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"I'm Owned no Longer": Unveiling Muse's Ideology in the Song Won't Stand Down

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Abstract

Within a framework of political theory, and employing critical discourse analysis and systemic functional linguistics, this paper demonstrates that the lyrics of the song "Won't Stand Down" by the band Muse portray a left-libertarian political ideology. By focusing on the ideational function, which encompasses transitivity, textual, and interpersonal processes, the paper identified compelling evidence within the choice of words in the song. These words not only express a critical stance towards figures of authority but also shed light on their underlying negative intentions and the transformative process of attaining freedom. The analysis is based on the examination of the written lyrics of the song, ensuring a thorough understanding of its political implications.

Keywords: political theory, music, left-libertarianism, systemic functional linguistics, critical discourse analysis.

1. Introduction

Muse is an English rock band formed in 1994 in Teignmouth, Devon. The band consists of vocalist and guitarist Matthew Bellamy, bassist Chris Wolstenholme, and drummer Dominic Howard. They are known for their unique sound that blends elements of rock, electronic music, and classical music, as well as their energetic live performances. Muse's political ideology is one that emphasizes social justice, environmentalism, and anti-war activism. In an interview with Apple Music (2022), Matt Bellamy stated that there should be a systemic change in the way politics is done since there is corruption in the elites. In the same interview, Matt Bellamy identifies himself as a left-libertarian and shares Noam Chomsky's position within this ideology. The band has tried to raise awareness about these issues and encourage their fans to engage in activism and social change. Muse has become one of the most politically engaged and outspoken bands of their generation, inspiring a new generation of activists and socially conscious music fans.

In this paper, critical discourse analysis and systemic functional linguistics are employed to identify the linguistic elements Muse uses to critique the system taking a left libertarian position in the song "Won't Stand Down" from the band's latest album to date (The Will of the People, 2022). First, I present the main concepts and theories that encompass this analysis including political theory, left-libertarianism, and Chomsky's political ideology. Then, I provide an overview of the literature of previous works regarding music and political ideologies in

discourse analysis. Next, I describe the methodology employed to analyze the song, and I present the discussion based on the analysis. Finally, I will offer a conclusion to this analysis.

- The word choice used in song "Won't Stand Down" portray a left-libertarian political ideology.
- The band has negative attitudes towards authoritarian and oppressing figures.
- The lyrics project an attitude of rebellion.
- The song challenges the status quo by raising awareness of the injuries the authority figures have done.

2. Conceptual theoretical framework

In this section, the main concepts that underpin this paper will be discussed: political theory, left-libertarianism, Noam Chomsky's political ideology since he has been an influence on Muse, and the role of music in politics.

2.1 *Political theory*

According to Kymlicka and Patten (2003), political theory has been related to discussions around the nature of political power, the organization of societies, and the principles that guide political decision-making. They explain that "there is a vibrant debate about how rights claims relating to these forms of diversity connect with liberal-democratic principles of freedom, justice, and democracy. There are well-developed liberal theories of immigration or liberal theories of nationalism" (p. 3). Political theory is concerned with questions about the legitimacy of government, the distribution of power and resources, and the rights and obligations of citizens. This complex field comprises a wide range of concepts and debates. According to Graham and Hoffman (2015), by exploring the nature of political power, the principles of justice, the organization of societies, and the role of the state, political theorists seek to better understand the complex relationship between individuals, communities, and political institutions. There are different proposals in politics about how societies ought to be organized. Hence, there is an evident division of ideologies.

It is worth mentioning that political theory is tightly related to discourse analysis, in which it is classified as political discourse (PD). Fairclough and Fairclough (2013) explain that PD "is understood as the analysis of political discourse from a critical perspective, a perspective which focuses on the reproduction and contestation of political power through political discourse" (p. 17). Discourse analysis helps identify the assumptions, meanings, and connotations attached to political concepts and terms. It explores the linguistic and rhetorical strategies employed to define, frame, and categorize political phenomena.

I now turn to one of the most significant political ideologies, which is left-libertarianism.

2.2 *Left libertarianism*

In order to understand the principles of left-libertarianism it is important to refer to the notion of human nature. Chomsky (2009) asserts that "people have basic needs – not only survival, but those needs that are distinctive to human beings. The latter needs consist of freedom (creativity, autonomy…) and community with choice" (p. 51). Left libertarianism is a political philosophy that combines left-wing economic views with libertarian principles of individual

freedom and autonomy. Liberty ensures that we are not being used as a mere means of someone else's ends. According to Quong (2011), "Left libertarians offer an account of justice that appears firmly committed both to individual liberty, and to an egalitarian view of how opportunities or advantages must be distributed" (p. 64). Thus, left-libertarians believe that individuals should be free to make their own choices without interference from the state or other powerful institutions. This includes the freedom to engage in economic activities such as trading and entrepreneurship, as well as the freedom to express oneself through art, speech, and other forms of creative expression.

Another significant contribution of left-libertarianism is its focus on reducing economic inequality and promoting social justice. Vallentyne (2000) explains that "any violation of full self-ownership is unjust" (p. 3). Left libertarians argue that economic inequality and poverty are major barriers to individual freedom and autonomy and that the state has a responsibility to intervene in the economy to promote greater economic equality. This includes policies such as progressive taxation, social welfare programs, and the regulation of corporations and financial institutions.

Moreover, left-libertarians argue that the state should be limited in its powers, with a focus on protecting individual freedom and autonomy, which are human rights, rather than promoting the interests of the wealthy people in power. They propose alternative forms of governance such as participatory democracy, worker-owned cooperatives, and mutual aid networks. One ongoing debate within the field of left-libertarianism concerns the relationship between individual freedom and collective responsibility. Left libertarianism provides significant contributions to our understanding of the complex relationship between individual freedom, economic justice, and social change. By combining left-wing economic views with libertarian principles of individual freedom and autonomy, left-libertarianism provides a unique perspective on the role of the state and the possibilities for alternative forms of governance.

2.3 *Noam Chomsky and left libertarianism*

To attain the objective of this paper, it is relevant to identify Chomsky's political position to identify if it has a relationship with the song to be analyzed bearing in mind that Matt Bellamy advocates for left-libertarianism, and specifically with Chomsky's view. Noam Chomsky is a prominent American linguist, philosopher, and political activist who has been active for more than six decades. Chomsky's political ideology is generally considered to be left-wing, specifically a form of libertarian socialism or anarcho-syndicalism. Chomsky's political views are deeply rooted in his analysis of power and social structures. He believes that power is concentrated in the hands of a small elite, who use their wealth and influence to maintain control over society (Osborn, 2009). He argues that the concentration of power in the hands of the few leads to social and economic inequality, as well as the erosion of democratic institutions. From Chomsky's view, it is necessary to exert individual freedom through a libertarian vision, though he does not establish a specific social organization.

Chomsky's vision of an alternative society is based on decentralization and popular control. He advocates for the creation of a participatory democracy, where decision-making is decentralized, and power is shared among the people. In this regard, he argues that "political institutions […] are artifacts created by human beings to serve human interests and needs. They are supposed to serve interests and needs" (Chomsky, 2009: 52). However, these institutions fail to ensure the human nature of freedom and creativity. They exert control from their privileged position to serve their own interests. The state gives rise to the creation of elites that undermine the essential needs of the people.

3. Literature review

In this section, I will present some previous research related to the analysis of song lyrics regarding political ideologies and discourse analysis.

