

PARABASIS
Journal of the Department
of Theatre Studies
University of Athens

Volume 19/1

ΠΑΡΑΒΑΣΙΣ
Επιστημονικό Περιοδικό
Τμήματος Θεατρικών Σπουδών
Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών

Τόμος 19/1

Παράβασις· τοῦτο λέγεται παράβασις, ἅπερ ἔλεγον ἐπιστρέφοντες οἱ χορευταὶ πρὸς τοὺς θεωμένους. ἔστι δὲ ὁ τρόπος, ὅταν καταλιπὼν τὰ ἐξῆς τοῦ δράματος ὁ ποιητὴς συμβουλευῇ τοῖς θεωμένοις ἢ ἄλλο ἐκτὸς λέγῃ τι τῆς ὑποθέσεως. Παράβασις δὲ λέγεται, ἐπειδὴ ἀπήρτηται τῆς ἄλλης ὑποθέσεως, ἢ ἐπεὶ παραβαίνει ὁ χορὸς τὸν τόπον. ἔστ᾿ αὖσι μὲν γὰρ κατὰ στοῖχον οἱ πρὸς τὴν ὀρχήστραν ἀποβλέποντες· ὅταν δὲ παραβῶσιν, ἐφεξῆς ἐστῶτες καὶ πρὸς τὸ θέατρον ἀποβλέποντες τὸν λόγον ποιοῦνται.

ΛΕΞΙΚΟΝ ΣΟΥΔΑΣ

PARABASIS

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Department of Theatre Studies
University of Athens

Volume 19/1

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S. ZORJIAN
BOOK REVIEWS
SUMMARIES
THE AUTHORS OF THE VOLUME
DISSERTATIONS

NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN
UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE STUDIES

ATHENS 2023-2024

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ΤΜΗΜΑ ΘΕΑΤΡΙΚΩΝ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ

ΑΘΗΝΑ 2023-2024

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ΠΑΡΑΒΑΣΙΣ

Επιστημονικό Περιοδικό
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Καποδιστριακού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών

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Η *Παράβασις* δημοσιεύει μόνο επιστημονικές μελέτες που προάγουν με τρόπο σαφή συγκεκριμένα θέματα της θεατρολογικής έρευνας, κυρίως γύρω από την ιστορία και τη θεωρία του νεοελληνικού θεάτρου.

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WALTER PUCHNER

FOREWORD

The thematic tributes of the scientific journal of the Department of Theatre Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens *Parabasis* have a respectful tradition and give each issue, both in Greek and foreign language, a special profile. Following the special tributes of the last years, «Theatre and Nature», «Dramatic Text and Oral Improvisation», «Music and Dance in the Theatre», «Writers and Plays of Modern Greek Theatre», «Ancient Theatre and its Reception», there now follows a volume dedicated to the theme «The Greek Revolution of 1821 and the Theatre (Drama and Stage)», which was composed and redacted on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of this world-historical event that led to the foundation and existence of the Greek state as a separate and autonomous administrative entity and a basic cell of European civilization.

In addition, for this top historical event the Department of Theatre Studies of N.K.U.A. organized the anniversary conference «The Greek Revolution and Theatre», which, on the one hand, was part of the more general celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the 1821 Revolution and, on the other hand, was combined with the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Department of Theatre Studies. This major conference was held from 10 to 12 November 2021 in the Aula of the Faculty of Philosophy and in the Lecture Hall of the Greek Language Teaching Centre at the Zografou Campus and was dedicated specifically to Professor Emeritus Nasos Vagenas and Professor Emerita Anna Tabaki for their work and contribution to the Department of Theatre Studies of N.K.U.A. A total of 78 attendees participated with papers, most of which will be included in the Proceedings, to be published soon.

The tribute of volume 19 of *Parabasis* is therefore a complementary event, which has the same objective, i.e. to emphasize the overall contribution of theatre to the War of Independence as well as exploring the various reception of the War of Independence in modern Greek and world drama and theatre. The redaction and edition of the book *1821 and the Theatre. From Mystification to Demystification* by Walter Puchner, which was published in 2020 by OTAN Publications in Athens, was motivated exactly by the same desire and objective.

This special tribute includes in the foreign language issue of the journal (19/1) the following studies: Walter Puchner, «Laienschauspieler und Dramatiker als Freiheitskämpfer der Griechischen Revolution von 1821», an article emphasizing the agonistic action of actors and playwrights; Dimosthenis Fistouris, «The subject matter of the Greek Revolution of 1821 on the operatic stage through the aspects of Philhellenism-Orientalism by European composers and Folklorism-Nationalism by Greek composers», an article covering the musical theatre; Kyriaki Petrakou, «Lord Byron's icon in the Greek theatre and cinema», an article that sheds light on the reception of Lord Byron, that emblematic figure of the War of Independence, in the Greek theatre and cinema.

More specialised are the topics of the Greek-language issue (19/2), which includes also three contributions: Zafiris Nikitas, «Aspects of patriotism in the interwar period. The 1821 in the dramaturgy of Vassilis Rotas»; Leonidas Papadopoulos, «Re-enactments of the Greek Revolution of 1821 on the theatre stage of the State Theatre of Northern Greece»; Kyriaki Petrakou, «Legendary and underestimated heroines of the Greek Revolution: Bouboulina and Manto». With these research contributions, the anniversary volume 19 of the *Parabasis* complements and extends the rich thematic coverage of the previous conference and other editorial activity which were realized in the frame of anniversary events related to theatre and is a worthy addition to the series of tribute volumes offered so far by the journal, which in 2025 will celebrate 30 years of existence and contribution.

In addition to the special thematic tribute, Volume 19, both in its Greek and foreign language issues, includes a wide range of articles with free subject matter, unpublished dramatic texts and book reviews of publications and monographs in the field of drama and theatre studies, thus continuing to contribute to the scientific enrichment and promotion of theatrological research in Greece and worldwide.

WALTER PUCHNER

LAIENSCHAUSPIELER UND DRAMATIKER
ALS FREIHEITSKÄMPFER
DER GRIECHISCHEN REVOLUTION VON 1821

Die europäische Aufklärung hat Theater vorwiegend zu didaktischen Zwecken benutzt. Das ist auch beim neugriechischen Theater nicht anders, das in der Vorbereitungsphase der Nationswerdung in der Revolution von 1821 in den griechischen Kommunitäten von Bukarest, Iași und Odessa ab 1814, dem Gründungsjahr des politischen Geheimbundes Philiki Etairia (Φιλική Εταιρεία, in der Folge Hetairistenbund) im Schwarzmeerhafen Odessa auf russischem Boden entstanden ist.¹ Vorherbestehende Spieltraditionen haben nur auf den Ionischen Inseln überlebt. Der Spielplan dieser Laien Bühnen von 1817-1821 (an den Authentischen Fürstenakademien in Bukarest und Iași bestand er vorwiegend politischen Schüsseltücken mit altgriechischem Hintergrund, vor allem Voltaire und Alfieri, mit bevorzugtem Thema den Tyrannenmord).² Jede Aufführung verwandelte sich in eine patriotische Demonstration mit emotionellem Höhenflug und Eruptionen von patriotischem Enthusiasmus. Die Schauspieler wurden als Nationalhelden in vollem politischen Sendungsbewußtsein gefeiert,

¹ Zu diesem Kapitel der neugriechischen Theatergeschichte W. Puchner, «Hof-, Schul- und Nationaltheater der griechischen Aufklärung im Europäischen Südosten», *Maske und Kothurn* 21 (Wien 1975), p. 235-262 (wiederabgedruckt in *Ausgewählte Studien zur Theaterwissenschaft Griechenlands und Südosteuropas*, Wien, Hollitzer Verlag 2018 (Don Juan Archiv Wien, Ottomania vol. 7), p. 467-500, *Hellenophones Theater im Osmanischen Reich (1600-1923). Zur Geschichte und Geographie einer geduldeten Tätigkeit*, Berlin etc. LIT Verlag 2012 (Balkanologie. Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft, Bd. 4), p. 57-81 und *Greek Theatre between Antiquity and Independence. A History of Reinvention from the Third Century BC to 1830* (assisted by Andrew Walker White), Cambridge University Press 2017, p. 246-268.

² Odessa 1816: *Leonidas bei den Thermopylen* von Nik. Pikkolos (Hyrda 1816), *Die Sulioten* (Ballett, das auch 1818 gegeben wird); 1817: *Temistocle* von Metastasio; 1818: *Philoktet* in der Bearbeitung von Nik. Pikkolos (nach der dreiaktigen Fassung von La Harpe), *Der Tod des Demosthenes* von Nik. Pikkolos (nur in englischer Übersetzung 1825 erhalten), *Die Sulioten in Ioannina* (Ballett nach der Hauptvorstellung); 1819: *Der Tod des Demosthenes*, der allegorische Einakter *Hellas* von G. Lassanis als Prolog zum Tyrannemorddrama *Harmodios und Aristogeiton* desselben, *Philoktet*; 1820: *Mahomet, La mort de César*; 1822 *Philoktet*. – Bukarest 1817: Szenen aus *Hekabe*, *Oreste* von Alfieri, *Junius Brutus* von Voltaire, *Daphnis und Chloe*; 1818: *Junius Brutus, Timoleon* von I. Zambelios; 1819: *Phèdre* von Racine, *La mort de César* (als *César*), *Aspasia* von Iak. Rizos Nerulos, *Der Tod des Patroklos* von Ath. Christopoulos (*Achilleus* 1805), *Mérove* von Voltaire, *Temistocle* von Metastasio, *Oreste* von Alfieri; 1820: *Polyxene* von Iak. Rizos Nerulos, *Temistocle* und *Mérove* als Wiederholungen, auch *Junius Brutus*, als neue Premiere *Filippo II* von Alfieri.

die jungen Protagonisten gelobt und ausgezeichnet. Die Trojaner in den Stücken sowie die Perser wurden mit den Türken gleichgesetzt.

Die Politisierung des Spielplans ging rasch vor sich, nicht nur im russischen Odessa, sondern auch in von der Pforte abhängigen Walachei (die phanariotischen Fürsten 1716-1821 wurden vom Sultan eingesetzt und waren der Pforte gegenüber rechenschaftspflichtig; etwa die Hälfte von ihnen hat das Amt auch nicht überlebt). Für die Laienbühne an der Fürstenschule in Bukarest bestand zwar Präventivzensur, doch das Repertoire entwickelte sich mit den historischen Schlüsselstücken über die Alte Herrlichkeit rasch von einem Schultheater zu einer Revolutionsbühne. Die meisten der Lehrer waren Mitglieder der Hetairistenbundes. Protagonist war hier Konstantinos Kyriakos Aristias (1799-1880) und ständiger Schauspieler Theodoros Alkaios (ca. 1780-1833). In Odessa war der Dramatiker aus Kozani Georgios Lassanis tätig (1793-1870), der auch auf der Bühne auftrat sowie die Schauspieler von den Ionischen Inseln Spyridon Drakulis (†1821) und Georgios Avramiotis (1793-1825). Ähnliche Aufführungen fanden auch in Iași statt, in Triest, in Argos und anderswo.

Besondere Aufmerksamkeit freilich gebührt der Bospous-Metropole Kostantiniyye (so bis 1930) selbst: hier wurde in griechischen Archontenhäusern Laientheater gespielt. Interessant ist eine Lesung der Perser (Chiffre für die Türken, auch bei Shelley), wobei auch das Kampflied von Rigas Velestinlis Thuriotiká abgesungen wurde³ (vgl. dazu das Kapitel «Rehearsing Revolution. Aeschylus's Persians on the Eve of the Greek War of Independence» im Buch von Gonda Van Steen über den Diplomat De Marcellus).⁴ Doch das Sensationellste ist freilich, daß hier in der alten byzantinischen Kaiserstadt am Bosphorus, nun Sitz der Hohen Pforte, im Winter 1820/21, nur wenige Monate vor dem Ausbruch der Griechischen Revolution, von griechischen Laienschauspielern im Geheimen eine Tragödie auf den Fall von Byzanz, Konstantinos Palaiologos oder Der Fall Konstantinopels⁵ in einem angemieteten Saal auf Betreiben des kephalonitischen Porträtmalers und Architekten Gerasimos Pitsamanos,⁶ der auch für Bühnenbilder und Kostüme

³ De Marcellus, *Une lecture à Constantinople en 1820*, Paris 1859, p. 57 ff.

⁴ G. Van Steen, *Liberating Hellenism from the Ottoman Empire. Comte de Marcellus and the Last of the Classics*, New York 2010, p. 67 ff.

⁵ Wahrscheinlich die Tragödie von Ioannis Zambelios, die zu diesem Zeitpunkt nur in handschriftlicher Form existierte (erst 1833 in Druckfassung veröffentlicht). Zu diesem Zeitpunkt hatte der Dramatiker aus Zante in Wien 1818 bereits seinen *Timoleon* veröffentlicht.

⁶ Pitsamanos kam 1818 nach Konstantinopel und war in den Hetairistenbund eingeweiht. Nach diesem Vorfall

sorgte, aufgeführt wurde. Die Vorstellung wurde entdeckt, Schauspieler und Zuschauer konnten entfliehen, doch der Saalbesitzer, ein Apotheker aus Pera, wurde von seinem Geschäft von der Menge geköpft.⁷ Diese Nachricht ist erst vor kurzem veröffentlicht worden und bringt eine ganze historische Kette von kühnen Symbolismen, die auf den kommenden Aufstand hinweisen und das geistige Klima dieser Jahre dokumentieren: griechische Laienschauspieler führen wenige Monate vor dem Ausbruch der Revolution von 1821 ein historisches Stück über den Fall von Byzanz auf, und zwar in Konstantinopel selbst.⁸

* * *

Daß sich diese Dilettantenakteure der vorrevolutionären griechischen Laienbühnen in Bukarest und Odessa ihrer historischen, politischen und gesellschaftlichen Rolle voll bewußt waren, erweist sich beim Ausbruch der Revolution in den Donaufürstentümern (parallel zu den Ereignissen auf der Peloponnes im März 1821), der zum Einmarsch von Alexandros Ypsilantis, Offizier der russischen Armee, in die Moldau führte und in der verhängnisvollen Schlacht von Drăgășani am 7. Juni 1821 zu einem frühen Ende kam. Hier finden wir dieselben Schauspieler der Laienbühnen in Bukarest und Odessa in Schlüsselpositionen der «Heiligen Schar» (Ιερός Λόχος). Und ihre Einzelschicksale dokumentieren, daß es nicht leere Bühnenworte gewesen sind, die in der Donauebene und an der Schwarzmeerküste zu hören waren und zum Opfer für Freiheit und Ethnos aufgerufen haben. Im Detail:

- Georgios Lassanis, erster Chiliarchos und Leiboffizier von Alexandros Ypsilantis, Organisator der provisorischen militärischen Einheit «Heilige Schar», flüchtet sich zusammen mit seinem Anführer auf österreichischen Boden und wird mit

flüchtete er sich in die englische Botschaft und brachte sich mit Porträtmalereien durch, bis er mit einem Schiff nach Odessa flüchten konnte. Am Zarenhof wurde er zum Hofarchitekten ernannt I. Meletopoulou, *Γεράσιμος Πιτσαμάνος. Ένας σοφός επιστήμων, τεχνικός και ζωγράφος μνημείων και ανθρώπων της εποχής της δουλείας, 1787-1825*, Athen 1977, jetzt auch Ausstellungskatalog im Griechischen Historischen Museum in Athen *Pizzamano fecit. Ένας Επτανήσιος καλλιτέχνης στην αυγή μιας νέας εποχής*, Athen 2019.

⁷ Die Nachricht findet sich im Reisebericht des Reverend Robert Walsh, *Narrative of a Journey from Constantinople to England*, London 1828, p. 331-333.

⁸ Dazu W. Puchner, «Το θέμα της άλωσης στην ευρωπαϊκή και στη νεοελληνική δραματολογία», im Band: *Ανιχνεύοντας τη θεατρική παράδοση*, Athen 1995, p. 302-317, bes. p. 308 ff., A. Tabaki, «Μία θεατρική παράσταση στην Κωνσταντινούπολη το 1821: Η μαρτυρία του R. Walsh», *Ο Ερανιστής* 20 (1995), p. 256-260 und Chr. Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou, *Το ελληνικό θέατρο στην Κωνσταντινούπολη το 19ο αιώνα*, Bd. I, Athen 1994, p. 122 ff.

ihm in den ungarischen Kerkern von Munkacz (1821-23) festgesetzt, in der Folge dann in Theresienstadt (1823-27), erst 1827 auf Intervention des Zaren Nikolaus I. freigelassen, begleitet Ypsilantis nach Wien, wo dieser 1828 verstirbt.⁹

- Spyridon Drakoulis aus Zante, Hekatontarchos der Heiligen Schar, fällt in der Schlacht; zu seinen Ehren wird 1822 in Odessa eine letzte griechische Laienaufführung gegeben, der *Philoktet* in der Bearbeitung von Nikolaos Pikkolos.
- Konstantinos Kyriakos Aristias, Protagonist der Laienbühne in Bukarest, hißt in der Hauptstadt der Walachei schon am 27. 3. 1821 die Fahne des Hetairistenbundes und rekrutiert sich als einer der ersten in der Heiligen Schar, wird schwer verwundet, kann sich ins österreichische Siebenbürgen absetzen, kommt dann über Italien nach Korfu, wo er die Organisation der Ionischen Akademie für Lord Guilford übernimmt und gibt im Zeitraum 1824-26 im Teatro San Giacomo, Laienvorstellungen antiker Tragödien, bis er nach dem Ende der Revolution nach Bukarest zurückkehrt und zu einem der Gründer des rumänischen Nationaltheaters wird.¹⁰
- Georg Avramiotis aus Zante, Erfolgsschauspieler der Laienbühne in Odessa, kämpft auf der Peloponnes und stirbt in Nauplion 1825 an Typhus.
- Theodoros Alkaios aus Lesbos, Stammschauspieler der Laienbühne in Bukarest, flieht in die Peloponnes und unterrichtet die provisorische Regierung über die Vorfälle in der Moldau, kämpft an der Seite von Dimitrios Ypsilantis in der Peloponnes, nimmt an den Seeschlachten rund um Psara teil, organisiert eine eigene Guerillatruppe, die in Mesolongi, auf Lebos und Kreta tätig war, nimmt an dem mißlungenen Entsetzungsfeldzug von Fabvier auf Chios 1827 teil, gründet im Freihafen Hermoupolis auf Syros 1829 ein kurzlebiges Theater, und kommt 1833 bei einem eher zufälligen Scharmützel mit französischen Soldaten in Argos um.¹¹
- Unter der Flagge des Hetairistenbundes kämpften in den Donaufürstentümern auch die Schauspieler Ioannis Somakis und Gerasimos Orphanos.

⁹ Lassanis ist später auch der Gründer eines Dramatischen Preisausschreibens der Universität Athen, das unter seinem Namen noch bis ins 20. Jahrhundert hinein bestanden hat (K. Petrakou, *Οι θεατρικοί διαγωνισμοί (1870-1925)*, Athen 1999, p. 171-233).

¹⁰ Dazu jetzt W. Puchner, «Drei griechische Theaterleute auf dem Balkan im 19. Jahrhundert», *Ausgewählte Studien zur Theaterwissenschaft Griechenlands und Südosteuropas*, Wien 2018, p. 237-275 (mit der gesamten Bibliographie).

¹¹ Zur Biographie G. Valetas, *Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος, ο βάρδος και καπετάνιος τον εικοσιένα. Τα πρώτα θεατρικά*, Athen 1971 (1943). Vgl. auch ausführlich W. Puchner, «Ο Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος και η λαϊκότεροη πατριωτική τραγωδία στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης», im Band: *Ράμπα και παλκοσένικο. Δέκα θεατρολογικά μελετήματα*, Athen 2004, p. 205-368, bes. p. 215 ff.

Ein ähnliches Schicksal haben auch manche Dramatiker:

- Alexandros Rizos Rangavis (1809-1892), der Neffe des Fürsten, flüchtet mit Familie von Bukarest über Kronstadt nach Odessa, kommt durch die Vermittlung von Ludwig Thiersch an die Militärschule in München und kehrt erst 1828 nach Griechenland zurück.¹²
- Michael Chourmouzis (1804-1892), nachmals satirischer Komödienschreiber und Abgeordneter des griechischen Parlaments, der letztlich Griechenland wieder verläßt und an den Bosphorus zurückkehrt, ist aktiv an den Kampfhandlungen in verschiedenen Phasen beteiligt, zieht sich dann nach Kreta zurück, um seine Verletzungen auszuheilen.¹³
- Konstantinos Kokkinakis (1781-1831), Übersetzer von vier Kotzebue-Stücken (Wien 1801), wird 1821 wegen der Verbreitung revolutionären Schrifttums von der österreichischen Polizei verhaftet und bleibt bis 1825 inhaftiert, wird dann nach Griechenland ausgewiesen und stirbt in äußerster Armut 1831 auf Ägina.¹⁴

Die Große Geschichte greift in die kleinen Geschichten der Individuen auf rücksichtslose Weise ein. Die Griechische Revolution ist eine Zäsur für alle und in den Biographien vieler Persönlichkeiten nachzulesen. Manche sind zu Helden geworden, denen Statuen und nationale Gedenktage gewidmet werden, andere sind der Vergessenheit anheimgefallen und wieder andere haben die Erhebung mit dem Leben bezahlt, ohne auch nur irgendwo genannt zu werden. Für alle Kategorien gibt es Beispiele; in den schrecklichen Jahren der Erhebung gegen eine Supermacht der Zeit, und für die schwierigen Jahre nachher. Darunter waren auch die Laienschauspieler der griechischen Bühnen von Bukarest, Iași und Odessa.

* * *

¹² Zur Persönlichkeit und dem Werk des bedeutenden Gelehrten, Diplomaten, Universitätsprofessor, Archäologen, Übersetzer, Dichter und Dramatiker gibt es eine umfangreiche Bibliographie. Hier seien nur seine vierbändigen Memoiren genannt, Athen 1894/95 und 1930.

¹³ T. Lignadis, *Ο Χουρμούζης. Ιστορία – θέατρο*, Athen 1986, p. 27-37.

¹⁴ K. I. Amantos, *Τα γράμματα εις την Χιον κατά την Τουρκοκρατίαν 1566-1822*, Piräus 1946 (Athen 1976), p. 176-179; W. Puchner, «Οι πρώτες θεατρικές μεταφράσεις του Κ. Κοκκινάκη: τέσσερα δράματα του August von Kotzebue, Βιέννη 1801. Η αρχή της αισθηματικής λογοτεχνίας στο νεοελληνικό θέατρο», im Band: *Πορείες και σταθμοί. Δέκα θεατρολογικά μελετήματα*, Athen 2005, p. 40-177.

Die Politisierung des Spielplans der griechischen Laientheater im Nordbalkan ist jüngst auch angezweifelt worden,¹⁵ doch neue Interpretationen des Informationsmaterials weisen in die gegenteilige Richtung: im Kapitel «The ‘More Dangerous’ Plays of Early Modern Greek Dramaturgy – Lifeline Odessa» der Monographie von Gonda Van Steen zu Comte De Marcellus¹⁶ wird der Spielplan des vorrevolutionären griechischen Laientheaters einer Analyse unterzogen: *Philoktet*, *Hekabe*, *Perser*, *Themistokles* von Metastasio, *Achilleus* von Christopoulos (1805), *Harmodios und Aristogeiton* von Lassanis (1819); Marcellus selbst sieht *Leonidas bei den Thermopylen* in einer Vorstellung von Gymnasialschülern in Argos;¹⁷ die Schlüsselfunktion des *Themistokles* von Metastasio und seine politisch-patriotische Funktion für die Revolutionsvorbereitung wird ausführlich exemplifiziert. Doch kann die flämische Altphilologin und Neogräzistin, heute am Korais-Lehrstuhl des King’s College in London, den Nachweis führen, daß schon in den ersten Proklamationen von Alexandros Ypsilantis, dem Anführer der «Heiligen Schar», «aus dem Generallager in Iaşi» (mit dem Titel «Kämpfe für Glaube und Heimat») vom 24. Februar 1821 («Die Stunde ist gekommen, o griechische Männer») deutliche Anspielungen auf die Theaterstücke des Repertoires der Laienbühnen im nördlichen Balkan gemacht worden;¹⁸ da heißt es (eigene Übersetzung): «Welche griechische Seele wird unbewegt bleiben vom Aufruf der Heimat?»¹⁹ *In Rom war es ein Freund von Cäsar, der mit der blutigen Tunika des Tyrannen das Volks aufstachelte*²⁰. *Und was wollt ihr tun, Griechen, denen die nackte Patris ihre Wunden zeigt und mit gebrochener Stimme ihre Söhne um Hilfe ruft?*...²¹ *Laßt uns also aufs Neue, o ihre mutigen und großherzigen Griechen,*

¹⁵ Georgios Polioudakis, *Die Übersetzung deutscher Literatur ins Neugriechische vor der Griechischen Revolution von 1821*, Frankfurt/M. etc., 2008 (Maß und Wert, Düsseldorf/Schriften zur deutschen Literatur, vol. 4), p. 239-247.

¹⁶ Van Steen, *Liberating Hellenism from the Ottoman Empire*, p. 125 ff.

¹⁷ *Souvenirs de l’Orient*, 2 vols, Paris 1939, neue Ausgabe von Y. Leboucher, Vendôme 2006, p. 374-376.

¹⁸ Der Text bei L. I. Vranousis – N. Kamarianos, *Αθανάσιος Ξόδιλος. Η Εταιρία των Φίλων και τα πρώτα γεγονότα του 1821*, Athen 1964, p. 24-28 und englische Übersetzung bei R. Clogg, *The Movement for Greek Independence 1770-1821: A Collection of Documents*, London 1976, p. 201-203.

¹⁹ *Patris* ist eine deutlich weibliche und mütterliche Imago, so daß der Terminus *Heimat* dem *Vaterland* vorzuziehen ist.

²⁰ Das Beispiel aus der römischen Geschichte hat die Forscher verwundert, jedoch bezieht sich die Anspielung auf die Vorstellung von *Brutus* und *La mort de César* von Voltaire auf der Bukarester Laienbühne, in Odesa und Triest in den vorausgegangenen Jahren (N. Laskaris, *Ιστορία του νέου ελληνικού θεάτρου*, Bd. I, Athen 1938, p. 174 ff., 198 ff. und A. Camariano, *Spiritul revolutionar francez și Voltaire în limba greacă și română*, București 1946, p. 110 ff., 116 ff.).

²¹ Genau das ist in dem allegorischen Einakter *Hellas* von Lassanis zu sehen, wo die vom Tyrannen gefolterte Mutter-Imago *Patris* dem blonden Fremden [Russen] in einer Höhle, wo sie gefangen ist, die antiken Statuen erklärt, ein

*die Freiheit zurückrufen auf den klassischen Boden von Hellas! Laßt uns die Schlacht von Marathon und bei den Thermopylen vorbereiten! Laßt uns auf den Gräbern unserer Väter kämpfen, die da Krieg führten und starben, um uns als Freie zu hinterlassen! Das Blut der Tyrannen mag die Schatten des Thebaners Epameinondas und des Atheners Thrasybulos tränken, die die dreißig Tyrannen verjagten, und jene von Harmodios und Aristogeiton, die das Joch von Peisistratos zertrümmerten, und jenen von Timoleon, der in Korinth und Syrakus die Freiheit wiederherstellte, und auch jene des Miltiades und Themistokles, des Leonidas und der Dreihundert...».*²² All dies bezieht sich, in der Interpretation von Van Steen, ausdrücklich auf das dramatische Repertoire der griechischen Laienbühnen in Bukarest, Iași und Odessa: *Harmodios und Aristogeiton* von Lassanis mit dem allegorischen Einakter-Prolog *Hellas*, *Timoleon* von Zambelios, *Themistocle* von Metastasio, *Leonidas bei den Thermopylen*; könnte man dies noch als Zufall hinstellen, der aus der Alten Herrlichkeit herrührt, die die Aufständischen beschwören und die in den Laientheater der Griechen auf die Bühne kam, so ist der Hinweis auf *La mort des César* und *Brutus* nicht mehr aus dem griechischen Altertum zu erklären: ersteres Stück wurde 1819 in Bukarest aufgeführt, zweiteres 1820.²³

Dies dürfte eine bemerkenswerte Entdeckung sein, die noch klarer und deutlicher die enge Verbindung zwischen dem vorrevolutionären griechischen

Stück, das als Prolog zum Tyrannenmorddrama *Harmodios und Aristogeiton* von Lassanis 1819 in Odessa zu sehen war und in Moskau 1820 herausgegeben wurde.

²² Vranousis – Kamarianos, *Θανάσιος Εόδιλος*, p. 24 ff. (ähnliche Proklamationen auch auf S. 15, 17, 28 f., 29 f.).

²³ «Ypselantes opened his proclamation with the motto, 'Fight for Faith and Fatherland', and he invoked the shades of Brutus, the Marathon fighters, Harmodius and Aristogeiton, Timoleon, Miltiades, Themistocles, and Leonidas. His call to revolt espoused the legacy of the Persian Wars and also the more biographical interest in the characters that, by early 1821, sealed the dramatic trope of tyrannicide. In prior years, the patriotic Greek audiences of Odessa and Jassy, where the call was issued, had seen, read, or certainly heard about the *Harmodius and Aristogeiton* of Lassanes, the *Timoleon* of Zampelios, and the *Themistocles* of Metastasio or Rousiades. The anonymous heroic drama *Leonidas at Thermopylae*, published in 1816, had been staged in Odessa in the following year. It might seem odd, though, for Ypselantes to try to foment revolutionary fervor by alluding first to Roman history, with the reference to Brutus's killing of Caesar. However, Voltaire's plays *Brutus* and *The Death of Caesar* were precisely the plays that were the talk of Odessa in the month preceding the proclamation. Also the Greek community of Bucharest, not too far from Jassy, had seen stage adaptations (through the prominent role of Konstantinos Kyriakos Aristias, actor, translator, and stage manager) of Voltaire's *Death of Caesar* in 1819 and of his *Brutus* in 1820. Because neoclassical adaptations were all the rage and overshadowed stage productions of ancient drama in the prerevolutionary Greek communities, it was hardly surprising that Ypselantes invoked the common experience of a recent and popular set of adaptations first, even at the expense of Greek history and Greek pride. The classic tyrant slayers were recirculated in the rhetoric of the contemporary Greek stage and revolutionary dream» (Van Steen, *Liberating Hellenism from the Ottoman Empire*, p. 138).

Theater und der ideologischen und psychologischen Vorbereitung der Erhebung exemplifiziert, aber auch mit dem Freiheitskampf als militärischer Aktion: der Aufruf der Proklamation zur unmittelbaren revolutionären Aktivität verwendet genau jene Symbole und Personen, die auf den Laienbühnen der Transdanubischen Fürstentümer und in Odessa zu sehen waren. Es ist nicht nur das Theater, das die Kriegshandlungen vorbereitet, sondern die militärische Aktivität beruft sich selbst auf das Erlebnis der Theatervorstellungen, die in der Lage waren, derartigen patriotischen Enthusiasmus hervorzurufen. Auf dem glücklosen Schlachtfeld von Drăgășani fanden sich gleich einige der Laienschauspieler wieder.

Es gibt auch noch einen anderen Fall einer solchen Identifikation von fiktiver Theaterrolle und faktischer Revolutionstätigkeit: als Theodoros Alkaios am Beginn des Jahres 1829 in seinem eigenen Theaterstück *Markos Botsaris* in der Hauptrolle den legendären Freiheitskämpfer auf der Bühne darstellte, er, der selbst Freischärler und Anführer einer Guerillagruppe gewesen ist, in einer Vorstellung vor Flüchtlingen und Aufständischen des Unabhängigkeitskrieges im Freihafen Hermupolis,²⁴ die auf der Bühne genau das sahen, was sie in Wirklichkeit selbst erlebt und durchgemacht hatten, und dermaßen Begeisterungstürme beim Publikum hervorrief. Genau diese Atmosphäre patriotischer Begeisterung wollte auch Alexandros Ypsilantis mit seinen Aufrufen zur Schlacht evozieren.

Die Verbindung des Theaters mit der Politik war also in Wirklichkeit noch enger als bisher angenommen: die Vorstellungen haben nicht nur den Waffengang psychologisch vorbereitet, sondern die militärische Revolutionsrhetorik selbst suchte Hilfestellung beim Theater. Insofern ist auch der zeitliche Terminus «vorrevolutionäres» Theater sowohl als ideologischer Inhalt als auch als geschichtssoziologische Funktion gerechtfertigt: die gesamte Theatertätigkeit dieser Laienbühnen war auf die Erhebung von 1821 hinorientiert. Entpo-

²⁴ Zu einer Episode, wie sich der Schauspieler wegen eines improvisierten *ex tempore* im Gefängnis wiederfand, Puchner, «Ο Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος και η λαϊκότεροη πατριωτική τραγωδία στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης», bes. p. 246 ff. Hermoupolis mit seiner vorwiegend katholischen Bevölkerung, die an der Aufstandsbewegung nicht teilnahmen und sich in den militärischen Auseinandersetzungen neutral verhielt, daher auch den osmanischen Sanktionen nicht ausgeliefert war, wurde binnen weniger Jahre zu einem der bedeutendsten Hafenstädte der Ägäis und Anlaufpunkt von vielen Flüchtlingen und Freischärlern, Sitz auch der reichen chiotischen Kaufmannsfamilien mit ihren internationalen Handelsverbindungen, die nach 1822, dem Massaker von Chios, in der syrischen Hauptstadt sogar die Demogerontie stellten. Auf diese Konstellation ist auch das noch heute charakteristische neoklassizistische Stadtbild mit seinen bedeutenden Architekturwerken zurückzuführen.

litisierende Interpretationen wie die von Polioudakis,²⁵ der sie auf die Funktionen des allgemeinen Bildungsbegriffs, der Moraldidaktik, Aufklärung und Unterhaltung beschränkt wissen wollte, geben zwar den weiteren Rahmen der Theaterfunktionen in der griechischen Aufklärung wieder,²⁶ sind jedoch nicht in der Lage, den kollektiven Stellenwert der politischen Symbolismen in der zeitgenössischen Auslegung der Antike wiederzugeben, wo die Perser die Türken bedeuten²⁷ und die antiken Tyrannenmörder (in Griechenland und Rom) als Freiheitskämpfer gegen das türkische Zwangsjoch gelten. Diese Interpretationen und Parallelismen sind keineswegs eine innergriechische Erfindung in den Kreisen des Hetairistenbunds, sondern sind in der europäischen philhellenischen Tradition von langer Hand vorbereitet und finden ihre Anwendung auch in der ephemeren Philhellendramatik in fast allen europäischen Sprachen mit ihren populären Vorstellungen noch während des Freiheitskampfes und später²⁸. Selten in der europäischen Theatergeschichte ist die Verbindung zwischen Theater und Politik so eng gewesen wie in der griechischen Aufklärung wenige Jahre vor dem Ausbruch der Revolution von 1821.

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Die Angelegenheiten des Theaters sind auch noch während des mehrjährigen Unabhängigkeitskrieges präsent: am 25. Februar 1823 schickt Nikitas Stamatelopoulos aus Nauplion dem Minister für Innere Angelegenheiten ein Schreiben mit folgendem Inhalt: aufgrund der Tatsache, daß die Bildung das erste und höchste Gut der Menschheit sei, soll ihm die Befugnis erteilt werden, die Moschee des Alipascha und alle Nebengebäude als Theater zu benutzen,²⁹ was letztlich nicht geschehen ist, denn die

²⁵ Siehe oben Anm. 15.

²⁶ Als Rigas Velestinlis nach seiner Verhaftung in Triest bei den Verhören der Wiener Polizei den Grund erklärte, warum er das Libretto von *L'Olimpiade* von Metastasio übersetzt und im *Moralischen Dreifuß* (*Ηθικός Τρίπους* 1797) abgedruckt habe, antwortete er einfach: «zur Aufklärung der griechischen Nation» (É. Legrand, *Ανέκδοτα έγγραφα περί Πήγα Βελεστινλή και των συν αυτό μαρτυρησάντων*, Übersetzung Sp. Lampros Athen 1891, p. 100).

²⁷ Diese historische Schlüsselsymbolik gibt es schon in der *Iphigenia* von Petros Katsaitis (1720) und der *Polyxene* von Iak. Rizos Rangavis (1814), wo die Trojaner mit den «Asiaten» gleichgesetzt werden.

²⁸ Dazu W. Puchner, «Die griechische Revolution von 1821 auf dem europäischen Theater. Ein Kapitel bürgerlicher Trivialdramatik und romantisch-exotischer Melodramatik im europäischen Vormärz», *Südost-Forschungen* 55 (München 1996), p. 85-127 (auch in *Beiträge zur Theaterwissenschaft Südosteuropas und des mediterranen Raums*, 2. Band, Wien – Köln – Weimar 2007, p. 133-167).

²⁹ Das Schreiben in extenso bei G. Gritsopoulos, «Το '21 και το θέατρο: πρώτες προσπάθειες», *Νέα Εστία* [1. April 1949], G. Sideris, *Το 1821 και το θέατρο*, Athen 1971, p. 40).

Kampfhandlungen dauerten noch lange Jahre und es bestand eine dringendere Notwendigkeit, die Moschee als Kriegsverletzten-Spital zu benutzen. Doch das Schreiben allein dokumentiert, in welch hohem Ansehen die Theaterkunst bei den Aufständischen gestanden hat.

