

Singing of pain and memory – Emotionalizing mythistory of migration in Epirus

ECKEHARD PISTRICK (Halle)

1. Migration in the Balkans as concept of continuity and nostalgia

Diverse migratory movements caused by various factors such as pastoralism, cultural choices, economic necessities or political pressures have profoundly marked the contemporary economic, social and cultural outlook of the Balkans. Many Balkan countries possess a large diaspora community: 5% of the Turkish population live outside the present boundaries (FLICHE 2006: 109), Albania has lost even before the Second World War 13% of its entire population (PIPERNO 2002), rising up to 25% until now (BARJABA 2004). Greece has been a “classical” sending country of migrants with an estimated Diaspora of 3 Million Greeks until it became itself a favoured destination for migrants.

For many countries these complex migratory movements, which may be specified as a “circulating mobility” (related to temporal displacement often for seasonal work) and “migratory mobility” (as imposed long-term migration) (FLICHE 2006: 110), have been considered a historical continuity and a point of collective reference.

Migration has been seen as a part of the national narrative, of a shared national history¹, but also as a part of local histories and individual biographies, which sometimes function as a counter-discourse to the national narrative. Throughout these movements migrants were not simply passive actors of imposed events within transformation processes: migration was experienced and imagined, it shaped and questioned their individual identity and identification models, and in addition it led to the transgression of existing cultural and political boundaries (KRETSI 2002, MAI 2003, PAPAILAS 2003, CHIODI 2005). In particular the way *how* to remember migration was connected with a concept of “mythistory” (MCNEILL 1986) and a specific cultural encoding of migration history through oral narratives and songs. Migration as a relatively new phenomenon is inscribed into local folk culture, using transmitted formulas. Both forms of economic migration², the (predominantly short-term) labour migrations in the Ottoman period and between the two World Wars and the migration of Greek *Gastarbeiter* to Western Europe in the 1950’s and 60’s as well as the Albanian mass migration after 1990 was conceptualized as one temporal continuity.

Memories of the past and present on migratory movements are attached to terms of Ottoman or local origin such as alb. gurbet, kurbet, gr. ξενιτιά, serb., bulg. pečalba

¹ During the summer feasts incorporating migrants returning for holidays, it becomes visible, that this shared migration history is not only a construction of the migrants themselves but also of the village community as a whole. On a higher level this local migration history is appropriated and used in a national context – relating migration to a tragic national history.

² I exclude in this discussion the tradition of nizam – recruits’ forced migration in Ottoman times.

which bear in themselves a notion of emotionality and nostalgia opposed to the “official” terms used by mass media and scholars (alb. *mërgim*, gr. *μετανάστας*³).

Emotions are not only present in the terminology of migration but are also an important stimulator and an essential part in memorizing migratory events. The emotional load of migration, the state of being foreign⁴, is particularly intensely perceived on the lower levels of social organization, especially in family (individual) and village (collectively) context. Migration answered primarily to the individual economic needs of families and was understood in individual terms as a “service” or “sacrifice” for the family economy. Nevertheless national historians turned this economic need into a trope, building up an idea of migration as “collective national suffering” seen as an inevitable “sacrifice” in service of collective progress and prosperity. It was well understood that interpreting migration in terms of a national history can be turned into a powerful tool to mobilize memories and sentiments constructed as “collective”. This article excludes these imposed ideas of migration as “collective suffering” for the nation state, focusing on the local evaluations of migration songs and their roles in making sense of local history through the mobilization of sentiments through singing.

Migration has particularly shaped rural space. Once densely populated regions became already at the beginning of the 20th century transformed into sparsely inhabited areas, the abandoned villages became overgrown by forests and bushes (Cvijić 1918: 113). The present study focuses on a specific region with a particular high migration toll⁵, marked additionally through the omnipresence of a border (between Greece and Albania). According to GREEN (2005) and PISTRICK (2006) Epirus has attained a status of “marginal marginality”⁶, “ambiguity” and “cultural contestation” for cultural activities taking place in this area. Depopulation in Epirus (connected with the collapse of the socialist (cultural) system in the 1990’s), resulted in a discontinuity of local cultural traditions such as the tradition of multipart singing. Villages irrevocably lost their accumulated cultural potential, as it is remembered by villagers and recorded by the expeditions of STOCKMANN 1957 and PERISTERIS in 1955–1957. They became “muted” and “without voice” (PISTRICK 2005).

