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Skweee

Skweee, sometimes specified as Synthetik Scandinavian Funk, had its origins in Sweden in 2006. Among its originators and supporters it is claimed to be the first electronic dance music style to originate from Sweden. Early in its history it spread from Sweden to Finland. The first small independent Skweee-label Swedish Flogsta Danshall was soon followed by the Finnish label Harmönia, and later on by the Norwegian label Dødpop. The early development of the style was the result of the close co-operation, exchange of ideas (and DJ-ing) and friendship between the founders of Flogsta Danshall and Harmönia. The founder of Flogsta Danshall, Pavan (a.k.a. Frans Carlqvist), is commonly considered to be the originator of the style. Pavan started his label in order to release his first Skweee record 'Punt kick' in 2006. Credit for the naming of the scene, however, is given to Stockholm DJ Kool DJ Dust (a.k.a. Daniel Savio), who is also credited with being the first Skweee-DJ. Still today (2015) Skweee is principally concentrated on the Scandinavian countries, but established scenes are also to be found all around Europe as well as in the USA and Canada.

Skweee-music is exclusively electronic, and one significant feature of the genre is the use of simple equipment. When Kool DJ Dust made his first attempts at Skweee, his idea was to use only a Roland Alpha Juno 1. His equipment consists of this and some similar synthesizers, plus 'a cracked Cubase on a crappy PC' (www.skweee.com). Pavan describes his equipment as 'mostly old gear' and some instruments built by his brother. He also uses a Russian drumsynth from 1984 and a Juno 106. All his music, he says, 'is recorded live into a computer' (www.skweee.com).

Skweee is hard to describe with precision. Indeed, some descriptions champion a sense of imprecision. One of the main individuals in the Swedish scene, Mrs Queda, has called it a 'rough and slightly under produced music that makes you feel something' (www.skweee.com), while the slogan of Harmönia is 'You know that it's Skweee when you feel that it's Skweee.' Basically, Skweee is instrumental electronic dance music, but there are also more experimental and less dance-oriented tunes, and some recordings with rap-remixes. Pavan himself describes Skweee as: 'instrumental, quite primitive electronic music influenced by the rhythms of R'n'B, dancehall and funk. It usually consists of a "dirty" sound, vibes that make you think of early electro, techno and C-64 music [Commodore 64, author's note]' (www.flowmagazine.net). The tempos of Skweee are quite slow, usually around 90–110 bpm, but can range between 65 and 120 bpm. Reference to other genres is often made – hip-hop

and early techno, for example, are often mentioned, together with technical phenomena such as the SID chip (early sound chip used in Commodore computers) and Gameboy-sounds.

Most Skwee releases are 7-inch vinyl, but 12-inch vinyl records are also released in limited editions and directed towards DJs. The record labels have their own websites, and in addition there is a collective site, Nation of Skweee.

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THOMAS BOSSIUS

Skyládiko

The term *skyládiko* (meaning doggish-style) is broadly used to refer, usually in a derogatory way, to a wide spectrum of Greek *laikó* music from the 1970s to the present. In a stricter sense, the term derives from and designates the infamous nightclubs (*skyladika*) in Athens and other Greek cities during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the musical scene that developed around them and a number of 'second-rate' record companies. Despite its exclusion from the state-controlled media and its bad reputation, *skyládiko* was widely disseminated through informal networks and illegal radio stations, and became very popular. It emerged as a distinct musical genre simultaneously with the advent of *elafrólaiikó* (light *laikó*) in the central scene of *laikó* music and the creation of luxurious new music halls and modernized forms

of entertainment. The two categories of *laiko* music and entertainment should be understood as complex entities, which are in constant interaction and interpenetration. *Skyládiko* is in many ways an imitation of *elafrolaikó* and adopts many of its styles and manners (for example, in the presentation of the singers, the organization of the performances and the reception of the clients in the clubs). At the same time, however, it became a space for the production of new forms of popular music and culture that very soon started to infiltrate the central scene.