Auf der Insel Tinos wird 1822 der *Philoktet* gegeben,³⁰ auf Naxos werden im selben Jahr Szenen aus den homerischen Epen deklamiert,³¹ und 1825 sind auf Tinos zwei Theaterstücke in einer Laienvorstellung aufgeführt worden: ein *Markos Botsaris* (entweder von Alexandros Soutsos oder Theodoros Alkaios)³² und *Megaklis* (die Zentralfigur im Libretto *L'Olimpiade* von Metastasio in der griechischen Übersetzung *Ta Oλύμπια* von Rigas Velesinlis).³³ 1826 ediert Evanthia Kairi (1799- nach 1866), anonym in Nauplion den *Nikiratos*, bloß drei Monate nach dem heroischen Exodus von Mesolongi, der die öffentliche Meinung in ganz Europa erschüttert und wesentlich zum Ausgang der Revolution beigetragen hat,³⁴ im wesentlichen das erste patriotische Drama des 19. Jahrhunderts über den Unabhängigkeitskrieg 1821-27,³⁵ das im 19. Jahrhundert des öfteren aufgeführt worden ist (1837 von einer griechischen Laientruppe sogar am Hof Otto I. in Athen).³⁶ Das Werk bringt die türkische Belagerung der Stadt von 1826 und die verzweifelte Lage der Eingeschlossenen auf die Bühne, den kühnen Ausbruch der noch kampffähigen Bevölkerung und als Finale

³⁰ M. Raybaud, *Mémoires sur la Grèce...*, Paris 1824, Bd. II, 263 (K. Simopoulos, *Πώς είδαν οι ξένοι την Ελλάδα του '21*, Bd. I, 1821-1823, Athen 1979, p. 306).

³¹ A. Vakalopoulos, *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, Bd. 6, Thessaloniki 1982, p. 915 (mit Quelle).

³² Anzeige in der Athener Zeitung *Εφημερίς των Αθηνών* vom 14. Dezember gibt an, daß die Großstaten der Vorfahren Bühnenmäßig dargestellt werden (A. Koumariou, *Ο Τύπος στον αγώνα*, Athen 1979, Bd. I, p. 114 ff.), während die Zeitung von Hydra *Ο Φίλος του Νόμου* am 6. Mai 1825 berichtet, daß die zwei angeführten Tragödien auf Tinos zur Darstellung gekommen sind (Koumariou, *Ο Τύπος στον αγώνα*, Bd. III, p. 83, Vakalopoulos, *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, Bd. 6, p. 915). Die Vorstellung fand am 25. Februar 1825 statt und die Namen der Laienspieler sind festgehalten (vgl. auch Laskaris, *Ιστορία του νέου ελληνικού θεάτρου*, Bd. I, p. 261 ff.).

³³ Neuedition durch W. Puchner, *Ρήγα Βελεστινλή, Τα Ολύμπια. Μετάφραση του λιμπρέτου του Πιέτρο Μεταστάσιου Βιέννη 1797*, Athen, Uranis-Stiftung 2000 (theatralische Bibliothek 1), Einleitung 9-98 Text p. 103-219.

³⁴ Neuausgabe des Texts durch W. Puchner im Band: *Γυναίκες θεατρικοί συγγραφείς στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης και το έργο τους. Μητιά Σακελλαρίου: Η ευγνώμων δούλη, Η πανούργος χήρα (1818), Ελισάβετ Μοντζάν-Μαρτινέγκου: Φυλάργυρος (1823/24), Ευανθία Καίρη: Νικήρατος (1826)*, Athen, Uranis-Stiftung 2003 (theatralische Bibliothek 4), Einleitung 140-248, Text p. 687-738.

³⁵ Zu dieser von der klassizistischen Tragödie unabhängigen Stückkategorie mit stark dokumentarischem Charakter vgl. W. Puchner, «Η Επανάσταση του 1821 στην ελληνική δραματολογία», im Band: *Αιάλογοι και διαλογισμοί. Δέκα θεατρολογικά μελετήματα*, Athen 2000, p. 145-238 (mit der einschlägigen Bibliographie) und in der Dramen-Anthologie dess., *Ανθολογία νεοελληνικής δραματολογίας*, Bd. II, *Από την Επανάσταση του 1821 ως τη Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*, Athen, Bildungsförderung der Nationalbank 2012, p. 488-490.

³⁶ Dazu W. Puchner, «Μεθοδολογικοί προβληματισμοί και ιστορικές πηγές για το ελληνικό θέατρο του 18ου και 19ου αιώνα. Προοπτικές και διαστάσεις, περιπτώσεις και παραδείγματα», im Band: *Δραματολογικές αναζητήσεις*, Athen 1995, p. 141-345, bes. 330-334 (mit den einschlägigen Quellen).

den Holocaust der In-die-Luft-Sprengung der gesamten Stadt mit den zurückgebliebenen Kranken, Alten und Schwachen als spektakulären Szenenschlußeffekt; der Name der Stadt war damals in ganz Europa bekannt.³⁷ Die Autorin bringt sich selbst als Tochter des Kommandanten der Festung auf die Bühne und gibt das Beispiel für das heroische Opfer des Widerstands gegen den Glaubensfeind und Dynasten.³⁸

Die Angelegenheit des patriotischen Polit-Theaters und die führende Rolle der Schauspieler war aber auch nach dem unerwartet glücklichen Ausgang der Revolution durch die Vernichtung der türkisch-ägyptischen Seeflotte in Navarino 1827 keineswegs vergessen: 1829 gründete der schon angeführte Theodoros Alkaios in Hermupolis eine Lientruppe und eine Spielbühne zusammen mit seinem Bruder und seiner Frau,³⁹ und spielt hauptsächlich vor Freiheitskämpfern und Flüchtlingen, die sich im vor den Türken sicheren Freihafen der Stadt angesammelt haben; jedoch nach einer extemporierten Zusatzbemerkung in der Vortsetzung seines eigenen *Markos Botsaris* über die üble Rolle der reichen Chioten, die den angeheuerten Freischärlern für den Entsetzungsfeldzug von Chios, den General Fabvier im Februar 1827 ohne Erfolg unternommen hatte, die Bezahlung des vereinbarten Solds verweigerten,⁴⁰ wird sein Theater auf Intervention der Betroffenen von der Regierung geschlossen,⁴¹ - eine Institution, die er selbst bezeichnet als die «lebendigste Schule der Menschheit... wo sich die vorgeführte Lehre, die schuldige Verpflichtung gegenüber dem Vaterland, in die Seelen der Menschen unauslöschlich einprägt, der Eros des wahrhaften Ruhms, die Neigung zur Tugend und die Ablehnung der Schlechtigkeit».

³⁷ Vgl. W. Puchner, «Η ελληνική Επανάσταση του 1821 στο ευρωπαϊκό θέατρο», im Band: *Ανιχνεύοντας τη θεατρική παράδοση*, Athen 1995, p. 256-301 (und ders., «Die griechische Revolution auf dem europäischen Theater. Ein Kapitel bürgerlicher Trivialdramatik und romantisch-exotischer Melodramatik im europäischen Vormärz», *Südost-Forschungen* 55, 1996, p. 85-127).

³⁸ Zur Stückanalyse Puchner, *Γυνακεία δραματουργία στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης*, p. 187 ff.

³⁹ Details dazu in Puchner, «Ο Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος και η λαϊκότερη πατριωτική τραγωδία στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης», p. 237 ff. Der Mietvertrag der Spielstätte bei A. Phenerli, «Το θέατρο και η πόλη (1828-1864)», im Band: *Για τη Μαρίκα Κοτοπούλη και το θέατρο της Ερμούπολης*, Athen 1996, p. 157-181, bes. p. 178. Zu dem kurzlebigen Theaterunternehmen, zum erstenmal mit Abonnementkarten D. Spathis, «Η Ερμούπολη θεατρική πρωτεύουσα του ελληνικού κράτους», *ebenda*, p. 187-201. Mit der gesamten älteren Bibliographie und den Neuerkenntnissen der Forschung vgl. die Dissertation von M. Dimou, *Η θεατρική ζωή και κίνηση στην Ερμούπολη της Σύρου κατά το 19ο αιώνα (1826-1900). Τάσεις, επιλογές και μεθοδεύσεις της θεατρικής ζωής*, 3 Bde., Athen 2001, p. 24 ff.

⁴⁰ Zu den Hintergründen der Theaterschließung N. E. Karantinos, «Θεατρικό επεισόδιο του 1829», *Ηώς* II (1940), p. 33-35. Die dort veröffentlichten Dokumente sind in die einschlägigen Bibliographie eingegangen (sogar in die allgemeine Geschichte von A. Vakalopoulos, *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, Bd. VIII, Thessaloniki 1988, p. 582).

⁴¹ Die Erlässe und Dokumente bei Karantinos, «Θεατρικό επεισόδιο του 1829», p. 33 f., Puchner, «Ο Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος και η λαϊκότερη πατριωτική τραγωδία στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης», p. 249-252. Dort auch die Ankündigung der Schließung des Theaters, gerichtet an das theaterfreudige Publikum der Stadt, dem die eingezahlten Abonnements zurückerstattet werden.

Nach diesem Vorfall wird er verhaftet und angeklagt, da seine Stelle als Offizier des Heeres und seine Aktivität als Schmierenkomödiant unvereinbar seien und seine Spieltätigkeit die Waffenehre der Armee beschmutze. In einem feurigen Protestbericht, verfaßt in den Gefängnissen von Ägina, gerichtet an den Gouverneur Kapodistrias, verteidigt er seine künstlerische Sendung als Schauspieler, die er nicht für unvereinbar hält mit seiner militärischen Stellung und Aktivität, wie übrigens die Biographien von so vielen Schauspielern zeigen, die auf den verschiedenen Schlachtfeldern als Freiheitskämpfer zugegen gewesen sind und manche von ihnen ihr Leben gelassen haben.⁴²

Im selben Jahr 1829 ist auch auf Samos eine Theaterbewegung nachzuweisen, wo die *Polyxene* von Iak. Rizos Rangavis gespielt wird,⁴³ eine Tragödie die schon 1817 patriotische Schauer auf Korfu hervorgerufen hatte. In dieser Theatergruppe befand sich sehr wahrscheinlich auch Georgios Kleanthis (1801-1839), leitende Figur der samiotischen Befreiungsbewegung und Verfasser eines patriotischen Dramas mit dem Titel *Charidimos der Samier* (ediert in Karlovassi 1832), ein Stück, das die (vergeblichen) Bemühungen der Insel, ins befreite Griechenland aufgenommen zu werden (1830-1834), zum Thema hat; Kleanthis wurde nach Euböa exiliert, da er den Regelungen des halbautonomen Status der Insel weiterhin im Osmanischen Reich nicht akzeptieren wollte.⁴⁴

* * *

Die Schicksale dieser Schauspieler-Revolutionäre des griechischen Befreiungskampfes, der letztlich zur territorialen Unabhängigkeit und administrativen Nationswerdung geführt hat, bilden für die europäischen Schauspielerbiographien der Restorationszeit eine ungewöhnliche Typologie paralleler künstlerischer und politischer Aktivität, nach Maßgabe der üblichen Praktiken und Verhaltensweisen dieser Berufskategorie, allerdings nicht so ungewöhnlich für den

⁴² Der Text dieses kulturhistorisch interessanten Schriftstücks bei Valetas, *Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος, ο βάρδος και καπετάνιος του εικοσιένα*, p. 44-48 und Puchner, «Ο Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος και η λαϊκότεροη πατριωτική τραγωδία στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης», p. 255-260.

⁴³ A. Kapoli-Kentouri, «Προβληματισμοί στη θεατρική κίνηση της Σάμου στα χρόνια της επανάστασης με αφορμή 'ένα χειρόγραφο'», *Συμπόσιο Σαμιακής Λογοτεχνίας. Πρακτικά, Πυθαγόρειο 22-24 Απριλίου 1988*, Athen 1989, p. 263-268.

⁴⁴ Dazu ausführlich W. Puchner, «Στα μετόπισθεν της Επανάστασης: Ο αγώνας της Σάμου για την ένωση με την ελεύθερη Ελλάδα (1830-1834) και το θέατρο. *Χαρίδημος ο Σάμιος* (1832) του Γεωργίου Κλεάνθη και το πατριωτικό δράμα», im Band: *Σταθμίσεις και ζυγίσματα. Δέκα θεατρολογικά μελετήματα*, Athen 2006, p. 289-475.

Balkanraum des 19. Jahrhunderts, wo die meisten Völker die Phase des erwachenden Nationalbewußtseins bzw. der staatlichen Unabhängigkeit durchlaufen.⁴⁵ Die hohe Einschätzung des Theaters im Zeitalter der Aufklärung als Bildungsinstrument und Lehrkanzel auf der einen Seite, der Zuschauer, und dem hohen Sendungsbewußtsein, eine nationale und patriotische Aufgabe zu erfüllen, auf der anderen Seite, der Schauspieler, führt zu einem hohen Grad psychischer Identifikation breiter Populationsschichten, aber auch der Intelligentsia mit den Laienschauspielern und ihrer bescheidenen Tätigkeit, die in den ersten nachrevolutionären Jahren mit der Spektakularität der vom Palast subventionierten italienischen Oper konfrontiert waren.⁴⁶ Und die Diskussion um die importierten Schauspiele und die landesfremden Thematiken in den Übersetzungen zu Lasten der einheimischen Dramenproduktion und Theatertätigkeit, welche dezidiert nationale und patriotische Ziele verfolgte, durchzieht das gesamte 19. Jahrhundert bis in die *belle époque* der Trikupis-Ära.⁴⁷ Als Bastionen der patriotischen Thematik erwiesen sich dann die poetischen und dramatischen Wettbewerbe und Preisausschreibungen der Universität Athen, die der Tendenz einer eventuellen Überfremdung entgegensteuerten; nicht immer zum Wohle der Qualität dieser Stückproduktion.⁴⁸

Relativ selten in der Geschichte des europäischen Theaters spielen Szenenkünstler und Theaterleute von der «dionysischen Zunft» eine so unmittelbare und entscheidende Rolle in der politischen und ideologischen Vorbereitung – und promovieren in aktiver Weise die Durchführung – revolutionärer Bewegungen von europaweiter Bedeutung. In dieser Phase wurde der Schauspieler zu einem politischen Anführer, Lehrer der Nation, Aufklärer der Geschichte und Prediger der ersehnten Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit, eine idealisierte Verkörperung der patriotischer Tugend der Opferbereitschaft und des Enthusiasmus, des Verfechters von

⁴⁵ Dazu W. Puchner, *Η ιδέα του Εθνικού Θεάτρου στα Βαλκάνια του 19ου αιώνα. Ιστορική τραγωδία και κοινωνιοκριτική κωμωδία στις εθνικές λογοτεχνίες της Νοτιοανατολικής Ευρώπης. Συγκριτική μελέτη*, Αθήνα 1993, pass. und ders., *Historisches Drama und gesellschaftskritische Komödie in den Ländern Südosteuropas im 19. Jahrhundert. Vom Theater des Nationalismus zum Nationaltheater*, Frankfurt am Main – New York 1994.

⁴⁶ Zum Repertoire in Athen vgl. K. Georgakaki, «Θέατρον Αθηνών: οι παραστάσεις στα χρόνια του Όθωνα», *Παράβασις* 2 (1998), p. 143-180. Griechenlandweit A. Skandali, *Η πορεία της όπερας στην Ελλάδα του 19ου αιώνα σε σχέση με τη συγκρότηση του αστικού χώρου. Μια πρώτη προσέγγιση*, Athen 2001.

⁴⁷ Vgl. z. B. die Zeitungsartikel im *Φορολογούμενος* von Patras (15. Oktober 1876, 3. und 10. Dezember 1876 und 14 Januar 1877; dazu W. Puchner, «Το θέατρο στην ελληνική επαρχία», im Band: *Το θέατρο στην Ελλάδα. Μορφολογικές επισημάνσεις*, Athen 1992, p. 331-371, bes. p. 359-362).

⁴⁸ P. Moullas, *Les concours poétiques de l'Université d'Athènes : 1851-1877*, Athen 1989 ; Petrakou, *Οι θεατρικοί διαγωνισμοί*, passim.

Werten wie Kultur und Freiheit, Bildung und Aufklärung. Als Theodoros Alkaios im März 1829 die Hauptrolle des Markos Botsaris in seinem eigenen Stück, *Markos Botsaris*, auf der Bühne vor einem Publikum von ehemaligen Freiheitskämpfern und Flüchtlingen in Hermupolis darstellte, die das Gesehene aus eigener persönlicher Erfahrung nur zu gut kannten, war er nicht nur überzeugend in seinem Spiel, weil er ein guter Schauspieler war, sondern weil er selbst Anführer einer Kampfgruppe gewesen ist, die zu Land und zur See an den Schlachten teilgenommen hatte, der für seine Tapferkeit und Risikobereitschaft bei dem Entsetzungsfeldzug nach Chios 1927 ausgezeichnet worden war, der demgemäß eine Art lebendige Verkörperung des legendären Helden von 1821 darstellte⁴⁹; hier waren Schein und Sein einander sehr nahe gekommen und die Erinnerung an die eben überstandenen Gefahren wurde auf der Bühne wieder lebendig. Dementsprechend waren auch die Reaktionen des Publikums: volle Identifikation und hohe emotionelle Involviertheit. Theodoros Alkaios wurde auf der Bühne erneut zum Helden: der Schauspieler vor der Revolution, der Freiheitskämpfer und militärischer Anführer während des Aufstandes, und in der Folge wieder Schauspieler, im wesentlichen seiner selbst, ein sozusagen doppelter Heros.

Diese bescheidenen Autodidakten des dionysischen Kunst hatten in den Jahren des Unabhängigkeitskrieges, sowohl vorher als auch nachher, die uneingeschränkte Hochschätzung der Bevölkerung, weil sie sich letztlich mit Körper und Seele mit ihren dargestellten Rollen identifizierten, und Kunst und Leben, *fictum* und *factum* zur Deckung brachten, den Schein des Theaters mit dem Sein der blutigen Schlachten. Seither hat sich eine Tradition herausgebildet, daß Schauspieler und Dramatiker bei wichtigen Ereignissen der Geschichte des neueren Griechenlands im gesellschaftlichen und politischen Sinne gegenwärtig sind:⁵⁰ es ist kein Zufall daß das meistgespielte patriotische Drama des 20. Jahrhunderts, *Mesolongi soll leben*,⁵¹ aus der Feder eines Schauspielers und Regisseurs stammt, der ganz bewußt die Thematiken der Revolution von 1821 kultiviert hat, und dieses Stück hundert Jahre nach dem *Nikíratos* von Evanthia Kairi, 1928, veröffentlicht, Vasilis Rotas.⁵² Und es ist kein Zufall, daß die Theatergruppe von

⁴⁹ Puchner, «Ο Θεόδωρος Αλκαίος και η λαϊκότεροη πατριωτική τραγωδία στα χρόνια της Επανάστασης», *passim*.

⁵⁰ Puchner, «Η επανάσταση του 1821 στην ελληνική δραματολογία», *passim*.

⁵¹ V. Damianakou, *Βασίλη Ρώτα, Θέατρο για παιδιά*, Athen s. a., p. 60 ff.

⁵² W. Puchner, «Να ζή το Μεσολόγγι του Βασίλη Ρώτα (1928) και ο Νικήρατος της Ευανθίας Καίρη (1826). Περιστασιακά σημειώματα μιας διαχρονικής ανάγνωσης», im Band: *Ο μίτος της Αριάδνης. Δέκα θεατρολογικά μελετήματα*, Athen 2000, p. 358-364.

Rotas bei den Partisanengruppen des organisierten Widerstands im Gebirgsland während der deutsch-italienischen Okkupation eine herausragende Rolle gespielt hat. Und Jahrzehnte noch in der Nachkriegszeit wird dieses Stück bei den Nationalfeiertagen des 25. März in den Schulen gespielt.⁵³ Und der *Kapodistrias* von Nikos Kazantzakis löste bei seiner Aufführung im Nationaltheater 1947 stürmische Angriffe sowohl von Rechts wie auch Links aus.⁵⁴

Die Griechische Revolution hat die Wirkungsmächtigkeit der Bühnendarstellung, ihre potentielle gesellschaftliche und politische Relevanz exemplifiziert. Sie hat gezeigt, welche Rolle das Theater unter spezifischen historischen Gegebenheiten zu spielen vermag, wenn es nicht nur die Fluchtwelt der Scheinhaftigkeit vortäuscht, die ohne wirkliche direkte Folgen bleibt, sondern in den Dienst der realen Welt tritt als ein Probeversuch der Zukunftsgestaltung oder Lehrkanzel der Verkündigung neuer Werte, die die Welt von Morgen gestalten können. Im Sinne der Funktion eines Labors des Möglichen und Denkbaren, ist Theater immer umstürzlerisch, revolutionierend, weil es um ein Experiment mit anderen Wirklichkeiten geht, und Schauspieler sind gefährliche Menschen für bestehende Machtstrukturen, weil sie den Umgang mit Freiheiten zum Beruf haben, von denen der Normalmensch nur träumen kann. Nämlich ein anderer zu werden.

Die Vision vom befreiten Griechenland wurde zuerst auf der Theaterbühne dargestellt, verkörpert von bescheidenen Laienspielern, aber diese Vorstellungen wurden von der Bevölkerung mit enormer Begeisterung aufgenommen und verhalfen der Bewegung, jene psychische Dynamik zu entwickeln, die zum Entschluß des schier Undenkbaren führte: daß sich ein kleines Volk, bereits 400 Jahre unter dem Halbmond, dazu entschließt, sich gegen eine der Supermächte der Zeit zu erheben. Und die Laienschauspieler blieben grosso modo ihre patriotischen Sendung auch jenseits der Bühne treu. Wer den Tod nicht scheut, ist frei. Die Laienschauspieler und ihre Bühnen waren entscheidende Instrumente sowohl der ideologischen wie auch der psychologischen Vorbereitung der Revolution. Künstler sind Seismographen der Entwicklungen und auf der Bühne ist manchmal das zu sehen, was die Zukunft bringen kann. Auch wenn das Thema scheinbar ein historisches ist. Die wesentliche Lehre der Ereignisse von 1821 mag auch aus der Zukunft kommen.

⁵³ Puchner, «Η επανάσταση του 1821 στην ελληνική δραματουργία», p. 226 εξ. Vgl. auch den Band W. Puchner, *To 1821 και το θέατρο. Από τη μυθοποίηση στην απομυθοποίηση*, Athen 2020.

⁵⁴ P. Bien, «Kazantzakis' *Kapodistrias* a (Rejected) Offering to Devided Greece 1944-1946», *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 3 (1977), p. 141-173.

THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE GREEK REVOLUTION OF 1821
ON THE OPERATIC STAGE THROUGH THE ASPECTS
OF PHILHELLENISM-ORIENTALISM BY EUROPEAN COMPOSERS
AND FOLKLORISM-NATIONALISM BY GREEK COMPOSERS*

1. Greek Revolution and Philhellenism

The epic Greek War of Independence, influenced by the revolutionary ideologies of that time in Europe, is undoubtedly a great event of Greek history and a crucial one in the history and politics of the nineteenth-century Europe as well. During an era of nine years, from February 1821 to January 1830, the liberation struggles against the Ottoman rule succeeded in establishing the modern Greek state and hence the presence of Greece in the international political map, after centuries of absence.¹ Greece, in the name of the Orient issue, faced the official policy of the Great Powers of Europe, in the context of interests and competition in Southeastern Europe. In contrast, the Europeans saw the liberation struggle of the Greeks with sympathy and enthusiasm, deepening the strong movement of philhellenism, which as an expression of European liberalism decisively contributed to the cause of the Greek Revolution.²

As a purely European ideological and intellectual manifestation, flowing from Europe's fascination with the Classical Greek past, philhellenism was reflected as a passionate and supporting response for the modern Greeks of the Ottoman era of the nineteenth century.³ Philhellenism, without exhausting its momentum during the Greek War of Independence, survived and evolved in a variety of ways, oscillating between

* *Acknowledgements*: The author would like to thank: a) the anonymous reviewers for their valuable contribution and advice within the context of the revision of this manuscript and b) Georges Constantzos for providing the archival material.

1. Alexandros Despotopoulos, «Η Ελληνική Επανάσταση και η Καποδιστριακή Περίοδος (1821-1832)» [The Greek Revolution and the Kapodistrian Era (1821-1832)], *Ελληνική Ιστορία* [Greek History], Ekdotiki Athinon, Athens 1992, p. 458-495.

2. Nikos Svoronos, *Επισκόπηση της Νεοελληνικής Ιστορίας* [Overview of the History of Modern Greece], Themelio, Athens 2007, p. 70-71.

3. Philhellenism was a reflection of European ideological and intellectual manifestation of the idea that Western civilization could be traced back to the Classical Era in Athens, rather than an expression of European love for the modern Greeks. See K.E. Fleming, «Philhellenism», Christopher John Murray (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760-1850*, Fitzroy Dearborn, London 2004, p. 872.

national specificity and European comprehensiveness.⁴ It should be noted that the European philhellenism encouraged the right of the Greeks to independence, altering the European and Greek identity, yet under the pretext of the «Greek idea», it also promoted hegemony, colonialism and as a result, a strong current of orientalism especially in Letters and Arts.⁵ Throughout the course of philhellenism, a negative aspect having become more and more acute was the idealized image of Greek antiquity, in stark contrast to the harsh reality of modern Greece, leading to mis-Hellenism.⁶

As regards the complex characteristics of philhellenism in the field of Letters and Arts, they could be summarized by the René Canat's pen, as follows:⁷

The political and religious aspect of philhellenism, either ignores the Greece of the past, or serves it in order to glorify modern Greece, in contrast; the secular aspect of philhellenism recalls the memories of the past, but without deepening; poets' philhellenism rehashes them so slavishly that it makes them despised. The critics' philhellenism gets rid of all the aforementioned in order to re-approach the reality of modern life. On the whole, the (Greek) Revolution greatly favored Orientalism and served Hellenism, underestimating the interest and paralyzing the influence they might have had on intellectuals and arts.

2. A brief look at Orientalism and the consequent Musical Exoticism

In 1829, Victor Hugo mentioned the dynamics of Orientalism in writers and people of Letters and Arts, in the preface of his poetry collection *Les Orientales*:⁸

Oriental studies have never been so advanced. In the time of Louis XIV, there was the Hellenist, today there is the Orientalist. [...] The East, either as an im-

4. Margarita Milioti, «Europe, the classical polis, and the Greek nation: Philhellenism and Hellenism in nineteenth-century Britain», Roderick Beaton – David Ricks (eds), *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism, & the Uses of the Past (1797-1896)*, The Center of Hellenic Studies-King's College London-Ashgate Publishing limited, London 2009, p. 65.

5. For all the aspects of Philhellenism and the victimization of the Greek war of Independence, see Alexander Grammatikos, *British Romantic Literature and the Emerging Modern Greek Nation*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2018, p. 12, 93-109.

6. The demythologization was sealed with the work *La Grèce Contemporaine* (Paris 1854) by Edmond About (1828-1885), French novelist, publicist and journalist. In this work, he expressed his impressions about the daily life of the Greeks in an ironic way, whereas a disposition of vulgarization of the ancient Greek literature is evident as well.

7. René Canat, *L'hellénisme des romantiques*, vol. 1, M. Didier, Paris 1951, p. 244-245.

8. Victor Hugo, *Les Orientales*, E. Laurent Imprimeur Éditeur, Bruxelles 1832, p. 13-15.

age or as a thought, has become a widespread occupation both for the intellect and the imagination to which the author of this book obeyed rather unconsciously [...]. The whole European continent leans towards the East.

Orientalism as a long-lasting fashion intensified the European interest in every exotic element of the Middle East and later of the Far East within the bosom of Romanticism.

In the field of Arts, Orientalism emerged as a trend that described, depicted or imitated elements of East, whereas many times it was seduced by the stimulus of imagination. However, sometimes the «Eastern diversity» was projected in a critical mood. Greece, as a descendant of Greek antiquity, acquired a dual existence:

- a) As a symbol of European culture in the context of neo-classicism and the following philhellenism, and
- b) As a geographically distant region, located in a not strictly defined Middle East in the context of Orientalism.⁹

For instance, in Hugo's *Les Orientales*, heroes and events of the Greek revolution are praised, and at the same time are listed next to persons of the Middle East alike, since the titles of the poems are indicative, such as: *Canaris, Les têtes du Serail, Navarin, Cri de guerre de mufti, La douleur du pacha, Chanson de pirates, La sultane favorite, Marche turque, Sultan Achmet, Romance Moresque*.

Musical Exoticism that proved to be a characteristic trend of the nineteenth century was developed in Western Europe, attempting to add a musical dimension to a depiction of remote and alien milieu on stage or in literature.¹⁰ The crucial point is the function it serves as a legitimate departure (by getting borrowed and appropriating elements that invoke or portray alien civilizations)¹¹ from the aesthetics and compositional norms of European music in the context of an opera.¹²

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the aesthetic and compositional norms were broken in the comic or parody operas with Turkish or Middle Eastern

9. See works such as *Voyage en Morée, à Constantinople, en Albanie, et dans plusieurs autres parties de l'Empire Ottoman* (1805); *Mémoire sur la vie et puissance d'Ali pacha* (1820); *Voyage dans la Grèce*, (1821); *Histoire de la régénération de la Grèce* (1824); *La Grèce, dans l'Univers pittoresque* (1835) by François Pouqueville (1770-1838). Furthermore, works such as *Voyage en Orient* (1835) by Alphonse Lamartine (1790-1869), *La Grèce contemporaine* (1855) and *Le roi des montagnes* (1856) by Edmond François About (1828-1885), describing an exotic Greece in Orientalist decline, promoted Orientalism in France.

10. Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music* (tr. J. Bradford Robinson), University of California Press, Berkley 1989, p. 302.

11. Sometimes the term Orientalism is used as a disapproving substitute for Exoticism. See Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism Images and Reflections*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2009, p. 36-38.

12. Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*.

references. All the embedded exotic effects, such as unusual vocal declamations or instrumentations, projecting the ethnic peculiarities could be regarded as deviations from the rationality of European classical music. However, summarizing Carl Dahlhaus' view, during the nineteenth century, as exoticism entered serious opera, all the peoples of East obtained the dignity of tragedy conferred upon them, just as it had happened to the bourgeoisie tragedy. As regards the musical context, the functional harmony was gradually enriched with the coloristic harmony.¹³

3. The subject of the Greek Revolution of 1821 on the European operatic stage: From France to Italy

The movement of Philhellenism, either as a pure expression or in the shadow of Orientalism, was evident in hundreds of articles of political and historical content¹⁴ as well as in the inflorescence of paintings and musical compositions. It coincided in time with the transition from Classicism to Romanticism. Therefore, it is obvious that the philhellenic works bear the features of both eras.

As regards music compositions, there has been a great output of works. The vast majority of these works, either the genres of instrumental music (marches, fantasies for piano or small musical ensembles), or songs (voice and piano), were written by amateur musicians and composers.¹⁵ More than three hundred philhellenic songs were written in France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, England, America, Russia, Netherlands, etc. Most of them were original compositions, while some were adaptations of the verses to older known melodies.¹⁶

13. *Ibid.*, p. 304-305.

14. Notices and leaflets with rich daily news, such as *Appel aux nations chrétiennes* and *Considérations sur les Grecs et les Turcs*.

15. The philhellenic songs drew their themes from the achievements of the heroes but also from the great disasters and barbarities of the conquerors. There are many songs that parallel the Greek fighters with their Spartan and Macedonian ancestors, while portraying with brilliance the brave Greek women who fight equally with men for freedom. Of course, there are many others that are simply inspired by exoticism and the glorious Greek antiquity. These songs were presented by famous artists of that time in various evenings, thus helping to raise funds and to recruit volunteers for the Greek Independence Struggle. The scores, the covers of which were adorned with lithographs of famous engravers of the time, were sold for the same purpose. See Georges Constantzos, *La Muse Philhellénique, Partitions des Œuvres du Philhellénisme Français*, Archive of Greek Music, Athens 2016.

16. Rigas Feraios, the forerunner and pioneer of the Greek War of Independence, had adapted the tune of the chant of French Revolution «La guillotine permanente» to his «Patriotic Hymn» and probably the tune of «La Marseillaise» to the verses of his legendary poem «Come on, Sons of Greeks», See Constantzos, *La Muse Philhellénique*, p. 8-9.

Several cantatas, ballets and operas were dedicated to or inspired by the Greek revolution. Some of them are considered to be major works. A vast majority of them were premiered at French theaters, since France evolved into a cradle of Philhellenism in Arts and Letters soon after the death of the controversial Lord Byron, the British poet and politician, in Missolonghi in 1824, just two years before the following fall of the city.¹⁷ We shall look at these works in chronological order.

- On 9th July 1822, the three-act and grand-spectacle melodrama *Ali-Pacha* set to music by MM. Alexandre and Henri, was staged at the theater «Panorama dramatique» of Paris.¹⁸

- The case of Constantine Agathophron Nicolopoulos (1786-1841) deserves to be mentioned, since he was the Greek scholar, poet, bibliophile and composer who pioneered in composing patriotic music to enlighten the foreign public opinion on the Greek issue. From these works noteworthy is *Le chant de Germanos, archevêque de Patras*, a religious and military aria on composer's verses in 1825. Furthermore, in 1826, a trio titled *Byron au camp des Grecs* was composed by Nicoris, who is highly probable to be the same person as Nicolopoulos.¹⁹

- After Lord Byron breathed his last on 7th April 1824 in Messolonghi on the side of the Greek revolutionaries, the most famous Italian opera composer of that time Gioachino Rossini performed *Il pianto delle Muse, in morte di Lord Byron* (The weeping of the muse, on the death of Lord Byron) as a tribute to the latter on 9th July 1824 in London.²⁰ It is a cantata for a tenor, a choir, and a chamber ensemble, the music of which comes from the moving prayer «Nume cui il sole è trono» in the final scene of his opera *Maometto II*.²¹ Rossini assuming the role of Apollo sang the solo tenor part «Ahi! qual destin crude!», but the work was excoriated by the press.²²

17. Byron's death upsurged the philhellenic current and benefited his posthumous fame (he became one of the heroes of Romantic revolutionaries). See William St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence*, Open Book Publisher, Cambridge 2008, p. 181-184, 267; Victor Roudometof, *Nationalism, Globalization, and Orthodoxy: The Social Origins of Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans*, Greenwood Press, London 2001, p. 67.

18. Constantzos, *La Muse Philhellénique*, p. 14.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 9-15.

20. When Gioachino Rossini arrived in London in late 1823, he had already gained international acclaim with his 34 operas, throwing off the 18th-century formulae and codifying new conventions that dominated the Italian opera for half a century. The best of his operas formed a large proportion of the repertory in opera houses throughout the Italian peninsula, whereas England and France were bidding for his services. See Philip Gossett, «Gioachino Rossini», *The New Grove Masters of Italian Opera Rossini Donizetti Bellini Verdi Puccini*, Papermac Macmillan, London 1983, p. 1-2, 45-46.

21. Richard Osborne, *Rossini: His life and Works*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007, p. 89.

22. Richard Osborne, «Off the stage», Emanuele Senici (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Rossini*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004, p. 128.

● At a time when the Greek revolution against Ottoman Empire was hanging in the balance, Rossini was commissioned to compose an opera for the celebration of the coronation of French King Charles X in Reims in 1825. Rossini in collaboration with his librettist Luigi Balochi wrote a dramma giocoso titled *Il viaggio a Reims, ossia L'albergo del giglio d'oro* (*The Journey to Reims, or The Hotel of the Golden Fleur-de-lis*), which was premiered at Théâtre Italien in Paris, on 19th June 1825.²³ In Balochi's libretto, Corinna, the beautiful and famous poetess, a borrowed proto-feminist figure from Madame de Staël's novel *Corinne, ou l'Italie* (1807), recites:

Italian verse	English translation
Contro i fedeli ancora Lotta falcata luna; Ma al sacro ardir fortuna Propizia ognor sarà.	Against the faithful again Crescent moon strides across the fight; But fortune the sacred values Will favor.

In the gathering of cosmopolitan Europeans in Reims, Corinna softens the pain of the young Greek orphan Delia, telling:

Italian verse	English translation
Son felici le nuove, e presto, io spero Del sacro Legno all'ombra protettrice La vostra patria alfin sarà felice.	The news are good, and soon, I hope In the Holy Cross protective shadow Your homeland will find happiness.