This article focuses on how migration memory in such a particular place is conceptualized and expressed through a constructed category of migration songs which allow people to digest and negotiate individual migration experience. Through singing Epirotes enable themselves to put forward their emotions embedded in local “histories” and experiences, sometimes supporting sometimes subverting the current national discourse on migration.

³ This term became known even in Western scholarship through the French translation of Cvijić 1918: “mouvements métanastiques”.

⁴ Being foreign in its double sense in the host society and in the country of origin; gr. “ξένος”, alb. “i huaj në vend të huaj” (“a foreigner in a foreign land”).

⁵ KAYSER (1964: 712) speaks of a zone across the continental Greek border from occidental Epirus up to the oriental Evros region with between 10%–40% of the inhabitants in migration.

⁶ Marginality in economic and spatial terms – as one of the poorest provinces of Greece, marginalized additionally through its geographical position at the border.

The phenomenon of migration songs (alb. *këngë kurbeti*, gr. τραγούδια της ξενιτιάς) was treated in Albanian and Greek ethnographic and folkloristic literature (VASILI/MUSTAQI 1980, SAUNIER 2004, ΤΟΣΚΑ-ΚΑΜΠΑ 2006) primarily as a textual category, which resulted in the almost complete neglect of the aural dimension of these songs, a dimension which is fundamental for a proper understanding of the repertoire. This article therefore concentrates on the musical aspects of migration songs and the local concepts attached to it.

2. Death and migration – mental concepts and related musical repertoires

Migration as a relatively recent social phenomenon has been inscribed into traditional local folk culture in reference to established cultural models of thinking and expressing. Since the beginning migration was socially understood as a survival strategy which challenged the institution of the family as the reference point of traditional patriarchal society. In this context migration was seen as belonging to the realm of *αδικία* (“injustice”) as opposed to *το δίκιο* or *δικαιοσύνη* (“justice”), which was associated with home and the established social order (SAUNIER 1979).

The concept of migration in the musical sphere was positioned in reference to established genres, especially the ritual repertoire of death laments from which musical and textual formulas were used deliberately and in stylized form⁷.

Underlying assumption is the local view of death as existing in an actual and metaphoric form. Being in the foreign land is seen as being “living dead”. A song from Zagoria region describes this state as being even more miserable than dead itself:

Emigration and slander, death and Charos
these four were weighed on a silver balance;
the heaviest was emigration, the heaviest is to be foreign.
Death has consolation, forgetfulness has Charos
But the separation of the living has no consolation at all.
(PUCHNER 1986: 155)

Therefore taking the road to the foreign land is comparable to taking the road towards death. Both death and migration are perceived as injustice laid upon humans by destiny – something out of the ordered and “right” world fixed through customs and rites. Death and migration are two extraordinary events, which require a response of the social community, of the community of living. SEREMETAKIS considers *ξενιτιά* “a basic cognitive structure within which life and death are thought as a foundational taxonomy” (SEREMETAKIS 1991: 85). Migration and death relate to the absence or loss of human beings and are in essence defined through social and spatial division. This incorporates the principle of distance from established social structures or the known world of the village. In addition, both are defined in negative terms

⁷ In Epirus on the Greek side despite their painful or nostalgic connotations migration songs cannot be reduced to this sphere; they can be performed as part of the table song repertoire and danced during joyful *paneyiri* like the song “Xenitemenou mou pouli” (gr. “My stranger, my little bird”) as Pogonissios or Tsamikos.

that means as a collection of absences. The reference point which makes the feeling of loss experiencable is the unit village-family.

This prominent reference model to actual or metaphoric death has tempted some authors to include migration songs into a wider conception of the Greek term *μουρολογία* (lament) (ALEXIOU 1980). Albanian informants told me in the same line of thought that “all songs of gurbet are a sort of lament”⁸. A similar wide concept of lament in other cultural surroundings was proposed by Kurdish informants who stated that “les lamentations ne sont pas pour les enterrements, elles sont partout. On peut chanter une lamentation pour celui que l’on aime, quand celui que l’on aime est mort ou en difficultés, quand notre famille nous manque, mais aussi lorsqu’un mouton du troupeau est pris par les loups”⁹. This inclusive approach neglects fundamental musical and performative differences between laments and migration songs in terms of “orderedness” of emotions and musical structure, relatedness to rituals and their constructed “music-historical” age. Above all singers perceive a different emotional content in both repertoires and clearly distinguish that migration songs are not “wept” but “sung” (vajtoj vs. këndoj, μουρολογώ vs. τραγουδώ). Singers do not need to verbalize in detail about these differences because they deeply *feel* them¹⁰. Vocal practice, subsumed under the umbrella term “to say” (alb. thotë, gr. λέο), was distinguished by the singers primarily between a sphere of “lamenting” and “singing”, which mark the border between music and “non-music”. It is therefore possible to „say a song“ and „to say a lament“ but not to „lament a song“ or to „sing a lament“ (HERZFELD 1981). This distinction is as much permeable as it is inconsistent and questioned by the singers in Epirus themselves who consider migration songs as being “in-between” the sphere of lament and song. As one informant puts it, in migration songs “one sings and laments at the same time”¹¹.