3.1 *Music and politics*

Music has played an important role as a powerful tool to transmit messages. Musicians may inspire and mobilize people through their music since they have an influx to certain sectors of the population. For example, through lyrics, they can convey complex ideologies in a way that is accessible to the audience. There are some critical discourse analysis studies on music. Those studies are focused on different social issues, ideologies, or power relations. For example, Putri and Triyono (2018) examined the song "We Shall Overcome" by Roger Waters and concluded that the song contains socio-political nuances regarding the conflict between Palestine and Israel. For the analysis, they employed a Critical Discourse Analysis Model to unveil the intended meaning.

Some studies disclose the relationship between music and political features such as social justice, nationalism, and gender (Randall & Klein, 2005); resistance and liberation (Goodman, 2012); promotion of political ideologies and social movements (Ostendforf, 2000); and social change (Street, 2013). Certainly, music has the power to signal a political message to the audience and have an impact on society to challenge or maintain the status quo.

4. Methodology

The analysis in this paper is based on the song "Won't Stand Down". This song was chosen because it is a powerful and thought-provoking composition that effectively captures the essence of societal transformation. This song showcases the potential of music as a vehicle for social change and activism in a current panorama.

The analysis was conducted through Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Firstly, the lyrics of the song will be analyzed through systemic functional grammar features identifying the ideational and textual metafunctions of language in order to identify patterns, meanings, and attitudes. Then, through critical discourse analysis, I will examine how the song reflects power relations, ideologies, and societal discourses. The research question guiding the analysis is the following:

How does word choice portray the political ideology of the band in the song?

4.1 *Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)*

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a theoretical and methodological approach that emerged in the late 1970s and has influenced different fields of study such as linguistics, sociology, and other social sciences. CDA focuses on disclosing ideologies, beliefs, and social issues that are conveyed or not through language. It has been employed to analyze different discourses such as political speeches, media texts, advertising, and educational materials, etc. Paltridge (2013) asserts that "critical discourse analysis explores the connections between the use of language and the social and political contexts in which it occurs. It explores issues such as gender, ethnicity, cultural difference, ideology, and identity" (p. 89). Therefore, one of the central ideas of CDA is the belief that language is a social practice that reflects and reproduces power relations in society. This view is grounded in the idea that discourse is not neutral but is rather shaped by the ideologies and interests of those who produce it.

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By revealing the hidden power relations and ideologies that are encoded in discourse, CDA provides a powerful tool for understanding and challenging the dominant discourses that shape our societies. It is important to consider the context in the analysis since the context allows us to interpret the discourse and identify the implications it has.

4.2 *Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)*

Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), also known as the *Theory of choice,* is a linguistic theory that was developed in the 1960s by Michael Halliday and his colleagues. SFL considers language as a social semiotic system that enables people to make meanings in a particular context. According to Halliday (2009), "Language, like other semiotic systems, is a systemic resource for making and exchanging meaning. Language is a particular kind of semiotic system which is based on grammar, characterized by both a stratal organization and functional diversity" (p. 5). Therefore, by applying SFL, we can analyze how language choices in the song reflect broader social and political ideologies. It allows to uncover how the lyrics construct meaning and interact with the socio-cultural environment.

Eggins (2004) states that SFL comprises four main claims regarding language: (1) Language use is functional; (2) the function of language is to make meaning; (3) meanings are influenced by the social and cultural contexts; and (4) language is a semiotic process of making meaning by choosing.

From the perspective of SFL, language consists of three meta-functions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Ideational functions are related to the representation of experience through grammatical resources and comprise the system of transitivity. Interpersonal functions are related to social interaction, and textual functions are related to the organization of discourse.

As explained above, the ideational function includes the transitivity system which proposes that every clause in a sentence comprises three processes (i.e., material, mental, relational, verbal, existential, and behavioral), participants, and circumstances (i.e., time, location, manner, cause, and purpose). The interpersonal system includes several components, including mood, modality, and polarity. These components work together to express the speaker's attitude towards what they are expressing, as well as to the listener. According to Haratyan (2011), "[m]ood is concerned with the topic of information or service and whether it is giving or demanding and the tenor of the relationship between interactants. Tenor deals with gender or status-based power" (p. 262). Mood can be declarative, interrogative, and imperative. Modality allows the speakers to express their attitudes. It can be expressed through modal verbs, and other structures to express the degree of certainty, obligation, or possibility.

The textual function includes the theme, information structure, and cohesion. According to Haratyan (2011), "theme includes the message in a text, indicating the identity of text relations. Topic comes first and after that Comment appears to expand, justify and provide additional information to preceding information" (p. 263). Cohesion "relates to the "semantic ties" or relations of meaning within text" (Haratyan, 2011: 263). Cohesion allows one to connect different parts of the text and creates unity and coherence.

4.3 *The analysis*

The song was analyzed through systemic functional grammar. First, the words in the lyrics were counted and divided into types (i.e., the number of different words) and tokens (i.e., the total number of words regardless of their frequency throughout the song). For the analysis, each line was categorized based on two metafunctions: ideational, and interpersonal. For the ideational metafunction, the transitivity system was considered. The information was stored on a

table that included the number of clauses (i.e., 53) and the processes present in each one. Some causes have more than one process, while some clauses do not correspond to any process within the transitivity system (e.g., *now die alone*), but rather belong to the interpersonal system (i.e., mood). Regarding interpersonal metafunction, the mood was considered as part of the analysis. Thus, each clause was also classified into interrogative, declarative, or imperative. As for the modality process, there was no modal verb identified in the song. Thus, the process is non-existent in the song. In the following section, I will present the results of the analysis.

5. Results

In this section, the results of the analysis will be presented. First, I will describe the transitivity analysis of the ideational metafunction carried out. Then, I will explain the interpersonal function.

The lyrics of the song include the following proportion of tokens and types:

Table 1. Tokens and types in the song's lyrics

Item	No.	%
Tokens	295	100
Types	101	34.2 %

Table 1 shows that a high proportion of the words in the lyrics of the song are repeated. This property is usual in this type of text genre since it contains verse, pre-chorus, chorus, and bridge. The total number in Table 2 below represents the number of times each process was present in the song, and the percentage is obtained concerning the tokens of the lyrics. The following subsections will present the results regarding the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions.

5.1 *Ideational metafunction*

As explained above, the ideational metafunction comprises the transitivity system, which will allow us to identify the patterns of how language represents actions, processes, and relationships between participants. Table 2 displays the processes that were identified in the song.

Table 2. Transitivity analysis

Transitivity process	Total number	Percentage	Examples from the song
Material	24	45.3 %	You've used me for too long
Mental	15	28.3 %	I see your disguise
Behavioral	12	22.6 %	Won't stand down
Verbal	2	3.8 %	You were just gaslighting me
Relational: attributive	10	18.9 %	You are just a user and an abuser
Existential	0	0%	

Note. The transitivity analysis within the ideational function.

This analysis shows that most of the content of the song contains material processes, which encompasses the mood of the song which is mostly declarative and describes events carried out by an entity (this will be explained in the following section). The band uses the pronouns *I* and *You* to signal the actors in the process and, *me* and *you* as the most repetitive goals. This process

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represents the interactions between the actor and goal which are constantly interchanged as can be appreciated in the two verses below:

> **_I_** *never believed that I would concede*
> *And let someone trample on me*
> **_You_** *strung me along, I thought I was strong*
> *But you were just gaslighting me*
>
> **_I've_** *opened my eyes, and counted the lies*
> *And now it is clearer to me*
> **_You_** *are just a user and an abuser*
> *Living vicariously*
>
> *...*

The band predominantly employs verbs laden with connotations of violence, oppression, and rebellion to articulate these behaviors. For instance, phrases like *"but now, you have pushed me under"* and *"you've used me for too long"* vividly depict the singer's sense of victimization. Additionally, the lyrics *"I'll shoot you before you take aim"* further emphasize the retaliatory nature of their response. The actions undertaken by the authoritarian figure bear a profound influence on the singer, serving as a catalyst for their counteractive actions in the face of oppressive circumstances.