23. See Gossett, «Gioachino Rossini», p. 48, 73.

Thus, in this elegant work, for showcasing the politic issues of that time, and the hints at the French pro-Greek and anti-Turkish feelings in France, both composer and librettist received accolades from French journalists.²⁴

- The next year in Paris, Rossini having been promoted to the honorary post of the «premier compositeur du roi» and «inspecteur général du chant en France», reacted with the usual tactic of adapting an older work, rather than composing a new one. Consequently he transformed his elder *Maometto II* to *Le Siège de Corinthe*, his first French opera, which was premiered on 9th October 1826 at the «Théâtre de l'Académie Royale de Musique». The libretto of this tragédie lyrique in three acts was arranged by Luigi Balocchi and Alexandre Soumet, who were inspired by the homonymous poem of Lord Byron (1816). In this libretto, the action was shifted from the historical context of the capture of the Venetian colony city of Negroponte (Eubea) by the great Ottoman sultan Mehmet II, to Corinth. Thus, the work conformed to the intensive movement of Philhellenism. The symbolic connection with the events of the third siege of Missolonghi and the heroic sortie (1826), in conjunction with the death of Lord Byron, is obvious. After all, Rossini was well-known for his philhellenic attitude since he gave benefit concerts to raise funds in support of the Greek Struggle.²⁵

In this Paris revision, Rossini accomplished a more consistent, if less audacious, musical texture with larger units in which solo voices and chorus are combined more dramatically. Through the orientalist context of the ardent love of fearsome Mahomet II for Pamyra and the warmonger Turk armies, the large-scale choral scene «benediction of the flags» in the middle of Act III emerges as a philhellenic exaltation. Almost all the critics singled out the tremendous impression, the admirable grandeur and the tragic accent of the philhellenic scene, in which Hiéros blesses the soon-to-be martyred Greek warriors and prophesies future greatness for Greece.²⁶ After the great success of the opera in Paris,²⁷ its Italian version entitled *L'Assedio di Corinto* was staged in Italy on 26th January 1828 in Parma and then in Genoa on 7th June of that year.

24. See Osborne, *Rossini: His life and Works*, p. 95-96.

25. For example, the concert held at the Vauxhall de Paris in 1826 raised 30.000 francs. See Roderick Cavalier, *Ottomanism: The Romantics and the Myth of the Islamic Orient*, I.B. Tauris, London 2010, p. 93-95. In this concert, besides the works by Rossini and Nicollini, the *Chant Grec*, for chorus and three solo voices and piano composed by (Hippolyte Auguste Baptiste) Chelard, was enthusiastically received by the audience as well. See Constantzos, *La Muse Philhellénique*, p. 16, 125-138.

26. See Gossett, «Gioachino Rossini», p. 50; Anselm Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera: Music Theater in Paris in the Nineteenth Century*, (tr. Marry Whittall), University of Chicago Press, 1998, p. 82.

27. The great success of *Le Siège de Corinthe* was marked by the staging of a follie-vaudeville *Le Dilettante ou Le Siège de l'Opéra*, on 6th November 1826.

Recit. Hiéros.

Au nom du Dieu qui vous inspire je bénis vos

fronts glo-ri-eux J'at-tache à vos dra-peaux les pal-mes du mar-ti-re

Allegro vivace.

Le-vez-vous pour mou-rir je vous ou-vre les cieux

Marchons mais ô trans-ports ô pro-phé-tique!

Figure 1. In the name of the God, Hiéros blesses the Greeks (Act 3, No.13.
Scène et chœur, *Le Siège de Corinthe* by Rossini, Publisher Troupenas).

- On 24th December 1827, the two-act ballet-pantomime *Les Grecs* by A. Blache was premiered at Grande Théâtre de Bordeaux. The music of the work was composed by Hippolyte Sonnet (1803-1879).

- On 10th April 1828, the philhellenic drame héroïque *Le Dernier jour de Missolonghi* was premiered at the «Théâtre de l'Odéon» of Paris. The libretto of

this three-act heroic drama was written by George Ozanneaux, and the music was composed by Ferdinand Hérold.²⁸ In this work, the vocal line follows a march-style reciting way, alternating with moments of emotion by choral couplets, such as the ballade Grecque «D'une marche si rapide qui descend dans nos cattons» alternating with the chorus «L'Enfer vous demande Turcs accourez tous sainte Vénérande priez pour nous».

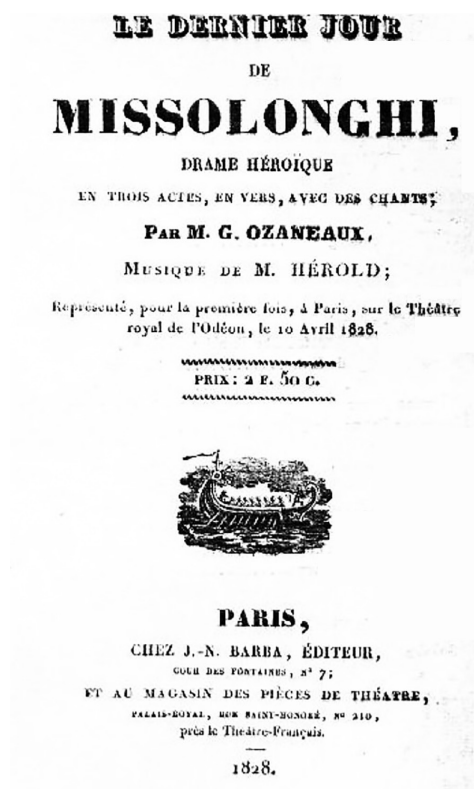


Figure 2. The ballet-pantomime *Les Grecs* by Hippolyte Sonnet and the drame héroïque *Le Dernier jour de Missolonghi* by Ferdinand Hérold (© Gennadius Library).

28. In 1826, Ferdinand Hérold with his opéra-comique *Marie* had already established his international reputation as one of the great figures of French Romantic opéra-comique. See Vicent Giroud, *French Opera. A Short History*, Yale University Press, New Haven – London 2010, p. 132-135.

The image shows a page of a musical score for a chorus. The lyrics are in French: "L'Enfer vous demande Turcs accourez tous sainte Vénérande priez pour nous". The score is written for four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are repeated in the vocal parts. The piano part has a strong, rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as "pp" (pianissimo) and "ff" (fortissimo), and a tempo change to "Plus vite" (Faster). The score is numbered "J. M. 544" at the bottom.

Figure 3. The chorus sings «L'Enfer vous demande Turcs accourez tous sainte Vénérande priez pour nous» (*Le Dernier jour de Missolonghi* by Ferdinand Hérol).

• On 26th May 1828, the *Scène héroïque de la Revolution Grecque* for two solo bass voices, (be they the Greek Priest and the Hero), a chorus and a large orchestra by Hector Berlioz was premiered at the «Salle du Conservatoire» of Paris.²⁹ The verses by Humbert Ferrand, inspired by a poetical philhellenic oestrus, parallel the Greek fighters with their

29. The manuscript of the work was published in 1903. See Jonathan D. Green – David W. Oertel, *Choral-Orchestral Repertoire: A Conductor's Guide Omnibus Edition*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham 2020, p. 216.

Spartan ancestors, calling Hellenes to prepare to die or to conquer. This technically assured cantata by Berlioz is considered his first romantic and political manifesto, which is designed like an intermezzo, whereas it shows Spontinian and Gluckian influences.³⁰

- On 17th March 1830, the two-act and five tableaux melodrama *Youli ou les Souliotes* set to music by M. Sergent and staged by A. Franconi, was premiered at the «Théâtre du Cirque Olympique» in Paris.

Subsequently the baton of operatic philhellenism passed to the theaters of Italian peninsula.³¹ After the premiere of *L'Assedio di Corinto* in Parma in 1828, lesser known works followed, such as:

- During the Carnival-Lent season of 1832-33, the heroic ballet (ballo eroico) *L'ultimo giorno di Missolongi* composed by Antonio Cortesi, was premiered at the «Teatro La Fenice» in Venice.³² According to the press for theaters in Venice, for the second staging in 1835, the ballet was acclaimed by the public as huge success.³³

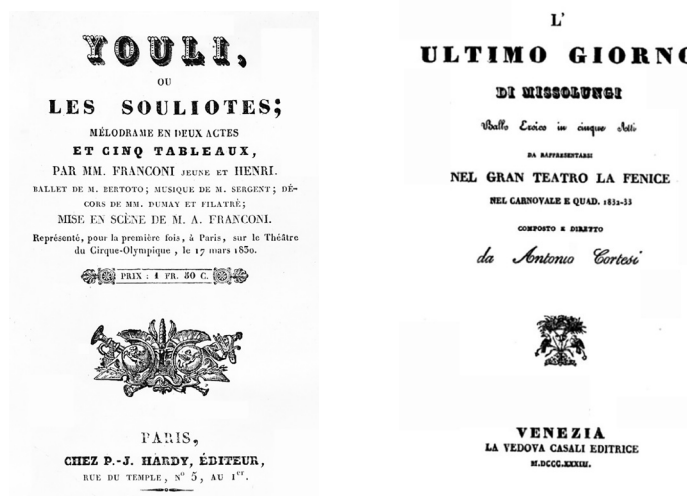


Figure 4. The melodrama *Youli ou les Souliotes* (left). It is obvious that the correct title is *Souli, ou Les Souliotes*, due to a mistake during printing. *The ballo eroico L'ultimo giorno di Missolongi* (right).

30. Julian Rushton, *The Music of Berlioz*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001, p. 13-14.

31. In Italy, the Austrian troops had suppressed any uprising and consequently the frustrating calmness had spread throughout the peninsula. The Italian revolutionary ideas were redirected due to the struggle of the Greeks by providing manpower to an adjoined sister country. See St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still be Free*, p. 251-262.

32. Cf. «In 1832-1833 the ballo eroico *L'ultimo giorno di Missolongi*, with music composed by Luigi Viviani was produced in Venice» in Katy Romanou, «The Ionian Islands», Katy Romanou (ed.), *Serbian and Greek Art Music: A Patch to Western Music History*, Intellect Books, Bristol – Chicago 2009, p. 108.

33. *L'Apatista*, Giornale di Istruzione Teatri e Varietà in Venice, 12 February 1835, No.6.

- In the spring of 1833, another ballo eroico similarly titled *La caduta di Missolungi* set to music by Antonio Cortesi, directed by Giuseppe Coppini, was staged at «Teatro delle Muse» in Ancona and was an enormous success.³⁴
- In 1835, ballo eroico *La caduta d'Ipsara* set to music by Luigi Astolfi was premiered at «Teatro Grande di Trieste» during the carnival season and had huge success as well.
- The case of the opera *Belisario*³⁵ by Donizetti which was premiered on 4th February 1836 at the «Teatro La Fenice» of Venice deserves to be mentioned as regards its warm reception by the Greek audience of Athens in 1840 and 1854. Its Byzantine subject was perceived by the Athenian public as a symbolic patriotic work manifesting the «Great Idea» (the visionary nationalist idea, following the Greek War of Independence, which aimed to the liberation of all Greeks under Turkish rule, the reviving of the former Byzantine Empire and the recovery of Constantinople) in the context of tense relations between Greece and Ottoman Court.³⁶



Figure 5. The ballo eroico *La caduta d'Ipsara* and the opera *La Battaglia di Navarino*

34. *Teatri Arti e Letteratura*, No. 527, 1833, p. 66.

35. Cammarano's libretto is based on Marchionni's adaptation of the homonymous novel by Eduard von Schenk. However, the plot of the work is loosely based on the life of the great soldier Belisarius of the Byzantine Empire in the era of Justinian I the Great. See William Ashbrook, *Donizetti and His Operas*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1982, p. 561, 636.

36. See Constantza Georgakaki, «Θέατρο Αθηνών: οι παραστάσεις στα χρόνια του Όθωνα» [The Theater of Athens: the performances in the era of Otto], *Parabasis* 2 (1998), p. 143-180.

- In the winter of 1838, the drama *La Battaglia di Navarino* composed by Barone G. Staffa on libretto by Emanuele Bidera, was premiered at «Teatro San Carlo di Napoli».
- In 1838, the ballo tragico *La Caduta di Suly*, set to music by Giovanni Fabris, was staged at «Teatro Apollo» of Rome during the carnival season.³⁷
- During the carnival season of 1838, the azione pantomimica *Ali Pascià di Giannina* set to music by Antonio Mussi, was staged at Teatro alla Scala of Milan.
- During the Carnival-Lent season of 1842-43, the opera *Ultimi Giorni di Suli* by Giovanni Battista Ferrari (librettist Giovanni Peruzzini) premiered at the theater «La Fenice» in Venice and was staged for over fifteen years in various Italian theaters.

ALI PASCIA DI GIANNINA

AZIONE PANTOMIMICA

di Giovanni Calzerani

DA RAPPRESENTARSI

NELL' I. R. TEATRO ALLA SCALA

il Carnevale 1838.

MILANO

PER GASPARE TRUFFI

M.DCCC.XXXVIII

ULTIMI GIORNI DI SULI

AZIONE LIRICA

POESIA

DI GIOVANNI PERUZZINI

MUSICA DEL MAESTRO

GIO. BATT. FERRARI

DA RAPPRESENTARSI

NEL GRAN TEATRO LA FENICE

IL CARNOVALE E QUADRAGESIMA 1842-43.



VENEZIA

DALLA TIPOGRAFIA DI GIUSEPPE MOLINAR,
in Rugagiufla, San Zaccaria, N. 4859.

Figure 6. The azione pantomimica *Ali Pascià di Giannina* and the opera *Ultimi Giorni di Suli*

- In 1845, the Italian opera composer and conductor Achille Graffigna, having assumed the position of the music director of the Opera of Odessa some years earlier, staged his opera *Gli ultimi giorni di Suli*.³⁸

37. Emanuela Negri, *Catalogo dei libretti del Conservatorio Benedetto Marcello*, vol. 1, L.S. Olschki, 1994, p. 246.

38. François Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*, v. 4, Li-

• From an Athenian press titled *Αἰών* (Century) on 26th October 1846, we are getting informed that a melodrama called *La partenza dell'eroe Marco Bozzari* by the Maltese composer Vincenzo Napoleon Mifsud was staged at the theater of Athens the same year, achieving success.³⁹ As regards this work, in 1848, from a London press, the composer had offered his work to their Majesties of Greece and which had been gracefully accepted by them,⁴⁰ whereas, he had quarreled with another Italian composer named Gennaro Fabrichesi, who had already been active in the theater of Athens, since 1842. As regards the latter, the music of a melodrama titled *Il giuramento di Germanos* on a libretto by Giacomo Capriles is attributed to him, since its printed libretto was discovered through the process of research.⁴¹



Figure 7. *Il giuramento di Germanos* by Gennaro Fabrichesi in 1842 in Athens (left) and *La partenza dell'eroe Marco Bozzari* by the Maltese composer Vincenzo Napoleon Mifsud in 1848 in Smirne (right) – Source: The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (BSB).

brairie de Firmin Didot Frères, Paris Fils et Cie, Paris 1862, p. 79.

39. Avra Xepapadaku, *Παύλος Καρρέρ* [Pavlos Carrer], Fagotto Books, Athens 2013, p. 65-66, 415.

40. *The Literary Gazette and Journal of the Belles Lettres, Artes, Sciences & C*, No. 1630. London, On 15th April 1848, p. 257. According to other sources, the same composer's grand scena *Marco Bozzari* was published in Trieste in 1849 with a Greek translation of the libretto. See Georgios Ladas, *Συνοπτική Ιστορία του Ελληνισμού της Τεργέστης* [Concise History of the Greeks in Trieste], Kouloura, Athens 1976, p. 101; Romanou, «The Ionian Islands», p. 108.

41. George Leotsakos, *Παύλος Καρρέρ. Απομνημονεύματα και εργογραφία* [Pavlos Carrer. Memoirs and works], Benaki Museum, Ionian University – Department of Music Studies, Athens 2003, p. 33.

● In 1849, the two-act melodrama *Il giuramento di Germanos ovvero La liberazione della Grecia* by the Maltese composer Vincenzo Napoleon Mifsud, was scheduled to be staged at the theater «Apollo» in Rome, but it got cancelled due to censure and political issues.⁴²

● The last but not least link of this philhellenic operas chain in Italy was completed by Giuseppe Verdi's flag-waving *Il Corsaro* (*The Corsair*). This 3-acts narrative melodramma tragico, on a libretto arranged by Francesco Maria Piave from Lord Byron's homonymous poem, was premiered at the «Teatro Grande» in Trieste on 25th October 1848. The action of the opera takes place on a Greek island in the Aegean Sea and in the small coastal town of Koroni in the Peloponnese Southern Greece, around 1800. The leader of the Greek corsairs Corrado (tenor) plans to attack on Koroni, which is under the Ottoman yoke, in order to rescue the odalisque Gulnara who is kept in the harem by pasha Seid. Corrado's rage against wicked Turks is strongly expressed in his first act cabaletta, followed by the chorus of corsairs:

Italian verses	English translation
Sì de' corsari il fulmine vibrar disegno io stesso; dal braccio nostro oppresso il Musulman cadrà . All'armi, all'armi e intrepidi cadiam, cadiam sull'empia Luna.	Yes: the corsairs' thunderbolt shall I myself strike; from our oppressed arm the Mussulmen will fall. To arms, to arms and fearless fall, fall on the impious moon.

42. Andrea Sessa, *Il melodramma Italiano: 1861-1900*, Leo S. Olschki, Firenze 2003, p. 322-323. The mechanisms of theatrical censorship in Rome had been a strict articulated system of preventive and repressive control. See Ornella Di Tondo, *La censura sui balli teatrali nella Roma dell'Ottocento*, UTET università, 2008, p. 197.

Vendi — Il Corsaro, Prelude and Act I

OSL. **ALLEGRO MARZIALE** *and ff*

Si: de Corsar i ri fulmi - ne

ALLEGRO MARZIALE

vibrar dise - gno io stes - so, dal braccio nostro op -

- pres - so il Mu.sul.man ca - dra. Al.

Lu - na;

All' ar - mi, all'armie in tre - pidi ca.

All' ar - mi, all'armie in tre - pidi ca.

All' ar - mi, all'armie in tre - pidi ca.

qual pos - sa in noi s'a -

.diam cadiam sull'empia Lu - na; qual

.diam cadiam sull'empia Lu - na; qual

.diam cadiam sull'empia Lu - na; qual

.l'ar - mi, all'armie in tre - pidi ca. diam cadiam sull'empia

Figure 8. The rage against Turks expressed as allegro marziale in Corrado's cabaletta and the following chorus of corsairs (Publisher: Ricordi).

The exhortations against tyranny and the appeals to liberty of this work, being storied upon the canvas of the Greek Revolution against the Ottoman Empire, were readily understood in the intended sense by the sympathetic Italian audiences during the Risorgimento,⁴³ reinforcing indirectly the Italian nationalistic self-consciousness (the gallant Greek pirate Corrado fighting the violent Turks operates as an intermediary reflection of brave Garibaldi opposing Austrians).⁴⁴ However, due to the poorly reception by the audience and the critics, few performances of *Il Corsaro* were given in Italy after the première.⁴⁵

43. Donald Jay Grout – Hermine Weigel Williams, *A Short History of Opera*, Columbia University Press, New York 2003, p. 402.

44. Giorgio Bagnoli, *The La Scala Encyclopedia of the Opera*, (tr. Graham Fawcetttr), Simon & Schuster, New York 1993, p. 86-87.

45. Karyl Charna Lynn, *Italian Opera Houses and Festivals*, The Scarecrow Press, Oxford 2005, p. 85.

4. The subject of the Greek Revolution of 1821 on the operatic stage: From Italy to Greece

The main passage of western music and especially of opera to Greece was the territory of the Ionian Islands (Heptanesa), which had been evolving under a distinctive political, social and cultural situation for seven centuries (from 13th to 19th century).⁴⁶ During the 18th and especially the 19th century, Heptanesa developed a culture which was of a genuine combination of both European and Hellenic characteristics through the organization of the educational system at all levels and the musical life grace to the philharmonic societies and the opera theaters. Being adjacent to Italy, on the one hand, they had been the prime station of the Italian opera touring companies and, on the other hand, the passage to the superior musical education in Italian conservatories, such as Naples and Milan for the young Greek musicians.⁴⁷ However, at the time of the liberation struggle in mainland Greece, the British political leadership, having declared the region of the Ionian Islands in strict neutrality, in an effort to suppress any attempt by revolutionary liberal movements that could be fueled by such spectacles in the wider territory, sometimes did not hesitate to trigger censorship.⁴⁸

In the course of the nineteenth century, main cultural markets formed, where the Greek composers had opportunities to find a footing for the staging of their works:

- a) In the first place, the Ionian islands (such as Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante),
- b) The cosmopolitan centers where the Greek communities blossomed, such as in Middle-East (Constantinople and Smyrna in Ottoman territory, Alexandria and Cairo in Egypt), in the Black Sea basin (Odessa, Bucharest and Braila,) and in western Europe (Trieste and Marseille),
- c) the Greek urbanized ports: Patras (in North-west Peloponnese) and Hermoupolis (in the Cycladic island of Syros) and last
- d) Athens, which developed as the cultural capital of Greece towards the end of the nineteenth century.

European Romantic movement was cultivated and assimilated in time more in the Ionian Islands than in Athens, the fledgling capital of the new established Greek state

46. Ionian Islands, escaping the Turkish occupation, had been a Venetian dominion since the 13th century till the end of the 18th century, then falling under the regime of French (1797), Russian (1799) and British rulers (1814), they were finally incorporated into Greece in 1864.

47. For the music in the Ionian Islands, see Romanou, «The Ionian Islands», p. 126-154.

48. See David V. Wrigley, *The Diplomatic Significance of the Ionian Neutrality 1821-1831*, Land, New York 1988.

in 1834, which looked like a phoenix regenerating from its ashes, nearby ancient Greek, Byzantine and medieval ruins. Consequently, Romanticism was perceptible in Athens with considerable delay, during the second half of the 19th century, when it was practically in its twilight in Europe.⁴⁹

The perception of «Greekness» by West, oscillating between Exoticism and Ancient Greek vogue in the wider context of Romanticism, undoubtedly influenced the views of Heptanesian intelligentsia for determining the characteristics of their emerging national identity and acquiring a place beside the Enlightened European States.⁵⁰ This idea of connection of the Ionian Islands with the Greek Antiquity was already reflected upon the early operatic works of Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros (1795-1872), the pioneer composer of the Modern Greek Art music. All the above is evident from his first pasticcio style azione comica *Don Crepuscolo* in 1815 till his cantata *Minerva nell'isola di Corfù* in 1827, all staged at the theater «San Giacomo» in Corfu, the center of the music life of the island.⁵¹ Subsequently, on the one hand, the Greek language as an element of national self-identification and its establishment as the official language of the Heptanesian state in 1817, and, on the other hand, the Greek Liberation Struggle during 1820s, led to the demand for music compositions on Greek verses. This attempt culminated to the *Hymn to Liberty* by Dionysios Solomos (1798-1857), the national poet, which was set to music by Mantzaros in 1828. After the unification of the Ionian Islands with Greek mainland in 1864, the *Hymn to Liberty* became the national anthem of modern Greece since 1865. However, Mantzaros remained faithful to a conservative musical idiom amalgam of Classicism and Pre-romanticism distancing himself from composing operas and concentrated on preparing the new generations of musicians by teaching gratis throughout his life.⁵²

49. The Athenian literary devices of the middle of the 19th century are distinguished for a peculiar combination of Romanticism-Classicism. See Linos Politis, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας*, [History of Modern Greek Literature], National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, Athens ¹¹2002, p. 168-184.

50. Kostas Kardamis, «Ionian (Septinsular) composers and Classical Antiquity: Revisiting the past or legitimizing the present?», Evi Nika Samson – Giorgos Sakalieros – Maria Alexandru – Giorgos Kitsios – Emanouil Gianopoulos (eds), *Crossroads: Greece as an Intercultural Pole of Musical Thought and Creativity (Conference Proceedings, Thessaloniki, 6-10 June 2011)*, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki/ Faculty of Fine Arts/School of Music Studies-IMS Regional Association for the Study of Music on the Balkans, Thessaloniki 2013, p. 453-464.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Mantzaros' conservative attitude was mentioned in the memoirs by Carrer as well. See Leotsakos, *Παύλος Καρρέ*, p. 112. Mantzaros, as an instructor of great renown and founder of many music institutions in Ionian Islands, due to his adherence to the strict technical forms of composition (such as the counterpoint and fugue) and his negative view about the freedoms and extremes of the theatrical conventions, gradually moved away from composing operas.

As regards the vocal demands of opera, the lack of native Greek trained singers until the end of the 1860s, led the Greek composers to set the music on Italian librettos.⁵³ Furthermore, the currents of western philhellenism and the nationalism that prevailed in Europe, in conjunction with the rise of the national consciousness in the Ionian Islands created the appropriate cultural milieu for the formation of operatic works by Greek composers who were inspired by the events and the heroes of Greek Revolution. Consequently, from the second half of the 19th century and on, the vast majority of these works, apart from their artistic values, could be considered as an attempt to establish and disseminate national ideology, and furthermore, as an intention of shaping national consciousness.⁵⁴

- Looking at the timeline of the works composed by Greek composers on librettos inspired by the heroes and the events of Greek Revolution Struggle, the first one viewed is the cantata (overture and vocal parts for soprano voice) *L'orfano di Souli* by Antonio Liberali⁵⁵ premiered in 1837, in Corfu and garnered excellent reception from the public. For this work, Mantzaros pointed out that in the introduction of the cantata, the seeds of an original National Melody radiate with majestic harmony and orchestration.⁵⁶

Kostas Kardamis, *Νικόλαος Χαλικιόπουλος Μάντζαρος* [Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros], Fagotto Books, Athens 2015, p. 135-136, 169-205.

53. Carrer, as a composer of second generation from Heptanesa, describes the difficulties he was facing for the casting of singers. See Leotsakos, *Πάυλος Καρπέρ*, p. 108-110. Nevertheless, *The Parliamentary Candidate* is considered as the first Greek opera premiered by a Greek troupe (the Greek libretto by Ioannis Rinopoulos was set to music by Spyridon Xyndas and was staged at the theater «San Giacomo» in 1867). Furthermore, the first professional troupe by Greek opera singers was gathered towards the late 1880s. See Ioanis Karayianis, «Έργα και ημέραι του Πρώτου Έλληνικού Μελοδράματος» [Works and days of the First Greek Melodrama], *Μουσικά Χρονικά* [Music chronicles] 7-9, Athens 1932, p. 43-45, 185-192; Antonios Xatziapostolou, *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού μελοδράματος* [History of the Greek melodrama], Athens 1949, p. 7-20.

54. Angeliki Skandali, *Η πορεία της όπερας στην Ελλάδα του 19ου αιώνα σε σχέση με τη συγκρότηση του αστικού χώρου* [The course of opera in Greece of 19th century in relation with the construction of urban class], Gutenberg, Athens 2001, p. 24-27.

55. Antonio Liberali (1814-1842), of Corfean descent, was one of Mantzaros' favorite students. He also studied at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella in Naples. In Corfu he was known for his marches, one of which titled *Ο Καμπούρης* (The Hunchback) had achieved great popularity. See Spyros Motsenigos, *Νεοελληνική Μουσική-Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της* [Modern Greek Music-Contribution to its history], Athens 1958, p. 223-224.

56. The work was interpreted by the renowned soprano of «San Carlo theater» of Naples, Antonietta Galzerani Battaggia. The music score of this cantata is missing, but the libretto has been saved. See Kostas Kardamis, «Μία άγνωστη νεκρολογία του Νικόλαου Χαλικιόπουλου Μάντζαρου για τον Αντόνιο Λιμπεράλη» (An unknown obituary by Nikolaos Halikiopoulos Mantzaros for Antonio Liberali), *Εξι Μελέτες για την Φιλαρμονική Εταιρεία Κερκύρας* [Six Studies for the Corfu Philharmonic Society], Philharmonic Society of Corfu, Corfu 2010, p. 56-110.

• In 1840, the cantata *The return of Kanaris* by Iosif Liberali⁵⁷ premiered at the theater «San Giacomo» in Corfu. As regards his first opera *Rigas Feraios* on a libretto by Gerasimos Markoras,⁵⁸ it referred to the national martyr and forerunner of the Greek Revolution of 1821, and as a consequence, it was staged in fragments at the aforementioned theater in Corfu in 1850, due to political issues and censorship. Afterwards, he composed a duet scene *Ali and Tzavella* and a cantata for soprano, tenor, choir and orchestra on an Italian libretto by an unknown librettist, entitled as *The return of Kanaris*, after the burning of the Turkish fleet. Both aforementioned works were staged at the theater «San Giacomo» (on unknown dates).⁵⁹ Furthermore, his piano fantasy and variations on folk themes *Le reveil du Klepht* in 1847 is considered as the oldest surviving work of Greek national music.⁶⁰

As regards the case of Marcos Botsaris,⁶¹ the legendary hero of the Greek Revolution Struggle and his ideal figure for the European dramaturges of the Philhellenic Romanticism was of great public interest.⁶²

57. Iosif Liberali (1820-1899), brother of Antonio Liberali, studied music with Mantzaros and later at the Conservatory of Milan for seven years. He was one of the pioneers in the use of folk music tunes. Although he had been general director of the theater «San Giacomo» in Corfu (1846, 1850, 1851), his works were censored. See Motsenigos, *Νεοελληνική Μουσική-Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της*, p. 224; Kardamis, «Μία άγνωστη νεκρολογία του Νικόλαου Χαλικιόπουλου Μάντζαρου για τον Αντόνιο Λιμπεράλη», p. 5.

58. Gerasimos Markoras (1826-1911), one of the personages of the Ionian Islands' intelligentsia, was well known by his poem *Όρκος* (*Oath*), published in 1875 and inspired by the Cretan Revolution of 1866. His patriotic and lyric poems in the vernacular are written in an elegant form. Furthermore, he was an ardent supporter of the idea of the unification of the Ionian Islands with Greece. See Politis, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας*, p. 163-164.

59. Motsenigos, *Νεοελληνική Μουσική-Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της*, p. 224.

60. George Leotsakos, *Αόχνος υπό το μόδιον* (*Light under a bushel*), reference to works and composers, Crete University Press, Heraklion 1999, p. 39, 43. However, according to a Corfu press of 1849 (in an issue of a new released gazette titled as *Πατρίς* [Homeland] in Corfu), the year of presentation seems to be 1849. *Πατρίς* 15, 23 April-4 May 1849, p. 76 (quoted in Kardamis, «Μία άγνωστη νεκρολογία του Νικόλαου Χαλικιόπουλου Μάντζαρου για τον Αντόνιο Λιμπεράλη», p. 76).

61. Marcos Botsaris was born in Souli in 1790. After the uprooting of the Souliotes from their homeland, the youngster Marcos took refuge in the Ionian Islands, which were under the rule of France. There, Marcos became a non-commissioned officer. From 1813 to 1823, Marcos continued on his own the uninterrupted and unequal struggle. He was among the defenders of Missolonghi in its first siege at the end of 1822. In 1823, he was killed in the battle of Kefalovryso, near Ioannina. His death was mourned as a national disaster both in Greece and abroad. Many artistic poems and folk songs were written about Botsaris' death (such as the references in the collection of poems *Les Orientales* by Victor Hugo). Among others, Dionysios Solomos, the national Greek poet, wrote a poem in which he parallels the Botsaris' funeral to Hector's burial. His death has been portrayed by eminent philhellene European painters, such as Ludovico Lipparini (1800-1856) and Peter von Hes (1792-1871). See Georgios Gazis, *Βιογραφία των ηρώων Μάρκου Μπότσαρη και Καραϊσκάκη* [Biography of the heroes Marcos Botsaris and Karaiskakis] National Print shop, Aigina 1828, p. 9-16. A square in Strasbourg, a metro station and a street in Paris were honorary given his name.

62. For the theatrical works on the subject Marcos Botsaris, see Walter Puchner, «Η Ελληνική Επανάσταση στη σύγχρονη Ελληνική δραματολογία» [The Greek Revolution in Modern Greek dramaturgy], *Διάλογοι και διαλογισμοί, Δέκα θεατρολογικά μελετήματα* [Dialogs and meditations, Ten theatrical studies], Hatzinikoli, Athens 2000, p. 145-238.

- On 28th May 1849, the opera *Marco Botsaris*, composed by Frangiskos Domeneginis⁶³ on Italian libretto by Georgios Lagouidas,⁶⁴ was staged at the theater «Apollon» in Zante (Zakynthos).⁶⁵ Consequently, this work is considered as the earliest complete opera by a Greek composer (on an Italian libretto) on a subject related to the Greek Revolution.⁶⁶ Afterwards, Frangiskos Domeneginis also composed a melodramatic scene titled *Despo, the Heroine of Souli* on a libretto by Ioulios Typaldos.⁶⁷

- In 1857, only the first act of the opera *Marco Botsaris*, composed by Iosif Liberali, was staged at the theater «San Giacomo» in Corfu, due to censorship and political issues.⁶⁸

- On 26th April 1858, Pavlos Carrer (1829-1896)⁶⁹ performed excerpts of his opera *Marco Botsaris* on the libretto by Giovanni Caccialupi in the presence of His Majesty, the King of Greece Otto and the Queen Amalia. Despite of the warm reception by the King, the work was excluded from the theater of Athens, since at that time, the promotion of an opera devoted to Marcos Botsaris would cause political issues (on the one hand, the displeasure due to the marginalization of sev-

63. Francesco Domeneginis (1807/9-1874), composer, intellectual and radical member of the Greek parliament, was inspired by the ideas of national liberation and was against any foreign control in Greece, supporting the National Restoration and the unification of the Ionian Islands with Greece's mainland. His ideas were reflected especially in his operas. See Motsenigos, *Νεοελληνική Μουσική-Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της*, p. 239-240.

64. Georgios Lagouidas (1814-1865), poet and journalist, wrote the libretto of two melodramatic works on the theme of Marcos Botsaris, composed by Frangiskos Domeneginis and Nikolaos Tzanis-Metaxas respectively. He was also writing articles in a Zante fortnightly newspaper titled *Σπινθήρ* (Spark), released from 1847 to 1849, in two languages: Greek and Italian. See Theodosios Pylarinos, *Επτανησιακή Σχολή* [Heptanesian School], Savvalas, Athens 2003, p. 51.

65. Panagiotis Chiotis, *Historical memoirs of Heptanese* vol. 6th, Leonidas Zois (ed.), Library Dionysius Notis Karavia, Athens 1980-1981, p. 399-400.

66. Romanou, «The Ionian Islands», p. 108.

67. Julius Typaldos (1814-1883), lawyer and poet of Cephalonian descent. His poetry influenced by Dionysios Solomos, moves towards idealism, with distinct elements of patriotism, folk song and lyrical competence. See Politis, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας*, p. 160-161.

68. Χεραπαδάκου, *Πάυλος Καρρέρ*, p. 65, 415.

69. Pavlos Carrer (1829-1896) is one of the mainstays of the Modern Greek Art music. His works, especially his operas, enjoyed unprecedented popularity and were widely performed in 19th-century Greece. Pavlos Carrer, had already achieved a good reputation in Italy in the 1850s with his three operas which were staged at the theater Carcano in Milan: *Dante e Bice* (1852), *Isabella d'Aspeno* (1855), *La Rediviva* (1856); and his many works for piano (such as mazurkas, polkas and adaptations of excerpts from operas) published by eminent Italian publishers, such as Ricordi and Canti. In 1857, Carrer realized the vanity of the further advance of his career in Italy, due to the reign of Verdi and the unequal competition with the sweeping productions of Verdi's operas. Consequently, following the advice of the Italian novelist Giovanni Rovani (the writer of the History of the Risorgimento of Greece in 1846) Carrer chose to repatriate and to compose operas, inspired by the Greek history and the national ideologies. See. Leotsakos, *Πάυλος Καρρέρ*, p. 103-104.

eral revolutionaries who still held high government positions and, on the other hand, it was believed that it could cause frictions in diplomatic relations of Greece with the Ottoman High Court).⁷⁰

Consequently, on 18th April 1861, Carrer's four-act lyric tragedy *Marco Botsaris* was staged at the Theater of Patras. Since its huge success of the premiere, this work is considered as the most popular opera which has ever been written on the subject of the Greek Revolution Struggle. On 19th December 1864, the opera was staged at the theater «Apollo» in Zante. It is worthwhile to mention the first performance of the opera in Greek and the incorporation of the legendary folk-style song «Gero-Dimos» (old-Dimos) by Carrer in the first act, at the theater «Apollo» of Hermoupolis in the Cycladic island of Syros in November 1866, dedicated to the Cretan Revolution that was being in progress.⁷¹ As regards the song «Gero-Dimos» on verses by the eminent Heptanesian poet Aristotelis Valaorites (1824-1879), Carrer composed it in 1859 in Patras and it is considered as his most popular work.⁷² This song is embedded in the score as a cavatina form transposed to A Aeolian mode for the voice of tenor (Marco), and afterwards a revolting cabaletta follows in allegro according to the usual romantic Italian opera conventions.

Subsequently, Carrer's *Marco Botsaris* was staged on 12th January 1875 in Patras at the new inaugurated theater «Apollo» that was built in 1872 by the well-known architect Ernst Ziller, whereas its longtime desired premiere in Athens was finally accomplished on 14th June 1875. After that, a long course of performances followed in Greece and in many financial and cultural capitals where the Greek communities had flourished in the Mediterranean basin (e.g. Marseille, Trieste, Alexandria and Cairo) and in the Black Sea basin (Odessa, Brăila) as well.⁷³

70. *Ibid.*, p. 113-117.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 125-126.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

73. For this long course of performances see Xepapadaku, *Πάβλος Καρρέρ*, p. 391-402.

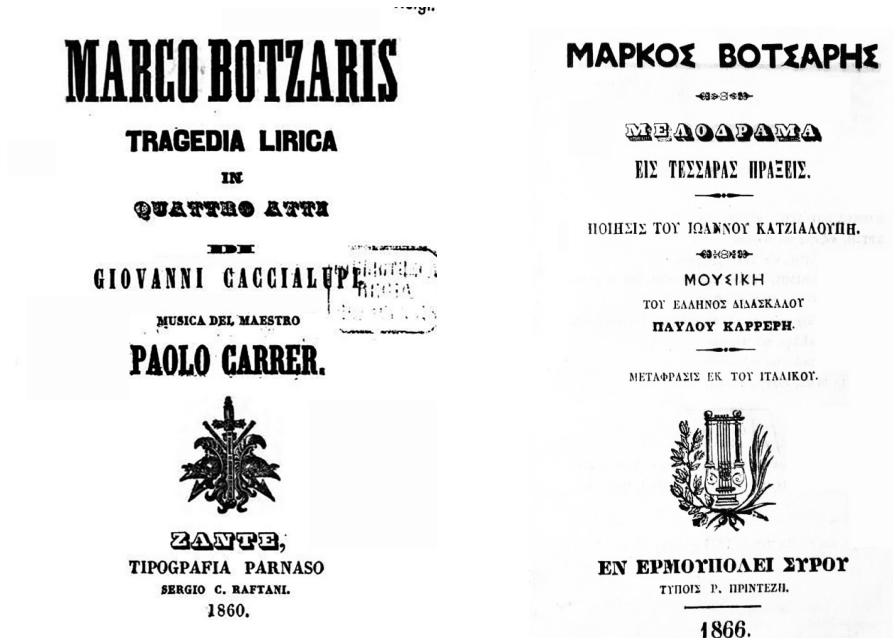


Figure 9. The lyric tragedy *Marco Botsaris* in Italian version (Zante) and in Greek version (Hermoupolis, Syros).