The most important creators of *skyládiko* included both new composers such as Kostas Psychogios, Takis Mousafiris, Takis Soukas and Nakis Petridis, for whom the *skyládiko* scene offered an opportunity to record their music and make commercial hits, and established *laikó* musicians such as Giorgos Manisalis, Antonis Repanis and Vasilis Vasiliadis, whose image and style were considered old-fashioned by the major companies, along with many other less well-known musicians. The important *skyládiko* composers were soon in high demand in the music industry, and they dominated the central scene during the 1980s and 1990s. Lyricists included composers such as Psychogios and Mousafiris, who were also prolific and innovative writers, established lyricists such as Iraklis Papisideris and Pithagoras, as well as new writers such as Maro Bizani, Loula Papagiannopoulou, Katerina Panagou and Spiros Giatras. Finally, among the singers of *skyládiko* were new names such as Kostas Kafasis, Kostas Karousakis, Kostas Koliás, Giorgos Margaritis, Giannis Floriniotis, Pitsa Papadopoulou, Antzela Dimitriou and Lefteris Pantazis (who were stars of the *skyládiko* clubs and recorded in small record companies) and known singers of *elafrolaikó* and *laikó* such as Stratos Dionisiou, Rita Sakelariou, Litsa Diamanti, Doukissa, and Dimitris Mitropanos, who built successful careers during the late 1970s and the 1980s, based on a repertoire highly influenced by *skyládiko*. It is important to stress, however, that all the important composers and most other creators resisted the label *skyládiko* and insisted that they had produced *laikó* or *elafrolaikó* songs. Moreover, most of them have substantially contributed to other styles of *laikó* and popular music and many are now considered important and authentic representatives of *laikó* music.

Skyládiko should be seen as a complex area comprising different musical, performative and ideological attitudes and sensitivities. The music of *skyládiko* does not differ essentially from the mainstream *laikó* of its time (it retains perhaps more elements from previous *laikó* and at the same time it incorporates

more daring innovations stemming from fashionable international musical styles), and its specificity lies more in the texts of the songs and in the personalities and the phonetic styles of its singers. More than anything, *skyládiko* is associated with a specific type of nightclub that attracted the underworld and the new generation of 'magges' (a reference to the style, the conception of manhood and the worldview of the 'bohemian vagrants, petty criminals, addicts, and unemployed or underemployed "street people"' [Manuel 1988, 127] who were associated with *rebetiko*), and was especially patronized by upwardly mobile social strata of the city and the country. These clubs offered a more direct, informal and carnivalesque form of entertainment (in comparison with the luxurious music halls), that aimed at the inebriation of the participants, the unobstructed expression of their feelings and desires, and the wasteful expense of money on rituals of conspicuous consumption (like the breaking of plates) and the company of women provided by the club. It must also be noted, however, that *skyládiko* clubs employed a great variety of *laikó* artists (including famous *rebetes* in the end of their career) and offered a wide range of programs and entertainment styles (for interesting autobiographical accounts of the *skyládiko* scene see Alexandris 1994; Floriniotis 2004; and Karousaki 2008).

The singers of *skyládiko* personified, in a perhaps more raw and open manner than did other genres, the emerging cultural trends and ideas, and their vocal styles were distinguished by their working-class or rural intonations and by their excessive passion. The male performers include: (1) traditional male figures with robust voices; (2) singers embodying modern conceptions of maleness and personhood and resembling the dominant models of *elafrolaikó*; and (3) singers who were known homosexuals or projected an ambivalent sexual identity. Most female singers, on the other hand, had powerful voices and they combined the image of a strong and independent woman with traditional female attitudes and roles. Most *skyládika* are love songs in which emerge new social realities (like the anonymous and alienating urban metropolis and the speedy pace of social mobility and modernization), new conceptions of gender, love and the self, and new ideas about politics, morality and success. Many songs are devoted to the fleeting and often cynical relationships of the city, with obvious and often explicit references to the women of the nightclubs, but most texts depict relationships of extreme passion and *amour fou*, 'crazy love.' This is a form of love in which 'sin' or 'illicitness' is a prerequisite to development (and we can therefore

say that the exemplary relationship of *skyládiko* is the erotic triangle), can lead to destruction or death, and is almost always accompanied by excessive behavior and drunkenness. 'Madness' is a central metaphor of *skyládiko*, designating a new, more radical form of individualism, a rejection of older social constraints, ideologies and morality, and a demand for immediate consumption and gratification. Many texts are directly related to the environment of the clubs and mythologize the 'night,' which is presented as dangerous, cruel and unpredictable and at the same time as more free, intense and exciting than the daytime world and conventional social life. Society and politics are viewed with indifference and cynicism and the essence of life is sought in the intensity of revelry and passion. Money, which is not demonized or saved as in previous *laikó*, is dissociated from effort and thrift, and is seen as a means for extravagance and the wasteful expression of feelings. On the other hand there are important continuities with *laikó* and *elafrolaikó* and many texts and themes express more traditional and politically charged sentiments, ideas, grievances and protests.