At least five musical repertoires in Albania and Greece refer implicitly or metaphorically to death: lullabies, laments, recruits songs, migration songs and laments for the bride.

While laments refer directly to death, migration songs and the related repertoires of recruits songs and bridal laments refer to a metaphorical death. The relatedness of recruits songs (seen here as a specific form of forced migration)¹² and the lament repertoire was shown in similar cases for Russia (MAHLER 1935) and Bulgaria (KAUFMAN 1988).

⁸ Alb. “të gjitha këngët e gyrbetit janë një lloj vajtimi” (HOTI 2007).

⁹ Singer Müyesser GÜNEŞ from the region of Ahlat, living in Istanbul (AMY DE LA BRETEQUE 2004: 16).

¹⁰ Posing the question “është një vajtim apo jo?” (“is this a lament or not?”) often resulted in ambiguous and contradicting answers by the performers who did not think in terms of rigid ethnomusicological categories.

¹¹ Alb. “këndohet dhe vajtohet në të njëjtën kohë”.

¹² Alb. *Këngë nizam* – recruits songs are a category which could not be treated in detail within the limits of this article, but whose study as a “parallel repertoire” would be very fruitful for comparative purposes.

3. Constructing a world of pain

Mental Concepts of Death and Migration and their related musical repertoires (Albania, Greece)

The table shows the interrelations of the mental concepts of death and migration in Epirus to which laments, migration songs and laments for the bride may be related by locals in a direct or metaphorical manner. These two points of reference are used to verbalize about musical repertoires, but they must not necessarily coincide with the actual emotions felt during any performance. All repertoires relate socially to a concept of physical loss or absence which is related to the different levels of social organisation.

Pain¹³ is the motivation to sing in the musical repertoires of different cultures (cf. PASQUALINO 1998, AMY DE LA BRETEQUE 2004, LORTAT-JACOB/DELAPORTE 2007). Pain as a concept exists within a socio-political framework which makes use of this concept resulting in what SEREMETAKIS calls “The politics of pain” (SEREMETAKIS 1991). Pain (alb. dhimbje, gr. πόνος) incorporates certain physical and emotional conditions and individual and collective references.

The ideal for every performer is to share the pain with the audience. This means not only that the singer “translates” the pain into a musical form but also that the singer as much as the audience takes part in shares the sufferings of the migrant.

¹³ The term pain – describing both *actual* deep physical and mental pain, is preferred by local singers to the notion of *nostalgia* usually connected to *remembered* pain. Singers refer in this sense mostly to pain as a metaphor.

Through singing one lives through the misery the migrant experienced. This can be understood in the extreme as an act of self-sacrifice.

In this sense, every performance of migration songs is a call for collective response to individual suffering¹⁴. In addition, pain and ability to express pain adequately is considered to be connected with truth. Singer Nazif ÇELAJ of the “Lapardha” multipart group reports that while singing, his feelings are completely as if he were *there* (in the land/the situation of the migrant)¹⁵. While singing he has the impression as living “with them there”¹⁶. Through transmitting his feelings¹⁷, he compels the audience to feel the same way he feels, evoking a “silence” (alb. *heshtje*) which makes the audience to “cry with tears”¹⁸. Kavall (end-blown flute) player Shaqir HOTI, having experience of performances in front of the Albanian Diaspora communities in Switzerland, Austria and Germany, describes a similar reaction of the audience after listening to migration songs: “the migration songs which I sung had more tears than applause”¹⁹. The precondition of absolute involvement of the musicians or singers for a “true” and emotionally satisfying performance is illustrated also by the Greek expression “βγήκε στο γκουμπέτ” (“he went out into gurbet”) which the famous clarinet player Kostas CHALKIAS mentioned referring to a musician/singer, who is “inside” his singing and playing, performing exceptionally good²⁰.