N. 3.
Ο ΓΕΡΟ ΔΗΜΟΣ.
LE VIEUX DIMOS.
D. KARRER.
Andante, 4/4.
poco rit. a tempo
allargando

Figure 10. The most popular work by Carrer, the song «Gero-Dimos» on verses by the eminent poet Aristotelis Valaorites (as printed by the music editor Zaharias Veloudios in 1887 in Athens).

• Afterwards, Pavlos Carrer's next national four-act melodramma tragico, titled *Frossini ossia una vendetta di Ali Pasca* on an Italian libretto by Elisavetios Martinengos (1832-1885), based on an homonym work by the eminent poet Aristotelis Valaoritis⁷⁴ was staged on 16th November 1868 at the theater «Apollon» in Zante, getting a very warm reception by the audience.⁷⁵ The plot of the opera is based on a Verdian-style erotic triangle of three persons: Ali Pasha (baritone), his son Muhtar (tenor) who is engaged with Frossini (soprano). It is a love story based on two incompatible poles, sensuality versus religiosity. The work is very loosely connected with the Greek revolution, since it emphasizes mainly religious contrasts rather than patriotic ones, through the characters of the protagonists. For example, Ali swears in the Koran in contrast with Frossini's prayers and the sanctity of the last scene with the Priest Ignatius (bass). In this work, Orientalism is intertwined with Exoticism and Folklorism, through music and the design/costumes sets. Orientalism is perceptible, both in the oriental laziness of the palace and the nervous, warlike characters of Ali Pasha and his son Muhtar, rendered in turk-albanian tunes known in the wider region of Epirus. The musical Exoticism emerges mainly in the modal arias of the homonymous heroine, whilst Folklorism is suggested through the national folk element in the parts of the Priest Ignatius. Furthermore, a highlight of this opera is considered to be the colorful orchestral prelude «Sunset in the lake of Janina» followed by the great scene and aria of the heroine in the beginning of the second Act.⁷⁶

• In 1875, Pavlos Carrer offered his last national style one-act opera *Δέσπω, Η ηρωίς του Σουλίου* (*Despo, the heroine of Souli*) on a Greek libretto by Antonios Manousos (1828-1903) to be staged by the new inaugurated Conservatoire of Athens (1871). However, once again, the negative response from the Athenian authorities on the pretext of financial issues and the vocal inability of the Conservatoire's students disappointed him.⁷⁷ Consequently, he turned to the Italian opera market and staged the opera in the Italian version as *Despo, L'eroina du*

74. Valaoritis' poem *Kyra Frosini*, written in vernacular, was published in 1859. In horrifying details, the poet, on the one hand, narrates the well-known incident of the drowning of Frosini, because she did not respond to the love of Ali Pasha in Jannina, and on the other, expresses the whole drama of the oppressed nation and defends its struggle against «hostility». Valaoritis' subjects are inspired by the heroes and the struggles of the Greek Revolution that take place in a supernatural context under a romantic magnification. Politis, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας*, p. 165.

75. Leotsakos, *Πάυλος Καρρέρ*, p. 130-131.

76. Ekkehard Pluta, «Ein Land des Gesanges ist neu zu entdecken», *Opernvelt-Das Internationale Opernmagazin* 40 (November 1999), p. 55.

77. Leotsakos, *Πάυλος Καρρέρ*, p. 141-143.

Suli – Primo Greco Melodrama tragico on 25th December 1882 at the municipal theater «Apollon» in Patras.⁷⁸ It is worthwhile to mention the Italian protagonist soprano Carolina Casseli sang Despo's heartbreaking aria «Μες στα σπλάχνα του Τούρκου» (In the bowels of Turk) in Greek, which was enthusiastically received by the audience.⁷⁹ According to the press of that time, the work was considered as a «starting point for a Greek School of Music».⁸⁰

As for the dramatic plot, it is evident that Manousos was influenced by the homonymous folk song of «Despo», which was also included in his collection of national songs that he published in 1850 in Corfu.⁸¹ The dramatic scene takes place in 1803 on the mountainous village of Souli. In the tower of Dimoula, Despo together with a small detachment of ten Souliote women have taken refuge after the fall of Souli. When their resistance is finally bent and the Turk-Albanians invaded the tower, Despo, in the name of liberty or death, using the remaining explosives blew it up and killed herself, bringing the other Souliote women to death as well. *Despo*, as Carrer mentions in his memoirs, is a complete proposal of a national Greek melodrama in a Greek libretto, which utilizes the folk tradition.⁸² As for the musical and dramaturgical numbered layout of the melodrama, Carrer uses a specific folk melodic tune-theme that constitutes the core of the whole music fabric of the work, whereas his orchestration renders the incorporated transparent folk melodies primarily through the sound nuances of clarinet, and secondarily by the flute, combined with the violins in a whole mix sound coloring. The national coloring in solo voices, especially for the intensification of the expression and the interpretation of meaningful words is achieved through the use of augmented second interval and modal touches.⁸³ Undoubtedly, Carrer's *Despo* constitutes a musical manifestation of national music, since it was titled and promoted as *The first Greek tragic melodrama*.

78. Xepapadaku, *Πάυλος Καρρέρ*, p. 168-169, 405, 429.

79. Leotsakos, *Πάυλος Καρρέρ*, p. 151.

80. «Θέατρον Δέσπω», *Φορολογούμενος* [Taxpayer], 1 January 1882, p. 3, quoted in Xepapadaku, *Pavlos Carrer*.
81. Antonios Manousos: *Τραγούδια εθνικά* [National songs], Διονυσίου Νότη Καραβία, Athens 1983 ('1850), p. 129.

82. Leotsakos, *Πάυλος Καρρέρ*, p. 157-160.

83. Athanasios Trikoupi, «Πάυλος Καρρέρ (1829-1896): “Δέσπω” Πρώτον Ελληνικόν τραγικόν Μελόδραμα (1875), Συνθετική πρόθεση και υλοποίηση εθνικής μουσικής» [Pavlos Carrer (1829-1896): «Despo» First Greek tragic Melodrama (1875), Compositional intention and realization of national music], *Conference proceedings 23-24 April 2010, Επτανησιακή Όπερα και Μουσικό Θέατρο έως το 1953* [Heptanesian Opera and Music Theater until 1953], Department of Theatre Studies NKUA, Athens State Orchestra, Megaron Mousikis, Athens 2011, p. 187-211, <https://www.openbook.gr/eptanisiaki-opera-kai-moysiko-theatro-eos-to-1953> [30/9/2020].



Figure 11. The last two operas by Carrer on a subject of the Greek Revolution: the Oriental-Exotic-Folkloric *Frossini ossia Una vendetta d'Ali Pascia* (left) and his National tragic melodrama *Despo L'Eroina di Suli* (right).

Carrer never stopped looking forward to the advance of his career in Italy, which is evident in his Italian operas: *Fior di Maria ovvero I misteri di Parigi* (at the theater «San Giacomo» in Corfu in 1868), *Maria Antonietta* (at the municipal theater «Foskolos» in Zante in 1884) and his last grand-opera style *Marathon-Salamis* (staged posthumous after a century, in 2003 at the theater Olympia of the National Opera of Greece). The Italian influences, especially from Verdi and the tradition of romantic belcanto, are evident in his composing style, which gradually acquired a more personal musical idiom by the integration of musical themes of mainland Greece traditional and urban popular music. It is evident that, as regards the evaluation of his folk-style songs and operas on librettos inspired by the Greek Revolution Struggle, Carrer can be considered as a pioneer composer of Greek national school of music.

- On 12th February 1873, some excerpts of another version of the opera *Marco Botsaris*, composed by Nicolaos Tzanis-Metaxas (1825-1907) on the libretto by Georgios Lagouidas, were presented at the theater «Cefalo» in Cephalonia and at the theater of Zante.⁸⁴ This work was considered as lost for a long time. After the recently found handwritten score which was restored musically by the Study Laboratory of Greek Music of the Department of Music Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the complete opera was staged on 7th October 2021 at the open-air theater «Veakeio» in Pireus by the Athens Philharmonia Orchestra.

- On 2nd May 1874, another lyric melodrama titled as *Arkadion* by Raffaele Parisini (1820-1875) was staged in the theater of Athens.⁸⁵ This Greek melodrama refers to the holocaust of Arkadi Monastery, which took place during the first year of the Great Cretan Revolution (1866-1869), known as «the second revolution of 1821».⁸⁶

- The case of the poema drammatico *Marco Botzari* composed by Riccardo Bonicioli (1853-1933) deserves to be mentioned, since it was performed in an orchestral concert on February 1883 in Corfu, adding another link to the chain of the works dedicated to Marcos Botsaris.⁸⁷ The work is written for a bass voice for Marcos Botsaris, a soprano voice for his wife Crise and a choir for the Greek soldiers and people.

84. Nicolaos Tzanis-Metaxas (descended from Cephalonia), was an eminent composer and music teacher. Due to the marches he composed for liberation activities of the radical party of the Ionian parliament, he was expelled by the authorities. See Ilias Tsitselis, *Κεφαλληνιακά σύμμικτα* [Cephalonian series of papers], Athens 1904, vol.1, p. 440-441. For the impressive reviews about the performance in Cephalonia, see *Aspis*, 12 February 1873, p. 3.

85. Raffaele Parisini (descended from Bologna and Manzaros' pupil) was a favorite composer of the Athenian public. His lyric melodrama *Arkadion* garnered excellent reviews and warm reception from the public as well. See *Εφημερίς* (*Gazette*) 3 May 1874, p. 2 and 5 May 1874, p. 2-3. For Parisini and the *Arkadion*, see also Sp. De Viazis. «Φιλέλλην Μουσουργός» [Philhellene Composer], *Κρητική Στοά*, Heraklion 1909, vol B, p. 10-11.

86. On 9th November 1866, the second day of the siege, the Cretans blew the Arkadi monastery up and killed themselves in the name of liberty or death, using the explosives, and bringing the Ottomans to death.

87. Andrea Sessa, «The musical life in Greece in the 19th century in the pages of the *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* (1842-1902)», *Opera and the Greek World during nineteenth century*, Ionian University/Music Department-Corfu Philharmonic Society, Corfu 2019, p. 210.



Figure 12. Bonicioli's dedication to the esteemed Philharmonic Society of Corfu, distinguished supporter of the divine musical art, as a pledge of respectful admiration (left) and the cast of the poema drammatico *Marco Botzari* (right), as printed in the libretto - Source: Philharmonic Society of Corfu.

100 years after the Greek Revolution Struggle of 1821...

• On 27th March 1921, the orchestral work *Kyra Frossini*, composed by Georgios Sklavos,⁸⁸ was presented at the Conservatoire Theater of Athens for the official centenary celebrations of the Greek War of Independence of 1821. It is an incidental music for Georgios Aspreas' homonymous dramatic play. In this work, Sklavos features his personal national music idiom enriched by impressionistic and modal tinges. *Kyra Frossini* –including its well-known «Intermezzo» of Act III– was performed by the Symphony Orchestra of the Athens Conservatoire conducted by

88. Georgios Sklavos (1888-1976) was as an active member of the first generation of the Greek National School of Music. He composed operas and symphonic works. For Georgios Sklavos, see Demothenes Fistouris, «The two Byzantine operas of the Greek National School of Music: *Konstantinos Paleologos* by Manolis Kalomiris and *Kassiani* by Georgios Sklavos», Maria Alexandru – Sofia Kontossi – Evi Nika-Sampson – Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman (eds), *Series Musicologica Balcanica 2021, No.2, MODUS-MODI-MODALITY 7th International Musicological Conference (Conference Proceedings, Nicosia, 6-10 September 2017)*, Series Musicologica Balcanica IMS RASMB 1.2, 2021, p. 108-110.

Armand Marsick, and a repeat performance was given in 1927 under the baton of Dimitri Mitropoulos.⁸⁹

● In 1937, the «Song of Kyra Frossini», composed by Théodore Spathy,⁹⁰ was published by the Greek music editor Gaetano in Athens. It is presumably the only one excerpt that has been saved from Spathy's opera *Kyra Frossini* on a libretto by Sotiris Skipis; this work was never staged.

Γ. ΣΚΛΑΒΟΣ G. SKLAVOS
ΚΥΡΑ ΦΡΟΣΥΝΗ
KYRA FROSSINI
„INTERMEZZO“
(1920)

ANDANTE MOLTO QUINTEMO

Figure 13. The Intermezzo of Act III of *Kyra Frossini* by Georgios Sklavos - © The Athens Conservatoire.

89. The work was composed during the summer of 1920 at the town of Vytina in Arcadia. See G. Sklavos, *Kyra Phrossyni «Intermezzo»*, Works by Greek Composers - Ministry of Culture and Sciences, Athens 1975.

90. Théodore (Théo) Spathy (1883/1884-1943) of Cephalonian descent, was a Greek composer and violinist who studied in the Conservatoire of Paris. During the first three decades of 20th century he had a successful career as a musician («Opéra de Paris», «Trianon-Lyrique», «L'Apollon Théâtre») and composer in France. He had a great success with his operetta *L'abbé Bonaparte* in Paris. Furthermore, many of his works for voice and piano, such as *Chansons Populaires Gresques*, *C'est toi*, *L'heure brève*, *Le baiser*, *Petite Berceuse* etc., were published by Edition Maurice Senart in Paris. He also conducted the Orthodox chant choir in Paris, substituting for his father, Spyridon Spathis (composer and choir director of the St. Stephen's Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Paris). During the 1930s, he returned to Athens and continued composing music, teaching and conducting choirs. See Gerasimos Galanos – Lambrogiannis Pefanis, *Λόγια Κεφαλληνιακή Μούσα - Έργα Κεφαλλήνων Συνθετών 19ου και 20ού αιώνα* [Literary Cephalonian Muse - Works by Cephalonian Composers of 19th and 20th Century], vol. II, Technological Educational Institute of the Ionian Islands, Athens 2016, p. 49-50.

ΤΟ ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙ ΤΗΣ ΚΥΡΑ ΦΡΟΣΥΝΗΣ
 ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΟΜΗΡΕΥΜΟΥ ΜΕΛΟΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ Ἡ ΚΥΡΑ ΦΡΟΣΥΝΗ.

Λυμπέτρο Στ. Σικινη. Μουσική: ΘΕΩΔ. ΣΠΑΘΗ.

Copyright 1937 by M. GAETANO, Athens. M. 1937. F. (1937) 1937. 1/12 (1937) 1937. 1/12

Figure 14. The vocal score of «Song of Kyra Frosini» by Théodore Spathy, as published by editor Gaetano in 1937.

5. Conclusion

The Greek Revolution Struggle of 1821 was interpreted in the West as the rebirth of Ancient Greece, creating the movement of philhellenism in the wider context of Romanticism during the 19th century, strengthening the consciousness of Hellenism and awakening the national awareness in the soul of Greeks. Philhellenism evolved dynamically in the countries beyond the Alps, while in the musical level and especially on the operatic stage, it emerged in France, shortly after the outbreak of the Greek Revolution. Over time, great philhellenic operas, such as *Le Siège de Corinthe* by Gioachino Rossini and *Le Dernier jour de Missolonghi* by Ferdinand Hérold continued to attract the interest of opera market until nowadays. However, as regards the aesthetical trends, these works emerged in the wider environment of orientalism, which, towards the middle of the 19th century, gradually transformed into a strong movement of exoticism.

At that point, the baton of philhellenism as a musical manifestation passed to the Italian peninsula, where many works were presented, primarily in the form of ballet and secondarily as operas, which over time were marginalized and disappeared from the operatic stage. In these works, philhellenism, projected in contrast to the orientalist alien of the Ottoman East, was rendered as an out-musical element (libretto, costumes and designs), rather than in music, obeying the demands of the Italian trends of romantic belcanto vocal line and closed form conventions.

Then, the baton of operatic works on the subject of the Greek Revolution Struggle passed to the hands of the Greek composers in the Ionian Islands, where Arts and Letters flourished, following the Western European standards. However, the works of Greek composers faced phenomena of censorship and political expediencies. The Heptanesean composers tried to create original works, awakening national awareness in their music, but without having the most basic substratum of a national school of music, which is the native Greek vernacular language. All the librettos were written in Italian, mainly due to the lack of native Greek opera singers, who began to blossom towards the fin de siècle (e.g. Puccini's favorite great Greek tenor Ioannis Apostolou who sang the title role of Marcos Botsaris by Carrer numerous times in Greece and abroad). However, even in these operas, nationalism, projected at the opposite end of the oriental Ottoman-Turkish alien, is rendered mainly by out-musical means. The national elements in the majority of these operas, either as peculiar folk rhythm-melodic shapes or as modal touches embedded in a romantic Italian belcanto style music idiom, could be attributed even as oscillations between folklorism and orientalism, except for the cases of molding the music with folk tunes, aiming at wholeness, as nationalism prescribes. Furthermore, the nineteenth-century folklorism, linked with the idea of the national style, systematically appropriated the artistic species of folk music, but most of the time it had analogous aesthetic functions with Exoticism.

The course of the Greek operatic works by the Ionian composers on the subject of the Greek Revolution Struggle was finally finished shortly before the end of the 19th century. It could be considered as a transitional era of essential preparation for the forthcoming substantial nationalism in Modern Greek Art Music that manifested in delay, in comparison with the other European national schools of music, from the early 20th century and lasted till the early 1960s.

200 years after the Greek Revolution Struggle of 1821...

Last but not least, in 2017 the eminent Greek composer Theodore Antoniou (1935-2018) finished the composition of his last opera *Kapodistrias, the first governor of the Greek State*.

To be continued...

KYRIAKI PETRAKOU

LORD BYRON'S ICON
IN THE GREEK THEATRE AND CINEMA*

There is no need for an introduction to the personality and history of George Noel Gordon, universally known as Lord Byron, or «Λόρδος Βύρων» in Greek.¹ Apart from the multitude of biographies, the different editions of his diaries and correspondence and the countless translations of his work, various novels and a number of plays and films have his life, which was adventurous and extremely interesting, as their main theme. Karen Blixen wrote three short stories in which there is a reference to the romantic poet. In one of these short stories, *The second meeting*, the main theme is his incestuous love for his half-sister Augusta and his death in Messolonghi. In the story, a man predicts that a hundred years later his poems will be rarely read, but his life and the multiple versions of his personal trajectory will still be discussed.² Greek people have an additional reason to love and idealize him as he offered his fortune, his energy, his repute and his own life in a way, to the Greek war of Independence.³ Blixen was both right and wrong. All through the 19th century, Byron's poetry was passionately read, thoroughly studied, while it influenced the literature of –almost all– the other western countries.⁴ Solomos' *Λάμπρος* [Lambros] (1824-1826) is obviously inspired by the picaresque heroes of his long poems (and those heroes are inspired by the poet himself). In the Greek theatre, in one of the first plays which were written, Panaghiotis Soutsos' *Οδοιπóρος* [Wayfarer] (1830), the intertextuality with *Manfred* is more than obvious. His influence continued throughout the 19th century and perhaps a specialized research would pinpoint obvious or

* Tr. by Aphroditi Dimopoulou.

¹ In this paper there can be found different spellings of the name in Greek depending on the text the name is found.

² E. Stamou, «Karen Blixen: shades of her life and work», *Odos Panos*, Oct.-Dec. 2020, p. 9.

³ For Lord Byron and philhellenism see B. Raizis (ed.), *Lord Byron, Byronism, Liberalism, Philhellenism. Proceedings of the 14th International Byron Symposium*, Athens 1988; B. Raizis (ed.), *Byron and Greece, Proceedings of the 1st International Student Byron Conference*, 11-19 May 2002, University of Athens, Messolonghi 2003; a biography based on new documents by Roderick Beaton, *Romantic Rebellion, Greek Revolution*, Cambridge 2013 (also translated in Greek, *Ο πόλεμος του Μπάιρον*, Patakis, Athens 2015).

⁴ About the influence of his poetry on Greek poetry see Evgenia Kefallinaiou's PhD thesis *Ο Lord Byron στην Ελλάδα. Η παρουσία του στην ελληνική πνευματική ζωή κατά τον 19^ο αιώνα* [Lord Byron in Greece. His presence in the Greek intellectual life in the 19th century], Athens 2015.

even indiscernible traces in the 20th century too. His life was conducive for dramatization, as well: either as the dramaturgical axis or as a theatrical character, Byron can be found in several plays written in the first half of the 19th century, an expression of the movement and the spirit of philhellenism.⁵

Nevertheless, all during the 19th century no play related to Byron (performed or even published or submitted to the poetic-theatrical competitions) has been traced.⁶ In the poetry of the competitions, when any Byronian inclinations were traced as an expression of Romanticism, they were, generally, decried as immoral, foreign («οθνεΐαι»), unacceptable. A long poem with Byron as its central theme that was submitted to the Rallis' competition (*Τα σπλάγχνα του Βύρωνος* [Byron's viscera] by Anastasios Giannopoulos) was not taken into consideration because it was submitted after the deadline.⁷ In the Lassanis' competition of the university, Romanticism was the desideratum, since the instructions of Lassanis' bequest required the submission of romantic plays, but not in the byronian dimension, which was considered immoral and extravagant.⁸ The only play with the philhellene lord as its theme was submitted in the Lassanis competition in 1903: *Ο Βύρων εις το Μεσολόγγι* [Byron in Messolonghi], a play which did not receive an award, so the name of the author remained unknown and it was not even commented upon by the jury.⁹

The first to approach the subject in his play *Ο Βύρων* [Byron], was the journalist-publisher-writer-dramatist Spiros Potamianos in 1909.¹⁰ It was performed in the «Variété Theatre» by the theatrical company of Kyveli, with the famous actress in the role of Byron according to the trend of the time when Greek leading actresses sometimes performed male roles, just like Sarah Bernhardt and other international stars did.¹¹ The play received some moderately positive reviews and it was staged for three performances, that is, it had a decent stage presentation.

⁵ See W. Puchner, *Το 1821 και το θέατρο. Από τη μυθοποίηση στην απομυθοποίηση*, [1821 and the theatre. From mystification to demystification], OTAN, Athens 2020, p. 93-94 and passim.

⁶ P. Moullas, *Les concours poétiques de l'université d'Athènes 1851-1877* [The poetic competitions of the University of Athens 1851-1877] Secrétariat Générale à la Jeunesse, Athènes 1989· K. Petrakou, *Οι θεατρικοί διαγωνισμοί 1870-1925* [The theatrical competitions 1870-1925], Ellinika Grammata, Athens 1999.

⁷ Moullas, *Les concours poétiques de l'université d'Athènes 1851-1877*, p. 82, about or the rejectable Byronian inclinations, and passim.

⁸ Petrakou, *Οι θεατρικοί διαγωνισμοί 1870-1925*, p. 177-213, chapter «Ο Λασσάνειος» [The Lassanis competition].

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

¹⁰ He was the publisher of the newspaper/magazine *Ελλάς* [Hellas], where he published his own literary works, but mainly his novels. *Byron* was not found either in this magazine or in any other edition or publication. The reconstruction of the plot is based on the reviews.

¹¹ Evangelia Paraskevopoulou, for example, played the role of Hamlet in 1900 and there was some comparison with the French actress (A. Altouva, *Το φαινόμενο του γυναικείου βεντετισμού στην Ελλάδα τον 19ο αιώνα* [The phenomenon of Women Stars in the Nineteenth Century in Greece], Ed. Herodotus, Athens 2014, p. 610.

«Mr S. Potamianos wanted to present images from the last part of Byron's life on stage and combined the romance and the patriotic drama based on the rumored love of the poet for the Maid of Athens.¹² He was not successful, as the play lacks in élan worthy of a poet whose whole life was full of élan. Nevertheless, one must recognize that the dramatist avoided any exaggeration, which would cause the audience's exasperation for the disproportionate or inadequate skills of the playwright. In the play, there is the big mistake of the on-stage presence of the Maid of Athens, who could have been beautifully used as a distant vision and would have given the audience the idea of a love idol worthier of the poet and the maid. And this love affair, to which real history denies any existence, was presented in a mundane way in the tender scenes of the play. Then, the dramatist, encouraged by the poetic license of finding a relationship between the poet and the maid, created incidents historically inaccurate and scenically inept, like the Maid's appearance in Messolonghi next to the dying poet, a scene which did not add any poetry to Byron's death. There could be a lot to add, about even more unsuccessful scenes, for which the director is responsible, like the Messolonghi captains dressed in white foustanelas and uniforms embroidered in gold thread during the days of hunger and deprivation. In the final act, several people in the audience shed some tears. Those who applauded were the greatest part of the audience. So, one can predict a series of performances for the play. The dramatist was repeatedly called on stage and loudly applauded. Mrs Kyveli Andrianou presented an ideal Byron, likeable and handsome. One would want him to be more masculine and less unfortunate. But in the character that the playwright created for his hero there are so many inconsistencies. Mrs Rozan was disserved by her role. How could she possibly embody the ideal image of the Maid of Athens, whom the playwright wants to be like a Caryatid, at such a close distance from the audience? The rest of the actors were mediocre».¹³ «The play, which is a vivid portrait of Byron and has a potent action and plot, was much liked and applauded. The drama is centered on the ideal love of the great poet and the Maid of Athens. And one must admit that the dramatist faithfully portrayed that difficult love. However, we would suggest to Mr Potamianos some changes in the second act so that it become quicker. Mrs Kyveli, in the role of Byron, presented this divine poet as excessively

¹² Byron's famous poem «The Maid of Athens» inspired a play which was performed immediately after the death of the poet, in mid-June 1824, with the title *Revolt of the Greeks; or The Maid of Athens* by C. E. Walker, in which Ida, the Maid of Athens, is trying to free her father from Ali Pasha's prison and she achieves it thanks to the Greek revolution (Puchner, *To 1821 και το θέατρο*, p. 93).

¹³ X., «Από τα θέατρα: Ο Βύρων» [From the theatres: Byron], nwspr *Estia* [Εστία], 11 June 1909, p. 1.

ideal and handsome. Her first appearance provoked prolonged applause. And she was completely successful from the beginning till the end».¹⁴

«Byron in Athens together with the Maid of Athens and a harem girl as her rival are the focus in the first two acts. In the third act, we see Byron again in Messo-longhi, with his fustanela and the Maid of Athens, who is present in his final moments. A drama without much literary value, for the masses, but, as such, well-written and well-designed. If it had been performed in a more popular theatre, it would have met with great success. But in the Variété Theatre, where Kyveli - Fyrst stage the most delicate plays, they were obliged to stop after the third performance. Mrs Kyveli in the role of Byron, a perfect figure».¹⁵ Xenopoulos is more analytical: «... The only pleasure for the Variété audience would be to watch Kyveli as Byron [...] The rest consisted of the so-called patriotic flare-ups. –*Ah, Greece. I will fight for Greece! ... I will spill my blood for its freedom! ... I hate Turkey!*, etc., etc. Exactly those flare-ups that would excite to frenzy the common, sincere and naïve audience of Athinaion or Neapoleos Theatre. Mr Potamianos did not want to write a literary play, but a more popular one [...] Neither does Mr Potamianos' *Byron* [...] seem like a historical drama. Because there is too little history in it, especially the story of the love between Byron and the Maid of Athens is thanks to poetic license unrecognizably altered. Well, a popular play, relatively noble...».¹⁶ It seems that this first *Byron* follows the idealized model of the romantic poet and hero, poetically and purely in love with the beautiful young Greek girl, deeply and constantly. Of course, the heroic last phase is not omitted, while the spectrum of his first love comes to accompany him to death. Nikos Koundouros shows something similar in his film, but with the forbidden liaison and the most powerful passion of Byron's life (see below). However, during the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, with the still extremely strict morals, it would be considered a sacrilege to present on stage the immoral passions of our imported national hero. As far as the text itself is concerned, it did not win a commendation and, from the reviews gathered, it seems very cerebral and uninspired and perhaps that is the reason why its writer hid it in a drawer.

¹⁴ «Θεατρική κίνησης: *Ο Βύρων*» [Theatre movement: Byron], nwspr *Kairoi* [Καιροί], 11 June 1909, p. 2, anonymous.

¹⁵ Καποίος, «*Ο Βύρων*». Ιστορικό δράμα εις πράξεις τρεις υπό Σπ. Ποταμιάνου, Βαριετέ» [Byron. Historic drama in three acts by Sp. Potamianos], *Panathinaia* [Παναθήναια] 18, 15-30 June 1909, p. 170.

¹⁶ Xenopoulos, «Θεατρική επιθεώρησης, Θέατρο Βαριετέ: *Ο Βύρων*, ιστορικό δράμα εις πράξεις τρεις υπό Σπ. Ποταμιάνου...» [Theatre revue, Variété Theatre: *Byron*. Historic drama in three acts by Sp. Potamianos], nwspr *Athinai* [Αθήναι], 18 June 1909, p. 1.

Miltiades Lidorikis' cosmopolitan son, Alekos, turned to the theatre at a very young age (22 years old), as could be expected, and with his second play (*Η μεγάλη στιγμή* [The big moment], 1933) he was established as a talented dramatist. If his father's connections were useful for the play to be performed by a respected theatre company (Mousouris-Aliki), they were obviously not responsible for his recognition and acceptance by the theatre world. The same year, he submitted his *Λόρδο Βύρωνα* [Lord Byron] to the newly founded National Theatre (Miltiades was a member of the administrative board) and it was read with a positive proposal written by Xenopoulos. «In 11 scenes, the playwright tried to depict the English poet's adventurous life and irregular character [...] (the scenes in England) mostly show his behavior towards women [...] who played an important role in his life, various women, his mother, his wife and his mistresses [...] about his other loves and hates –literary, political, social– they (the characters) talk less. In that way, the poet and the public figure remains more or less in the shadow. However, the dramatist has studied his sources extensively, especially the latest biographies of Byron. All the events mentioned in the play are historically confirmed. Also, there are a lot of Byron's lines put in the correct places [...] My conclusion is that *Byron*, firstly because of its theme and then because of its successful construction, can be accepted, on the condition that the dramatist will accept the changes proposed by the Manager and the Director and will edit the play according to their suggestions...». His reservations are whether the scenes of Byron's life that have been dramatized are well-selected so that they can correctly describe Byron the person, whether all the pictures are interesting and whether they constitute an imposing total. He believes that the prologue should be removed and he lists the scenes (quite a number of them) that are beautiful images and would be impressive on stage.¹⁷ It is decided for the play to be proposed for production, after some changes that the dramatist must make according to Xenopoulos' and Fotos Politis' suggestions.¹⁸ It was discussed again in April. Theodoros Synadinos generally agrees with Nirvanas' final positive proposition, but he thinks that in the last scene of the play the narrative element is dominant at the expense of the action and that this scene should not

¹⁷ «Εισήγησις Γρηγ. Ξενοπούλου στο Διοικητικό Συμβούλιον του Εθνικού Θεάτρου για το έργο του Αλέκου Λιδωρίκη *Λόρδος Βύρων*» [Greg. Xenopoulos' proposal to the Administrative Board of the National Theatre concerning Alekos Lidorikis' play *Lord Byron*], A. Lidorikis, *Θέατρο Α'* [Theatre A'], Ed. Dodoni, Athens – Giannina 1983, p. 220-221.

¹⁸ *Πρακτικά Καλλιτεχνικής Επιτροπής Εθνικού Θεάτρου από 27-2-1932 μέχρι 18-3-1935* [Proceedings of the Artistic Committee of the National Theatre from 27-2-1932 to 18-3-1935], 19 January 1933. The records of the proceedings of the National Theatre do not have page numbers and the meetings start from p. 1, so the dates are mentioned here.

only be altered with the insertion of some pauses but it should be rewritten so as not to destroy the brilliant impression that the audience would have up to that point.¹⁹ The play was staged on 13th March 1934 and it was published for the first time the same year.²⁰ It was an excellent production.²¹

It is structured in episodes, with scenes from Byron's life, which reveal the different aspects of his character and his nascent spirit, as they were already known in his era, either when he was treated as a *persona grata* or when he was considered, in England at least since 1816, as a *persona non grata*.²² The one-hundred-year jubilee of the Greek revolution was recent,²³ in the previous years, events had already been organized and articles had been published about Byron, the aristocrat poet who was devoted to the Greek issue towards the end of his life. Lidorikis, a promising young writer and a man of letters, identified with him and he considered the praise of the great philhellene as his patriotic duty, reinforced by his own desire to acquire an early fame as a writer, just like him.²⁴

In the first scene (Prologue, 1794 in Aberdeen) Byron, as a six-year-old child, clashes with his sixty-year-old governess May Grey, who wants to instill the narrow-minded religiousness and the superstitions of the place and the era in him, among them the dogma of predestination. The boy gets scared, but his intelligence

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 19 April 1933.

²⁰ Here the collective volume A. Lidorikis, *Θέατρο Α'*, p. 125-238 was used. The references are taken from this edition. It also contains abstracts reviews, but the research has been carried out directly from the National Theatre Archive.

²¹ It had an excellent cast, which was not always reviewed positively however. Lord Byron: Nikos Dendramis, Hobhouse: Giorgios Glinos, Teresa Makri: Vaso Manolidou, Lady Melbourne: Sapfo Alkaiou, Caroline Lamb: Litsa Ferentinou, Lady Annabella Byron: Eleni Papadaki, Augusta Leigh: Katina Paxinou, Fornarina: Miranda Mirat, Shelley: Theodoros Aronis, Countess Teresa Guiccioli Gamba: Rita Mirat, Fletcher: Christos Efthimiou and other good actors. Sets: Kleovoulos Klonis, Costumes: Antonis Fokas, there is also a reference to the prompter but not to the director who must have been Fotos Politis (to whom there are few references in the reviews, perhaps because they criticize him not only for this specific production but for many things in general).

²² Marios Byron Raizis, a systematic researcher of Byron, for his study M. B. Raizis: «Lord Byron in Greek drama», *Επιστημονική Επετηρίς της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών*, vol. 28 (1979-1985), Athens 1985, p. 447-467 (reprint), in order to write about this play and the next one by Skouloudis, talked to the two dramatists and they shared their literary intentions with him. He believes that they used Andre Maurois' biography of the poet *Don Juan ou la vie de Byron*, 1930, a best-seller until today with a lot of translations and publications both internationally and in Greece, although there were also other biographies that the polyglot writers could have possibly used. This is something that most of the reviewers also believe.

²³ The festivities did not take place in 1921 due to the campaign to Asia Minor and they were performed in 1930. In 1931, during the festivities for the 100 years from the foundation of the Greek state, the «literary» revue *Η ιστορία της Αθήνας* [The history of Athens] was staged with great success. In the play there was a scene with the meeting between Byron and the Maid of Athens, played by Kostas Mousouris and Eleni Papadaki respectively.

²⁴ Raizis, «Lord Byron in Greek drama», p. 450. Raizis was told that by the playwright himself during their meeting.

makes him react: why did Christ not get off the Cross, since he could, as she has told him? Why was he crucified? His moody character, with the outbursts of anger and the sudden expressions of tenderness and kindness, manifests itself. Also, the big idea of himself. «Byron: *I am a Byron May, and I do not ask for forgiveness*» (129). His mother, who has a similar character, considers him crazy and hysterical, just like his father. The boy declares that he wants to do great things and live just like his father. There is also a reference to the famous prophecy that he will die at the age of thirty-six, also like his father. His governess insists that he will become a good man and not a womanizer and a gambler with debts, following the paternal example. The first act has got two scenes. In the first one (1809, Newstead Abbey), Byron, Mathews and Hobhouse have a drink in the living room, they talk about the trip to Greece and philosophize while listening to music. They probably participate in an orgy as well, since there are also three unknown young women. Byron recites his own lines (probably translated by the dramatist)²⁵ and inveighs against England. «Byron: *...This is not a delirium of happiness... it is pain and doubt about everything I see in front of me... about everything I live [...] We are finally leaving this rock that is called England and those oysters that are glued on it and are called Englishmen! Cheers!...*» (134). He is sensitive and in pain about the death of his dog, but Matthews doubts if he would suffer even a little if his friends died. Byron complains that they do not understand him. Mary Chaworth had already hurt him when he was fifteen years old, a vulnerable teenager, who had not even found love in his mother's caresses, since she gave birth to him handicapped, disabled and different from the others. «Byron: *...Everything around us is a lie... everything is superficial [...] the outcry for my first book and the triumph of my satire [...] since the world is a big, vulgar, deceitful lie...*» (137). There is some necking with the girls and an unreasonable scene of jealousy by Byron. The second scene is in Athens, in 1810, Byron's second trip while continuing the grand tour that the young aristocrats used to take after they finished their studies. On his first trip he had toured Epirus and met Ali Pasha. Byron is with Hobhouse, his loyal till the end servant Fletcher and Tahir, an Albanian. He meets nineteen-year-old Nicolas Sarris (probably Nicolas Giraud, his young lover, who was probably French-Italian). The miserable life and the debasement of the Greek people in the Turkish thrall become obvious. Byron's companions get involved in various offenses and are in constant

²⁵ The epitaph for his dog and stanzas from «Lines inscribed upon a cup formed from a skull», *ibid*, p. 453.

danger of finding themselves in trouble, while they also quarrel with each other. Byron laughs at them, suppresses them and gets depressed. «Byron: *My God... is it possible for two people to quarrel about such petty stories, when others here rot in a stupor and are indifferent to things so much bigger... so much more important?*» (147). He feels sorry for the Greeks and he hates the Turks. Hobhouse considers Greek people as carcasses. «Byron: *...What do you want them to do? Who has ever really supported them? One kicks them and another swears at them [...] (he himself swears at them) just like a father swears at his child [...] he feels disgusted to watch them live in dirt... badly, but he is willing to sacrifice everything for his child... [...] But they do have a soul, Hobhouse, they have a soul and they could break their chains*» (148, 150). He has a date with Teresa, who is late but comes, and a tender scene follows. «Byron: *...But believe it, believe it, please, that for me you will always be the idol of the ideal love [...] Teresa, only you have given me real love*» (152). Of course, the scene ends with Byron reciting with emotion the famous «Maid of Athens».