In relation to the mental process, there were many stances in the song mostly regarding the cognitive process. For example, in the following two consecutive lines:

> *I've opened my eyes, and counted the lies*
> *And now it is clearer to me*

The phrase *"I've opened my eyes"* is employed metaphorically to symbolize the act of gaining awareness or insight. Consequently, it has been categorized as a mental process rather than a material one. Through this expression, the band seeks to convey a clear and unambiguous message of having uncovered the abuser's deceitful lies and hidden motives, and now possessing a heightened level of consciousness. The choice of words utilized by the band within the mental process aligns with the cognitive domain, as they epitomize the concept of becoming cognizant, altering thoughts, and exposing intentions and falsehoods.

Based on the analysis, an important number of behavioral processes were identified. The title of the song itself: "*Won't stand down*" corresponds to this process and is repeated as part of the chorus eight times throughout the song. As indicated above, in SFL, language needs to be observed on the basis of the context in which it is used and not in isolation. Thus, even though "stand down" might seem like a material process, the context of the song indicates that it is a behavioral process as it captures the spirit of resistance. It signifies the singer's determination and commitment to challenge and confront the existing order, highlighting their refusal to comply or give in. This may arise as a response to an emotional and/or cognitive trigger.

Regarding the relational process, a total of 10 stances were classified as attributive as they attribute specific characteristics to a dominant entity or figure. These relational processes were identified as intensive, possessive, and circumstantial. Examples of intensive processes include lines like *"You are just a user and an abuser,"* wherein the band employs adjectives such as *"abuser"* to describe a figure of authority, signifying their negative attitudes towards the political system. Additionally, the band uses adjectives like "*strong*" and *"stronger"* to illustrate a progression from a state of weakness to one of resilience, highlighting their capacity to withstand the harmful behaviors they have endured. The phrase *"I'm owned no longer"* further reinforces a sense of liberation from the oppressive figure, emphasizing the band's newfound freedom.

5.2 *Interpersonal metafunction*

Regarding the interpersonal metafunction, the mood analysis is displayed in Table 3. This analysis will help to identify how language is used to represent attitudes and intentions in the song.

Table 3. Mood Analysis

Item	Total Number	%	Example in the song
Imperative	3	5.7	*Now die alone*
Declarative	48	90.6	*I've opened my eyes; you've used me for too long*
Interrogative	0	0.0	

Note. The analysis of mood within the interpersonal function.

As explained previously, the mood of the song serves as a significant indicator of the band's attitudes toward the depicted situations. Primarily classified as declarative, the statements within the song present accounts of various scenarios that are portrayed as factual events. Phrases like "*You strung me along*" or "*I opened my eyes*" exemplify this process. Interestingly, the band employs only one imperative sentence, *"Now die alone,"* repeated three times throughout the song. Through this command, they express their intentions and attitudes towards the system, advocating for its disappearance. Notably, the choice of the word *"die"* carries a potent connotation, underscoring the band's strongly negative attitude towards the entity in question. By incorporating the adverb "*now,*" they mark a transformative shift between the past events narrated and the necessity for change in the present. In the following section, I will now discuss the results presented by answering the research question.

6. Discussion

As mentioned earlier, Matt Bellamy explained that the album "The Will of the People" (2022) stands for a position changing the way politics are done. Considering the research question: How does word choice portray the political ideology in the song? Based on the analysis presented above, it becomes apparent that there is a strong consistency between the band's ideas and the lyrics of this song. Primarily, the lyrics convey past oppressive actions and behaviors while projecting a sense of resistance and empowerment in the present and future. These actions are mainly represented through verbs related to violence, power abuse, and the deprivation of personal freedom. By recognizing that language involves the act of choice, the band intentionally selects words such as "*abuser*", "*gaslighting*," "*living vicariously*," and "*you strung me along*" to depict power relationships and the concept of liberty. These concepts also align with Noam Chomsky's position in claiming individual freedom as in the phrase "*I'm owned no longer*", which is key in signaling the concept of liberty. The choice of words serves to convey negative attitudes towards a dominant authority that exerts control and serves its own interest. As discussed earlier from a CDA perspective, the use of discourse serves to represent ideologies or interests. In this case, libertarianism is reflected through the use of ideational and interpersonal metafunctions. Although the song does not explicitly mention the political system, it does allude to an entity indicated by the pronoun "you". Considering the context of the song and the band's interviews, it is plausible to interpret this song as embodying an attitude of rebellion towards both the political system in general and any entity attempting to subjugate or manipulate individuals.

Left-libertarianism opposes authoritarianism and strives to empower people to be autonomous and free, asserting their inherent rights as individuals. The lyrics of this song aim to depict the process of breaking free from a dominant entity, which could be the political system or any other oppressive figure. The message of the song aligns with the principles of this political ideology, taking a strong libertarian stance. Muse has been recognized for writing songs that emphasize social justice, and through their music, they encourage their audience to engage in activism and contribute to social change. In the lyrics of the song "Won't Stand Down," they attempt to challenge the status quo by raising awareness about the negative actions of authority figures and confronting them with an empowered attitude.

7. Conclusions

The results of this analysis conclude that the song "Won't Stand Down" by Muse portrays a left-libertarian political ideology which is represented through word choice in the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions employed by the band. The application of critical discourse analysis as well as systemic functional linguistics in examining songs, particularly within the realm of political theory, yields valuable insights into power dynamics, ideologies, and social change. In the case of Muse's song, a clear consistency emerges between the band's ideas and the lyrics of the song. These depict past oppressions and advocate for resistance and empowerment in the present and future. Through careful word choice, Muse conveys negative attitudes towards dominant authorities, reflecting a strong libertarian position aligned with principles of autonomy and individual freedom.

The combined use of SFL and CDA offers a powerful analytical approach to examining the political implications of song lyrics. These frameworks enable comprehensive analysis, facilitate the detection of political ideologies, unveil power dynamics, provide contextual understanding, and ensure a rigorous evidence-based analysis.

Muse's emphasis on social justice and its call to engage in activism and social change aligns with the band's goal of raising awareness and inspiring listeners to challenge the status quo. By examining the lyrics of songs such as Muse's "Won't Stand Down," we are reminded of the transformative potential of music and the importance of analyzing the discourses that shape our understanding of politics and society.

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Cultural Trek in the Greek-speaking Villages of Lower Italy

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Abstract

In this article, the region of the Greek-speaking villages of Puglia, the region known as Lower Italy, will be presented and, through research, a route will be proposed, as a means of preserving Hellenism and the unique cultural heritage of the place. The trek will present the nine villages with their archaeological and historical monuments, as well as intangible heritage elements, such as the Griko language, dances, traditional music, and religious festivals.

Keywords: Lower Italy, Greek-speaking, tarantella, Greek, cultural trek, cultural tourism.

1.1 *Cultural tourism*

The development of cultural tourism as a product of a strategic policy to promote a region in a competitive market, according to Manola and Tsatalbassoglou (2020) is, nowadays, gaining more and more acceptance, as new alternative plans are developed through different from the classic sectors in the tourism industry, for holidays that look out for the sustainability of a place.

According to McKercher and Ho (2011), cultural tourism, although it initially promotes the interests of the tourism industry and has some negative points, basically improves the quality of life of residents, through sustainable economic development, as it is based on the preservation of material and intangible advantages of the region, through precisely this maintenance of them.