Underlying principle is that only through the self-experience of pain a singer becomes authorized to feel/sing about pain. Singer Tahir SEFIRI from Dibra (Debar) explained to me that through experiencing loneliness as the essence of the word “gurbet”, through having been himself a gurbetli in USA 1987–1990, makes him feel authorized to sing about gurbet for a larger audience²¹. He nevertheless considers the sentiments involved as intimate and personal belongings while singing in front of the public always gives him the impression to sing false in the sense as not being “truthful” to himself²².

The concept of pain incorporates also a fundamental gender aspect: In Greek lament tradition women are considered to be more sensitive towards an “understanding” of pain which increases with their age and experience (CARAVELI-CHAVES 1980: 146). This belief stems from the assumption that women have a special insight into the pains of life from being a mother. In a quite similar manner the father of a migrant family is said to weep “silently” for his migrating son, while the mother, beloved and siblings are the main bearers of the migration song repertoire. This distinction of the mourning affect is seen as being directly related to gender: women do

¹⁴ In Kurdistan this appeal to the collective is already expressed in one possible terminology for lament: *hewar* – “to cry for help” (AMY DE LA BRETEQUE 2004: 17).

¹⁵ Alb. “kur këndoj këngë të emigracionit ... ndenjat e mia janë komplet sikur jam atje” (ÇELAJ 2007).

¹⁶ Alb. “jetoj atje bashkë me ata” (ÇELAJ 2007).

¹⁷ Alb. “ndjenja që përcjell unë” (ÇELAJ 2007).

¹⁸ Alb. “qaj me lot” (ÇELAJ 2007).

¹⁹ Alb. “këngë të gyrbetit kur i këndonte me shumë kish të lot sa applause” (HOTI 2007).

²⁰ Interview with Kostas CHALKIAS in Pirsogianni, 2006.

²¹ Alb. “unë kam qënë që thotë fjalën gurbet: vetë” (SEFIRI 2006).

²² Alb. “në qoftë që si këndon për publikun si këndon fals” (SEFIRI 2006).

not cry with the men, they do not cry like them but in a different manner. Suspiciously the mother is omnipresent in migration song texts while the father of the family (and his reaction) is rarely mentioned at all.

Performance aesthetics are centred on the realization of this certain emotional content. Pain serves as stimulation for the creation of a “true” and “authentic” performance as perceived by its performers. The emotional state of pain is therefore indispensable for the production and reception of a truthful performance. Musical practice itself is consequently not considered as an independent fact but as intrinsically interwoven with the emotions of the performance context. The musical fact is seen as *deriving* from certain emotions. The way of singing, alb. “me të qarë” (“with crying”) or alb. “të qarë me bote” (“crying [with tears] outpouring”)²³ or gr. “με θλίψη” (“with mourning”), is in this sense not seen as a musical feature but understood as *deriving* from the felt pain of the singers. In the case of laments and migration songs the motivation to sing is “the personal signification and social (interpersonal) validation of ‘πόνος’ (pain)” (SEREMETAKIS 1990: 482).

Migration songs can be described in this sense as a „performative category“ (HERZFELD 1981). This means that singers and audiences define what can be considered a migration song less in relation to the thematic content they represent, but in relation to the performance context in which they are executed (HERZFELD 1981: 51). A “performative genre” as defined by HERZFELD (1981) and applied here on migration songs is constituted through context, behavioural expressions, gender of the performers and musical form.

4. How to perform the pain? – Singing Concepts and Sound Aesthetics for Migration Songs

Verbalizing and singing about migration in Epirus are intrinsically connected. Often conversations about migration are stimulated by “objects of remembrance” such as photos, souvenirs of migrants, ending up in the performance of migration songs. During such discourses emotions “heat up”, finding their ultimate release in a musical performance which is characterized through particular emotional features.