Second act, first scene, in London, in Byron's living room, in 1812. Byron is at the peak of his fame and is literally pursued by (Lady) Caroline Lamb to continue their scandalous liaison, while he wants to get rid of her. He claims that he was never in love with her. «Byron (to Hobhouse): *Simply, because this noble lady is a very bad advertisement for the English Aristocracy. [...] What love are you talking about? ... I simply wanted to have a taste of... a noble woman to finally see what this renowned fruit that has besotted you is... And I did taste it... That was it...*» (154-155). Lady Melbourne, Caroline's mother-in-law, and Countess Bessborough try to help him in an attempt to avoid an escalation of the social scandal, by suggesting a marriage with Annabella Milbanke, an apparently unwilling bride. «Byron: *Perhaps this is what attracts me so much to your niece [...] the difference in character... she is the only woman who knew how to keep me at a distance...*» (159). Caroline makes a theatrically melodramatic entrance,²⁶ but Byron dismisses her deftly. The scene closes with a cynical aversion and sarcastic laughs. «Byron (to Hobhouse): *Humph! I'm safe... You saw all of them [...] a bunch of silly golden peacocks, who, a year ago, would pronounce my name without paying any attention to it... Today, all of them for this scandal [...] Ah! Hob-*

²⁶ In any case, she wrote a hugely successful novel in 1816. It is titled *Glenarvon* and the corrupted homonymous hero is an unfavorable description of Byron. The famous characterization of Byron as «mad, bad and dangerous to know» is hers and it is repeated in most articles related to him.

house, the nice thing is not to be able to ascend to their level, but for them to descend to yours... to your most despicable and stupid actions...». Second scene, again in Byron's living room (but in another house), 1814. One more time, Byron makes a confession to his raisonneur, who tries more seriously than ever to make him see reason. His scandalous life is continued, but now there is a tragic aspect to it: it is the love for his frivolous half-sister Augusta Leigh, an affair that has already resulted in a pregnancy. He half-jokingly proposes to her. He adores her and he boldly expresses it. «Byron: ...Why could we not have met earlier? Why should we have spent all those years apart? How could I not love you, Augusta?... Why do they curse us? Why do they not understand us? How is it possible not to give all your love when you find the person who deserves it? [...] You will become the mother of a child... and they will shout, they will curse... They do not know how you came into my life... A strange love, something new, something tender that I never expected it would come. How could I not hug you tightly?...» (167). Besides, they did not grow up together and he does not feel her like a sister. The rumors, the anonymous diatribes and the social exclusion hurt him very much, although he believes that the main reason is his admiration for Napoleon. She responds to his love in a way mixed with sisterly/motherly affection, but she is incapable of resisting or imposing a solution, that is, the separation.

Third act, first scene, in the Milbanke residence, in the seaside town of Seaham, 1815. Byron has married Annabella. His in-laws and Lady Melbourne, a close friend of his and a confidante, treat him perfectly, but he feels distressed; he is irritable and feels nostalgic for his exotic trips and adventures. «Byron: (to Lady Melbourne) ...the person we marry is our eternal enemy who deprives us of our most precious possession... our freedom... There are moments when we unwillingly look so deviously, so belligerently at the person that life and the Church have burdened us with, we look at them with eyes that hide the hatred, the annihilation, the persecution...» (174). That is the kind of discussions he has with his young wife, indifferent to how much he hurts her – he feels he is her victim and he sees her as his jailer. She is patient with his bitter words and his insults. «Annabella (to Lady Melbourne): It is impossible to understand this man, Elizabeth. To all his malice, to all his infidelities, he gives the most outrageous excuses. I want to make him happy and I cannot [...] There are moments when I wonder if this man is really crazy or he likes to play the comedy of craziness» (176-177). Byron daydreams in a prose song about the mountains of Greece and Ali's female slaves. The second

scene is again in the living room of Byron's house in London, 1816. Annabella has given birth to Ada; she has reached her limits and is ready to abandon her poet husband. She hesitates but only for his sake: the scandal of the separation would have to be explained and it will make his position worse in high society, to which he belongs nevertheless. She explains her reasons to her mother; divorces were not easy at that time. «*Annabella: ...If it were possible to watch him, without him knowing it, you would understand the craze that possesses him this moment [...] I do not know if I should (get a divorce)... Why should I make his position in London worse? There are so many who obviously hate him and they ask for his destruction. The contempt that some show enrages him and then he becomes sicker and more unhappy [...] His involvement with the Whigs circle and his enormous sympathy for Bonaparte have brought him here. While shouting in favour of him, he forgets that he talks to English people. Then, the scandal of his life, the tremendous slanders, slanders or horrible truths about his past, about that woman... all of these lead to our separation*» (179-180). She does not have to try hard: he sends her away, showing a kind of superior understanding – and with a badly hidden relief. «*Byron: I... I will leave Annabella... In this place I have spoken the truth more times than I should and now I am everybody's enemy... [...] England cannot accommodate me anymore! I am drowning... I can feel it... I hate them and they hate me... I have to leave once more...*» (184).

In the fourth act, scene one, in (Guiccioli's) Palazzo Mocenigo in Venice, 1818. Byron has become the lover of the young and married Teresa Guiccioli and, at the same time, the lover of the so-called (by him) Fornarina, a common voluptuous woman, passionate and jealous, who creates wild scenes of jealousy. He has had little Allegra with Claire Clairmont and he keeps her with him as he considers Claire an unsuitable mother and even prevents her from seeing her daughter.²⁷ Shelley, who together with Mary and Claire were travelling in Europe for reasons similar to Byron's, with whom they had met in Switzerland, comes to visit him and tries to persuade him to give them Allegra. The text does not provide the whole complex situation; apart from the fact that it would be scandalous for public morality, on the one hand it would be too complicated to be understood in just a few lines, on the other

²⁷ Considering himself as the most suitable guardian, he kept her for a period of time and then he sent her to a convent, where the five-year-old child soon dies, proving Shelley's and Claire's fears right, even though Byron himself probably did not feel particularly sad.

hand it might alienate the audiences towards the two philhellene poets.²⁸ Byron admits that he feels enervated in Italy and this makes him sad. «*Byron: Percy... I am looking for a woman or an Idea... Something that will feel me or make me feel it deeply... Something that will redeem me from this situation...*» (192). Next, there is a fiery conflict with Claire, in which Byron almost becomes vulgar in his audacity, arrogance and aggression. Second scene, Ravenna, 1821. Byron has got involved with the Carbonari movement together with the Guicciolis, probably playing safe as the Italian authorities did not bother him. He is disappointed. «*Byron: ...a while ago, I thought I had found what I was asking back then... You and the Carbonari... The Austrians destroyed them, together with my hopes for them...*» (198). The news about the Greek revolution excite him. «*Byron: How beautiful this is... [...] How could I doubt them even for a moment? [...] The first star after the storm... Fight... Fight... My heart is with you... kneels in front of you... and cries for you... Cries out of joy...*» (201). Third scene, in Messolonghi, at the square, 1824. Byron's companions are afraid of the Greeks and do not appreciate them at all: they do not try to fight, on the contrary they quarrel with each other. Their schemes almost try to involve Byron as well, whose pounds everyone covets. Byron, diminished, decrepit, in a bad state, leans on Mavrokordatos, the only person with whom he can really communicate but not really rely on. He has a more practical spirit than Mavrokordatos, who gets lost in the games of power and speaks the ambiguous language of diplomacy: he presents things communicatively, as we would say today. «*Byron: ...Messolonghi, which is in a bad state, instead of newspapers needs to fix its forts, to repair the Turkish canons that rot in warehouses and buy gunpowder, Prince, gunpowder!!! I believe today that only with the sword can the enemy of Greece be attacked...*» (207). The claims on his money, for various aims, are endless and he is determined to give everything. He senses that he has not much life left, since he is 36 years old, and, indeed, he dies in sorrow and grievance because this happens when he needs all his strength. An Army Messenger announces his death and the national mourning to the people, who sing Solomos' poem²⁹ in the midst of cannonfire, chants and sounds of bells ringing, while a pale light is cast on Byron's body – a very impressive ending.

The writer made his literary intentions public in the theatre programme, in various publications and in the prologue of the first edition. He states that he did

²⁸ Byron, and his biographers, suspected that Allegra was perhaps Shelley's child, who was a supporter of romantic freedom in love as well. Claire was like a step sister to Mary.

²⁹ Freedom stop for a while / to strike with the sword / now come close and cry / over Byron's corpse.

not want to view Lord Byron just as a poet, although his work is a bright mirror of his restless soul. He did not choose *one* episode revealing of his personality, of his inner world, because for him, Byron always struggled in order to be saved, in every episode of his being; he was beaten and then he left again for another place. His inner world always remained a mystery to the others and to himself. He let his actions be regulated by the complex moods of his soul and his unexplored feelings. Inside him, his opposite elements clashed: one Byron with another, the spirit of good with the spirit of evil, hate with love, logic with madness, and above all, there was the flag of quest. «A man perfect in his mental suffering, great suffering and for that reason he suffered more than the millions of the small ones, he hid, to the highest degree, his virtues and his malice, the craziness and the prudence of each person. [...] And he was always different. Always a pursuer [...] he could not find repose, he could not find what ordinary people find: casual satisfaction [...] his whole life was an endless ribbon of pains and a protest, it had the variety of feeling unfulfilled and this feeling followed him up to his death – a strange irony – the moment he thought that he could perhaps find something to redeem him [...] In that moment death arrived».³⁰ He wrote similar, but fewer, things in an article. «Leaving aside the poet and the public man, I chose the pure man, the man who is the super perfect Byron for me [...] I tried to portray the suffering of the excellent man, the restless, the one who always pursued something both under the influence of Virtue as well as in the arms of Malice: his salvation, which would bring him to perfection. A sinner? In the strict sense of the word, of course. But is someone, who knows his sins and is afraid of them, disgusted by them and trying to escape them, a sinner? Is someone who sins, because he believes that in Sin he will find the quintessence of his being, a sinner?».³¹

On the eve of the premiere, *Acropolis* made a long presentation written by a writer who claims that, albeit implicitly, he knows the play and he is sure that it will be a great success and an aesthetic delight for the audience, since both the production and the cast are brilliant.³² Apropos, it is a period when Lidorikis collaborates with (newspaper) *Acropolis*. The critics did not waste any time, all of them more or less dealt with it, even though the majority did not react positively. S. considered it as a

³⁰ A. M. Lidorikis, «*Lord Byron*» in the programme of the National Theatre performance.

³¹ «Η αποψινή πρώτη. Ο Λόρδος Βύρων. Πώς τον βλέπει ο συγγραφέας του». [Tonight's premiere. *Lord Byron*. How his writer sees him], nwspr *Proia* [*Πρωία*], 13 March 1934.

³² Theatrikos, «Ο Λόρδος Βύρων» [Lord Byron], nwspr *Akropolis* [*Ακρόπολις*], 12 March 1934.

venture that required another Byron to write the play, a poetic genius. However, it is the venture of a young playwright with serious intentions and not the easy choices that other novices make. He thinks that the warm reaction shown by the audience was in this spirit, and, in general, the performance was successful and he is of the opinion that this production will have a long run at the National Theatre.³³ «The writer [...] had the ambition to portray, perhaps with some rawness, perhaps with some honesty, an extremely important figure. With his play he lifts the veil that covers the great philhellene's life for many people...».³⁴ Red is praising. He mentions the Press notes in which Lidorikis informs the reviewers and the theatre lovers about his venture and he believes that this kind of real Byron that he aspired to create, he did create after «tireless study and work, which provokes every person's admiration and respect [...] what a huge achievement is the stage portrayal of such a multiform historical personality [...] an extremely theatrical dialogue and an excellent scenic economy...».³⁵ One critic considered the play «a success» which is worse than the worst failure and accused the critics that praised it of vulgarity and charlatanic attitude, because they pamper the barbaric and vulgar inclinations of the retarded spectator. He wrote many more imaginative swear words but he did not justify his opinion.³⁶ Ω. believes that the venture of presenting Byron's life in 12 scenes was unfortunate, since it is impossible to give prominence to Byron's human character and deeper personality through the wealth of information and sources. The whole play should have been limited to the part in Messolonghi. «Exactly this last scene, the one which is the most ideal redemption a dramatic writer would be able to imagine for the hero, the scene which was praised with the same spiritual élan by a poet and an orator of Greece, Solomos and Trikoupi respectively, could perhaps be the capstone of Mr Lidorikis' play, the moment to which all of Byron's life headed steadily and irresistibly, after all those deviations, after all the obstacles [...] he portrayed his heroes and their emotional or spiritual conflicts vividly and politely...».³⁷

Th. Athanasiades-Novas looked at the issue from an ideological and political aspect and he completely disagrees. The tendency of historical drama to present

³³ S., «Ο Λόρδος Βύρων» [Lord Byron], nwspr *Foni tou Laou* [Φωνή του Λαού], 15 March 1934.

³⁴ «Ο Λόρδος Βύρων του κ. Αλ. Λιδωρίκη εις το Εθνικόν Θέατρον» [Mr. Al. Lidorikis' *Lord Byron* in the National Theatre], nwspr *Vradini* [Βραδυνή], 11 March 1934.

³⁵ Red, «Η προχθεσινή πρώτη του Εθνικού. Λόρδος Βύρων». [The National Theatre's premiere of the day before yesterday. *Lord Byron*], nwspr *Akropolis* [Ακρόπολις], 15 March 1934.

³⁶ Kathisma 13 [Seat 13], «Ο Λόρδος Βύρων» [Lord Byron], nwspr *Patris* [Πατρίς], 15 March 1934.

³⁷ Ω., «Ο Βύρων» [Byron], nwspr *Estia* [Εστία], 14 March 1934.

extremely important persons as ordinary people in Bernard Shaw's style had as a result the denudation of larger-than-life figures from their greatness. Fortunately, this tendency is in remission, and now they are presented in their whole magnitude, like for example in Mussolini's *The hundred days* and in various Nazi playwrights. The denudation of the heroes was a psychological and spiritual need immediately after the war, a need to abolish idols. Today, we are not afraid of idols anymore... «...this was Mr Lidorikis' chief error [...] it is obvious that he got carried away by this dangerous obsession to ignore the public man and the poet in order to present the man Byron (as if the public man or the poet were not a man). So, he saw a complex man...». And he brings some examples: Johst's writings as a defendant of Hitlerism and Goebbels' severity as paradigms, an «abomination» inferior to the director's intelligence and the audience's intelligence, contributed to converting Byron into a «buffoon, a gothic column, a Fantômas, a doctor Barbusse. It became a case of journalistic sensationalism...».³⁸ ALK., on the one hand, is happy that the almost unknown in Greece genre of biographical drama (the most recent example being Gerasimos Vokos' *Κατοχή* [Occupation] 1905) makes a reappearance in Greek theatre, although plays of this kind are somewhat cinematographic. He, too, believes that the theatrical action should have been focused on the last and best scene in Messolonghi, the scene that the «capable» critics and spectators liked the most, because the way the play is structured now should be titled *Byron and love*.³⁹

Leon Koukoulas believes that the structure in scenes excludes the undivided emotion and the drama loses its composition, the basic feature of every true creation. This stage biography omits Byron's basic characteristics, a poet who is one of the most important of the last centuries: the acrimonious humour, the sarcasm, the immeasurable vanity, the almost pathological love of sports, through which he tried to reduce the impression that his disability gave, and many more things. The last scene is given in an unforgivable hurry, at least for the Greek audiences.⁴⁰ The voices of criticism that follow are numerous. Mihalīs Rodas sees Lidorikis' attempt to enter the abyss of the poet's psyche as a failure. The tragic hero ends up an obnoxious creature in an unstoppable delirium. The human volcano that Byron is, cannot transmit any emotion. Even the scene in Messolonghi passes in a monoto-

³⁸ Th. Athanasiades-Novas, «Αόρδος Βύρων» [Lord Byron], nwspr *Neos Kosmos* [Νέος Κόσμος], 15 March 1934.

³⁹ ALK. (Alkiviades Margaritis), «Ο Τάβαριτς. Τινά περί “σκηνικών βιογραφιών”, ο Βύρων του κ. Αλ. Λιδωρίκη» [*Tavarich*. Some things about «stage biographies», Mr. Al. Lidorikis' Byron], nwspr *Ergasia* [Εργασία], 14 March 1934.

⁴⁰ L. Koukoulas, «Ο Αόρδος Βύρων» [Lord Byron], nwspr *Vradini* [Βραδυνή], 14 March 1934.

nous, indifferent, typical manner, like an official document.⁴¹ Theatis [spectator] thinks that the play shows disrespect to the memory of the praiser of the Maid of Athens, who gave his life for our nation's freedom; it is «plain sloppiness».⁴² It presents a poetaster, similar to today's exhausted, ridiculous, illiterate and stupid youth that the playwright's social class produces, a Byron who longed for the revolution each time he got disappointed from his love affairs, as if the revolution were some kind of cocaine; a lustful Byron, whose only aim in life is a woman's navel and who, via numerous and endless tableaux, ends up in a scandal. The great Byron sometimes talks like a tenor in Viennese operettas. The National Theatre must fulfill its vocation and it should simultaneously fanaticize and reignite the national sentiment, so it could not let *Byron* unused, since a silly «boy» managed to write it, now that the 25th March anniversary approaches. The whistling heard from the gallery was the answer it deserved.⁴³ A second critic also named Theatis [spectator] (unless it is the same person) is harsher. He wonders how it is possible for someone to be concerned with a play in the prologue of which Byron, at age 8, talks about women, in the 1810 street fair he has a love date with the Maid of Athens «in a crowded place» and after an endless cinematographic parade of all the people who played a role in the poet's story, people who are not only present but also talk, it ends up in Messolonghi where Byron dies ingloriously and in the end reappears like a kind of ectoplasm. (This must have been the director's idea, because it does not exist in the text). How did the National Theatre dare stage such a fabrication? The writer's «special bonds» with the theatre (obviously Miltiades) are not enough to justify it.⁴⁴ «Neither the poet nor the man did Mr Lidorikis give us. Only a maniac and an irresponsible man, who, according to his mood, sometimes had the attitude of Napoleon and others of Hamlet [...] There was no development or analysis of the great poet's life».⁴⁵ Giannis Sideris devoted a delayed

⁴¹ M. Rodas, «Εθνικόν Θέατρον. Λόρδος Βύρων. Αλέξ. Λιδωρίκης» [National Theatre. Lord Byron. Al. Lidorikis], nwspr *Eleftheron Vima* [Ελεύθερον Βήμα], 15 March 1934.

⁴² O Theatis, «Εθνικόν Θέατρον, Κρίμας τα έξοδα! Ένα νέον...τέρας» [National Theatre. It's a pity for the expenses made! A new...monster], nwspr *Eleftheros Anthros* [Ελεύθερος Άνθρωπος], 16 March 1934.

⁴³ L. B., «Εθνικό Θέατρο, Λόρδος Βύρων. Αλ. Μ. Λιδωρίκης» [National Theatre, *Lord Byron*, Al. M. Lidorikis], nwspr *Rizospastis* [Ριζοσπάστης], 18 March 1934.

⁴⁴ O Theatis (The spectator), «Ο Λόρδος Βύρων εις το Εθνικόν Θέατρον. Εντυπώσεις από την "πρώτην"» [*Lord Byron* in the National Theatre. Impressions from the premiere], nwspr *Athinaika Nea* [Αθηναϊκά Νέα], 14 March 1934.

⁴⁵ Sp. Drakopoulos, «Ο Λόρδος Βύρων. Από την προχθεςινήν πρώτη» [*Lord Byron*. From the premiere of the day before yesterday], nwspr *Anexartitos* [Ανεξάρτητος], 15 March 1934.

lengthy article in order to remonstrate the play and the choices of the National Theatre, that is of Politis', to justify the spiteful people who claim that he produces bad plays in order to prove his belief as a theatre critic that Greek plays have no value and to ruin Lidorikis' good name, who in essence is really a journalist. «He disrespected Byron; in other words, he presented him as a “poet” according to the viewpoint that poets are arrogant, he made him fall in love as if he had nothing else to do in his life [...] he took just one single aspect, Byron the conqueror of women. He did not explain why he was exquisite in such a common environment. History does not live in Mr Lidorikis, he does not have the ability to be touched».⁴⁶ Similarly, Alkis Thyrylos criticizes the dramatist for just reading Byron's biography by Andre Maurois – even though he could have used the poetic license and shape his own. «He systematically ignored that Byron was a poet, above all a poet, and if he is interesting as a man, it is because he was a poet. Also, he did not shape a dramatic person. He just converted Byron to a random Mr Byronopoulos, who has a series of amorous adventures». Those of the spectators who knew Byron and his work were exasperated; those who did not know him wondered why they had to watch the unimportant amorous incidents of an unimportant man. There was no demonstration of the Byronic soul in the play. He/she does not accuse the National Theatre for its choice, because it has the obligation to produce Greek plays.⁴⁷

This fusillade of criticism troubled the Administrative Board of the National Theatre and provoked commotion during its sessions with respect to whether the theatrical Byron in the said play was appropriate for a national theatre and for the national goals. The session was dedicated specifically to investigating the manner in which the play *Byron* by Mr Al. Lidorikis was accepted and produced. Petrakopoulos (financial councilor) considers the choice and production of the said play unfortunate and wants to discuss how they can prevent similar accidents in the future. Achilles Kyrou does not consider the choice an accident, since the theatre has been accused of showing disdain towards the Greek dramatic production and it should definitely accept serious Greek plays especially by young dramatists, but he considers the way it was chosen irregular. Namely, two mem-

⁴⁶ G. Sideris, «Αλ. Λιδωρίκη *Λόρδος Βύρων*, Εθνικό Θέατρο» [Al. Lidorikis' *Lord Byron*, National Theatre], *nwsprtt Xekinima* [Ξεκίνημα], 16 April 1934, p. 134-137.

⁴⁷ Al. Thyrylos, «Ένα ελληνικό έργο στο Εθνικό Θέατρο. Εθνικό Θέατρο, Αλ. Λιδωρίκη *Λόρδος Βύρων*, έργο σε 4 πράξεις και 12 εικόνες» [A Greek play in the National Theatre. National Theatre, Al. Lidorikis' *Lord Byron*, a play in 4 acts and 12 scenes], *Το ελληνικό θέατρο* [Greek Theatre], B' vol., 1934-1940, Kostas and Eleni Ourani Foundation, Athens 1977, p. 35-38.

bers of the Artistic Committee, Nirvanas and Vlachos, did not read the play, while Gryparis and Politis had some reservations about its success. Only the rapporteur, Xenopoulos, was in favour, suggesting, however, some changes, which were made in cooperation with Politis. Politis protested against the prejudiced and self-serving reviews, which the board should not even discuss. He personally did not consider the play appropriate. Since he has often been accused of being a fanatic polemicist of modern Greek drama production, he referred the writer to the Artistic Committee, promising not to react to its acceptance so as not to be characterized as an opponent of every writer, as usual. The Artistic Committee approved it –of course it remains unknown if everybody read it– and so did the Administrative Board. It is impossible to prejudge the success of a play and the actors appeared excited during the reading, they cheered enthusiastically and were sure of its success. As far as the earnings are concerned it was a success, indeed. Griparis points out that the Artistic Committee must read the plays; he himself had some serious reservations, but, after mentioning them once, he did not believe that he should insist on his opinion seeing that the other members approved of the play, and some changes were made. The President (I. Damberghis) states that the Artistic Committee has the fundamental responsibility to protect the theatre from accidents and, particularly, not to forget that it is a National Theatre and, consequently, «it may not present to the Greek audience plays that lower a legendary hero, like Byron, to the level of a corrupted man». He also considers it his responsibility to inform the board about certain complaints made by the parents of some female students of the acting school, who protested that the girls were used on stage to reconstruct orgy scenes. Fortunately, he managed to prevent the public presentation of the complaints. Politis protests about said complaints, because the National Theatre is a purely intellectual institution, in which the participants, and especially the acting school students, should free themselves from «any low perceptions of that kind». He has a completely different opinion on how the national heroes should be portrayed, providing great emphasis on their human side, just like the play did. The Artistic Committee may judge only the artistic value of each play without examining its national value and it is the committee that is in charge of proposing plays for the repertoire. The president insists on the absolutely national character of the institution, which creates special responsibilities concerning the plays that are presented. Kyrou insists that Byron (the person) is of valuable intellectual value to the Greek nation

and, regardless of what his personal life had been, he purified it with his wonderful death, as even his enemies admitted. When such a hero is presented on the national stage, it is expected that his valiant death will be praised. In the produced play not only is his death not emphasized, but also every deviation and every incident of corruption of his personal life is continuously stressed, while his end is presented in a weak way. Consequently, he is of the opinion that it cannot be considered as a «national play». Diomedes (Alexandros, councilor) believes that said play does not live up to either the fundamental purpose of the National Theatre or the audience's justified expectations. In the future, the Administrative Board should be advised beforehand of the plays that are to be produced and express its significant opinion.⁴⁸

From the modern scholars, *Lord Byron* convinced Areti Vasiliou of the dramatist's aim to search for Byron the person, his personal wandering, his subconscious self, his complex spiritual moods, his unexplored feelings, the combination of logic and insanity, madness and prudence, which were unknown even to himself (Byron). His figure is for the writer the symbol of the continuously unsatisfied person that seeks new goals, new moral values and spiritual adventures. The writer presents the self-reflecting, psychographic, confessional diary of his hero. She believes that Lidorikis, just like some other contemporary dramatists, was greatly influenced by the Bergsonian philosophy and psychology, which affected the aesthetics of the 1930s generation in a general and varied manner. In fact, Byron embodies the prototype par excellence of the Bergsonian hero that the 1930s generation tried to impose on literature: with the sleepless eyes of his soul he empirically supervises his own self during his constant psychological process in order to be able to grasp his inscrutable inner mystery that the mind is incapable of grasping.⁴⁹ It is an interesting interpretation, although Lidorikis himself reports as an influence on this play that of Hippolyte Taine.⁵⁰ The critics regarded the play as a historical drama and for that reason unacceptable,⁵¹ but the

⁴⁸ Πρακτικά Συνεδριάσεων Διοικητικού Συμβουλίου του Εθνικού Θεάτρου, από της συνεδρίας 18/2/32 μέχρι 25/10/34 [Records of the proceedings of the Administrative Board Sessions of the National Theatre, from the 18/2/1932 session to the 25/10/1934 one], 16 March 1934.

⁴⁹ A. Vasiliou, *Εκσυγχρονισμός ή παράδοση; Το θέατρο πρόζας στην Αθήνα του Μεσοπολέμου* [Modernization or tradition? Prose theatre in Athens of the Interwar Era], Metaichmio, Athens 2004, p. 430-434.

⁵⁰ See Lidorikis, «*Lord Byron*» in the programme of the National Theatre performance.

⁵¹ B. Georgopoulou, *Η θεατρική κριτική στην Αθήνα του Μεσοπολέμου* [Theatrical criticism in Athens of the Interwar Era], Aegokeros, vol. A, Athens 2008, p. 358, 402.

dramatist had other intentions: his interest was psychological and not historical. He wanted to understand and empathize with Byron as an unsatisfied and troubled human being, not as a Greek national hero.⁵²

In 1983, the play was performed again by the theatrical group of Giorgos Mes-salas (directed by him) in the Lycabettus open theatre. During the press conference, the dramatist referred to the «great liberal poet's and aristocrat's exquisite and complex personality», and, more cryptically, to the fact that Lord Byron, a hero like so many other «great ones», was above all a human. The director stated that his purpose was to stage a classic performance, not a museum piece. «For us, Lord Byron is a modern sinful "Christ". The tragic game of destiny through the white (the dreamlike) and the black (the violence)».⁵³

The versatile Manolis Skouloudis⁵⁴ wrote *Τραγωδία του Λόρδου Βύρωνα* [Lord Byron's tragedy]⁵⁵ in 1955.⁵⁶ It is written in a coordinating plot and in the same style as Lidorikis' play, a common structure in biographical plays. The first part, first act begins with the famous adolescent love affair between Byron and Mary Ann Chaworth and his clash, personal and political, with her lover –whom she finally married and had a miserable life– Jack (John) Musters, a savage person and exploiter of the poor, and especially of poor girls (sexually), who of course were destroyed. Byron, hurt in the love field as well as in the sense of societal justice and his intelligence, which has freed his spirit, lashes out: «*Byron: Your Bible lies. Everyone lies. The priests, Jack Musters, my mother, the lords, everyone. In France they burnt the Bible and they sent all the rest to the guillotine. But, you see, here the people are sleeping and they are filling England with lies [...]* The God who challenges and laughs, that one –yes!– that one is proscribed [...] Only He deserves the Hell he created for the others ...» (22-23). In the second act,

⁵² He stated that in his interview to Raizis («Lord Byron in Greek drama», p. 465).

⁵³ «Λόρδος Βύρων στο Λυκαβητό» [Lord Byron in Lycabettus], nwspr *Rizospastis* [Ριζοσπάστης], 2 August 1983, p. 4. Christos Parlas played the role of Byron and the other roles were performed by Kostas Galanakis, Vilma Kyrou, Viveta Tsiouni, Deni Themeli, etc.

⁵⁴ He got involved in music as a composer, pianist, conductor, professor in a conservatory, but also in writing as a novelist, dramatist, poet, critic, translator, adapter of literary works for the theatre and the radio, screenwriter, columnist and publisher.

⁵⁵ M. Skouloudis, *Η τραγωδία του Λόρδου Βύρωνα* [Lord Byron's tragedy], Difros, Athens 1964.

⁵⁶ It was presented by Manos Katrakis' Greek Folk Theatre at the Piraeus Municipal Theatre. Katrakis played the role of Byron, which the critics did not consider ideal. The other roles were performed by Alikí Georgoulí, Daphné Skoura, Elli Xanthaki, Theano Ioannidou, Giannis Argiris, Alekos Petsos, Foevos Taxiarchis, Gerasimos Stavrou (using his real surname, Stavrolemis), etc. Takis Mouzenidis was the director, while the music was composed by Skouloudis himself.

Byron returns from his first trip to Greece (1809-1810). His mother is getting ready to welcome him in Newstead Abbey, although she is not able to understand her son's choice of trip. «Mrs B.: But, what thing is this Greece? Fletcher: A country with ancient pots, madam, inhabited by savage people and about which my lord writes songs and suffers –in my opinion, absurdly– because he sees it in the thrall of Turks». He has also written a «song» (poem) against Lord Elgin, who systematically steals the statues from Greece, a satire in which he hauls him over the coals. «Mrs B.: Bravo! Long live George Gordon Byron! That's the man he is! Honest! Liberal! Big-hearted! Rebel! Long live...» (33). However, she is moody, a characteristic that her son inherited. When she sees the epitaph praise for Byron's dog at the chapel of Newstead Abbey, she lashes out not for the sacrilege but because her son did not write anything about her, the woman who gave birth to him, and preferred a dog instead. «Mrs B.: ...Why is not my portrait in here? He is cursed! I don't want to see him!...» (34). Her nervous breakdown is powerful (concerning some unimportant waste of the household), that she dies of apoplexy, waiting for the arrival of her uncaring son. Byron appears accompanied by Dimitris Zografos, whom he appreciates and he brought as his companion and attendant to England. «Zografos: Sir, I just want your love and not your money. Byron: What? Nice! Really Nice! He wants my love, although he is in danger of dying if he has it! This is the true people of Greece who live in slavery!...» (36). When he is informed of his mother's death, he gloats, because he considers himself freed from his duty to God. «Byron: ...We are done with the Demons [...] Now, finally, it's my turn to collect my delayed rights! [...] She pestered me! She made me limp! She destroyed my heart! She took my love! My friends! My mother!...». He gives Mary Chaworth's ring to Peggy, the village girl that Musters corrupted and she became a whore, and organizes a feast-orgy with her and other flighty village girls in a very lyrical mood. He does not want to restrict his impulsions in the least: he believes the prophecy that he will die aged thirty-six years old and he wants to collect as many hedonic experiences as he can. Meanwhile, he is on a diet⁵⁷ and identifies, in a way, with Hamlet. He also composes some lines for the liberation of Greece. Then, he remembers his passion

⁵⁷ There are references in various biographies: his tendency to obesity and his weight fluctuations were notorious. In order to deal with these he had adopted a diet, which was popular then (perhaps it was his own invention which became popular because of his own popularity), to pour vinegar on every kind of food. Perhaps, it was effective in the sense that the food and the sweets had such a disgusting taste that the chubby aristocrats ate less.

for his half-sister and rumored lover (true in all probability), Augusta Leigh. Augusta comes to visit and fills the space with her careless and tender babbling that Byron loved so much in her. She gets scared with Mrs Byron's corpse, but, in the end, she was not her own mother.⁵⁸ After that, they embrace and kiss in a way not resembling the kissing of siblings and they go on kissing as the curtain falls.⁵⁹

The third act depicts the affair with Caroline Lamb. She has returned from her country mansion, where her husband and her mother-in-law sent her in order for her to calm down and the scandal to die down. However, Caroline does not intend to exercise any prudence, while at the same time she is a little bit piqued by her lover's indifference and her antagonism with other women and politics. She tries to pry Byron's mood out of Fletcher, while in reality she exposes her own. «*Caroline: (She rehearses with Fletcher acting as Byron) ...Have the gallows that they are preparing for the weavers in Newstead scared you so much that you suddenly became a champion of justice! You, who have hanged my sincere love under the tree of your sin!*» (50). Lady Melbourne, her mother-in-law and a trusted friend of Byron's, together with her cousin and Byron's future wife, Annabella Milbanke, come to bring her to her senses. She just mocks them and talks unashamedly about Byron's and the whole of society's *dessous*. They come to the conclusion that she has lost her mind. In any case, she seems to understand him well, better than Annabella. «*Caroline: ...For Byron, my dear cousin Annabella, limits were made only to be crossed!*» (53). Although she turned down his marriage proposal at first, Annabella is proud of her poet's humanitarian politics and his bravery to defend them from the Parliament podium and during the conflicts. She admires him. «*Annabella. You should consider his attitude during the weaving mills riots! When the cavalry cowardly attacked the workers, it was that cynical! It was that shameless! It was he who intervened and defended them putting his life in danger. It was he who grabbed the whip from the cavalry major Musters' hand when he saw him strike a defenseless woman during the interrogation*» (54). In this act all the important people in Byron's life, even his enemies, take part. Byron himself does not lose his political realism just because he is temporarily thought as the star of the day and a hero for the labour class. «*Byron: (to Jack Musters) ... In Giannina, in*

⁵⁸ She was the daughter of the poet's father from his first marriage, while the surname Leigh was that of her husband.

⁵⁹ Raizis («Lord Byron in Greek drama», p. 457) states that this scene makes clear to the audience that it concentrates events that happened over time. In any case, they do not give any information about their affair apart from the nature of their relationship.

Greece, I met your God in the face of Ali Pasha. Well, the cruelty and bliss of this tyrant left me thinking. What if you are not right, Jack Musters? What if your hatred made me a rhetor today? Do these things lessen your power and happiness? No. The Newstead weavers will be hanged and you ... you played with my heart, just like the cat with the mouse. You played and won till the end!» (66). This scene encloses concisely the whole mix of love and politics that created this popular and successful poet's impasse and led him to self-exile. His passion for Augusta has grown strong and he is ready to declare it publicly. «*Byron: It seems that my friends started to understand that I am permitted to do anything! [...] Even the crime of incest!»* (59). Augusta prefers to consider it as a «small and sweet mistake», but she is pregnant and, scared of the consequences if no way is found to obstruct Byron's provocative behavior, she pushes him, together with Melbourne, to get engaged to Annabella. Byron is disgusted by the hypocrisy of English society and even his friends' evasions, his friends who do not seem to accept what is crystal clear. He appreciates more Zografos' stiff attitude, who insists that he is neither a slave nor has he ever been one, although Byron believes that he suffers from false conscience. Despite the love troubles presented, Skouloudis gives equal attention to politics and Byron's liberal ideas.