The issues related to cultural tourism according to e-Culture (2009: 360) are distinguished for their variety and include, not only objects and intangible elements and events such as local history with tangible monuments, such as distinct architecture, local technology, clothing, items handicrafts, but also intangibles such as gastronomy, art and religious, musical and oral traditions and dialects spoken by the inhabitants of a region. Griko is spoken in this area, and these will form the axis, which the presentation of the trip will be organized around, as the Greek language is a trademark of the area.

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1.2 *Grecia Salentina*

Apulia (Puglia) includes the region of Salento, which is the easternmost point of the Italian peninsula. It is a flat area with smooth hills. South of the city of Lecce in the place called Greece of Salento (Grecia Salentina) is the Greek-speaking villages centered on Kalimera where the population speaks the dialect and the residents welcome visitors with a sign at the entrance of the settlement that reads "Kαlos Irtate".

In Lower Italy, the villages are full of customs and traditions reminiscent of Greece, which makes sense if one considers the geographical proximity and the historical elements that connect the regions. The Italian parliament recognized the region of Salento as an ethnic and linguistic minority and freed the inhabitants to fight for the preservation of their identity without having, according to Profili (1999), separatist tendencies, as Italian nationals, bearers of a separate tradition, declare.

Many and impressive are the points that reveal a common culture such as the buildings, the traditions, and, to a certain extent, the language.

1.3 *Cultural elements*

The dialect of Salento

According to Kamaroudis (2015: 21), a dialect is a form of language that keeps a distance from the common language type and is spoken by several speakers in a wide geographical area.

The Catoitalian dialect is spoken with two varieties [1] in southern Italy in two regions, in Calabria [2] and the region of Salento in Apulia (Grecia Salentina). According to the UNESCO Red Book of Threatened Languages [3], Griko today has about twenty thousand (20,000) native speakers.
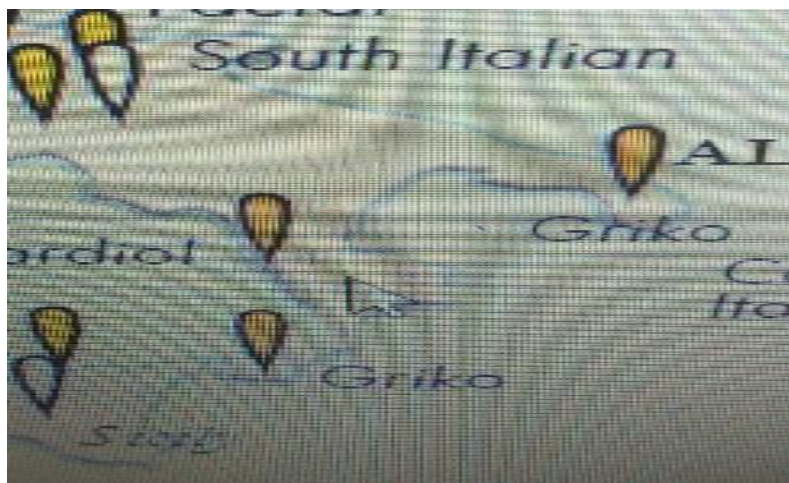
Source: unesco.org

Photo 1. South Italy on the UNESCO map

The relationship between Greek and Catoitalian is interactive and dates back to ancient times as, as Greco (2001) states, the Greeks created a peculiar culture that developed complex societies long before the arrival of the Romans.

Systematic theories related to the subject have been developed from time to time. Rohlfs (1997) argued that this dialect comes directly from the inhabitants of the ancient colonies

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of Greater Greece. Aprile et al. (2002) summarizing the theories other than Rohlfs also present as the main ones those, who want the Greek of the region to be an outgrowth of Byzantine rule in Southern Italy during the 9th and 12th centuries AD, or finally Byzantine Greek has mixed with the ancient ones to give the current form of the dialect.

The specific dialect, in fact, can be considered an evolution of the ancient language that was enriched and renewed during the Middle Ages, but also from the frequent contact of the two cultures and a proof of this close bond, as Macri (2016) mentions, it can be considered beyond the existence of common words, the oral tradition of a series of stories, even fairy tales, few, but existing, with a common theme.

Devoto (1962) does not think that this dialect was preserved precisely, due to the intangible cultural heritage of the Greek-speaking inhabitants.

According to Kondo (2017), the present-day Greek speakers of Lower Italy have recognized the importance of preserving the dialect and the identity of the region and are turning, as Tomassi (2015) states, to its written record, as well as through its codification and organization with morphological and syntactic rules could be made available for teaching and learning, and becoming, from a language of simple communication, to a language of study of a culture about to disappear, which, in this way, will be saved at the last moment.

The action "Pos matome Griko" is also moving in this direction, which, as a free multimedia website since 2013, is a completely free source of knowledge. Funded by the European Union, it is an effort to preserve and bequeath the language, addressed not only to students, teachers, and adults, in Italian university departments, where Modern Greek is taught, but also in general to anyone interested in deepening their knowledge regarding Griko, as well as other cultural elements that shape the character of the area.

- **Gastronomy-Music-Dance**

In the preservation of the cultural identity of the Greek-speaking inhabitants, in addition to the language, gastronomy, music, and dance played an important role, often gathered in festivals such as the most famous one also known as "La notte della Taranta" [4] which is a trademark for the preservation of delivery. As stated on the official website of the festival [5], the first event took place timidly on a small stage in Melpignano in 1998 and today it is an event of global scope that included foreign elite guests who were invited to re-interpret Salento folk songs and entertain with dances with tarantella [6] and pizzico [7] to lead the way. Today the festival includes not only Griko, but also folk traditional music from all over the peninsula, and it continues to be the most important festival for the dissemination of local culture.

In addition to the official authorities, the private initiative also plays an important role as there are nurseries [8] interested in preserving the unique local tradition. In them, a serious attempt is made to combine the past with the future by promoting new musical groups to discover the roots of Griko through songs and dance. Thus, interesting adaptations are proposed, the rural life of Grecia Salentina is presented through photo exhibitions, as well as product tasting, which is an important point of reference since, as argued by Deliyiannis et al. (2022), food is a key ingredient that makes a place attractive, as it invites tourists to get to know the culinary traditions and get an authentic sense of the culture of a region.

From the Greek side, there seems to be an increased interest, especially in recent years, for Greeks to get to know the customs and traditions of the region, as the emotion for the preservation of Greek traditions in Italy is evident.

At this point, it is necessary to emphasize the warm climate which the residents welcomed the President of the Republic Mrs. Katerina Sakellaropoulou, during her visit last April [9].

2. Cultural trip to Grecia Salentina

There are nine villages where Griko is spoken today, Calimera, Castrignano dei Greci, Corigliano, d'Otranto, Zollino, Sternatia, Martano, Martignano, Melpignano, and Soleto. Tomassi, in an interview he gave with Marchiscella (2017), considers two to be the most important, Sternatia, due to the population predominance of Griko use, and Calimera, due to the general cultural concept.

- **Calimera**

The city's tourist website mentions Piazza del Sole, with the Basilica of S. Brizio as a focal point for hiking in the area.

In Via Costantini one can admire interesting buildings of the seventeenth century and a little further down, in San Vito, those, which are characteristic of the social stratification, as the houses of the nobles are at a short distance from those of the lower classes. Via Montinari is the most important road with the homonymous Palazzo, the seat of the last Orthodox Metropolitan of the area, Sgismondo de Matteis, who died in 1621.