Singers describe these involved emotions as being connected intrinsically with musical features. They use terms which are situationally influenced and which can be understood only as attempts to approximate to a performance reality and to the real felt sentiments. Emotions are understood by them as intrinsic part of the musical form, not as something which is “filled” into a pre-existent musical form. But the way how musical form and emotions relate to each other is seen differently. MARSHALL (1977: 98–100) has demonstrated convincingly in case of the Debarčari-Macedonians that the heart is not seen only as the place where all actual and potential emotions are accumulated. The feelings are also gathered in the heart which has the potential to become the motor for action. The increasing emotional intensity results in the breaking out of emotions through song. The emotions will be communicated and then, they become for the first time conscious and visible for and controlled by

²³ “E qara me botë” is a collective lament: “crying with tears and wails”, hence it is not considered singing or a way of singing (KONDI 2007, unpublished study).

the performer himself. This way of seeing emotions as a precondition and inspiration for the singing process is contrasted with the opinion of singer Nazif ÇELAJ who sees migration songs as products of a mental reflection on a migration experience. He distinguishes two possible “births” of a migration song: The first birth is effectuated by the “rapsod” who reflects after years about a passed migration event. His song is everything else than an immediate emotional response on occurring events, on the contrary, it is a process of reflection, a way of becoming conscious on what has happened. In this sense the “rapsod” is a poet: “rapsodi është poeti”. The second creation or more adequately re-creation is effectuated by the singers in performance. While following the text as a “stimulator” (alb. ngacmues) which provokes and stimulates (alb. lëndon [hurts]) they bring the events “into being” through singing. The text serves as a guideline provoking the singers “to work with the text, creating variations and an idea of how to sing”²⁴. It is only here – in negotiation with the text – when the exact vocal sound quality needed for a specific song is found.

Singing the truth is connected to the way of *how* to sing, with a particular quality of sound. This quality of sound is conceptualized as deriving from the lament repertoire and natural sounds referred to in Northern Albania²⁵ as “kukatja” (deriving from the call of the cuckoo)²⁶ and “kuja” in Southern Albania (related to the howling of the wolf). “Kuja”, often called “me ulërimë” (“with howling”) is a technique based on an ascending intonation contour which is held on the highest pitch as long as the women wish. This howling is executed on emotional diphthongs such as *ou, eu, oi, ei, oui*²⁷. These techniques are used in migration songs in a stylized form, which is perceived as “ordered” in contrast to the “unordered” improvisational character of laments. Singing migration songs can mean also to use the general formulas of how to sing multipart songs. But it can also involve certain vocal techniques which relate to a specific emotional quality. Nazif Çelaj prefers to sing migration songs with “low voice” (alb. nën zë), while he performs “borohitje” (male solo lament) with another sound quality. He justifies this use of vocal quality with the fact that the Albanians or persons who felt pain or lived a tragedy (such as migration) can not sing with an upper voice (alb. zë të lartë) but exclusively with a lower voice (alb. zë të ultë – in the lower octave). Pain in his conception “weighs” on the vocal register.

The multipart group “Jonianet” from Saranda uses for migration songs a plaintive way of singing (related to female laments alb. e qarë me ligje), which they clearly distinguish from the usual way how to sing the second voice (Kthyes – the one who breaks/answers) in Lab multipart songs. The Kthyes (gr. γυριστής) in migration songs differs from the “ordinary way” of how to sing this voice: it has a “special way of how to sing Kthyes”²⁸, a different way of how to respond to the first voice. This specific form of Kthyes is “adjusted to the melody”²⁹, a melody that in migration

²⁴ Alb. “këngëtari duke punuar tekstin krijon variacionin, idenë e të kënduarit” (ÇELAJ 2007).

²⁵ As in comparable cases in Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia (KONDI 2007, unpublished study).

²⁶ High-pitched exclamatory phrase “ku-ku për mu!” (lit. “cuckoo is singing for me”, “woe is me”).

²⁷ KONDI 2007, unpublished study.

²⁸ Alb. “lloj të kthyerit” (KULO 2006).

²⁹ Alb. “përshtatet melodisë” (KULO 2006).

songs “does touch [or stir] you with pain”³⁰. The second voice – even in its stylized form – keeps its function within the musical structure, it can not break out as in laments to “discharge feelings or to cause relaxation”³¹.