In the second part, fourth act, again in London, again in trouble. Byron is now a husband and the father of one more daughter, but a worse partner than any other time and with any other woman. Zografos wants to return to Greece. «*Byron: Me, a lion? Ha, ha, ha! All these are women's behavior, my naïve Souliotis. [...] The whole London calls me effeminate [...] So, you are leaving for Greece? Then farewell, if you insist. However, I fear that there you will get lost. [...] Zografos: Yet, my lord, in the past you yourself taught me that someone, who gets lost for freedom, is not lost in vain*» (81). He is grateful that he taught him how to read and showed him his «songs» that will help the Greeks regain Parga, even though the English sold it to Ali Pasha. He is indifferent to whether Byron has included him in his will or not. «*Zografos: It is not easy for me anymore to wear silk clothes and represent Souli in London! Down there, my brothers are getting ready for an uprising...»* (83). Byron appears disbelieving: who is going to help (the Greeks)? The tyrants? Zografos is not persuaded by any of the deterring arguments that Byron uses, in fact, they end up fighting at one point, but Byron recovers and controls himself. «*Byron: Go and die elsewhere, Souliotis. It is not easy for anyone to die for this country. They can only live while dead. Go to your beautiful Greece, Greek,*

and die since you are looking for a glorious death. [...] Do you think that I have not always known or that I do not know now which is the real duty of humanity?» (85). He admires the young Souliotis: perhaps, in the future, this admiration can become a model for action. «Byron:Souli was destroyed by Ali Pasha. Democracy was erased... In the tyranny of Vienna, the lords are chipping away at the heavy plate of freedom... Yet, this brave man is leaving! He is going there to die for all those extinct and dead things! Who inflames his faith? A fresh air! The God of Greece! What is his gain? Death! Yet, he left without looking back. Like Lot. Could it be that Sodom and Gomorra are burning?» (86). Annabella suffers from his rejections. Despite Augusta's advice to pretend that she does not care, she cannot stand his behavior and complaints, which results in him throwing away any pretext. «Byron: ...Suffer now! You shouldn't have married me! [...] Didn't you know that the marriage that comes from love is like the vinegar that comes from wine? Those who write songs, like I do, after their marriage they crave for anything else but their wife. Everything else is a hypocrisy [...] The fact that I can feel you are my wife makes me hate you! [...] You lost Paradise! It's gone! You fell in love and married me and my sins and together we will sink to the bottom!» (91). Annabella cannot stand this situation anymore: she takes the baby and leaves him. Fletcher gives him the news that a small ship uses boiling water to cross the river, that is, he informs him about the invention of the steamboat by Fulton, but how can a poet appreciate such a cosmogenic discovery? Its significance completely evades him, as he is lost in his feelings and metaphysical thoughts, always concentrated on himself. «Byron: Get used to it, Fletcher. I am a stranger in the world of the living. A spirit that fell from another star» (98). He perceives everything subjectively: he feels that he is as strange to society as the little steamboat is to him. The social isolation is now evident both towards him and Augusta. The crowd jeers at them, outside his own house, when they see them exit it arm in arm and his friends decide to support him. But there is no way out. Of course, the fifth act takes place in Messolonghi. His fellow countrymen have doubts about his choices. «Captain Scott: It's a pity about this lad! [...] Never have I heard before of a wealthy, young, handsome man who would arrive in this muddy village to waste his fortune on the cannibals!» (107). Fletcher more than agrees. «Fletcher: ...What is my little lord doing here, a heartthrob and a delicate man? [...] He forsook everything and he is tormented with lice, bugs, foreign crooks, knives and pistols, the Romii and their fights day and night! But, tell me, sir? Is there anything worse

in the world than the Romii? [...] The Romii named him commander in chief! [...] However, captain, let's suppose that my lord succeeds in liberating his "Greeks" – something which is impossible. Well, I am asking you: Is this glory? Here, the Turks are the only respectable landlords of this place [...] If he, my exiled and unprotected lord, sent them away –so to speak– Greece would look like an asylum run by the mad» (108-110). This view is shared by many foreigners, non or ex philhellenes, both in Greece and from afar. Since the time the play was written is the post-civil war period, with the still strong polarization and rivalry, it is impossible not to read this view of the folk people as superficial, on the one hand («with pigs' eyes», according to Byron, 110) and as an implicit but clear connotation for the civil war, on the other hand. Byron is wondering if he is as ridiculous as his servant describes him. «Gamba: ...You are trying to persuade me, in vain, that you, my God, have lost your mind, the moment when the whole of Britain changes its politics in the East because of you! Byron: Words! Not because of me. Because of a bunch of barefoot people whom, at the last moment, I believed in and they honored me by naming me commander in chief because I gave them my fortune. Gamba: But, no. You defame them yourself, your Greeks...» (114). However, he protects civilian Turks, as well, from the brutalities of the Greeks (the reputed incident with the young Turkish girl seems to have really happened).⁶⁰ The difficulties are endless, many of them due to extreme stupidity. The philhellenes fight with each other for reasons of prestige, the Greeks refuse to roll up their sleeves and unload the ammunition because it is a religious feast and, as a result, it is destroyed by the endless rain. Byron goes to unload it himself and, at last, they seem to decide to do something. He remains positive and optimistic. «Byron (to Gamba): ...Come to the window to see why I did not lose my hope, Pietro. [...] They carry and they sing! They have already emptied the dock. Five of them are worth for a regiment of Thames heavers, and, in the battle, ten Greeks are worth of all of Napoleon's cuirassiers! What it takes is to know how to awaken Leonidas' spirit in their hearts, with your own heart...» (127). However, the constant rain exhausts him and he reaches the end. He is possessed by a delayed yearning and nostalgia for his family (in a broader sense) and asks for the two most important women in his life: Augusta and Annabella. (Kostas) Botsaris consoles him. «Bot-

⁶⁰ He mentions it in his correspondence from Messolonghi both with Augusta Leigh and John Murray; Peter Quennell (ed.), *Byron. A self-portrait. Letters and diaries 1798 to 1824*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1990, p. 763, 765.

saris: ...Here we are, around you, the Greeks you loved, sir. [...] Kitsos: We are your real brothers! [...] Byron: Oh! I think that I am leaving something to the world ... something worth loving. [...] The Greeks: Lord Byron will never die».

Marios Ploritis was of the opinion that when Skouloudis started working on Lord Byron, a personality suitable for a novel or a drama hero, he did not choose the easy road. His history and his quality of life were such that many chose to focus on one of its aspects or a specific period. Skouloudis did not want to give a superficial outline of his life or work with the easy theme of his love affairs. He entered from the «narrow portal» and tried to bring the inner matter of this troubled person –more dramatic than romantic– to the light. He saw Byron –and rightly so– as a leading expression and symbol of the tragic and relentless fight that every well-rounded person has with the contradictory forces that exist inside him. A fight in which the winner is sometimes the demon and sometimes the angel and which, if in common people it remains insignificant and miserable, in people who have Byron's idiosyncrasy and talent and live in an era and an environment like his, then it takes explosive proportions. It is on this division and this struggle that the armies of angels give against the armies of devils that focused the attention and the drama of Mr Skouloudis.⁶¹ Alkis Thrylos believes that the play will remain incomprehensible for the majority of spectators who might be uninformed or might know Byron as a figure glorified and heroised by the legend, that is, his death in Messolonghi. He/she supposes that Skouloudis' intention was to shed some light on Byron's double personality, his «tragedy», the angel and the demon he hid inside him. «So, we see a schematic, furious, neurotic person suffering without reason (without reason, since we do not enter the depths of his Existence, where we would reveal his secret and we coincidentally learn that the problem with his leg had created an inferiority complex) fighting with shadows (every other character in the play is faintly sketched) and orating. [...] His Byron appears like the conscious supporter of a specific political party's agenda, he appears more like a political leader than a poet. Really, why did Mr Skouloudis ignore, why did he forget that Byron was also a poet, that he was above all else a poet? His poetic quality becomes evident only because at one time, somewhere, completely temporarily he mentions that his verse books were published».⁶²

⁶¹ M. Ploritis, «*Η τραγωδία του Λόρδου Μπάυρον*» [Lord Byron's tragedy], nwspr *Eleftheria* [Ελευθερία], 6 November 1955, p. 2.

⁶² A. Thrylos, «*Δημοτικό Θέατρο Πειραιώς* (Θίασος Μάνου Κατράκη Ελληνικό Λαϊκό Θέατρο: Μανώλη Σκουλούδη, *Η τραγωδία του Λόρδου Βύρωνα* σε πέντε πράξεις» [Piraeus Municipal Theatre (Manos Katrakis' Greek Folk Thea-

Contrasting the two plays, we could see that, although both dramatists wrote structurally similar plays, in a modern realistic perception which rejects moralizations and idealizations of great personalities, presenting both their negative and positive aspects, in reality Lidorikis chose the final glorification, while Skouloudis chose innerness till the end. Both seem to use the new knowledge of psychoanalysis, which appears more consolidated in Skouloudis due to the period of time the play was written.⁶³ Also, Skouloudis emphasizes his outsized hero's progressive political and humanitarian ideas. Lidorikis stated that he was influenced by Hippolyte Taine's opinion of Byron as a lonely pioneer, a searcher of a new country which henceforth will bear his name,⁶⁴ or of the absolute's, we would add. That is he wrote a neoromantic play for the romantic poet.

In 1992, Nikos Koundouros' film *Byron, Ballad for a Daemon*, based on a script written by Fotis Konstandinidis and Koundouros himself, premiered. The screen and the dialogue are in English, with few lines in Greek.⁶⁵ It is a film of philosophical and existential thinking.⁶⁶ It was filmed in Russia, in the village of Zaprudnaye (claimed both by Russia and Ukraine), where the «paper made» Messolonghi

tre: Manolis Skouloudis, *Lord Byron's tragedy* in five acts], *Το ελληνικό θέατρο* [Greek theatre], vol. 6, 1952-1955, Kostas and Eleni Ourani Foundation, Athens 1979, p. 479-480.

⁶³ For a concise diagram of the trajectory of psychoanalysis in Greece see P. Chartokollis, «Ψυχανάλυση και λογοτεχνία στην Ελλάδα» [Psychoanalysis and literature in Greece], *Νέα Εστία* 116 (1984), p. 1063-1074 and revised in the volume *Λογοτεχνία και ψυχανάλυση* [Literature and psychoanalysis], Themelio, Athens 1999, p. 13-56. Also, there is a lot of information in Th. Tzavaras (ed.), *Ψυχανάλυση και Ελλάδα* [Psychoanalysis and Greece], Society of Studies – Moraitis School, Athens 1984.

⁶⁴ A. Lidorikis, «*Lord Byron*» in the programme of the National Theatre production, 1934, p. 11.

⁶⁵ The script and some newspaper clippings from Koundouros archive were given to me by Nikos Koundouros' widow, the theatrologist and theatre critic Sotiria Matziri, whom I sincerely thank from this position. Similarly, I thank Giannis Soldatos for the rest of the published material, which he himself used for his book on Koundouros' work, see below. Perhaps, Koundouros deliberately uses the term demon-possessed alternately, and somehow ambiguously, just like Dostoyevsky in his homonymous novel.

⁶⁶ As Vrassidas Karalis (*A History of Greek Cinema*, Bloomsbury-Continuum, London 2013, p. 223) commented: «A powerful film of historical revisionism, “Byron, Ballad for a Demon”, was made by Nikos Koundouros. Irrespective of the negative reviews and its box office failure, this was a superbly atmospheric film that encapsulated some of the recurring themes of his work: the lonely individual, the hostile society, and the inability to find common ground for communication. But nobody liked seeing the darling of Romantic Philhellenism, the idealist who sacrificed his life so that “Greece might be free again”, being depicted as a cynical beast, a lustful desperado, and a raving sodomite. Koundouros' Byron is angry, resentful, possessed by animalistic lewdness and moral despair; all caused by his own inability to find meaning in anything that he does: sex, revolution, poetry, or even in life itself. The film was superbly photographed, in dark, ominous, and menacing colours by Nikos Kavoukidis, while Manos Vakousis, an actor of comic roles until then, presented a poet in a collapsing state of mind with empathy and subtlety. During this period, Koundouros was indeed the only director who resisted conformism and complacency; the only director who continued the oppositional aesthetics of good Greek cinema, criticizing, subverting, and debunking established myths, ideologies, and implied “truths”».

was built, with Greek and Russian actors and Russian extras.⁶⁷ The action focuses on the last phase of the poet's life, in Messolonghi, on his problems there and on his action or lack of it and on the introspection he was forced to undergo, till his death, due to the inactiveness. Although he did not effectuate any victories against the Turks as he aimed to do or at least he did not get the chance to fight no matter how he tried to, the poet was glorious in another way.⁶⁸ There is no plot, only a sequence of scenes which in the film deputizes for the deviation from the original script. It starts in an impressive and atmospheric manner, with Byron in the boat that brings him from Kefalonia to Messolonghi, accompanied by his companions (Gamba, his servant Fletcher); he is welcomed by Colonel Stanhope and men wearing fleece who are Greek or Souliotes/Arvanites, which is almost the same. Mavrocardatos is not present. Fog, mud and an emphasis on the chest that carries Byron's pounds. Byron has got a dark and pensive expression, just as it would be expected from a supersensitive poet, who experienced many adventures and personal traumas, while he is interested in the fate of mankind – to the point of self-sacrifice, as is revealed by his involvement in revolutionary movements from the moment he was self-exiled from England. He begins the plot with sarcasm, typical of his spirit. «*Byron: Tell me, Colonel. Is this sunny Greece? The Greece of my dreams? [...] Stanhope: This is the Greece of the Greeks...*» (3-4). Stanhope brings him back to reality, but his moody and explosive character is revealed very soon. He talks to the gathered Greeks in the rain, which almost does not stop at all through his stay; it was during the winter months.⁶⁹ He gets wet and starts coughing. Meyer translates his words. His doctor has warned him that if he continues getting wet, he is going to die, but he feels ridiculous to be the only one under an umbrella – where could the Greeks find umbrellas? As he is wrapped in the cloak he looks like

⁶⁷ From clippings from Koundouros' archive, without the information of the source. But, we need the content and the relevant information here. In the beginning, he submitted the screen to ERT (Greek Radio and Television), there was an outburst of moralization which reached the Ministry of Culture, but it was supported by the Cinema Centre. The co-production with some English producers failed because they demanded the presence of foustanela (the pleated skirt that the male Greeks wore in the past), but he found a positive response in the Soviets who, free of the tiresome bureaucracy of the communist regime in a great degree, loved the mysticism of the film and their warmth encouraged him, although he had grown extremely tired by the various obstacles and was thinking of quitting his plans for the project.

⁶⁸ The presentation of the film here is based on both the script and the watching of the film. The script used has got some, but not essential, differences from the original script; some parts have been removed or added or –mainly– permuted.

⁶⁹ January-April 1824.

Death in Ingmar Bergman's *The seventh seal*.⁷⁰ «Byron: At last, land, Colonel (pointing at the treasure chest). We've had a long journey to carry here whatever is left of me. My soul and my tired body» (6). «Fletcher: ...The Greeks would rob their own mother, wouldn't they? Byron: Shut up, Fletcher!...» (7). Various people come and visit him in his lodgings and we are informed about the situation and, also, about Byron's thoughts and feelings. The dialogues are, to a great degree, philosophically revealing and Byron's lines very introspective. «Byron: Greeks! At last with you! One of you! Who am I? Just a soldier... A Greek soldier» (11). «Byron: But what the deuce am I doing here? They frighten me!» (12). The notables organize an official welcoming ceremony. They are sitting; they are well-dressed and appear arrogant and insolent. The women of Messolonghi present him their sons, the future soldiers. Byron comes in front of them, unable to stand straight; he looks worn out (just as he would have been if such a scene had indeed taken place) with his constantly frowned and troubled look. He states his plans for the organization of the fight and toasts drinking milk. Musicians accompany the scene like an ironic counterpoint. A handsome young man, probably a Souliotis, Lukas, reminds him that he is bisexual. Lukas reacts rudely to his attempt to approach him and offends him. «Byron: ...I'm your master! Loukas: No!... Loukas is the master of Loukas!...». Another presence, a ghost as we would say had she not been alive, Augusta, appears and he talks to her in his mind – supposedly, because she is visible, luxuriously dressed, but then she gets undressed in almost all the scenes. She is beautiful, mature and sensual. «Augusta: Yes... It's me, lover. Your depraved sister...» (17). «Byron: Because something had died back in England [...] You're naked, dirty bitch, slut! My sweet depraved, loved, destructive sister!» (18-19).

There is a scene in which the philhellenes that have settled in Messolonghi, most of them obviously adventurers, challenge the Greeks to a shooting competition. Byron swears at them. «An army of pigs!» (it is not in the script). «Thomas: The place is full of foreigners. They eat our food, steal our animals, invade our homes. Where is the war? Print that, Sir, please!...» (28). Byron articulates long speeches, he almost soliloquizes, revealing his inner thoughts. «Byron: Free souls hover above mud and stay intact!» (23). As the days pass by without any action, Byron finds himself in a constant nervous crisis, with explosions that subside

⁷⁰ Or like count Dracula. There is the opinion that Abraham «Bram» Stoker drew inspiration for his *Dracula* (1897) from Polidori's novel, Byron's companion in Switzerland, *The Vampyre*, which was inspired by Byron himself.

abruptly. He visits two whores, a mother and a daughter, but he does not want to undress because he is ashamed of his body. «Byron: *With this rotten leg that I loathe! This body of mine that abandons me day after day...*» (25) «Someone: *Your Englishman came to buy Greece. Vayas: Let him buy it. Who wants her?*» (36). In the dialogues they often act theatrically, with all the actors looking at the audience en face. Stanhope prints his own newspaper (*The Greek Chronicles*). «Byron: *Listen Stanhope! A revolution is not made by printers. It's made by warriors! [...]* Stanhope: *But the Greeks are illiterate, thick-headed and stubborn! [...]* Byron: *That's how I like them. They are beautiful and unique and barbarous like men have always been.*» (51). Stanhope burns the newspaper. Byron talks to him encouragingly, in his own way. «Byron: *On the edge of utter despair await us our most daring dreams*», just like Orestes says in Sartre's *The flies* «*on the other side of despair*». He watches Parry's endless work at the canons. Like Hamlet and the undertakers, they philosophize about the meaning of life and death and about women. «Byron: *One can call a woman anything, Mr Parry. Wife, mother, sister, cat, viper and, of course, whore [...]* Who suck your blood like vampires [...] They frighten me» (61). Stanhope does not appreciate him. «Stanhope: *War's not a game! And Byron likes games. Because he's a clown! [...]* Can you trust a clown?» (93). He does not appreciate the Greek fighters either because they are not regular soldiers, they do not know discipline. «Byron: *Discipline my arse! Fuck your damned discipline, man! I need you and your cursed weapons, but remember, man, we're rebels! Not soldiers. Rebels!...*» (95). A small mime-dance event takes place in which Lukas is symbolically killed. Some thieves grasp the opportunity and steal Byron's gold from his lodgings. He catches them red-handed but he does not react. Augusta reappears and improvises with her brother, one playing the role of the other, wearing the clothes of the other and talking on his/her behalf, while they end up in passionate and lustful love making. Few are the scenes that show the Greeks and, in particular Greeks talking in Greek; in the script there are no lines in Greek. In the tavern, where the foreigners booze-up, an American preacher, obviously unbidden, makes his appearance. Byron's health has worsened, he suffers from hallucinations and he is delirious. «Baxter: *What else can you expect?* Byron: *The apocalypse! Why not? [...]* Immortality... Perhaps? Dexter: *The dream of a poet!*» (122). The fatal bleeding brings the unwanted result: death. During his last moments, the poet charges his servant with the same mission that Hamlet had charged Horace: to become his apologist. «Byron: *Go back, Fletcher... to Eng-*

land... You must tell the whole story... Do you understand? Everything! [...] My whole life... As I really was... Just remember it all!» (124).

Koundouros gave some explanations for his film. First of all, he named it a ballad in order to get rid of the responsibility of a document. He saw Byron –the way he arrived in Messolonghi, carrying his money– as the excessive expression of romanticism of that period, with his uncontrollable liberalism and his uncontrollable mood for heroism. He arrives in a city/trap, a city of death, without any triumph. Like a shadow. Together with Hugo, he was the most dynamic and liberal spirit of his era; they expressed a «global humanism». The film talks about the poet's existential agony; about his extremely liberal, revolutionary, anarchic and humanistic spirit. It talks about the thinker's agony when things are not directed towards an end. He does not have the stamina either to move or wait and he chooses to die. The main theme, that is, is the poet's despair; despair, however, expressed through the despair of a dying revolution, which dies because of its contradictions, the foreign interference, the contrasts of Greeks (Anglophiles, Francophiles, Russophiles, etc.). The subtitle of the film could have been «the poet's death in the death of the revolution». Ignoring the historical look at things, the *auteur* tries, through a metaphysical road, to grasp the existential agony of the thinker of that period and of what he represented.⁷¹ Indeed, both the script and the film do not deal with the historical moment or action –or the intent of some action, because in reality nothing concrete happened and Messolonghi was not saved– but they focus on the poet's fight with his demons. However, there are a lot of coups-de-cinema.⁷² Elsewhere, he (Koundouros) explained that the stimulus was a phrase by Roides concerning Byron: «...a misanthrope and a philhellene, he came to Messolonghi to die in the mud and the swamps». «Byron lived in the contradictions. Byron the romantic, Byron the visionary, Byron the metaphysical fascinated by the idea of the revolution. He was assigned to transport the money of the London Philhellenic Committee; he was urged to come to Greece and not for a moment did he wonder if he was doing the right thing or not. He entered with passion even though he knew his end was near. He was ill, he had panic attacks, he had epilepsy, his teeth were falling and his hair too. For him, who was an extremely vain man, all these were signals of death. There is no demythologization: I sought to add the myth of cinema to the

⁷¹ Newspaper clipping from Nikos Koundouros' archive without information of the source.

⁷² Just like coup de théâtre, impressive scenes and reversals.

myth of Byron. It is an elegy of death which includes a feeling of calm and deep joy, like a funeral lament».⁷³ He believes that Byron is a 19th century myth which remains alive because he was not only a poet, but also an ardent anarchist and denier of any political convention, a visionary of a universal state in which people of all races would be equal citizens of a nation of the people; at the same time, he was a realist and a vain, sensual lover.⁷⁴ The criticism characterized it as «an epic profile». ⁷⁵ «...The flattering image of the philhellenes created by the official history is overturned, the place is corroded by miasma and Byron is revealed in all his nakedness. An actor, a clown, a hedonist, a non-fighting soldier, a megalomaniac, domineering, blaspheme, sarcastic, ironic man. A general without an army and without a battle. A mixture of Hamlet, Henry, Napoleon which touches the limits of tragedy, grotesque and ridiculousness».⁷⁶ But is also characterized as a «cinematographic vulgarity» and a «humiliation of Byron and of the Greeks».⁷⁷ In more details, «Mr Koundouros is trying to isolate the tremendous existential agony of the lone rebel, the foreigner in another country, in a period of a tremendous personal crisis, degeneration and perdition, who is looking for a last bet, a justification through action, the suicide as a solution [...] an extremely insightful study on the relation of the history of action in a foreign country and of the function of all these with the individual and its special psyche».⁷⁸ A sober and modern analysis, both of an academic and artistic nature, was carried on by Giannis Soldatos. «Byron is a pagan, extremely liberal and pansexual: love, again without limits, for a young Greek man. Even though the king is naked and his wounds are visible, his skull almost deathlike, he believes that it is worth trying to establish a new Greece, to “resurrect” it through the ashes brought by the Ottomans and he meets Koundouros in the delicate point of anti-establishment, in the war against violence [...] the demonized poet is trapped in the net of the historic myth, a trap he intentionally pursued. He looks too small to face this hellish sandlot, too small for what those

⁷³ I. Kanellis, «“Η τέχνη δεν είναι κατ’ ανάγκην αισιόδοξη”. Ο Νίκος Κούνδουρος μιλάει στο *ANTI*» [“Art is not necessarily optimistic”. Nikos Koundouros talks to *ANTI*], *ANTI*, 27 November 1992, p. 46-48.

⁷⁴ E. Houzouri, «Νίκος Κούνδουρος» [Nikos Koundouros], *Ena* [*Eva*] 49 (2 December 1992), p. 80-82.

⁷⁵ O. Andreadakis, «Οι Ελλάδες» [Greeces], *nwspr Avgi* [*Avgh*], 14 November 1992, p. 10.

⁷⁶ D. Danikas, «Λόρδος Κούνδουρος» [Lord Koundouros], clipping from Giannis Soldatos Archive without other information.

⁷⁷ R. Sokou, «Γκραν Γκινιόλ ο Μπάουρον» [Byron Gran Guignol] clipping from Giannis Soldatos Archive without other information.

⁷⁸ A. N. Dermetzoglou, *Θεσσαλονίκη* [Thessaloniki] in G. Soldatos, *Οδύσσειες σωμάτων στο έργο του Νίκου Κούνδουρου* [Odysseys of bodies in Nikos Koundouros' work], Athens 2007, p. 268.

about to die ask of him [...] He came in order to die since the place needs a Byron dead more than a lord alive, sick, with panic attacks, with hair and teeth falling, with his body which cannot accommodate him [...] It is not accidental that Greece never embraced his poetry; it embraced him and buried his heart and viscera in its land [...] Why did Byron come to this mousetrap? In order to contribute to its opening or to die making its confinement more obvious? [...] That beautiful Lord Byron of the 1821 pantheon, the Byron of our childhood was a figure sick in body and soul [...] (Koundouros) borrows a historical figure [...] to integrate in his plan, a frightfully suffering body, wrecked by the turbulence of history and of his inner ghosts, wrecked by physics and metaphysics, a cursed romantic figure».⁷⁹

Already legendary both as a poet and as a divergent personality according to the norms of a society which, in his opinion, «associated stupidly» (Kavafis), Byron was established in Greece as an ideal both for his poetry and his death for the national case. The dimension of his scandalous personal life and action, the political but mostly the erotical, was considered best to be ignored and suppressed for more than a century. As a consequence, plays with him as the central theme and theatre character took long to appear, although he influenced the Greek letters and intellectual life greatly. Perhaps during the 19th century, not a lot of biographical facts about him were known, despite the published biographies, correspondence and memoirs, some of which written by people who personally knew him. The English language and culture were less influential than the French, primarily, and the German in Greece. The first play, as we saw, Potamianos' *Byron* appeared in the beginnings of the 20th century and presents a Byron idealized and spiritual, an ideal and worthy lover of romanticism. The other two writers, Alekos Lidorikis and Skouloudis, appear to know enough things about his history and biography, while they did not hesitate to present the things and, of course, the person as they were. The National Theatre produced Lidorikis' play. The negative reviews alarmed the Administrative Board and made them wonder whether it was advisable to stage such provocative plays, since, according to the conservative intellectuals (and most of them, as well as the audiences, were conservative), it demythologized a hero that had become national. No matter how strange it may seem, Koundouros too, in such a late time, faced difficulties and reactions of the same nature. In the begin-

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 246-269.

ning ERT was supposed to be in charge of the production of the film he planned,⁸⁰ but the administrative board had objections for the boldness with which the script presented the Byronian tendencies and fantasies. Elli Pappa and Iakovos Kambanellis were the judges, who committed a faux pas of puritan nature, advising the director to consult Kyriakos Simopoulos' study in order to present the historic role of the poet's coming to Greece more correctly,⁸¹ while the minister of culture, Tzannis Tzanetakis, seems to have expressed some reservations for the film about which the newspapers «raged that Koundouros intended to abuse Lord Byron's memory presenting him as a homosexual».⁸² These unexpected difficulties and the mocking or angry newspaper pieces perhaps contributed to the audience's lack of support to the film, as well as Koundouros' insistence on exploring the cursed poet's existential suffering. Some foreign films had already been shown about Byron and his scandalous adventures as their theme,⁸³ so, correctly and with a more artistic aim, the director looked for deeper meanings and the investigation of the psyche of the philhellene poet through his philhellenism. Perhaps the audience and the critics (inappropriately) found it «heavy» and avoided or criticized it. But ethics evolve continuously in more freedom. The film was shown in 2021, 200th anniversary of the Revolution, by the state TV channel, as it deserved to be, while the protagonist's performance (Manos Vakousis), internal and sarcastic in a harsh manner, does not seem inferior in any way to the possible interpretations by the international stars chosen initially.

⁸⁰ The initial film title would be *Ο δαμονισμένος* [The demonized] and possible protagonists Ian MacKellen or Robert Powel (M. Katsounaki, «Ένα έργο ωδή στον ποιητή ή στον δαίμονα» [A film ode to the poet or the demon], clipping from Soldatos' archive with no further information).

⁸¹ They expressed some lame excuses that it was not the homosexual element that it was troubling, but the existential (R. Kapitsala, «Κανγάζ για την... αρετή του Μπάυρον» [An argument for... Byron's virtue], nwspr *Ethnos* [*Έθνος*], 3 April 1988). It is strange that serious writers express that kind of objections and recommendations to a creator.

⁸² B. Georgakopoulou, «Παραπράγουδα για ένα “δαίμονα”» [Complications for a “demon”], nwspr *Eleftherotypia* [*Ελευθεροτυπία*], 16 June 1990.

⁸³ E.g. *Lady Caroline Lamb* by Robert Bolt, 1972, *Gothic* by Ken Russell, 1986.

THE CRETO-VENETIAN DIALECT IN RENAISSANCE CRETAN COMEDY:
HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND SCENIC FUNCTION*

In an apprenticeship contract dated November 6, 1645, in the city of Candia in Crete, Tzortzis Protonotarios undertakes to train the young Tzortzis Sevastos in the profession of «notarios», i.e. a notary, and promises to «teach him [...] to read and write vulgar, and not Greek nor Latin, but simple vulgar... to read and write, that is, in the spoken language» (*να τον μαθητεύσι γράματα ρομέηκα και φράγγικα, να διαβάξι και να γράφι υσέ βολγάρε, και όχι ελληνικά μηδέ τη λατίνα, μα απλός βολγάρε*).¹ This archival evidence summarizes the linguistic everyday life of the time. The language of the inhabitants of Crete during the Venetian rule is one of the outstanding products of the interactions that took place during the centuries-long coexistence of Greeks and Venetians, in the context of their adaptation to the same environment.²

After centuries of coexistence and through the interaction of local customs, Byzantine descent and Venetian influences, a new social and cultural life was formed, with clear references to the model of the metropolis. The contact of the Cretans with the Italian Renaissance opened new spiritual paths, which resulted in the creation of a «Cretan-Venetian» cultural landscape, with important examples of writing in the arts and letters.³ The bilateral education of the Cretans and the

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¹ Th. Detorakis, «Διδασκαλικές και συμβολαιογραφικές συμβάσεις στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη», *Κρητολογία* 10-11 (1980), p. 250-252 (doc. 8); A. Vincent, «Comedy», D. Holton (ed.). *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, Cambridge 1991, p. 122.

² From an ample bibliography on Greek-Venetian coexistence, see indicatively St. Alexiou, «Το Κάστρο της Κρήτης και η ζωή του στον ΙΣΤ΄-Ζ΄ αιώνα», *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 19 (1965), p. 146-178; Chryssa A. Maltezoú, «Η Κρήτη στη διάρκεια της περιόδου της Βενετοκρατίας (1211-1669)», *Κρήτη: Ιστορία και πολιτισμός*, vol. 2, Crete 1988, σ. 107-159; Chryssa A. Maltezoú, «Η Κρήτη ανάμεσα στη Γαλινοτάτη και τη Βασιλεύουσα», *Cretan Studies* 6 (1998), p. 3-20; Chryssa A. Maltezoú, «The historical and social context», D. Holton (ed.). *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, Cambridge 1991 p. 17-47; Chryssa A. Maltezoú, «Η καθημερινή ζωή στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη: κατάσταση και προοπτική έρευνας», *Πεπραγμένα Η΄ Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*, Irakleio 2000, p. 7-30; Anastassia Papadia-Lala, «Vivere civilmente nelle società dell'oriente grecoveneziano», *Il contributo veneziano nella formazione del gusto dei greci (XV-XVII sec.)*. *Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Venezia*, 2-3 giugno 2000, Venice 2001, p. 113-121. See also Chryssa Maltezoú (ed.), *Βενετοκρατούμενη Ελλάδα. Προσεγγίζοντας την ιστορία της*, Athens – Venice 2010, vols 1, 2.

³ For a description of the cultural environment in Crete during the Venetian rule see indicatively Maltezoú, «Η Κρήτη στη διάρκεια της περιόδου της Βενετοκρατίας», p. 150-156; N. M. Panagiotakis, «Η παιδεία κατά τη βενετοκρατία»,

osmosis with the Venetians, and, of course, the fruitful cultural debate between them played a catalytic role in the literary and artistic flourishing, established under the term «Cretan Renaissance».⁴

In particular with regard to language, Venetian was immediately imposed as the language of administration. However, with the passage of time, and through the reasonable need to communicate between the two different languages, it mixed with the language of the place, until finally a new dialect was formed, understood by both the Venetians and the Cretans.⁵ Characteristic examples of this linguistic interaction can be found in the notarial documents of the time, which introduce us to the world of everyday life. With their liveliness and immediacy, the notarial acts of the time capture their contemporary linguistic reality, as the pre-eminent means of transaction in every kind of daily activity, and provide information on the Venetian influence on Cretan society.⁶ In order to understand the phenomenon, and, without dealing with the philological side of the matter, let us look at some examples, gleaned from these archival sources.

The mixing of the two dialects lies mainly in the introduction of Italian and Venetian words or expressions into the everyday vocabulary. As a notarial document of the time informs us, written in this mixed dialect, the inhabitants of Crete during the 17th century *ελετζέριζαν κομέσους για να τους ντεφεντέρουν* (they chose representa-

Κρήτη: Ιστορία και πολιτισμός, vol. 2, Crete 1988, p. 166-195; Anastasia Papadia-Lala, «Συνσωματώσεις του αστικού χώρου και πολιτισμική ζωή στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη (16ος-17ος αι.)», *Cretan Studies* 6 (1998), p. 37-49; D. Holton, «The Cretan Renaissance», D. Holton (ed). *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, Cambridge 1991, p. 1-16; St. Kaklamanis, «Ειδήσεις για την πνευματική ζωή στον Χάνδακα από το 16ο βιβλίο της "Istoria Candiana" του Ανδρέα Κορνάρου», *Παιδεία και πολιτισμός στην Κρήτη. Βυζάντιο - Βενετοκρατία. Μελέτες αφιερωμένες στον Θεοχάρη Δετοράκη*, I. Vassis – St. Kaklamanis – Marina Loukaki (eds), Irakleio 2008, p. 115-249.

⁴ Holton, «The Cretan Renaissance», p. 15-16; N. Hatzinikolaou, «Σκέψεις για την Κρητική Αναγέννηση», *Ενθύμησις Νικολάου Μ. Παναγιωτάκη*, Irakleio 2000, p. 777-812.

⁵ See indicatively D. Tsougarakis, «Cultural assimilation through language infiltration. Some early examples from Venetian Crete», St. Efthymiadis – Claudia Rapp – D. Tsougarakis (eds), *Bosphorus, Essays in Honour of Cyril Mango*, Amsterdam 1995, p. 181-194. For the use of the Italian language in Crete at the end of the 16th century, see A. Vincent, «Scritti italiani in Creta veneziana», *Sincronie* II, 3 (1998), p. 131-135; Kostas Lambrinos, «Il vocabolario sociale nella Creta veneziana e i problem del censimento di Triv(is)an. Approcci interpretativi e desiderata di ricerca», Chryssa Maltezou – Angeliki Tzavara – Despina Vlasi (eds), *I Greci durante la venetocrazia: Uomini, spazio, idee (XIII-XVIII sec.)*. *Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Venezia, 3-7 Dicembre 2007*, Venice 2009, p. 183-197; A. Vincent, «Πληροφορίες και απόψεις για την κρητική διάλεκτο στα Απομνημονεύματα του Τζουάνε Παπαδόπουλου (1696)», *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 32 (2012), p. 107-118; A. van Gemert, «Η διγλώσση επικοινωνία στην Κρήτη γύρω στα 1500», *Ελληνικά* 63 (2013), p. 45-60.