Skyládiko was associated with both the abnormal conditions and the aesthetics of the dictatorship (1967–74) and rejected by intellectuals and the mainstream media. Its music and entertainment practices were thought of as expressions of cultural deformity and decay and were relentlessly scorned, ridiculed and castigated. The process of exculpation and authentication of *skyládiko* began in the 1980s as part of the new legitimacy of popular culture (encouraged and orchestrated by the socialist government) and the optimistic and carefree mood of the time (for the evolving conceptions and evaluations of *skyládiko*, see Ioannou 2001; Economou 2005 and 2010). During this period, and even more intensely during the 1990s, many singers, themes and practices of *skyládiko* entertainment were transposed to the central scene of *laikó* music, adopted by parts of the establishment (famous businessmen, politicians, journalists, artists) and permeated the culture of the new private electronic media. At the same time, a number of mainstream artists, intellectuals and cultural intermediaries began to re-evaluate *skyládiko* and recognize its authenticity. In the 2010s many (but not all) *skyládiko* artists are highly respected and considered as important and genuine *laikó* musicians.

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Slovenska Popevka

The term *slovenska popevka* (Slovenian popular song) denotes a typically melodic song form, performed by one or two singers and accompanied by a dance orchestra or a (jazz) band. It is similar to the German *Schlager*, to which it is strongly related. While some *popevka*-like songs were being written in the late 1930s by Frane Milčinski-Ježek (1914–88) and Jože Pengov-Jožek (1916–68), who also rearranged a number of internationally popular tunes such as ‘La Paloma’ (Štamcar 2005), the actual emergence of *slovenska popevka* dates from the 1950s and has to be seen in connection with the changing political climate in Slovenia after the break between the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (of which Slovenia was a member) and Moscow in 1948 (Fritzler 1993, 38 ff). This resulted, among other things, in the relative liberalization of the cultural sphere in general and in the fostering of popular culture and entertainment in particular. In what was called the ‘self-determined path into socialism,’ popular music gained in importance.

The peak of popularity of *slovenska popevka* occurred in the 1950s and 1960s. Thereafter it experienced a series of declines and revivals, until in the twenty-first century it has become recognized and enjoyed as part of Slovenian national culture.

Early Slovenian Jazz and Post-war Repression

A crucial role in establishing the significance of popular music post-1948 was played by the media, especially Radio Ljubljana, the central Slovenian radio station (now RTV Slovenija; see Bezljaj-Krevel 1998). In order to satisfy the growing need for appropriate musical programs, the radio station recruited more or less all (professional) musicians available at that time and established its own musical bodies, among them different choirs, a symphony orchestra and Plesni orkester Radia Ljubljana (The Dance Orchestra of Radio Ljubljana).

The core of Plesni orkester Radia Ljubljana was a big band that was tied to the modest pre-war jazz tradition. An outstanding bandleader of that time was Bojan Adamič (1912–95) with his orchestra Ronny, which provided entertainment predominantly for elite dances in the late 1930s. During World War II, with the country occupied by Italian, German and Hungarian forces, Adamič’s band also played at events

of the Osvobodilna fronta (Liberation Front), such as meetings and improvised dances. After a member of the orchestra was shot dead by the occupying forces because of his connections with the armed resistance, a number of musicians, Adamič among them, joined the partisans (Amalietti 1985/6 a and b) and there he established a brass band and co-organized the propaganda, while also making musical contributions to Radio osvobodilne fronte (Radio of the Liberation Front). Returning from the war a hero, Adamič set up a new jazz band, which by June 1945 had already given its first public performance (Meden 2014).

American popular culture was widely tolerated immediately after the war. As the Communist authorities gained ground, however, the influence of ‘real existing socialism’ and Soviet-style cultural propaganda increased (Tomc 1989, 70). Consequently, in tune with the Soviet motto ‘Today he is playing jazz, tomorrow he will denounce his country’ (quoted in Eisel 1990, 94), jazz fell into disrepute. Jazz fans, especially those of the cult band Veseli berači (Merry Beggars), were subject to severe repression, and radio music editors could be admonished for broadcasting tunes with hot solos. Even Bojan Adamič, though an active member of the Communist Party, became *persona non grata* and was temporarily exiled to Albania, where he earned his living as a sports teacher (Alenka Adamič, n.d.).

After 1948 the situation changed radically. Before the break with Moscow, radio broadcasting predominantly featured politically colored spoken-word programs, and the rare musical broadcasts included folk music, classical easy-listening and battle songs, marches and film melodies of Soviet origin. After the musical agit-prop repertoire was removed, a vacuum emerged: the pre-war popular songs sounded old-fashioned, the ban on German *Schlager* and Italian *canzone* had not yet been lifted, and jazz was still undesirable. The way out of the crisis lay in the promotion of two locally developed musical genres, *narodno-zabavna glasba* (see separate entry) and *slovenska popevka*.

The Golden Age of Slovenska Popevka

The formation of *slovenska popevka* owes much to Bojan Adamič, (1912–95), one of the most outstanding personalities of Slovenian music history. Classically trained, Adamič was an all-round musician: pianist, trumpet player, conductor, arranger and prolific composer. Though he also wrote a number of classical pieces, he is remembered predominantly for his music for some 200 films (among them ones made by American, British, French and German producers),