Commenting on migration is not only effectuated through singing but also through instrumental music. A suitable repertoire perceived as being close to painful singing is that of alb. kaba/gr. μουσολόγια performed on both sides of the border. It is possible to “e qarë me violin” (“crying with the violin”). And also the clarinet had the role to imitate vocal crying. It is possible to cry for the dead, for migration, inspired by “mall” (“longing”) and “hidhërim” (“bitterness”). “Kaba” (instrumental) and “e qarë” (vocal) are used by the musicians of the Saze Ensemble of Përmeti sometimes as a synonym: both are “born” in a specific mournful moment. But generally they maintain a distinction between the vocal qarja for the dead and the kaba executed for migration. While the qarja has an extended ambitus of a sixth and seventh the kaba reaches only up to a fourth or fifth. Restricted interval range is seen as “meditim-melankolik” (“melancholic-meditation”) while the wider intervals of the qarja are said to be related to a “strong emotional feeling”³². The ambitus is seen in this sense as an indicator for different emotional intensity. While the qarja is “emotionale”, allowing a “shpërthim” (“outbursting”) of feelings, the kaba relates to “hall” (“harm”, “difficult situation”) and to “a problem which is kept in mind”³³. Even the degree of “orderedness” and rhythm is considered to distinguish kaba and qarja. While the qarja is considered as “being without rhythm”³⁴, “a piacere” in the sense of a free flowing metre, the kaba is more “outspread”³⁵. In general the kaba is considered being “more softened”³⁶, in a sense more “tamed” than the qarja. This “softening” and “taming” which becomes visible in musical structure and acoustically manifest is based on the “softening” and “taming” of emotions, thought to be connected with a growing reflexivity on pain. Interestingly ambitus, content and musical form are all put into a connection with the concept of an “embodied emotion”. The more extended the ambitus, the stronger the emotions involved, the more specific the content, the stronger the emotional involvement, the more emotion involved, the more “unstructured” or “broken” is the musical form.

Migration songs and instrumental pieces are fascinating cultural expressions of the overarching mental concept of pain connected to folk beliefs about death. The local explanation models about involved emotions are highly differentiated and relate as much to the text as to particular musical features which are observed as *deriving* from these very emotions. Memorizing migration memory through songs becomes therefore a mobilizing act of emotions which are expressed in distinct ways of *how* to sing.

³⁰ Alb. “melodi që të prek me dhimbje” (KULO 2006).

³¹ Alb. “ka një shkarkim të ndjenjave, një shplodhje” [shplodhje – relaxation means an emotional catharsis and that is the aim of lament, migration or recruits songs] (KULO 2006).

³² Alb. “gjendje forte emocionalë” (ZEQIRI 2008).

³³ Alb. “për një problem që ka shpirti” (ZEQIRI 2008).

³⁴ Alb. “është pa ritëm” (ZEQIRI 2008).

³⁵ Alb. “me e shtruar” (ZEQIRI 2008).

³⁶ Alb. “me i zbutur” (ZEQIRI 2008).