⁶ On the language use in notarial practice see W. F. Bakker – A. van Gemert, «Οι διαθήκες του Αντωνίου Γιαλέα», *Κρητολογία* 6 (1978), p. 14-20; W. Bakker – A. van Gemert (eds), *Μανόλης Βαρούχας, νοταριακές πράξεις, Μοναστηράκι Αμαρίου (1597- 1613)*, Rethymno 1987, p. 17; W. F. Bakker, «Περιγραφή της γλώσσας των συμβολαιογραφικών πράξεων του Μανόλη Βαρούχας», *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 17-18 (1988-1989), p. 275-323.

tives to defend them) in front of the administrative authorities of the place (*ένμπροστες ιστους υψηλότατους αφέντες δούκα γενεράλε, καπετάνιον μεγάλον, ριζιμέντο, κολέγιον* [...] και εις κάθα άλον οφίτζιον, γιουντήτζιο, κριτί και μαγιστράτο), that is, in front of the highest masters duke general, captain great, regiment, college [...] and to every other officer, judge, judge and magistrate).⁷

The Cretan merchants and sailors, before their voyages, and fearing the dangers of the sea and death (*πριν από τα βιάτζα τους, φοβούμενοι τα περίκολα της θαλάσσης και του θανάτου*), drew up their testaments (*τα τεσταμέντα τους*).⁸ They were assigning commissaries (*κομισάριους*) for their properties and tutors (*τουτόρους*) for their children, leaving them as their last wish that they never come in disagreement, with their mother (*να μην έρθουν ποτέ ιν ντιφερέντσια με τη μάνα τους*), nor to upset her [...] but on the contrary, to be obedient (*να μην τηνε στραπατζάρουσι* [...] και να κάνουνσι το θέλημά της).⁹ In the case that the widow did not take care of her children, [...] she was appointed to the tribunal of the Lord, that is, she would be judged by God (*την όριζαν στο τριμπουνάλε του Κυρίου*).¹⁰

As far as architecture is concerned, where the influences from Italy are still visible today, the information on public and private buildings, such as *κιέζες* (churches) and *κάζες* (houses) and various venues and domestic spaces (*πόρτεγα, λοτζέτες, κάμαρες και σαλβαρόμπες*) is particularly rich, with the architectural terms, as expected, coming almost exclusively from the Italian language and the Venetian dialect.¹¹ Like architecture, fashion also has received significant influences from Venice, as confirmed by the comedy *Fortounatos* by Markantonis Foskolos, where Milia, one of the women of the play, describes in two words the fashion trends of her time, ordering the dressmaker to design clothes for her «like those worn by all the women of the city», that is according to the Western fashion (*καθώς τα ζάρου και φορού τη σήμεραν ημέρα, όλες εδώ στο Κάστρο μας, ήγου alla forestiera*).¹² The fashion of the time is depicted in great detail in the dowries of young girls. An

⁷ See sporadically in notarial documents of the period, kept in the Venice State Archive (*Notai di Candia* archive series).

⁸ Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASV), *Notai di Candia* (NC) –hereinafter ASV, NC–, b. 68, ff. 487r-v. See also Gogo K. Varzelioti, *Κρητική κωμωδία και καθημερινή ζωή: Σχέση σκηνικής εικόνας και κοινωνίας στο βενετοκρατούμενο Χάνδακα*, Athens - Venice 2011, p. 169.

⁹ ASV, NC, b. 68, ff. 466r-466r (bis). See also Varzelioti, *ibid*, p. 125.

¹⁰ *Ibid*.

¹¹ Gogo K. Varzelioti, «Η “σκηνογραφία” της Κρητικής Κωμωδίας και η αρχαιακή της απεικόνιση», I. Vivilakis (ed.), *Στέφανος-Τιμητικός τόμος για τον καθηγητή Βάλτερ Πούχνερ*, Athens 2007, p. 149-157, with relevant bibliography.

¹² *Fortounatos*, B 501-502.

excerpt from a dowry agreement of the time is mentioned below as an example, and it describes, among the many garments, *φιστάνι λαβοράτο με μετάξι κόκκινο και γαμπέτες μαβρες, ένα βελούδο άσπρος ο κάμπος με πολλά φιορε με κουδα με τρις κορδελήνες χρουσές κατο, ενα βελουδο ριτζο με κουδα με πολλά φιορε με ενα πλεκτο χρουσο εξι δακτυλιο, ενα φιστανι ολογεματο με μεταξι κολορε ντε μάρε* etc.¹³ They describe, that is, luxurious silk and velvet dresses, of various colors, decorated with ribbons, flowers, gold variegations, and «tail».

In this interactive cultural environment, in a spirit of exchange and assimilation, the first period of modern Greek theater took shape during the last century of the Venetian rule on the island. Influenced by contemporary Italian drama, but retaining elements of local tradition, the theater in Venetian-occupied Crete is a product of the ferments that led to the heyday of Venetian-Cretan culture.¹⁴ Especially in comedy, despite the dialogue with their contemporary Western dramaturgy, Cretan writers introduced their own, distinct elements while at the same time adapting their plays to their time and society: they codified the stage space, theatrical types, their behavior, their habits and values, in familiar persons and situations.¹⁵

Determining elements for the formation of the identity of these plays were the fifteen-syllable homonymous verse, inextricably connected with the Modern Greeks' poetry and their language: the literary elaborated spoken local dialect.¹⁶ The start of

¹³ ASV, NC, b. 234, [libro 1], ff. 11r-13v (n.n.). See also Gogo K. Varzelioti, «Λαογραφικές πληροφορίες στις θεατρικές και ιστορικές πηγές της βενετοκρατούμενης Κρήτης», *Πρακτικά του συνεδρίου του Κέντρου Ερεύνες της Ελληνικής Λαογραφίας της Ακαδημίας Αθηνών «Λαϊκός πολιτισμός και έντεχνος λόγος (ποίηση – πεζογραφία – θέατρο)»*, 8-12 Δεκεμβρίου 2010, p. 134; Gogo K. Varzelioti, «Ενδυματολογικές προσεγγίσεις στην κρητική κωμωδιογραφία της Αναγέννησης: ιστορικές πηγές και παραστασιακά τεκμήρια», Gogo K. Varzelioti (ed.), *Από τη χώρα των κειμένων στο βασίλειο της σκηνής. Πρακτικά Επιστημονικού Συνεδρίου. Αθήνα, 26-30 Ιανουαρίου 2011*, Athens 2014, p. 101-124; Tatiana Markaki, «Cultural Transfers and Social Ruptures in Venetian Crete: Dowries of Distinguished Cittadini in Seventeenth Century Candia», Konstantinos A. Dimadis (ed.), *Proceedings of the 5th European Congress of Modern Greek Studies of the European Society of Modern Greek Studies. Thessaloniki (2-5 October 2014). Continuities, Discontinuities, Ruptures in the Greek World (1204- 2014): Economy, Society, History, Literature*, vol. 5, Athens, p. 207-220; Tatiana Markaki, *Objects and Identities: Dowry and Material Culture in Venetian Crete in Regional and European Context (1600-1645)*, Amsterdam University Press B.V., PHD thesis, Amsterdam 2018, with a rich bibliography.

¹⁴ M. I. Manousakas, «Ζητήματα του Κρητικού Θεάτρου», *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 1 (1947), p. 47-73; M. I. Manousakas, *Η κρητική λογοτεχνία κατά την εποχή της Βενετοκρατίας*, Thessaloniki 1965, p. 27; A. Solomos, *Το Κρητικό Θέατρο. Από τη φιλολογία στη σκηνή*, Athens 1998, p. 13-21; W. Puchner, *Μελετήματα Θεάτρου. Το Κρητικό Θέατρο*, Athens 1991; Alexiou, *Η Κρητική λογοτεχνία*, p. 13-31. See also the relevant chapters in the collective volumes Chryssa A. Maltezou (ed.), *Θψεις της ιστορίας του βενετοκρατούμενου ελληνισμού. Αρχαιακά τεκμήρια*, Athens 1993; D. Holton (ed.) *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, Cambridge 1991; Chryssa Maltezou (ed.), *Βενετοκρατούμενη Ελλάδα. Προσεγγίζοντας την ιστορία της*, vol. 1, Athens-Venice 2010.

¹⁵ Varzelioti, *Κρητική κωμωδία και καθημερινή ζωή*, where also relevant bibliography.

¹⁶ Domenica Minniti Gonias, «Gli "italianismi" nella tradizione cretese: I. Katzúrbo», I. Vivilakis (ed.), *Στέφανος-*

this choice can be traced to two important elements: on the one hand, the desire of the authors to make the works understandable by the public of their time, which, as we saw earlier, spoke neither Greek nor Latin, but the spoken dialect (*ούτε ελληνικά μηδέ τη λατίνα, αλλά τη βολγάρε*).¹⁷ It was therefore self-evident that they would not choose the archaic language, nor of course the Latin or the Italian, which the scholars practiced with verses and texts in their meetings in the academies of the Cretan cities.¹⁸ They turn the language of everyday life into a literary instrument, which decisively stamps the works with the local element and shapes their identity, playing, despite their verbal beginning, an undeniably key role in their establishment and their long course in popular culture.

On the other hand, it has been documented by archival research that the well-known writers of Cretan drama of the Renaissance came from the upper class and were very much connected with the dramatic currents of the West. They have studied Italian Renaissance texts, and have found that one of their characteristics was the use of spoken language. Thus, in the spirit of their contemporary Italian dramaturgy, they wrote in the vernacular, wishing to establish an immediate communication with their theatre audiences, but also following the principles of Italian dramaturgy, on the basis of the humanistic Renaissance, the verisimilitude and also the didactic dimension of Renaissance dramaturgical aesthetics. This had the effect of placing the specific texts at the core of humanist thought, at the base of Renaissance theories.¹⁹ At the center of these theatrical texts is man and the unlimited possibilities that the new era conveys: education, love, optimism, emotions,

Τιμητικός τόμος για τον καθηγητή Βάλτερ Πούχνερ, Athens 2007, p. 803-813; Caterina Carpinato, «La letteratura greca dalle prime manifestazioni letterarie in volgare al 1713: da *Dighenis a Erotòkritos*», P. Boitani - M. Fusillo (ed.), *Letteratura Europea*, Torino 2014, vol. 1, p. 221-239; Caterina Carpinato, «Origini della letteratura greca in volgare ai confini orientali dell'impero bizantino: alcune riflessioni», *Revue des littératures européennes* 9 (2015), p. 145-166; R. E. Bancroft-Marcus, «Cretan Renaissance metrical idiosyncrasies and their relation to the Latin-scriptwriting system: the cases of *Abraham's Sacrifice* and *The Faithful Shepherd*», St. Kaklamanis – A. Kalokairinos (eds), *Χαρτογραφώντας τη δημόδη λογοτεχνία (12ος–17ος αι.)*. Πρακτικά του 7ου Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Neograeca Medii Aevi, Heraklion 2017, p. 293-306.

¹⁷ For various references on the audience, who watched the theatrical performances see Alexiou, «Το Κάστρο της Κρήτης», p. 165-167; Π. Βασιλείου, «Το κοινό των παραστάσεων του “Κρητικού Θεάτρου” (±1590-1669)», *Ελληνικά* 39 (1988), p. 323-346.

¹⁸ On the organisation and the sociocultural role of the Academies established in the Cretan cities see N. M. Panagiotakis – A. L. Vincent, «Νέα στοιχεία για την Ακαδημία των Stravaganti», *Θησαυρίσματα* 7 (1970), p. 52-81; G. I. Pilidis, «Fuor dal comun sentiero. L'Accademia degli Stravaganti di Candia: innesto socio-culturale italiano», Chryssa Maltezou – Angeliki Tzavara – Despina Vlassi (eds), *I Greci durante la venetocrazia: Uomini, spazio, idee (XIII-XVIII sec.)*. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Venezia, 3-7 Dicembre 2007, Venice 2009, p. 675-687.

¹⁹ St. Kaklamanis, «Ουμανισμός και Κρήτη», K. S. Staikos (ed.), *Οι ελληνικές εκδόσεις του Αλδού και οι Έλληνες συνεργάτες του*, Athens 2015, p. 1-39.

luck. How could all this be said in any other language? And what other language is more real, more human, more understandable than the language of everyday life? So in the spirit of the Renaissance and Humanism, the Cretan-Venetian dialect contributed decisively to introducing the works at the crossroads of social and cultural paths, sealing their character.

Influenced by scholarly Italian comedy (*commedia erudita*), which served as their model, these plays generally shared a common plot.²⁰ It can be summed up in the love between young couples, usually prevented from being together by their bickering parents, but also by a network of elderly conspirators, money-grubbing ruffians and sly servants. In all three comedies, *Katzourbos* by Georgios Hortatsis, (1595-1601), *Fortounatos* by Marcantonio Foscolos, (1655), and the anonymous *Stathis* (1585-1592),²¹ the dramatic characters were standardized in analogy to the corresponding Italian comedy, taking particular dramatic features.²² The Cretan writers proceeded to standardize the language of these theatrical types. Of particular interest, in fact, is the way it is used, and its configuration, depending on the social status, education and profession of the dramatic persons.²³

The language of young people in love is different: lyrical and poetic. Servants and their masters talk in quick witty dialogue: a constant verbal showdown. Representatives of the middle class, that is, merchants and businessmen, always speak measuredly and seriously. Language was not a special feature of «foreigners»: the mixed dialect, with minor variations, was spoken by all Greeks in the Mediter-

²⁰ G. Morgan, «Cretan Poetry. Source and Inspiration», *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 14 (1960), issue 1, p. 7-68, issue 2, p. 203-270, issue 3, p. 379-439; N. M. Panagiotakis, «The Italian background of early Cretan literature», *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49 (1995), p. 281-323; W. Puchner, «Μίμηση και παράδοση στο νεοελληνικό θέατρο. Το πρόβλημα της κοινωνικής λειτουργικότητας του “ξένου προτύπου”», *Ελληνική Θεατρολογία. Δώδεκα μελετήματα*, Athens 1988, p. 331-379; W. Puchner, «Το Κρητικό θέατρο στα ευρωπαϊκά του συμπραζόμενα», *Cretan Studies* 6 (1998), p. 293-316; W. Puchner, «Σχέσεις του ελληνικού θεάτρου με το ιταλικό», *Theatrum Mundi. Δέκα θεατρολογικά μελετήματα*, Athens 2000, p. 157-170; D. Spathis, «Ιταλικές πηγές και κρητική αναγεννησιακή δραματουργία (Χορτάσης, Τζιράλντι και Ευριπίδης)», I. Vivilakis (ed.), *Δάφνη. Τιμητικός τόμος για τον Σπύρο Α. Ευαγγελάτο*, Athens 2001, p. 319-342.

²¹ Lidia Martini (critical edition, notes and glossary), *Στάθης, κρητική κωμωδία*, Thessaloniki 1976 (hereinafter *Stathis*); L. Politis (critical edition, notes and glossary), *Γεωργίου Χορτάση, Κατζούρμπος, κωμωδία*, Irakleio 1964 (hereinafter *Katzourbos*); A. Vincent (critical edition, notes and glossary), *Μάρκου Αντωνίου Φόσκολου, Φορτουνάτος*, Irakleio 1980 (hereinafter *Fortounatos*). See also the English translations of two of the works discussed: E. Rosemary, M. Bancroft (ed.), *Georgios Chortatsis (fl. 1576–1596), Plays of the Veneto-Cretan Renaissance: A Bilingual Greek-English Edition in Two Volumes with Introduction, Commentary, Apparatus Criticus, and Glossary*, vol. 1, *Texts and Translations*. Oxford 2013, *Katzarapos* (formerly *Katzourbos*), p. 321-445 and *Stathis*, p. 447-515.

²² Varzelioti, *Κρητική κωμωδία και καθημερινή ζωή*.

²³ *Ibid.*

ranean, even in Venice.²⁴ The common women argue and argue: how would they manage to survive in the port and the infamous neighborhoods of the Castle? The bragging military men flaunt their exploits by speaking in a pompous language that they do not actually - but they have to prove themselves great, even though their interlocutors not only don't understand them, but usually mock them. Their linguistic deviation, was justified by the fact that they were world-traveled, therefore multilingual, having been «present» on the battlefields. So, they introduce more Italian than the average viewer knows, using this invented language as a means to achieve the comic.

Epigrammatically, I mention two examples, each with a different approach: In the first case, the comic is based on the misinterpretation of one word: in the comedy *Stathis*, when Bravo refers to Μάρτε (*Marte*), that is Mars, the ancient god of war, his servant understands that he is talking about μαρτί (*martí*), a kind of lamb, which, of course, infuriates his master and, at the same time, causes the audience to laugh.²⁵ In the second example, drawn from the comedy *Fortounatos*, the servant mocks his master's bravery. It is about Petruccio and the captain Tzavarla Matzasette. Even the braggart's name, Matzasette, (from the Italian *mangiare* = to eat and *sette* = thirst), which literally means, he who is hungry and thirsty, enhances his comic image. When the captain lays out his plan to defeat the Turks, his servant mockingly advises the feudal lords, who seem to have been trapped inside the city, to be patient, because Tzavarlas will soon be victorious and they will be able to return to their estates²⁶ – let us remember that *Fortounatos* was written during the multi-year siege of Candia by the Ottomans.

The language idiom of the teachers and medical philosophers of the texts also plays a significant dramatic role. It is a pretentious idiom of Italian, Latin and, to

²⁴ It is worth noting that in this linguistic context, literary works written in *greghesco*, the dialect spoken by the Greeks of Venice, had a particular impact in Venice – where *commedia dialletale* was already flourishing: L. Coutelle, *Le Greghesco. Réexamen des éléments néo-grecs des textes comiques vénitiens du XVI^e siècle*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1971 (=παράρτημα των Ελληνικών); M. Cortelazzo, «I Fatti e le prodezze di Manoli Blessi strathioto: titolo e nome imitati o parodiati?», *Quaderni Veneti* 29 (1999), p. 177-179; M. Cortelazzo, «Introduzione del greghesco nel teatro veneziano e il suo tramonto», *La commedia dell'arte nella sua dimensione europea, Giornata di studio, venerdì 14 novembre 2003*, Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia, σ. 21-26; Caterina Carpinato, *Vocabolari bilingue greco-volgare/italiano dal Cinquecento al Greco moderno*, Dizionario Zanichelli - Greco moderno-italiano, Bologna 2013, p. 12-16; Caterina Carpinato, «Stampe veneziane in greco volgare nella prima metà del Cinquecento e questione della lingua», S. Kaklamanis – A. Kalokairinos (eds), *Χαρτογραφώντας την δημόδη λογοτεχνία*, Neograeca Medii Aevi VII, Irakleio 2017, p. 147-167.

²⁵ *Stathis*, A 137-142.

²⁶ *Fortounatos*, C 23-24.

a lesser extent, Greek which almost none of their interlocutors understands, resulting in comical misunderstandings, original puns, and even small fights. Their linguistic incomprehension leads to a general confusion, where, not being able to understand each other, the Teacher gives Coustoulieiris a *libriá*, on the head, that is, he hits him with his book (Italian: libro), the only weapon at his disposal.²⁷ The term *libriá* (describing the act of striking with a book (libro), such as «pistolíá», the act of firing a pistol or «karpaziá», striking with the hand (a word derived from the wrist of the hand, in Greek «karpós»)) is, I think, very characteristic of linguistic ingenuity. Let's mention one shorter example, from the comedy *Stathis*, where the teacher needs the help of Petroutsos, a servant, to approach his beloved. The teacher poetically uses the Italian language to explain to the servant his mission, but he does not understand the romantic expression «messo d'amor». The teacher translates it into Greek but the greedy servant implies that he suffers from moral dilemmas in acting as the romantic mediator. He takes advantage of the multiple interpretations of words, but changes his mind as soon as he secures his *ρεγάλο* (it. regalo) that is, his reward. Their dialogue is based on the use of synonyms – in a comic context.²⁸

The complex language of the teachers is not used by chance. On the contrary, its use seems to be completely targeted by the authors, since teachers are the bearers of one of the most important concerns of Renaissance man; education. The Teachers constantly emphasize its value, and especially emphasize its absence, and its consequences.²⁹ And all this, in a linguistic idiom that escapes that of everyday life, since it is enriched by sophisticated Latin phrases and words, names of Latin authors and ancient Greek philosophers and other incomprehensible words and expressions. This has the consequence that their conversations, due to misunderstandings, paraphrases or even repetitions, attract the attention of the public, since they compose some of the most spartan scenes of the works. For example, in the comedy *Katsourbos*, after an extensive Italian-Latin monologue by the Master, his interlocutors wonder what language he speaks,³⁰ while in the comedy *Stathis*, Petroutsos expresses himself very abusively about how

²⁷ *Katzourbos*, D 390.

²⁸ *Stathis*, B 171-176.

²⁹ Varzelioti, *Κρητική κωμωδία και καθημερινή ζωή*, p. 129-142; Gogo K. Varzelioti, «La figura del maestro nei testi drammaturgici di Creta veneziana e la sua presenza nelle fonti notarili (XVI-XVII sec.)», *Parabasis* 15/1 (2017), p. 61-65.

³⁰ *Katzourbos*, D 371.

difficult, incomprehensible, is the way, in which the teacher Hermogenes speaks.³¹ And for his part, the Teacher of *Katsourbos*, clearly irritated, observes that due to the illiteracy of his interlocutors, he is forced to speak to them in *vernacula lingua*, the vernacular language.³²

The constant reference to the value of education works both in favor of the work and the performance, but also in the interest of the theater audience of the time, for whom, according to the humanist perceptions of the authors, it opens, in yet another way, the path of education. Who wants to be the dumb one who doesn't understand? In addition to the Renaissance writer, who teaches and motivates to knowledge, there is also the Renaissance reader and viewer, who is taught and motivated. In this spirit, it is worth mentioning an example from the comedy *Katsourbos*, where the Master, talking to the elderly Yakoumos, offers to teach him how to read and write. But Yakoumos, a representative of the older generation, rejects the proposal: at his age, it is enough for him just to know how to sign his name.³³ Yakoumos represents the old world. He sends his son to school and cares about his education, since the new age has different demands, but as for himself, he remains attached to the old ways. In the three comedies we are studying, therefore, in order to understand even more the contrast between the old world and the new, between education and illiteracy, one of the most characteristic mechanisms for achieving the comic, verbal humor is employed. The educated speak correctly and fail to get along with the uneducated, resulting in the creation of perhaps the most comedic scenes of the plays, at the level of dramaturgy, but also an indirect motivation towards the path of education, for the spectators.

As we have already established, those who have the most serious communication problems, situated in the very center of comic scenes and humorous dialogues, are the servants. When they converse in everyday dialect, they are cheerful and witty. But where, depending on their interlocutors, the linguistic form of the spoken language is altered, the misunderstandings do not stop. This is the case with the dialogue that follows, between the teacher of the comedy *Stathis*, and the servant Petroutsos.

- *Calces sunare as déχομαι, dum ludo cum somaro.*

- *Και πού 'ναι το σομάρι σου, κι εγώ πά σου το πάρω.*

³¹ *Stathis*, C 433-434.

³² *Katsourbos*, D 301-303.

³³ *Katsourbos*, D 231-233.

Petroutsos confuses the donkey (somaro) with somari (*σομάρι*) the saddle.³⁴

The misunderstandings continue in many verses, the Teacher affronts Petroutsos for his illiteracy, and the latter –being insulted– recites the Latin alphabet using imaginative examples according to the sound of each letter:

Το πρώτο γράμμα ο γάιδaros, καημένε ερμήνεψά σου
 ah ah ah ah φωνιάζοντας, κι εκαταμούτζωνά σου.
 Και τ' άλλο πάλι γεις κριός σου ερμήνεψε, εκείνο
 οπού σα βάλης δυο απ' αυτά be be θα πούσι κρίνω.
 Το ce από τσέρκουλο εμισό επήρες το ξαμάρι
 οπού 'χε 'ς τσι κορκύδες σας η μάνα σου δοξάρι.
 Το de η καμπάνα σου 'μαθε με δυσκολιά μεγάλη,
 μόλο που κρούγει din din don και ξανακρούγει πάλι.
 Το effe μόνο εξώφευγες, καημένε, να διαβάσης,
 γιατί της φούρκας ήτονε, μην πα να την περάσης.

The Teacher corrects him, saying that he forgot the letter -e, only to receive an insolent reply.³⁵

The study of the dramatic function of the language of the Cretan Renaissance comedies is a key field of study of the dramaturgy of the time. The use of the spoken language, apart from its comedic dimension, played a catalytic role in the formation of the specific dramatic genre, the urban comedy, as a key feature of Cretan identity. Of particular interest is the fact that, although these works were written many centuries ago, they still maintain their place on the stage today, they are a constant part of the repertoire throughout time. It is worth mentioning the fact that, despite the difficulties that reasonably arise for the creators of these performances, the issue of language does not seem to hinder the reception of the texts by the modern audience: what prevails is the timelessness of the theatrical types, the Renaissance dramatic aesthetics, the dynamics of the 15-syllable in modern Greek poetry and its timeless connection with the reader/spectator, and the spontaneous, original immediacy of the dramatic language, traces of which we find in Crete to this day.

³⁴ Stathis, B 137-138.

³⁵ Stathis, B 145-156.

THALIA BOUSIOPOULOU

DU PERSONNAGE TRAGIQUE DÉTERRITORIALISÉ
À LA PERSONNE TRAGIQUE TRANSFORMÉE :
TRAJECTOIRES VERS UNE ALTÉRITÉ CONSTITUTIVE

La notion du tragique semble porter une qualité ambiguë : plus elle est délimitée, plus elle devient vague. Elle ressemble à ces figures du rêve dont on est sûr de l'apparence mais dont les caractéristiques précises nous échappent. Szondi, dans son livre *Essai sur le tragique*, a parlé d'un certain aspect tragique de la théorie du tragique elle-même : elle semble perdre de vue son but en s'en approchant.¹ Quant au personnage, aujourd'hui plus que jamais il semble avoir une définition confuse, contestable et peut-être insuffisante face à l'écriture dramatique contemporaine. En se questionnant sur l'élaboration du personnage, on est nécessairement amené à pénétrer le champ de la pensée philosophique moderne qui cherche à définir la personne, qui, par ailleurs, semble avoir acquis une certaine théâtralité, et dans la relation que cette dernière entretient avec le personnage du théâtre. Ainsi, notre étude vise à poser quelques jalons sur le devenir du personnage tragique et sur son impact sur la personne tragique à travers deux pièces contemporaines qui s'inscrivent dans la même perspective que notre sujet. Il s'agit du *Littoral* de Wajdi Mouawad et de *Vers Éleusis* de Pavlos Matessis. En premier lieu, nous étudierons aussi bien les différents aspects du tragique (de sa naissance à aujourd'hui) que la relation philosophique qui existe entre le personnage théâtral et la personne. Deuxièmement nous analyserons les œuvres choisies ici à la lumière de certaines théories qui semblent répondre à la problématique de notre étude. Néanmoins, il est important de souligner que les concepts théoriques ne peuvent s'employer dans le cadre de cette étude que très schématiquement, étant donnée la complexité sémantique qui les caractérisent en tant que partie d'un système plus large.

Tout d'abord, le concept du tragique est le produit de la philosophie allemande du 19^{ème} siècle. À partir de la pensée allemande, la réflexion s'est dirigée dans deux directions qui sont encore d'actualité aujourd'hui : d'abord vers le tragique

¹ « Plus la pensée s'approche du concept général, et moins l'élément substantiel d'où elle tire son élan adhère à elle », Peter Szondi, *Essai sur le tragique* (tr. Jean-Louis Besson, Myrto Gondicas, Pierre Judet de la Combe, Jean Jourdeuil), Circé, Belval 2003, p. 64.

(au théâtre) en tant que phénomène esthétique et rhétorique, ce qui renvoie historiquement à la tragédie grecque antique ; puis vers le tragique en tant que donnée de la conscience humaine qui précède toute approche esthétique et qui constitue une caractéristique fondamentale de l'être humain. Pourtant, les deux approches ne sont pas opposées l'une à l'autre : le point de vue esthétique ne peut que nous renvoyer à une problématique ontologique ; et inversement, la pensée existentielle très souvent fait appel aux héros de la tragédie, pour dépeindre le tragique en tant qu'élément de la condition humaine. Comme l'a dit Matessis : « nous ne recherchons pas le tragique ; c'est lui qui nous attend ».²

La philosophie allemande, et surtout Hegel, a posé la dialectique du conflit tragique au centre de la pensée.³ Schelling a été le premier à dépeindre l'unité des opposés de la tragédie : le héros, qui lutte contre une puissance objectivement supérieure consent à être punis pour un crime qu'il n'a pas pu éviter. La volonté d'être libre se retourne contre lui ; le vainqueur est en même temps vaincu et le vaincu vainqueur.⁴ Pour Hegel la dialectique du conflit tragique se place entre le principe d'individualité et celui de totalité. Le personnage tragique n'agit pas simplement, mais il *est* son action (Hegel le place au même niveau que les œuvres de la sculpture grecque ancienne, qui représentaient les vertus). En s'efforçant d'agir au nom d'une valeur universelle, le héros nie le droit de son adversaire et par conséquent il instaure l'individualité la plus restreinte.⁵ Enfin, d'après Nietzsche, au moins dans la première phase de son système de pensée, l'être humain, qui porte en lui les caractéristiques divines de Dionysos et d'Apollon, devient le champ de conflits violents de pouvoirs opposés, où, même, la possibilité de la conjonction des contraires est absente. Le personnage tragique doit accepter que ce conflit reste en suspens et ne trouve jamais de solution. Mais il doit aussi affirmer son intention de vivre pleinement.⁶

² Pavlos Matessis, « Στη γέννηση της Παραού δεν ήμουν παρών » [Je n'étais pas présent à la naissance de Raraou], entretien accordé à Eleni Ghika, *Eikones*, 8 juillet 1992, p. 63-66.

³ Sur la philosophie du tragique, voir l'ouvrage important de Szondi, *Essai sur le tragique*, ainsi que celui de Chara Bakonikola-Georgopoulou, *Το τραγικό, η τραγωδία και ο φιλόσοφος* [Le tragique, la tragédie et le philosophe], A. Kardamitsa, Athènes 1990.

⁴ F.W.J. Schelling, *Lettres sur le dogmatisme et le criticisme* (tr. S. Jankélévitch), Aubier-Montaigne, Paris 1950, p. 151-153.

⁵ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Esthétique*, vol. II (tr. Ch. Bénard), revue et complétée par B. Timmermans - P. Zaccaria, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 1997 (1964), p. 663-664.

⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *La naissance de la tragédie* (tr. Michel Haar, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jean-Claude Nancy), texte, fragments et variantes établis par G. Colli - M. Montinari, Gallimard, Paris 1977.

Aujourd'hui, où les notions de dieu ou de destin ne fonctionnent plus de la même manière, la théorie du tragique évolue, sans néanmoins se détacher totalement de cette vue dialectique. D'ailleurs, Lacan définit le désir en tant que détermination « objective » de la modernité, en y intégrant une perspective tragique. Dans les grandes lignes, il s'agit d'un étrange désir, qui échappe parfois au contrôle de notre conscience, « quelque chose d'étranger au moi », d'extérieure-intime ou, selon le néologisme de Lacan, « d'extimité ». Ce désir est le désir de l'Autre, soit dans le sens « je désire l'Autre », soit comme « le désir de l'Autre a un effet sur moi ».⁷

Quant aux concepts du personnage et de la personne, leur divergence sémantique est à première vue certaine. La notion de personnage ne peut être abordée qu'à partir de son état de constant suspens entre le fictif et le réel. Produit de l'imagination, il ne peut néanmoins être saisi que par sa référence au monde réel, même si cette référence peut acquérir, au cours du temps, des formes différentes. Le personnage du théâtre grec antique n'avait pas de caractéristiques identitaires précises. La *mimésis* aristotélicienne a montré précisément que la notion de représentation ne renvoie pas à de pures copies du réel, mais à une reprise libre et créative de celui-ci. En revanche, à partir de l'apparition du théâtre bourgeois, le personnage devient l'illusion de l'homme réel : il constitue un individu dont les traits biographiques, socioculturels, psychologiques sont concrets, un « personnage-condition ». Les études littéraires du XXe siècle, aux antipodes du théâtre bourgeois, n'ont vu dans le personnage littéraire qu'une fonction interne au texte, un système ou partie du système de ce dernier – la psychanalyse a également montré que le personnage ne peut pas être vu comme porteur d'autonomie individuelle. Quant au théâtre « post-dramatique » contemporain, par son refus de la notion de représentation et du personnage comme tel, semble réintroduire, certes par des voies différentes de celles du passé, la notion de personnage en tant que pure copie du réel. Sans doute peut-on accepter que le personnage désigne un être incomplet, inachevé, toujours en suspens face à son incarnation par un acteur. De plus, par son appartenance à la fois au réel et à l'imaginaire, il est ouvert, au sens le plus fort du terme. Pour reprendre une phrase d'Abirached, « s'il appelle l'effraction d'une infinité d'interprètes, il leur préexiste et leur subsiste ».⁸

⁷ Jacques Lacan, *Le séminaire, Livre VII, L'éthique de la psychanalyse*, texte établi par Jacques-Alain Miller, coll. « Champ freudien », Seuil, Paris 1986; Jacques Lacan, *Le séminaire, Livre XVI, D'un Autre à l'autre*, coll. « Champ freudien », Seuil, Paris 2006.

⁸ Robert Abirached, *La crise du personnage dans le théâtre moderne*, Gallimard, Paris 1994 (1978), p. 28.

Certes, la notion de la personne semble se constituer à partir de qualités différentes. Même si le concept désignait à l'origine le masque de l'acteur, puis la face visible qu'un individu montre en société, aujourd'hui, éloigné de toute nuance de représentation, il désigne l'existence même du sujet. La personne est perçue toujours dans sa singularité, l'être le plus authentiquement réel dans le monde, formée d'une identité quasi complète et cohérente. Pourtant, la philosophie contemporaine trouve souvent difficile d'accepter la cohérence ou la fermeté du sujet ; par contre, elle met l'accent sur la forme fragile et variable de l'identité, surtout face à l'altérité. Ainsi, le théâtre se trouve à nouveau au cœur de la réflexion philosophique sur l'être humain : car, d'un côté le personnage est le reflet de cette ouverture de l'existence dont parlent les théories contemporaines. D'un autre côté, l'acteur est le sujet marqué par l'entrelacement de l'imaginaire et du réel, des rôles qu'il joue et de sa propre identité, dont les limites et les contours sont toujours vagues. Par conséquence, il semble qu'en abordant la notion du personnage on se trouve soudain dans le champ de la personne ; ou inversement, on ne peut qu'examiner la notion de la personne qu'à travers les rôles qu'il joue, les différents « visages » qu'il montre au monde.

Des théories modernes sur l'existence, on peut citer très brièvement seulement celles qui s'inscrivent directement dans notre sujet d'étude. D'abord, Sartre a proposé –au moins dans un premier temps, marqué par sa rencontre avec la phénoménologie– qu'une conscience est dépourvue de tout contenu, d'idée, de sentiments ; une conscience qui n'a pas de dedans, qui est toute entière au dehors et où le « Je » n'est qu'un simple épiphénomène, un rôle qu'il faut jouer et tenir. Dans un second temps, Sartre a nié la réduction de la personne à tel ou tel rôle ; même si elle joue malgré tout un rôle, une certaine teneur ontologique est désormais reconnue à ce jeu.⁹ Ensuite, Ricœur a élaboré le concept de l'identité narrative, où l'identité est constituée des histoires véridiques ou fictives qu'un sujet se raconte à lui-même ou que les autres racontent sur lui. Contrairement à l'identité qui est statique et sans faille, l'identité narrative est instable, flexible et elle se soumet au changement et à la possibilité de transformation, dans le temps d'une vie.¹⁰ Enfin, pour Deleuze, le soi est un devenir éternel, une déterritorialisation perpétuelle, où la différence domine chaque apparence. Le concept de la

⁹ Juliette Simont, « De la conscience impersonnelle à la "personnalisation". Jean-Paul Sartre, 1937-1971 », Thierry Lenain – Aline Wiame (éds), *Personne/Personnage*, Vrin, Paris 2011, p. 140.

¹⁰ Paul Ricœur, *Temps et récit, Tome I, II*, Seuil, Paris 1983-1984.

déterritorialisation s'étend sur une large amplitude dont on ne voit que certains aspects.¹¹ Dans notre étude, la déterritorialisation dépeint l'arrachement de toute identité et la puissance du devenir.

Les pièces que nous allons aborder commencent toutes les deux par un décès. *Littoral*¹² raconte l'histoire d'un jeune homme, Wilfrid, qui, en apprenant la mort de son père qu'il ne connaît pas, décide de lui offrir une sépulture dans son pays natal. Accompagné du fantôme parlant de son père et du chevalier imaginaire de son enfance, le chevalier de Guiromelan, le héros traverse une terre dévastée par les horreurs de la guerre et où il croise d'autres gens de son âge ayant aussi perdu leur père. C'est en arrivant au seuil, entre terre et mer, sur le littoral, que l'enterrement pourra enfin se faire. *Vers Éleusis*¹³ est une pièce basée sur le roman de William Faulkner *As I lay dying*, mais dont la trame, les personnages, l'espace et le dénouement ont subi de profonds changements. Après la mort de la mère, la famille part pour la Grèce continentale, vers le littoral d'*Éleusis*, la ville natale de la mère, pour l'enterrer, accomplissant ainsi sa dernière volonté. La mère, évoluant dans un espace indéfini, assiste au voyage, affranchie du passé, des rôles de sa vie, comme elle le dit, alors que les deux fils, face à la douleur, se plongent peu à peu dans la folie et le crime. La fille, d'une intelligence faible, est enceinte de son père, une figure caricaturale, le seul personnage terrestre, d'après Matessis. La pièce fait clairement référence à la religion grecque antique – et plus particulièrement aux Mystères d'*Éleusis* – et les personnages y sont confrontés aux grands mystères de l'existence humaine.

Si l'on étudie les éléments importants de la construction dramatique qui sont d'ailleurs étroitement liés à l'action, les deux pièces semblent placer les personnages dans des structures *identiques*, que l'on considère le contexte géographique, ou la narration qui s'inspire, dans une certaine mesure, des thèmes chers à la mythologie grecque antique.