Then, in the park, the visitor can "read" through the sculptures, the identity of the area, which is characterized by the existence of two languages, Italian and Greek that was in danger of being lost with modernization; the pioneer for its preservation was Palumbo, whose bust can be found here, as well as the marble column, from the 4th century BC, a gift of the city of Athens to Calimera in the 1960s where it is written, "Zeni esù en ise ettu' 'sti Kalimera" [10]. On the 28th and 29th of July, the great feast in honor of San Brizio takes place every year and crowds of people flock to worship and feel the intense religiosity. Ftikos (2019) suggests Easter as a visiting period, when the tourist can experience the representation of the Passion of Christ based on the Byzantine ritual. An important point is the Natural History Museum, where, in recent years, there has been an intense effort to preserve the turtles of the area. The route continues outside the city: we take the provincial road Calimera – Martignano. The Madonna delle Grazie Chapel, known as the Mantovano Chapel, dates from 1696. To the left of the road, is the pangiara, that is, a large drystone, a square structure with an external staircase.

- **Martignano**

Located about two kilometres from Calimera, it has about 1800 inhabitants and with special buildings that are often visited by many architects, due to their Byzantine influence, such as the church of San Pantaleone and the "pozzelle", the ancient rainwater collection systems. In the chapel of S. Giovanni Battista there are wonderful frescoes dedicated to both Saint John and the Apostles. Nearby, one can visit the Institute of Mediterranean Studies of Lecce.

- **Corigliano d' Otranto**

Corigliano, which has been twinned with Ilion, with about 6,000 inhabitants, is one of the most visited villages in the area because of the Castello dei Monti, which is the most complete monument of military architecture in Puglia. Of medieval construction, it was adapted by Giovan Battista de' Monti, to the needs of the military art of the 16th century, is surrounded by a moat and has a square plan with four circular towers.

Beyond the castle, the traveler can admire impressive buildings and mansions of the 18th century. The best time to visit is the feast of the patron saint Agios Nikolaos. In the village there is also the local cultural association Argalio, that is, "loom" which, as the relevant website [11] mentions, devotes itself to preserving the rich culinary and musical heritage of the place, by rescuing testimonies and transferring them as sources to be recorded by scholars in Italy and Greece.

- **Castrignano dei Greci**

The Greeks, who were in the area during the sixth century AD, used the existing fortresses to repel the attacks of the German tribes. Around the year 1000 AD, the fortress was transformed into a castle with three towers, which the village was built around, a village, which the Greeks, according to the official website [12] of the municipality, gave language, manners, and customs to. Its current architecture is special as it resembles a castle. An important point of the visit from the first era of the settlement is the crypt of Agios Onofrios, which dates back to the 6th century and came back to light in 1965, after earthworks. It is a natural cave designed to meet the religious needs of the inhabitants and consists of two areas, the first larger dedicated to Sant' Onofrio and with an altar carved into the stone. In the church of Madonna Annunziata, there are rare frescoes from the nineteenth century. Another important point of reference is the Clock Tower and the Pozzelle Park, which consists of dozens of deep wells in excellent condition.

- **Martano**

Further south of the route is Martano, the largest of the Greek-speaking villages in the surrounding area, with approximately 10,000 inhabitants. The most important monument [13] of the area is the medieval castle, but also worth a visit are splendid churches, such as L' Assunzione and Maadonna del Rosario. In Martano there is also the menhir Santu Totaru with a height that reaches 4 meters and 80 centimeters, it is also called Mehnir di Teofilo, because it is located on the homonymous street or Santa Lucia. The monolith is located in a place surrounded by houses, has a square shape and an engraved cross.

- **Zollino**

Full of menhirs and dolmens [14], it is the oldest settlement in the area and has about 2,000 inhabitants. Its churches of Pietro e Paolo and Sant'Anna stand out for a winter event, the Festa de lu Focu, a festival that takes place every year on December 28 since 1978. Traditional dances with Greek music with culinary creations based on recipes of the Salento peninsula are a hallmark record of the celebration.

- **Melpignano**

The Roman centurion Melpinio gave his name to the village, but it is probably of Byzantine origin [15]; perhaps this is the reason why even today it maintains the Byzantine standard during the religious service in the famous church of S. Giorgio. At the height of the tourist season every August the aforementioned Notte della Tantanto festival takes place, with over 100,000 spectators.

- **Sternatia**

Rohlfs argued that the name comes from the Greek word "cistern" and is justified by the fact that the village has four large tanks for collecting rainwater. The second and more beloved version by the residents wants to be an alteration of the word "embrace", as the village is a union of seven smaller settlements, formed to avoid the predatory raids of the barbarians and the fortress mentions on its outer wall the word Fillia "Friendship" (Porta Filia). An important day in the village is August 22nd, when the patron saint San Giorgio is celebrated. Other points of tourist interest are the Chiesa Matrice, and the crypt of San Sebastiano. It is worth a visit to the Chora group, which maintains an unquenchable interest in the Griko-Salentina culture.

- **Soleto**

The village has about 5,500 inhabitants and, as Greco (2001) states, it was a pivotal point for the historical development of Byzantine Lower Italy.

Famous according to Lombardo (2011) since its discovery by the Belgian archaeologist Thierry van Compernolle is the map of Soleto, the oldest known map on a shell [16] that is undoubtedly ancient. Although doubts have been raised about the age of the map, tourists from all over the world flock to Taranto to admire it, participating in the regional development of the peninsula. In the city, one should not neglect to visit the churches, Santo Stefano, Anime Sante del Purgatorio, and San Nicola, each of which has to offer images of another era, as they belong to different historical periods.

However, in the wider area of Soleto there are important monuments such as Palazzo Baronale, a castle built in the 11th century by the Normans.

3. Research

In order to investigate the knowledge of the Greeks regarding Grecia Salentina and the disposition of a tourist visit to the region, an attempt was made to cross-reference the aforementioned with a survey that included a questionnaire and an interview, ways of gathering information, which according to Tsopanoglou (2000: 84-86) constitute a process survey data recording. When the survey questionnaire and interview process was completed, it was given to people, other than the participants in order to see if there were any misinterpretations.

The questionnaire was given, by the three researchers, to Greeks, from 1 to 26 September 2022, at Syntagma Square, at Davaki Square in Kallithea, at the Metro Station in Ilioupoli and at the Metro Station in Egaleo. A total of 234 people accepted to answer. The results of the questionnaire and the interviews are then presented.
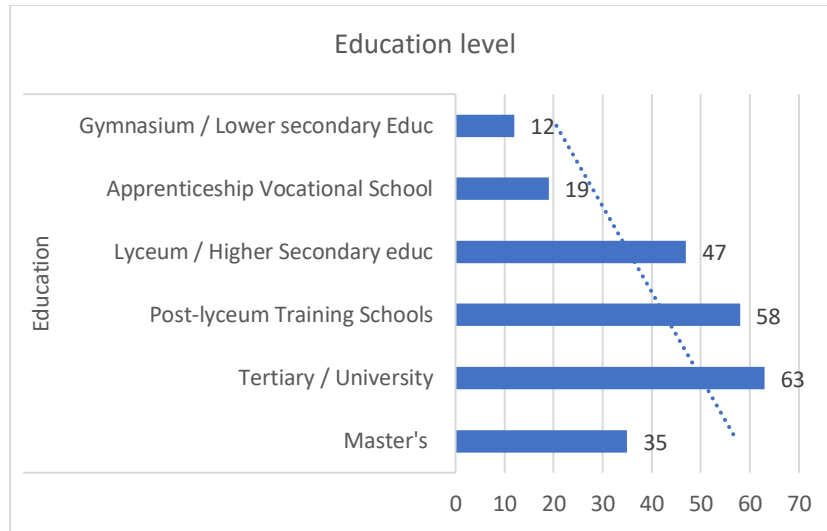
- **Questionnaire**