Bibliography

- ALEXIOU, Margaret (1980): *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*. Lanham.
- AMY DE LA BRETEQUE, Estelle (2004): *Lamentations de femmes kurdes déplacées: Les chemins de l'identité kurde en Turquie aujourd'hui*. Dissertation Université Paris VIII – Saint Denis (unpublished).
- BARJABA, Kosta (2004): "Migration and Ethnicity in Albania: Synergies and Interdependencies". *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. Summer/Fall, Vol. XI, 1. 231–239.
- CARAVELI-CHAVES, Anna (1980): "Bridge between worlds – The Greek Women's Lament as Communicative Event". *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 93 (368) (April–June 1980). 129–157.
- CHIODI, Luisa (2005): *The Borders of the Polity, Migration and Security across the EU and the Balkans*. Ravenna.
- CVIJIĆ, Jovan (1918): *La Péninsule Balkanique*. Paris.
- FLICHE, Benoît (2006): "Le nomade, le saisonnier et le migrant – une culture de la mobilité en Anatolie centrale?" *Études rurales*. (January–June 2006) 177. 109–120.
- GREEN, Sarah (2005): *Notes from the Balkans. Locating Marginality and Ambiguity on the Greek-Albanian border*. Princeton, Oxford.
- HERZFELD, Michael (1981): "Performative Categories and Symbols of Passage in Rural Greece". *The Journal of American Folklore*. Vol. 94, No. 371 (Jan.–March). 44–57.
- KAUFMAN, Nikolai (1988): *Погребални и други оплаквания в България* [Burial Laments and Other Laments in Bulgaria]. Sofia.
- KAYSER, Bernard (1964): "Nouvelles données sur l'émigration grecque". *Population (French Edition)*, 19e Année, No. 4. (Aug.–Sep.). 707–726.
- KONDI, Bledar (2007): *Vajtimi Ritual shqiptar* [The Albanian Ritual Lament]. Institute of Folk Culture Tirana (unpublished study).
- KOSTA-KAMPA, Soula (2006): *Τα Δημοτικά Τραγούδια Της Ξενιτιάς* [The Folksongs of Migration]. Athens.
- KRETSI, Georgia (2002): "'Shkëlqim' oder 'Giannis'? Namenwechsel und Identitätsstrategien zwischen Heimatkultur und Migration" ['Shkelqen' or 'Giannis'? Name changes, and the politics of identity between home culture and migration]. In: Karl Kaser, Robert Pichler, Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers (eds.): *Die weite Welt und das Dorf. Albanische Emigration am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts* [The wide world and the village. Albanian migration at the end of the 20th century]. Wien, Köln, Weimar. 262–284.
- LORTAT-JACOB, Bernard; DELAPORTE, Hélène (2007): *Le Chant d'un pays perdu*. Video.
- MAHLER, Elsa (1935): *Die Russische Totenklage – Ihre rituelle und dichterische Deutung* [The Russian Death Lament – their ritual and poetic analysis]. Leipzig.
- MARSHALL, Christopher (1977): *The Aesthetics of Music in Village Macedonia*. Doctoral Thesis, Cornell University, Faculty of Philosophy (unpublished).
- MCNEILL, William H. (1986): "Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and the Historians". *The American Historical Review*. Vol. 91, No. 1 (Febr.). 1–10.
- MIDDLETON, Dewight R. (1989): "Emotional Style: The Cultural Ordering of Emotions". *Ethos*. Vol. 17, No. 2 (Jun.). 187–201.
- PAPAILAS, Penelope (2003): "Money of kurbet is money of blood". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Vol. 29, No. 6 (Nov.). 1059–1078.
- PASQUALINO, Caterina (1998): *Flamenco gitan*. Paris.
- PIPERNO, Flavia (2002): *From Albania to Italy – Formation and basic features of a binational migration system*. Background paper for the CEME-CeSPI research mission.
- PISTRICK, Eckehard (2005): *Lab Epic and Historic Songs in the Saranda region (South Albania) – Continuity and Change in an Oral Tradition*. Master Thesis, Institute for Musicology, University of Halle (unpublished).

- PISTRICK, Eckehard (2006): "Saranda revisited – Musical Life in a 'border town' fifty years after Stockmann". In: Shupo, Sokol (ed.): *Urban Music in the Balkans: drop out ethnic identities or a historical case of tolerance and global thinking?* Tirana. 176–183.
- PUCHNER, Walter (1986): "The Stranger in Greek Folk Song". In: Shields, Hugh (ed.): *The Stranger in Ballad Narrative and Other Topics*. Dublin. 145–161.
- SAUNIER, Guy (1979): *Adikia – Le mal et l'injustice dans les chansons populaires grecques*. Paris.
- SAUNIER, Guy (2004): *Ta Δημοτικά τραγούδι της ξενιτιάς* [The Folk Song of Migration] (Reprint of the first edition 1983). Athens.
- SEREMETAKIS, Nadia C. (1990): "The Ethics of Antiphony: The Social Construction of Pain, Gender, and Power in the Southern Peloponnese". *Ethos*. Vol. 18, No. 4 (Dec.). 481–511.
- SEREMETAKIS, Nadia C. (1991): *The Last Word – Women, Death, and Divination in Inner Mani*. Chicago, London.
- VASILI, Kozma; MUSTAQI, Arsen (eds.) (1980): *Folklor shqiptar IV: Këngë për nizamët dhe kurbetin 3* [Albanian Folklore IV: Songs for nizam and kurbet 3]. Tirana. 5–11.

Interviews

- CHALKIAS, Kostas; Pirsogianni, Greece 20.9.2006 (clarinettist)
- ÇELAJ, Nazif; Tirana (Lapardha), Albania 30.8.2007 (singer)
- HOTI, Shaqir; Prishtina (Rrugova), Kosovo, 22.8.2007 (singer)
- KULO, Maks; Saranda (Nokova), Albania 27.9.2006 (singer)
- SEFIRI, Tahir; Skopje (Dibra), Macedonia 2.–3.9.2006 (singer, instrumentalist)
- ZEQIRI, Artur; Utrecht (Përmet), Holland 8.3.2008 (violinist)