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Mikis Theodorakis and the articulation of modern Greek identity

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on contemporary identity theories, such as those of Martin Stokes and Simon Frith, my aim, in this research report, is to interrogate the construction of modern Greek identity in Theodorakis' music. In Chapter One, I unpack the complex webs spun by history and culture to shape the modern nation, and the ways in which Theodorakis' political and musical life have intersected with them in the twentieth century. In Chapter Two I discuss the establishment of the *Popular Art Song* as a powerful agent of modern Greek identity. Chapter Three examines major moves in Theodorakis' advancing of popular art forms and hence his own renegotiation of modern Greek identity, while discussing theatre, `metasymphonic' music and lyric tragedy. Chapter Four explores Theodorakis' inner world, beliefs and perspectives, in particular his theory of Universal Harmony. Chapter Five discusses the phenomenon of Theodorakis' *Zorba* as the all-encompassing representation of modern Greek identity. It is concluded that Theodorakis shaped modern Greek identity through his music, mainly in the sixties; however, with the thrust of the technological revolution, a new Greek identity has emerged with which Theodorakis' music cannot contend. He has nevertheless remained a Greek cultural symbol, and an international symbol of culture, peace and freedom. Ironically, his most commercial piece, 'Zorba's Dance' from the film *Zorba the Greek*, has become an international marker of Greek identity.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Music in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree in any other university.

Angelique Mouyis

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