Question 1: "Gender"
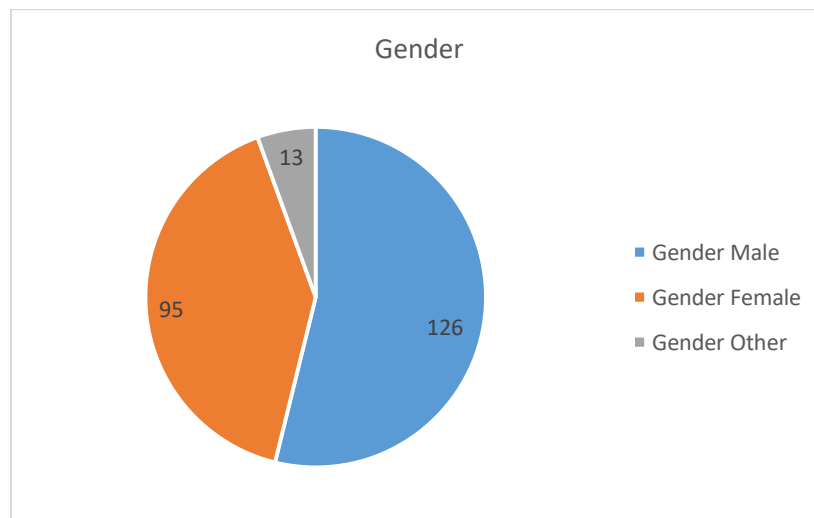
Graphic 1. Gender

From the answers we see that 53.8% of the respondents are men and 40.9% are women, while there is also a percentage of 5.3% that answers the specific question "other"

- **Question 2: "Education"**

Graphic 2. Educational level

It should be noted that the choices concern the Greek level of education, therefore as can be seen in the diagram, 31 people in total have completed compulsory education and apprenticeship, 105 people have finished secondary education and, of these, 58 have some kind of specialization, while 98 have a university degree

- **Question 3: "Do you think that the Greek language is also spoken in Italy by Italian citizens?"**
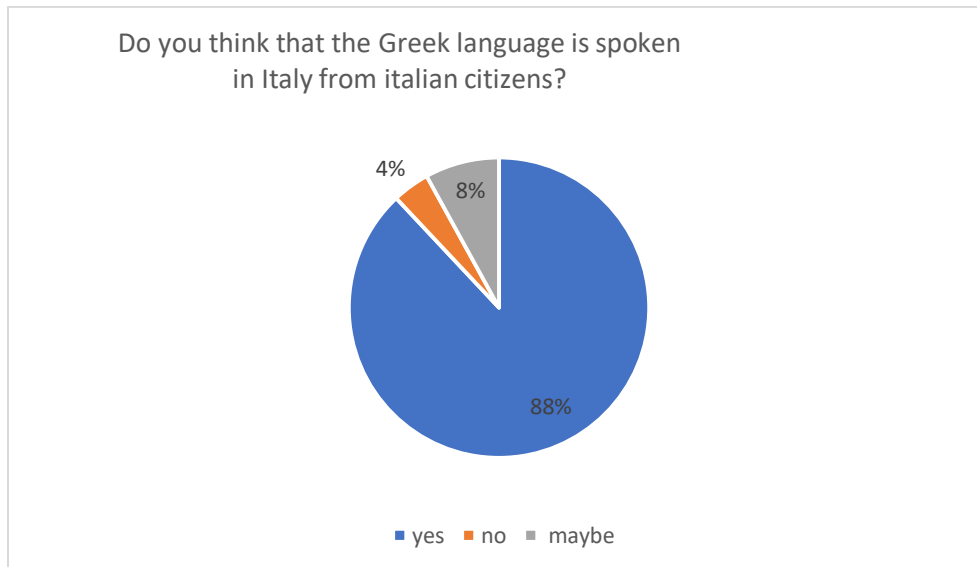
Graphic 3. Greek language spoken besides Greece

The overwhelming majority of those questioned, 206 people, believe that the Greek language is also spoken in the neighboring country, while only 7 give a negative answer and 21 hesitate to answer.

- **Question 4: "Do you know any villages in Apulia where the Greek language is spoken?"**

Graphic 4. Greek-speaking villages of Puglia

In this particular question, there is a decrease in positive answers compared to the previous one, most likely due to the geographical terms or the non-existence of the names of the villages, as it then appears that the relationship is reversed.

- **Question 5: "When do you think the Greek presence in the area of Salento began?"**
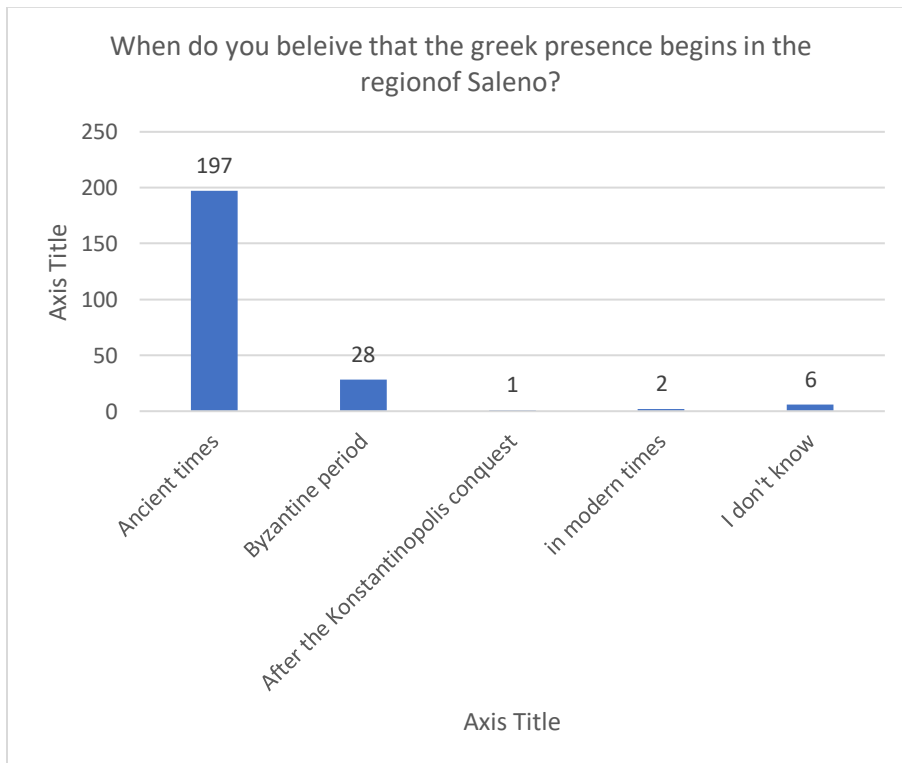
Graphic 5. Greek presence in peninsula

The dominant value (mode), i.e., the rank that collected the highest frequency (Tsopanoglou, 2000: 127) clearly shows us that the respondents are well aware that the presence of Greeks in South Italy starts from the era of colonization in ancient times.

- **Question 6: "Do you know what Griko or Grekanika are?"**

Do you know what "Griko" or "Grekanika" is?

