My Art and My Desires” in *Noumas*, submitted from Kharkov (Kalomiris 1910, 4), he states:

Here in Russia, where I teach, I would never allow my students to play Mozart’s *Fantasy in C minor*, for example, or Bach’s *Chromatic Fantasy*, as I would if I were somewhere in Romiosyni [A.N.: in Greek territory]; certain augmented seconds and certain whole-tone cadences (in Bach) [A.N., he refers to the subdominant-tonic interval relation] I would emphasize more, approaching them in this way to reflect the Greek character.

In Example 5a, we can observe the modal melodic texture in the first clarinet cadenza of the first movement of Kalomiris’s *Romeic Suite*, corresponding to the first cadenza of the solo first violin from the first movement of Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade* (Example 5b).

of the language question through literary production and press critique of the time (Tsagkarakis 2013, 17).

In a closer engagement with his musical audiences after 1908, Kalomiris incorporates issues of identity and language through the notion of historical continuity. As explained earlier, domestic ethnological designations relate to the interconnection between ancient Greece and modern times (the Latin-derived term *Graecus* as “Graikos” in modern Greek, as formulated by Korais), while the term “Romios” along with its derivative “Romiosyni” expressed the Orthodox identity of the Greeks and the nation’s close ties with Byzantium and its Eastern origins and influences (Mackridge 2009, 48–49, 55). Defenders of the *katharevousa* argued for the puristic character of a national language that was directly linked to classical ancient Greek, while the supporters of *demoticism* argued that the national language should be the language of everyday people and that linguistic change over time was an ever-evolving and culturally accepted condition (Frangoudaki 2001, 132). The alignment of the *demoticists* with the terms “Romios” and “Romiosyni” in relation to folk song and Byzantine chant was strongly reflected in the establishment of the Greek National School of Music. The identification of its leader, Manolis Kalomiris, with the *demotocist* movement certainly gives the title of the work in question, the *Romeic Suite*, the role of a musical signifier that is decoded within a broader cultural context of ideological integration.

The conceptual transition from the notion of the “individual” to the “collective” – a process of moving from personal experiences and perspectives toward a broader, shared understanding or activity and often in a social or historical context – as part of the music narration of an era and its people surrounded by their cultural pursuits and burdens, are all expressed in terms of multifaceted musicological approaches nowadays and under interdisciplinary and critical perspectives. In conclusion, Modern Greek musical culture was ontologically constituted in the 1910s under a twofold perspective in which its Europeanizing characteristics were being transformed into indigenous ones (or vice versa), while the formation of its identity became part of a domestic cultural evolution (such as the emergence of the National School and the works and ideas of Manolis Kalomiris). These terms and conditions all represent cumulative factors of the present historiographical and analytical attempt, as well as constituents of its semantic narrative.

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ЈОРГОС САКАЛИЈΕРОС

РОМЕЈСКА СВИТА (1907/1910) МАНОЛИСА КАЛОМИРИСА КАО ИНИЦИЈАЦИЈСКИ СЕΜΑΝΤИЧКИ ΟΖΝΑΧΙΤΕЉ ΚΟΜΠΟΖΙΤΟΡΟΒΕ ΙΔΕΟΛΟΓΙЈΕ И СТВΑΡΑΛΑШТВА. ΜΟΥΖΙЧΚΟ-ΑΝΑΛΙΤΙЧΚΙ И ΙΝΤΕΡΤΕΚΣΤУΑΛΝΙ ΠΡΙΣΤУΠ

(РЕЗИМЕ)

Μανολис Καλομιрис (1883–1962) посветио је свој стваралачки живот изражавању сопствене уметничке и идеолошке визије и музиком и речима. Његов опус већ дуго представља средиште истраживачког интересовања грчких музиколога, који настоје да осветле његову улогу у обликовању грчке националне музичке школе. Главну тему овог рада чине настанак и развој Καλομιρισове идеологије пре 1910. године, када се, након боравка у Бечу и Харкову, настанио у Атини. У раду се, такође,

упоредно разматрају композиторови чланци и „програм-манифест” из 1908. године и његово прво значајно оркестарско дело, *Ромејска свиџа* [*Romeiki Souita*] настала у периоду од 1907. до 1910. године. Музички и текстуални дискурс посматрају се као носиоци знакова и симбола, уз праћење семиотичке перспективе односа између „означитеља” и „означеног”, што одређује семантичке релације и води процесе означавања и тумачења, омогућавајући да се композитор и његова музика сагледају у ширем идеолошком и културном контексту.

Детаљна музичко-аналитичка интерпретација показује да *Ромејска свиџа* непосредно ступа у дијалог с уметничком музичком традицијом источне Европе с краја XIX века, нарочито кроз структурне, тематске и оркестрационе аналогije са симфонијском свитом *Шехерезада* оп. 35 (1888) Николаја Римског-Корсакова. Компаративна перспектива открива не само естетске и композиционо-техничке утицаје на Каломириса већ и како су такве интертекстуалне везе реконтекстуализоване ради изградње симболичких значења – везаних, на пример, за „Палату”, „(националну) душу”, „бојеност” [*chromatia*] и „занатлију” – која обликују његов настајући музичко-идеолошки идентитет. Постављајући Каломирисов уметнички развој у социополитички контекст тог времена, можемо разумети да његов стваралачки опус није био само лични подухват, већ одговор на шире културне токове и потребе Грчке с почетка XX века. Његов приступ музичком и текстуалном дискурсу добија интертекстуалну димензију, која му омогућава да своје идеолошке кодове пренесе различитој публици – домаћем књижевном и политичком кругу, као и све бројнијој атинској музичкој публици на почетку друге деценије прошлог века.

Каломирис се кроз ову међузависност музике и идеологије позиционирао као централна фигура у развоју грчке уметничке музике. Међутим, његово схватање „националног” стила није представљало изоловану творевину, већ је било дубоко укорено у органицистичким традицијама европских националиста XIX века. Његов оријенталистички изведен „ромејски” идиом стога у мањој мери представља прекид са западно-европским моделима, а више њихову идеолошку и естетску прераду у културном и политичком контексту Грчке раног XX века.