15

9

210

- Do you know what 'Griko' or 'Grekanika' is? Yes
- Do you know what 'Griko' or 'Grekanika' is? No
- Do you know what 'Griko' or 'Grekanika' is? Maybe
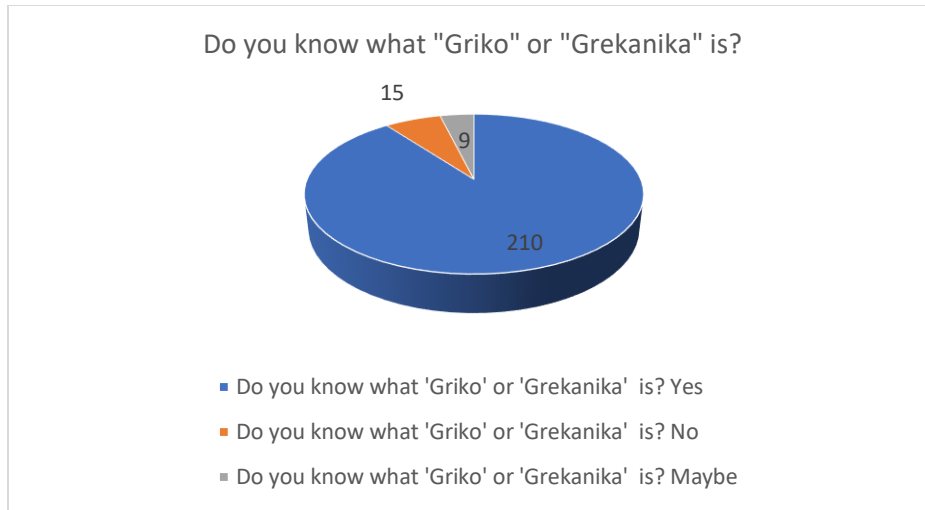
Graphic 6. "Griko – Grekanika"

As can be seen from the graph, the respondents know the terms "Griko" and "grekanika"

- **Question 7: "Do you know traditional songs and dances of the region such as the tarantella or 'my man is going'?"**

Do you know traditional songs or dances of the area like "tarantella" or "andras mou paei"?

3.70%   5.30%

91%

- Yes   - No   - Maybe
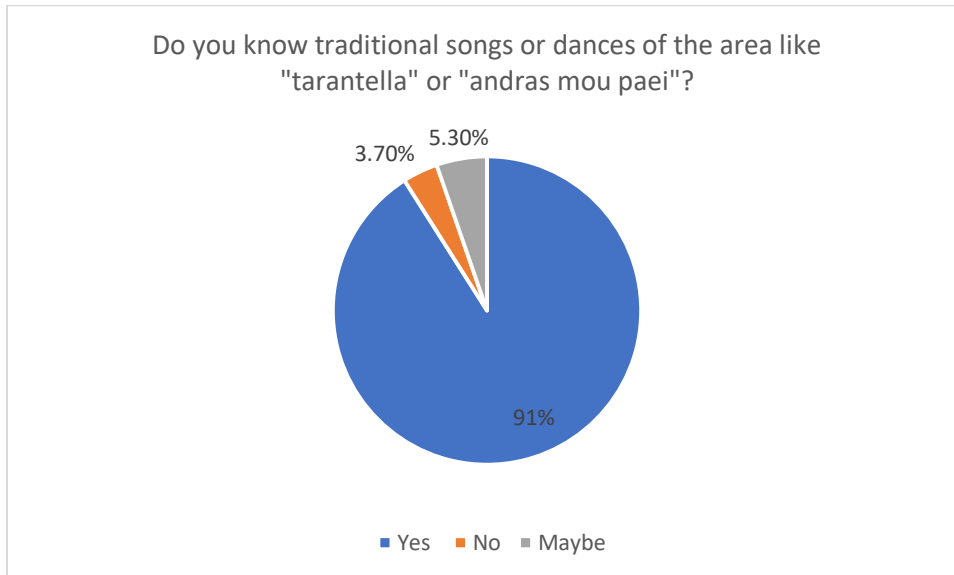
Graphic 7. Traditional songs or dances

From the graph it can be seen that traditional songs like "My man goes" or dances like "tarantella" are familiar to the vast majority of respondents, as 213 out of 234 answered positively to this question and only 9 negatively, while 12 were not sure.

- **Question 8: "Do you know the festival 'La notte della Taranta'?"**

Do you know the
festival 'Notte
della Taranta"
Maybe
22%

Do you know the
festival 'Notte
della Taranta" Yes
43%

Do you know the
festival 'Notte
della Taranta" No
35%
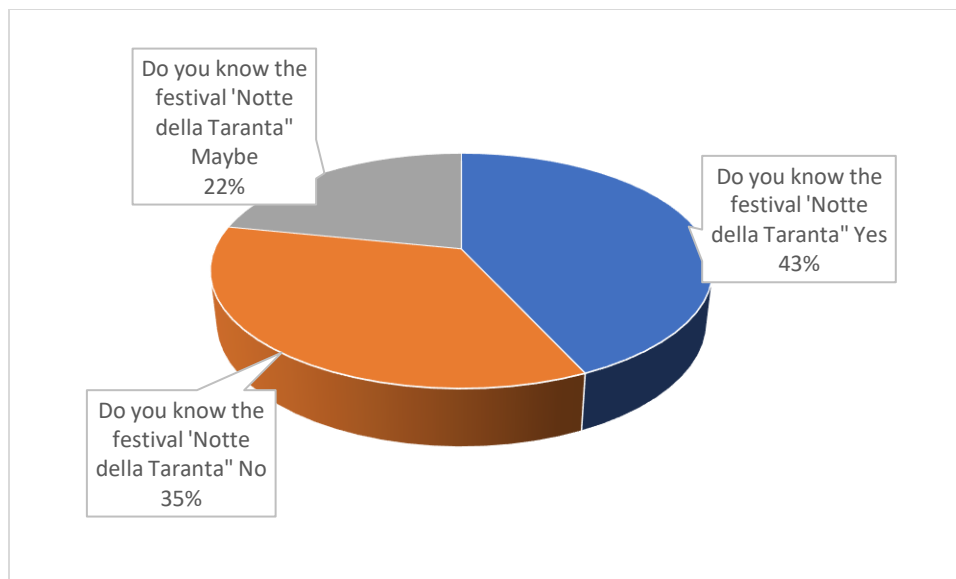
Graphic 8. The festival 'Notte della Taranta'

As the graph shows us, the festival is not particularly well known to the Greek public, as, out of the 234 people, 101 answered positively, 82 negatively and the answer "maybe" was given by 51 respondents

- **Question 9: "Could the cultural heritage of the area and its relationship with Greece be a reason for your visit?"**

Cultural heritage as a reason to visit the area

46

27

161

- Could the cultural heritage of the region and its relationship with Greece be a reason to visit it? Yes

- Could the cultural heritage of the region and its relationship with Greece be a reason to visit it? No

- Could the cultural heritage of the region and its relationship with Greece be a reason to visit it? Maybe

- **Interview**

As stated by Bird et al. (1999: 320-21), the interview seeks to show the views of the population being interviewed by focusing on the perspectives from which individuals experience the events

The interview questions captured the views of more than 24 participants. The six questions were open-ended and were made with the aim of clarifying the thoughts and attitudes

of the participants towards the Grecia Salentina region and especially if cultural tourism could act as a motivation to visit the region of Lower Italy Greeks. The participants were randomly selected based on their educational level, six people from compulsory education, six from secondary, and six from higher education among those, who were easy to contact for the interview.

- **Question 1: "From what source do you know the Greek villages of Lower Italy?"**

The question had multiple responses, with school being the answer that automatically garnered the most positive responses, as well as Mass Media, and the Internet.

- **Question 2: "Do you think the local people keep the traditions?"**

The answers were positive and the main reason is the use of language.

- **Question 3: "Would you be interested in getting to know the area up close, and for what reasons?"**

The responses were on the whole positive and the main reasons suggested were:

- "to find out how compatible the cultures of the two countries are"

- "to see if they keep (using/speaking) Greek in their daily life"

- "Out of curiosity"

- "to find out how strong Greek culture is in Lower Italy"

- "To learn more about the history of the area and to get to know the customs and traditions"

- **Question 4: "Would you visit the region to get to know the culture of the region and particular elements that unite Greece with Italy such as language-music-dance-gastronomy?"**

21 out of 24 responses were positive. Most people talked about Maria Farandouri, who made the song "Andras mou paei" and the band Encardia widely known. While there were no reports on the dance and gastronomy of the region, the respondents were willing to get to know the special character of the Greek-speaking villages.

- **Question 5: "Would you combine a possible trip with the "La note della Taranta" festival?"**

Certainly, after joy.

- **Question 6: "Is there any reason that would prevent you, from making a trip to the area?"**

The main reason stated for preventing such a trip is financial.

4. Conclusions – Suggestions

As can be seen from the above, the residents are active in the area to preserve their character, with the help of local associations that support cultural events and highlight Grecìa Salentina worldwide as a tourist destination of cultural and Greek interest. Although the Greeks know about the existence of Greek-speaking villages in the area, they do not know the names or have no special knowledge of the traditions in the area. In recent years, there has been a systematic effort to collect material and promote the region as a tourist destination, as the Greek-speaking villages of Lower Italy are a source of history, beauty, tradition and cultural heritage. The existence of Hellenism, in the Italian peninsula from ancient times until today, is an admirable fact, which

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can very easily develop into an opportunity for one to delve deeper into the tradition, culture and history of Hellenism. Thus, the obligation of Greece to support actions in this direction becomes necessary, even with simple actions such as:

- Erasmus programs and scholarships to and from Grecia Salentina for students;

- Sending teachers to teach the language in the schools of the region, since learning the language and history of each place promotes the creation of friendship and mutual respect;

- At the academic level, the exchange of experiences and opinions at meetings and conferences;

- Development of bilateral programs for learning Greek and Italian;

- Development of technological actions (e.g., Application – gammification etc.) as the times require adaptation to the changing conditions, in order to preserve the cultural wealth and deliver it unharmed to the new generations, while being renewed through it;

- A subsidized exchange network of cultural activities;

- Promotion of local products, handicrafts, and gastronomy through seminars.

Creation of a tourist network, to strengthen the authenticity of the area through the promotion of sustainable cultural tourism that will integrate characteristics of the place and will promote activities of the members with other counterparts in Greece, for the exchange of opinions and experiences

4.1 *Conclusions*

As can be seen from the research, the Greeks know the region from their textbooks of ancient history, even elementary school, and are strongly fascinated by the fact of the continuous existence of this culture, but they are now discovering the region through tourism. The state should move in this direction. The strengthening of tourist traffic through the subsidization of tourist packages would be a strong incentive to include the region in future trips of Greek citizens. The need to preserve tradition through the effective development brought about by a deep understanding of the cultural background of a region is proving more and more imperative.

As a tour represents moments of encounter and exchange between two parties that benefit and are enriched by mutual cultural knowledge, tourism in this particular case goes beyond the narrow limits of an economic activity and evolves into a driving force to save an arc of culture.

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[1] Historical and geographical factors caused the differentiation, but the Greek of Calabria and the Griko of Salento are so similar that on the Unesco map they appear as Griko I and Griko II.

[2] The Grecanika of Calabria as an idiom is spoken by fewer and fewer native speakers as social reasons such for example obsolescence and immigration, have limited it mainly to the region of Galliciano (GreciaCalabra.net). Organizations such as the "Università per la Terza Età e per il Tempo Libero della Bovesia – Area Ellenofona" (University of the Third Age – where a certificate of attendance is given at the end of free courses) organize conferences and various events to preserve the character of the area.

[3] This is the new edition of Unesco that concerns endangered languages and replaced the World Atlas of Threatened Languages. From 2009, an online edition was also launched.

[4] "The Night of Taranto."

[5] https://www.lanottedellataranta.it/it/la-notte-della-taranta/la-storia-del-festival.

[6] The tarantella is a 6/8 dance that originated as an antidote to the panic caused by spider bites (tarantella).

[7] Type of tarantella dance.

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[8] Such is the action "Gricanti festival" organized by Masseria Sant' Angelo in Corigliano d'Otranto ("Tutto pronto per il Grikanti festival", lecceprima.it).

[9] April 2022.

[10] "You are no stranger here in Calimera."

[11] Argalio.it

[12] https://www.castrignanodeigreci.it/.

[13] According to the website of the municipality www.comune.martano.le.it.

[14] Menirs are monoliths placed vertically on the ground, while dolmens are constructions of at least two menirs supporting a horizontal boulder. Their construction dates back to the Neolithic period.

[15] http://www.greciasalentina.info/Melpignano.html.

[16] Fragment of a vase.

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COAS

AIMS AND SCOPE

The OJSA, as an international multi-disciplinary peer-reviewed *open access online academic journal*, publishes academic articles deal with different problems and topics in various areas of theoretical studies of arts or the other studies which relates to arts (*theory of visual arts*: drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, design, crafts, photography, video, filmmaking, architecture, conceptual arts, textile arts, etc.; *theory of applied arts*: industrial design, graphic design, fashion design, interior design, decorative arts, etc.; *theory of performing arts*: comedy, dance, theatre, film, music, opera, rhetoric, marching arts, folklore, etc.; *music theory*, *historical musicology*, *ethnomusicology*; *theory of literature*: prose, poetry, drama, creative writing, etc.; *comparative literature*; *history of arts; museology; esthetics; psychology of arts*, *psychology of creativity*; *sociology of arts*; *cultural anthropology*; *art education*, *music education*, etc.).

The OJSA provides a platform for the manuscripts from different areas of study. The journal welcomes original theoretical works, analyses, reviews, etc. The manuscripts may represent a variety of theoretical, philosophical and epistemological perspectives and different methodological approaches.

The OJSA is already indexed in Crossref (DOI), BASE (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine), Google Scholar, J-Gate, ResearchBib and WorldCat - OCLC, and is applied for indexing in the other bases (Clarivate Analytics – SCIE, ESCI and AHCI, Scopus, ERIH Plus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Cabell's Directory, SHERPA/RoMEO, EZB - Electronic Journals Library, etc.).

The authors of articles accepted for publishing in the OJSA should get the ORCID number (www.orcid.org).

The journal is now publishing 2 times a year.

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All manuscripts submitted for publishing in the OJSA are expected to be free from language errors and must be written and formatted strictly according to the latest edition of the APA style. Manuscripts that are not entirely written according to APA style and/or do not reflect an expert use of the English language will ***not*** be considered for publication and will ***not*** be sent to the journal reviewers for evaluation. It is completely the author's responsibility to comply with the rules. We highly recommend that non-native speakers of English have manuscripts proofread by a copy editor before submission. However, proof of copy editing does *not* guarantee acceptance of a manuscript for publication in the OJSA.

The OJSA operates a double-blind peer reviewing process. The manuscript should not include authors' names, institutional affiliations, contact information. Also, authors' own works need to be blinded in the references (see the APA style). All submitted manuscripts are reviewed by the editors, and only those meeting the aims and scope of the journal will be sent for outside review. Each manuscript is reviewed by at least two reviewers.

The editors are doing their best to reduce the time that elapses between a paper's submission and publication in a regular issue. It is expected that the review and publication processes will be completed in about 2-3 months after submission depending on reviewers' feedback and the editors' final decision. If revisions are requested some changing and corrections then publication time becomes longer. At the end of the review process, accepted papers will be published on the journal's website.

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