Premièrement, la référence au mythe ancien est présente dans les deux pièces. L'enterrement d'un parent, du père dans *Littoral* et de la mère dans *Vers Éleusis*, renvoie à l'Antigone de Sophocle luttant pour enterrer son frère. Mais il ne s'agit ici ni d'un emprunt ni d'une confrontation ni d'une transfiguration ou d'une rupture avec le mythe ancien. Au contraire, le mythe ancien ou, plus précisément, les éléments des

¹¹ Gilles Deleuze – Félix Guatarri, *L'Anti-Œdipe*, Minuit, Paris 1972; Gilles Deleuze – Félix Guatarri, *Kafka Pour une littérature mineure*, Minuit, Paris 1975.

¹² Wajdi Mouawad, *Littoral, Le sang des promesses/I*, Actes Sud/Leméac, coll. Papiers, Arles/Montréal 2009 (1999).

¹³ Pavlos Matessis, *Προς Ελευσίνα* [Vers Éleusis], Estia, Athènes 1995.

divers mythes anciens, fonctionnent, à la fois, comme le départ d'un mythe nouveau et comme le lien important qui nous rattache aux grandes énigmes de la condition humaine. Ainsi, dans une telle interprétation libre des mythes, Wilfrid, se trouve, à l'inverse d'Œdipe, dans une situation en apparence comique. En effet, ce dernier avait tué son père et couché avec sa mère, tandis que Wilfrid, lui, est informé de la mort de son père alors qu'il est au lit avec une fille et, par la suite, il apprend que sa naissance a provoqué la mort de sa mère.

Deuxièmement, le temps et l'espace dépassent la fonction ordinaire de cadre du drame pour devenir des facteurs décisifs de la trame narrative. Ils apparaissent souvent comme les forces motrices de l'élaboration des personnages en déterminant de plusieurs manières leurs actes, leur pensée, leur interaction. On pourrait dire, d'un point de vue sémiotique, que l'espace-temps joue un rôle semblable au personnage, ou encore plus, qu'il s'agit vraiment d'un personnage.

Concernant l'espace, il s'agit, dans les deux pièces, de l'espace méditerranéen. À travers les voyages de Wilfrid vers son pays natal (nommé « là-bas » par l'auteur) et de celui de la famille grecque vers la ville natale de la mère, Éleusis, le paysage de la méditerranée est utilisé pour faire référence à des forces telles que la mémoire, l'histoire, l'hybridation, la dynamique des sociétés multiculturelles, l'ébranlement de l'identité. Sous le soleil brûlant et impitoyable, les morts deviennent des cadavres qui pourrissent vite, en dégageant la terrible puanteur de la mort, ce qui bouleverse leurs descendants. Alors, « là-bas » la mort est sensible par toutes les sensations et la douleur pénètre dans la chair, comme le clou qui, planté dans le crâne de la mère morte, fait saigner la tête du petit fils dans *Vers Éleusis*.

En approchant la temporalité dans les deux pièces, le cours du temps semble être bien circonscrit, fermement construit, comme c'est le cas dans *Vers Éleusis* où nous trouvons comme sous-titre de chaque scène un jour du voyage (six jours au total). De la même manière, Mouawad nous informe du temps exact des événements soit à travers la narration de Wilfrid, soit en indiquant dans les didascalies les jours et les nuits. Pourtant, le spectateur se trouve souvent face à un abîme temporel. Il constate que chaque fragmentation du temps ne sert qu'à en accentuer la continuité et même si les ruptures existent, elles sont d'une toute autre nature. Ainsi, la durée du voyage se déforme : d'abord, à travers des scènes presque autonomes où le temps semble recommencer à nouveau. Il s'agit, en fait, de scènes qui racontent la rencontre avec l'altérité et dont la forme nous rappelle en grand partie les « pièces à stations » du Moyen Âge ou le théâtre, plus récent, de l'expressionnisme. Puis, la mémoire des

défunts, qui devient peu à peu le présent des vivants, conduit à une libre circulation des flux du temps. Le présent s'ouvre vers diverses dimensions pour inclure, non seulement le passé, à nouveau vécu, mais aussi la mémoire collective, l'identité en devenir des héros, l'éternité enfermée dans la vie humaine. Les niveaux différents du temps qui se pénètrent l'un l'autre correspondent à une fusion analogue des espaces, où le lieu réel s'entremêle avec le lieu transcendantal. Cela est le cas lorsque le fils aîné dans *Vers Éleusis*, rencontre sa mère dans la mansarde où elle se trouve depuis sa mort. Aux effets de montage temporel et de mélange des lieux, on peut ajouter la perturbation de l'échelle naturelle des choses, surtout dans la pièce de Matessis, comme quand le cercueil de la mère se raccourcit à chaque jour de voyage.

Ces structures spatio-temporelles ne peuvent que marquer la constitution des personnages en reflétant la fragmentation ou la démultiplication de l'identité. Mais de quelle identité s'agit-il ? Nous l'avons mentionné précédemment, le personnage se trouve à mi-chemin entre le réel et l'imaginaire, étant donné que la mimésis théâtrale présuppose toujours une certaine distance par rapport au monde réel. D'après Abirached, le personnage porte des signes qui annoncent à la fois « l'empreinte de la vie vécue » et « le poinçon d'une vie rêvée » et c'est la raison pour laquelle il est considéré comme ouvert.¹⁴ Or, souvent dans le théâtre contemporain et surtout dans les pièces qui nous concernent, « la vie vécue » est déjà éloignée du réel. Ou, plus précisément, il y a quelques fragments de réalité, qui cependant ne forment pas un tout. Par exemple, les personnages de Matessis n'ont pas de nom propre et ils ne nous sont présentés qu'à travers leur relation familiale : la Mère, la Fille, le Grand fils etc. Également, on ne connaît rien de Wilfrid, sauf qu'il est le fils d'un père qui vient de mourir. Ainsi, on arrive à la conclusion que leur identité se construit autour de cet événement fondamental du début : la mort du père et de la mère. Ils deviennent le fils et la fille qui doivent enterrer leurs parents, l'incarnation d'une action majeure, ou les représentants des « puissances substantielles » de l'existence humaine.

Ce qui semble être l'accomplissement d'un devoir envers le parent apparaît être le point de départ de la déterritorialisation du personnage. Les héros découvriront qu'ils portent en eux beaucoup plus que le devoir d'enterrer leurs parents, et que l'acte en lui-même exige aussi le réveil de la mémoire, et la révélation de l'histoire d'une vie entière. Une certaine innocence caractérise ces personnages tragiques : le fils, Wilfrid, est jeune et naïf et la fille est d'une intelligence faible. Mais, comme les

¹⁴ Abirached, *La crise du personnage dans le théâtre moderne*.

héros tragiques anciens, ils portent aussi la marque de l'histoire de leurs ancêtres et de leur pays ; encore plus, ils portent la responsabilité même de leur innocence. En effet, restent l'inceste de la fille avec son père et l'ignorance absolue de Wilfrid sur la mort et le malheur qui consume sa terre natale.

Ainsi, la déterritorialisation semble s'exprimer de trois manières : la première concerne le sens littéral du terme. Les personnages quittent leur foyer pour voyager vers l'inconnu. Dans les deux cas, la destination est une terre à côté de la mer, une terre littorale, indiquant aussi bien la destination des héros que les limites qui séparent la vie de la mort. Deuxièmement, la déterritorialisation enlève le sujet du monde des références personnelles en l'installant dans un imaginaire collectif, différent pour chaque pièce. Wilfrid ne s'introduit pas seulement dans la mémoire de son père, mais aussi dans l'histoire de son pays d'origine. Il doit découvrir peu à peu la guerre récente, la douleur des hommes qui ont perdu leur famille, la colère de la jeunesse, une terre qui n'a plus d'espace pour les morts. Bref, l'histoire d'un pays étranger, mais qui est le sien. Le fantôme de chevalier de Guiromelan, un *alter ego* de Wilfrid appartenant à la sécurité du monde de l'enfance, dans lequel se réfugie le jeune héros pour affronter la réalité trop dure qui lui est présentée après la mort de son père, devient impuissant. Le père à son tour, se vide progressivement de sa mémoire et il n'est plus qu'un acteur jouant un mort (« ma mémoire est une forêt dont on abat les arbres. J'oublie »).¹⁵ Quant aux personnages de *Vers Éleusis*, ils s'introduisent dans un inconscient collectif. Comme pendant les Mystères d'Éleusis, la fille doit accomplir la dure épreuve de la transformation de Persephassa ou Perséphone (qui dans la mythologie était d'abord connue sous le nom de Korè, fille de Déméter) et doit donc devenir mère à son tour. Le triomphe de la vie passe alors par la traversée des Enfers. Les deux fils ne pourront pas supporter la dureté des Mystères. Ils choisiront la folie et le meurtre. La fille reste seule. La mère morte, comme le père de Wilfrid, perd toute mémoire et reconnaît que sa vie n'était qu'un rôle où elle portait le masque de la mère.

Enfin, dans un troisième temps, la déterritorialisation s'exprime par la confrontation du personnage à l'altérité. Les héros se trouvent face à l'Autre qui envahit la scène sous des formes diverses : d'abord, à travers le temps et l'espace déformés que nous avons déjà abordé. Ensuite, on repère chez Wilfrid une « identité narrative », qui suppose, comme dans toute narration, une marche vers l'autre. Wilfrid devient le spectateur de ses propres actions, quand il imagine qu'une équipe de tournage filme sa vie :

¹⁵ Mouawad, *Littoral, Le sang des promesses/I*, p. 44.

Le réalisateur : O.K., on a pas beaucoup de temps pour la tourner ! C'est une scène sous la pluie ! (*À l'éclairagiste*) C'est une nuit américaine. (*Au caméraman*) O.K., gros plan ici, camera à l'épaule, travelling arrière et position finale là pour laisser voir la solitude du personnage. En place s'il vous plaît.

La scripte (*lançant un seau d'eau sur Wilfrid*) : Il est raccord !

Le réalisateur : On envoie la pluie ! Moteur !

Preneur de son : Ça tourne au son !

Le caméraman : O.K. Ça roule !

La scripte : Seul dans la nuit, sous la pluie, prise 1.

Le réalisateur : Attention ! Trois, deux, un ! ... ACTION ! Wilfrid, tu avances et tu penses à la mort de ton père. Tu penses qu'il est mort seul, tu songes à son regard, à ses yeux, à son désarroi.

Wilfrid : Je ne sais pas d'où me vient cette manie d'avoir toujours l'impression que je suis en train de jouer dans un film.¹⁶

Donc, l'autre est déjà à l'intérieur de la personne comme une dimension indispensable mais toujours indéfinie, ouverte. Dans cette perspective, on peut comprendre la question anxieuse que pose Wilfrid à son père : « Qui j'étais pour toi ? ». Pour découvrir un peu plus tard, à travers ses lettres, qu'en fait il y avait un autre Wilfrid dont il n'a rien connu, car il s'est privé de l'histoire de sa propre famille. Enfin, les jeunes gens que Wilfrid connaît pendant son voyage forment aussi l'apparition de l'Autre, leurs histoires retraçant la cruauté du temps et du pays. Ils s'agissent de cinq personnes de son âge – orphelins, victimes de la guerre qui fait rage au pays – qui, comme lui, sont isolées et égarées ; ils se mettent tous en route avec Wilfrid, pour l'aider à enterrer son père. On peut repérer ici le désir de l'Autre car c'est à travers une ouverture illimitée à l'altérité qu'émerge la force de l'amitié et de la communauté. Ou, inversement, l'« être ensemble » passe toujours par la connaissance douloureuse de l'altérité. Ensuite, chez Matessis, à côté de la fusion spatio-temporelle, l'altérité se présente sous des formes rituelles ou magiques, comme le bruit des animaux qui quittent la maison après le départ de la famille ou l'apparition de la Nuit personnifiée. Caractéristique est d'ailleurs la présence de la mort qui advient comme un « miracle », un événement appartenant en partie à

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.

l’au-delà. Ainsi, l’instant mortel de la Mère dans *Vers Éleusis* se déploie dans une ambiance surnaturelle d’au-delà : les didascalies informent que la lumière devient « très blanche, au point de “brûler” le lit et la mère ». Quand le Père entre, il est effrayé : « Du soleil ? Q u e l soleil est entré ici ? ».¹⁷

Pour conclure, ce qui semble caractériser le personnage, en tant qu’être du théâtre, c’est la déterritorialisation. Il est le reflet de ce besoin fondamental de l’homme de partir, de quitter la stabilité et la fermeté de sa vie pour rechercher une autre vie, d’autres facettes de lui. C’est pour ça qu’il subit la douleur de l’histoire, la tyrannie de la mémoire, la peine de l’altérité, les changements radicaux de la vie humaine. Mais, à la fin du voyage, c’est la personne qui l’attend. Nous pourrions donc parler d’une reterritorialisation des héros qui se commencerait après l’enterrement des morts. La personne est l’être ‘recomposé’ qui, à travers les épreuves des personnages, a reçu une forme ‘normale’. D’une certaine manière, la personne est ce qui reste du personnage après ses transformations multiples. Enfin, la personne tragique reconnaît sa faiblesse devant les forces puissantes qui la dépassent. Mais malgré ou grâce à cette connaissance, elle continue son chemin. Un chemin qui finit, d’après Matessis, « par le triomphe de la vie mortelle sur la mort immortelle ».¹⁸

Dans le rapport ternaire du théâtre, l’acteur, le spectateur et le personnage sont des facteurs qui se constituent chacun à partir de la présence de l’autre, sans jamais arriver à s’identifier. Sans doute la personne devient cet espace intermédiaire qui les unit, malgré les différences et l’altérité qui les caractérisent. C’est une voie à explorer.

¹⁷ Matessis, *Προς Ελευσίνα*, p. 30.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 8.

MARIA KONOMI

BEYOND DRESS: CRITICAL EXPLORATIONS
OF COSTUME DESIGN PRACTICE*

Costumes are one of the main areas of theatrical design, intrinsically linked with scenery, lighting, sound and movement. They are considered staple parameters of performance, organically interrelated with almost all aspects of production, in particular with textual dramaturgy, the actors – their body, physicality, aura, and movement –, as well as scenography, style of production, and the mise-en-scène. Despite costume's centrality to performance, the considerably under-represented state of costume design, in comparison with other creative fields of theatrical craft and expertise, has been often addressed and brought to attention. In compensation, next to founding works of costume design literature, more recently a new critical perspective and critical idiom have been articulated and gained momentum in written scholarship.¹ This critical aspect has been explored with regard to some of the wider and more active contribution to performance making and its cultural, ideological, anthropological and philosophical implications.²

Some strands of recent costume criticism involve problematizing costume's relationship with fashion, and even more its conflation with dress. In this regard, costume is sometimes thought to result in invisibility, naturalization of the gaze, nullification of its theatricality and loss of its subversive potential.³ Another important direction, perhaps not unrelated to the previous one, concerns costume's at large difficult and discontinuous relationship with experimentation and the culmination of avant-garde practice.⁴

* Many thanks to the anonymous reviewers' helpful comments and generous input.

¹ Notable publications include: Aoife Monks, *The Actor in Costume*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke & New York 2010; Donatella Barbieri, *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture and the Body*, Bloomsbury, London 2017; Rachel Hann, «Debating critical costume: Negotiating ideologies of appearance, performance and disciplinarity», *Studies in Theatre and Performance* (2017), p. 21-37. DOI:10.1080/14682761.2017.1333831; Sofia Pantouvaki – Peter McNeil (eds), *Performance Costume: New Perspectives and Methods*, Bloomsbury, London 2021, as well as issues of the academic journal, *Studies in Costume & Performance* (Intellect).

² See Donatella Barbieri – Sofia Pantouvaki, «Towards a Philosophy of Costume» (Editorial), 1 (1) (2016), p. 3-7; Barbieri, *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture and the Body*; Pantouvaki – McNeil (eds), *Performance Costume: New Perspectives and Methods*.

³ Hann, «Debating critical costume: Negotiating ideologies of appearance, performance and disciplinarity», p.23ff., 31.

⁴ On a similar note, Hann (*ibid.*, «Debating critical costume: negotiating ideologies of appearance, performance and disciplinarity» p. 26) quotes Delbert Unruh's observation that «theatrical costume had not undertaken the same material and aesthetic revolution as the other methods of scenography»; Hann moreover argues that «costume design

In response to these critical observations, I will be considering, in this essay, three case studies of costume design practice put on the Greek stage, under the premise of a common thematic framework investigating the dress-form axis through different key visual devices and performing strategies. In particular, I aim to follow the critical perspective of costume's diversified and expanded position concerning dress,⁵ as well as manifesting experimentation with theatricality, embodiment, and agency,⁶ in addition to costume's other main formal and expressive aspects. Moving beyond the perceived stage functions of costume in accord with conventions of varying scenic realism as its character's dress, I will seek to question and problematize the costume's prescribed relationship to dress or fashion, as well as highlight some of the theatrical aspects of a contemporary costume's turn. Moreover, I will present some examples of prolific experimentation with the formal, expressive, and performative aspects of costume through analyzing the possibilities of costume form as a scenic or dramaturgical element.

To establish a wider frame of basic performance analysis for each case, we will consistently relate and contextualize costume design choices respectively with the textual dramaturgy, mise-en-scène, and scenography of the production to establish a broader context of analysis. Focusing on selected productions, we will highlight the main dramaturgical and staging concepts for costuming each production: *Wunschkonzert* (2011) will be discussed to exemplify an unfashionable theatricality of costume beyond everyday dress, *Festen* (2005) for problematizing costume's connection to fashion and conflating film and theatre genres for the costume. And finally, *Ithaca* (2007) is considered with a focus in its experimental practice of recycling used garments, as well as addressing costume as a form of three-dimensional assemblage in motion.

It should be noted from the start that all sub-design perspectives investigated here are heuristic, originating in the interrelation of analytical schemas and practice-based analysis, and are, by no means, exhaustive or definitive. It has been aptly suggested that «methods for the analysis of costume on a scholarly level remain tentative».⁷ In

(by and large) remains fixated on the identity politics of representation [...] conditioned by fashion systems as a criterion for how bodies are rendered». On the other hand, in recent years, costume scholarship has highlighted experimental practices in both historical contexts, such as avant-garde performance and the Bauhaus (see Melissa Trimingham «Agency and Empathy: Artists touch the body», in Donatella Barbieri, *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture and the Body*, Bloomsbury, London 2017, p. 137-165.) and in contemporary practice.

⁵ Responding to Barbieri, *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture and the Body*.

⁶ See also Trimingham, «Agency and Empathy: Artists touch the body», p. 137-165.

⁷ Sofia Pantouvaki – Peter McNeil, «Activating costume: A new approach to costume for performance», S. Pantouvaki – P. McNeil (eds), *Performance Costume: New Perspectives and Methods*, Bloomsbury, London 2021, p. 1.

our approach, we make use of standard and critical scholarly pathways for performance and costume analysis, as well as foregrounding practice-based analysis that can yield categories, typologies, and principles observed and researched in costume design practice. In all, we value a synthetic approach of costume pragmatics that emerges bridging the scholarly with its theoretical analytical framework and the creative process with its empirical, experiential, reflexive and self-reflexive presentation – as the author is partaking both in the creative process and the scholarship which refers to the creative projects.

Experimentations with theatricality and agency beyond contemporary dress: contemporary critical perspectives

Critical perspectives in costume scholarship involve the questioning of common and base misconceptions and deep-rooted conventions.⁸ One such conventional approach relates costuming to everyday dress and involves rendering the actor in costume for contemporary plays through an invisible costuming approach. As characteristically Di Benedetto claims: «Costume design in contemporary plays is often thought to be invisible. Contemporary costumes are considered successful if audiences do not notice them at all; however, they must be intimately connected to the characters».⁹ Hann heavily criticizes this invisibility approach, maintaining that «the platform of critical costume [...] be centered on how appearance normativity is challenged, subverted, re-conditioned and altered through the event and practice of costuming».¹⁰

The invisibility of costume is largely related to conflated conceptions of costume with fashion and clothing, which are major influences on contemporary costume design – however, scholars contend that all three categories should be separated, but also relegated in interdisciplinary terms.¹¹ While fashion is ubiquitous to contemporary clothing, «clothing and fashion are separate concepts although they are frequently used interchangeably».¹²

Clothing is a material production while fashion is a symbolic production.

Clothing is tangible while fashion is intangible. Clothing is a necessity while

⁸ See Hann, «Debating critical costume», p. 36.

⁹ Stephen Di Benedetto, *An Introduction to Theatre Design*, Routledge, London – New York, p. 100.

¹⁰ Hann, «Debating critical costume», p. 33.

¹¹ Barbieri, *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture and the Body*, p. xxiii.

¹² Yuniya Kawamura, *The Japanese Revolution in Paris Fashion*, Berg, Oxford – New York 2004, p. 12.

fashion is an excess. Clothing has a utility function while fashion has a status function [...] A fashion system operates to convert clothing into fashion that has a symbolic value and is manifested through clothing. Fashion is not created in a vacuum but exists in a specific cultural and organizational context.¹³

Costume design encompasses both costume and fashion investigations, spanning multifold relations between fashion, costume and dress.¹⁴ Fashion is certainly a vast source of inspiration for costume designers, and is frequently referenced in costume design scholarly analysis.¹⁵ Costume designers often work towards this direction, incorporating contemporary fashion in costumes. Moreover, this trend has also facilitated fashion designers to get involved with costuming themselves; this has materialized both as producing new costuming outfits, as well as showcasing or customizing their own current fashion signature collections on stage.¹⁶

A similar established convention connects contemporary costume as dress via representational theatre modes. In contrast, we find that theatricality is more ascribed to nonrepresentational theatre forms and often connected to practices of stylization and abstraction of costume's overall form. However, this binary distinction is deeply problematic in contemporary theatre and performance: in practice, the two often mix and interrelate, as stylistically «many plays fall somewhere between these two extremes».¹⁷ Hence, occasionally, costume is addressed as both representational dress and nonrepresentational form, where both realms, the outside world, and the world on stage are granted equal access to contribute to the creative signification process. From a semiotic perspective, on one end, dress bears connections to the social realm, the system of fashion and contemporary dressing conventions, and the pictorial power of negotiating signification in real life is often explored. On the other end, costume

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ For relations (and misconceptions) between fashion, costume and dress, consult also Donatella Barbieri – & Sofia Pantouvaki, «Towards a philosophy of costume» (Editorial), *Studies in Costume and Performance* 1 (2016), p. 3-7.

¹⁵ See for example Chryssa Mantaka, «The identity-character crisis in Greek theater and its repercussion in costume design», A. Andeson – F. Malva – C. Berchild (eds), *The Visual in Performance Practice*, The Interdisciplinary Press, Oxford 2012, p. 88- 95. Mantaka argues that a commonly found international trend, marking the performance style of a wide range of international and locally based artists, «is usually based on fashion, mainly focusing on abstraction and differentiation through colour».

¹⁶ Some indicative examples in Greek theatre are costume designers Dora Lelouda and Loukia (primarily a fashion designer).

¹⁷ Karen Brewster – Melissa Shafer, *Fundamentals of Theatrical Design: A Guide to the Basics of Scenic, Costume, and Lighting Design*, Allworth Press, New York 2011, p. 160.

becomes an almost autonomous collection of signs, with regards to the purely formal qualities of costume. Abstraction is a common avenue to achieve such an effect, albeit the broader in-between range of stylization seems to be by far the most favoured approach to costume designing in practice. Stylization encompasses both functions of pictorial representation and abstraction to achieve a free play with purely formal qualities of costume – although pure abstraction is rarely an option for theatre that relates for its foundational event on costumed actors' bodies visible on stage. Various modernist visual arts movements and schools of design like Bauhaus have experimented with a more extreme formalist turn.¹⁸ Related to the above, other normative conceptions refer to the overall perceived functional structure of costume on stage. Costumes are perceived to fulfill multiple functions:

[costumes] reveal the nature of each character embodying the psychological, social, and emotional condition of the character at a particular moment in time [...] The embodiment of the character comes to life through the actor and reciprocally the costume reinforces that life. Thus, costumes can shape and augment bodies, and the restrictions or characteristics of the materials of the costume influence the particular ways in which actors are able to move while wearing it.¹⁹

Charting postmodernist and postdramatic tendencies in the fragmentary dramaturgy and spectacle, Mantaka argues that «the costume as psycho-gram is likely to disappear» problematizing the traditional function of the costume to characterize and visually individuate characters on the stage akin to portraiture.²⁰ The context of post-modernism, with its character-identity crisis of representation, strongly impacts a «new model» of costume design:

The imposing elements of the post-modern theater like the play, the non-programmed, anarchy, silence, the happening, destruction, eccentricity, the

¹⁸ For Bauhaus' iconic work, see indicatively Evangelia Karakosta, «The *Triadic Ballet*, a historical anti-ballet» [Το Τριαδικό Μπαλέτο: ένα ιστορικό 'αντι-μπαλέτο'] *Skini* 3 (2011), p. 16-33; Vicky Karaïskou, *Visual Arts and Stage Avant Gardes in the first half of the 20th Century* [Εικαστικές και σκηνικές πρωτοπορίες στο πρώτο μισό του 20ού αιώνα], Papasotiriou, Athens 2009.

¹⁹ Di Benedetto, *An Introduction*, p. 99.

²⁰ Mantaka, «The identity-character crisis», p. 88f. Traditionally, the costume designer is called to help the actor construct his/her role, to offer the audience the visual and semiological tools necessary to recognize certain aspects of the character, to underline the dramatic relations and generally to become a part of the play direction.

trace, the inter-textual and irony are some factors that influenced the development of a relatively new model of costume design that has conquered the Greek theater stage.²¹

Yet, what most scholars emphasize above all, is the complex interrelation of costume with the actor's body and embodiment. The performative turn in theatre has also renewed the interest in the performing body and embodiment: to «somatic and body-centered approaches to exploring the agency of costume from an experiential embodied perspective via materiality and the creation of costume-based performance».²² Barbieri also draws our attention to the fact that «the journey of costume from the cutting table to the stage is reflected in the makings, the wearings and the readings of it».²³ In this, «the body is implicated as its central shared core, as costume becomes an object in movement»; an embodied, corporeal materiality communicated affectively between performers and audience.²⁴ In this context, Aoife Monks has particularly emphasized the multiple notions of the body at work in performance. The actor's body is multifold: the «working body» of the actor with its «corporeal elasticity and expertise»²⁵, the «aesthetic body made of codes and conventions, the «self-expressive body» (the body of the performer), the «character's body», the «sensate body» (body and sensations), the «historical body», all these categories are implicating the centrality of body for costume.²⁶

As this costume scholarship demonstrates, a creative and conceptual quest of critical costuming entails foremost questioning traditional assumptions and set binary distinctions, moving beyond costume as simply dress, and furthering multifold experimentations with its form and meaning. Expanding beyond the traditional conception of costume's functionalism for characterization and its sense of axiomatic stability and invisibility, contemporary costume focuses also on the bodily and embodied aspects of its performative potential. With these different perspectives, the full potential of costume's subversive and expansive theatricality, as well as its generative performativity can flourish in new critical ways.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Pantouvaki – McNeil, «Activating costume», p. 1.

²³ Barbieri, *Costume in Performance*, p. xx.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Aoife Monks, *The Actor in Costume*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke – New York 2010, p. 21.

²⁶ *Ibid.*



Wunschkonzert... Despoina Kourti as Fräulein Rasch: loneliness and silence in 'invisible' costume. Photo: *Ta Nea*, 29 May 2010.

Critical invisibilities: *Wunschkonzert*²⁷

Costume's invisibility, the loss of any distinct marking, trait, or sign of bearing an individual identity, was a core issue for costume design in *Wunschkonzert* (2010) following the focal de-characterization of a female character in her stage environment deemed invisible; it also nevertheless manifested an approach to a more subtle theatricality. An exceptional piece of dramaturgy of the mid-1970s, *Wunschkonzert* (1973) by the popular German playwright Franz Xaver Kroetz is a silent monologue, the text consisting only of movement stage directions for a female solo performer. Interestingly, the title of the play is also ripe with intertextual references to the Nazi wartime propaganda.²⁸ The play high-

²⁷ *Wunschkonzert* by Franz Xaver Kroetz; director: Zoe Chatziantoniou, set-costume designer: Maria Konomi, Apo Mixanis Theatro, Athens, 2010; For the full identity of the production see <https://www.elculture.gr/blog/Wunschkonzert/>; For a trailer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wk-Q28nCbjY&ab_channel=ZoeChatziantoniou [16/1/2021].

²⁸ The play's title *Wunschkonzert* (*Request Concert*) is also the title of a 1940 Nazi drama propaganda film by Eduard von Borsody. It was also a popular music show for the German troops broadcasted during WWII on the German radio network every Sunday afternoon from Berlin. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wunschkonzert>

lights invisibility and depersonalization as critical issues of the mass society and its psychic aftereffects constituting a sharp critique of the loneliness and alienation of urban life in the late modern period. It is a paradoxically eloquent disquisition without words about unfulfilled expectations, hopeless life prospects, anonymity, and the inability to escape the shackles of the society of mass production.²⁹ Kroetz's work portrays characters who have been rendered speechless and invisible by their social marginalization and existential misery and he has succeeded in constructing a political aesthetic in his works.³⁰ A solo of silent kinesiology, it follows in real-time about an hour from the life of Fräulein Rasch returning home from work: going through her usual home routine, she ends up silently committing suicide.³¹ Kroetz himself describes meticulously Fr. Rasch's actions: indicatively she changes clothes, shelves her shopping, tidies up her apartment, goes to the bathroom, washes up her breakfast set, listens to her favorite radio program, eats dinner, prepares the clothes for the next day, goes to bed taking a pill for insomnia.

The production in Athens in 2010 was overall well received with actress Despoina Kourti winning an award for her solo performance in a physically convincing and heartbreakingly affective performance. The mise-en-scène by choreographer-director Zoe Chatziantoniou, paired the external and internal states of the silent, and sterilized life of the protagonist with austere accuracy and timing, rendering Fr. Rasch's routines with contained tiredness, and eloquent bodily despair. As Chatziantoniou stated:

Without a word, through the endoscopic observation of the most common gestures and actions during the evening 'ritual' routine of a lonely working woman, using extreme realism and catalyzing the "traditional" theatrical plot and action, Kroetz exposes and correlates the loneliness and emptiness of her life, her unquestionable integration and her impenetrable silence with the socio-political factors that defined and finally crushed her life. What emerges is a work that is completely concentrated in the private

²⁹ Giorgos Sarigiannis, «Απόγνωση χωρίς λόγια» [Despair without words], nwspr *Ta Nea*, 7 May 2010. <https://www.tanea.gr/2010/05/07/lifearts/culture/apognwsi-xwris-logia/> [20/9/2020].

³⁰ Michelle Mattson, *Franz Xaver Kroetz. The Construction of a Political Aesthetic*, Berg, Oxford – Washington 1996.

³¹ Kroetz describes Fr. Rasch's actions; indicatively she changes clothes, shelves her shopping, tidies up her apartment, goes to the bathroom, washes up her breakfast set, listens to her favorite radio program, eats dinner, prepares the clothes for the next day, goes to bed taking a pill for insomnia.

sphere and at the same time universally open to the epitome of an entire modern world.³²

The scenography (Maria Konomi) featured a cross-section of a contemporary studio flat, sparingly fitted with only the essential furnishings. The living space of the solitary female protagonist opened at the back to video projections of blocks of apartment flats visible in the background, coming alive occasionally with their lights and the distant motion of their inhabitants: «from the window we gaze across at the same gray apartment buildings, an ingenious addition of the faceless mass, embalmed in the box-like apartments».³³

Grounded within sheer realism, and the aesthetics of the every day and the banal, a certain stylization of ‘frozen life’ was achieved by carefully inscribing an imperceptible degree of abstraction in architectural and furnishing detail, as well as in the overall restricted colour scheme of set and costume. Theatre critic Giorgos Sarigiannis positively comments on the total synergy of the performance, the consistent correlation of all aspects of the production:

Besides the «choreography» of the movement, the exact guidance of the actress is out of the ordinary. The dead senses must be internalized and connected to movement. Zoe Hatziantoniou achieved this coupling. Combined with the video of Maria Athanasopoulou, the realistically accurate, ‘sterilized’ setting of the talented Maria Konomi creates the ideal inhuman environment. In combination with her costumes, the excellent, «cold» lighting by Katerina Maragoudaki and the music by Stavros Gasparatos.³⁴

Costume worked in alliance with the surrounding environment of Fräulein Rasch, a middle-aged company employee, who returns to her small lonely apartment and indulges in her usual everyday rituals with unimaginable meticulousness. Her main clothing rituals involved undressing her work outfit and putting on her home clothes, the latter markedly sloppy. The main design objectives were to realistically render the surrounding environment as a generator/mirror of the main fe-

³² <https://www.in.gr/2010/03/29/entertainment/wunschkonzert/> [28/9/2020].

³³ Sotiria Mantziri, «Ζωές ανύπαρκτες» [Non-existent lives], nwspr *Eleftherotypia*, 8 May 2010, <https://reviewtheatre.wordpress.com/2010/05/08/%C2%ABwunschkonzert/> [28/9/2020].

³⁴ Giorgos Sarigiannis, «Σιωπή αβάσταχτη» [Unbearable silence], nwspr *Ta Nea*, 29 May 2010, <https://www.tanea.gr/2010/05/29/lifearts/culture/pame-theatro-22/> [20/9/2020].

male character, while gradually revealing her stalemate internal landscape of psychological distance and social alienation, which leads to her suicidal implosion at the finale of the play.³⁵ The production featured multiple challenges. With most of the rehearsals conducted in situ on the set, all dimensions, layout, and other scenic specifications were painstakingly adapted and fine-tuned to the improvisation rehearsal process and the particular needs of the solo performer Despina Kourti; this presented both a challenge and an opportunity, as movement and choreography came about in close dialogue with the scenic architecture aiming for scenography to provide a solid basis for the performer's work and the signification of the costume. In addition, the more abstracted feel of the overall scenic architectural environment was meant also to provide a distancing lens to the reading of the rather realistic costume.

In a similar generative mode to scenography, the costume design process involved accommodating to a large extent Kourti's improvisation and physical work on the silent character building during rehearsals. As aptly noted, Fräulein Rasch is portrayed as:

well-dressed, conservative-looking, reconciled with her living conditions and exuding order and cleanliness. She hangs her coat, tidies up shopping, prepares her simple dinner, eats, smokes, turns on and off the TV, watches her favorite show on the radio, knits, washes the dishes, goes to the bathroom, locks the front door, opens the foldable bed, wears her nightgown, opens her book and reads, closes it and tries to sleep. She gets up again and checks around the space. She opens the cupboard and the fridge. Then comes the unexpected end: in a calm, peaceful, tidy way...³⁶

³⁵ Efi Marinou, «Μια σιωπηλή παράσταση» [A Silent Performance], nwspr *Kiriakatiki Eleftherotypia*, 25 April 2010: «in the highly realistic setting [...] she [Kourti/Rasch] moves safely and confidently. Apparently nothing betrays that "below" awaits chaos. It's a day like any other». [20/9/2020].

³⁶ Sarigiannis, *news*, nwspr *Ta Nea*, 7 May 2010.



Despoina Kourti as Fräulein Rasch in *Wunschkonzert*.
Photo: *Ta Nea*, 7 May 2010

Fr. Rasch's stereotypical acts create «a situation in which these acts simultaneously invoke and undermine our identification. The ironic confrontation with the positive and the negative, with what attracts us and what repels us, creates a kind of distance that reveals the crucial essence of the work».³⁷ The solitary character of Fr. Rasch comes across as almost anonymous or invisible stylistically,³⁸ even though Kourti was perceived as her advanced version: «dynamic, much younger than originally, with a ponytail and flat shoes, and a concealed (not invisible) femininity».³⁹ The basic costume requirements were garments for home wear, as well as office clothes and sleepwear. Rasch's office attire included a uniform-like, simple ready-to-wear greyish skirt suit, featuring a loose fit jacket and an inverted midi pleated skirt, topped with a worn-out deep beige trench coat. Her home wear had a more sloppy look and was based on a midi skirt and a loosely knitted woolen cardigan, while bedtime clothes included a simple cotton nightdress underneath a midi dark green dressing gown. Costuming for the play practically involved cus-

³⁷ Ingeborg C. Walther, *The Theater of Franz Xavier Kroetz*, Peter Lang, New York 1991, p. 37-40; See also <https://www.in.gr/2010/03/29/entertainment/wunschkonzert/> [19/12/2020].

³⁸ According to Mantaka, («The Identity-Character Crisis», p. 92), the current character identification crisis both in society and theatre has influenced directing and costume design, in as much «in post-industrial societies, the proclaimed hero is a new subject, with no identity, anonymous consumer of material goods, ideas and images».

³⁹ Mantziri, «Ζωές ανύπαρκτες» [Non-existent lives].

tomizing and distressing mass-produced, cheap-looking, and unfashionable, outdated ready-to-wear clothing, as well as reusing items of found clothing.

Yet costumes were rarely simply clothes; they were created according to basic costume design parameters to convey mood and personality by using color, texture, or silhouette to make the costume visible and legible in the performance occasion.⁴⁰ To make the costume colour wise placidly visible in *Wunschkonzert*, these items were selected mainly to fit in/match, complement, and highlight the stringent colour palette of dusty off whites, light greyish, olive, and dark greens used for expressing the identity of the solo protagonist reflected in her stage surroundings. Stage lighting brought more cold than warm hues to this restricted colour range. An apt metaphor describing the overall aesthetic and conceptual metaphor of the costume design for the piece would be clothes ‘drained from the juices of life’, clothes for the living dead, the left-outs of our contemporary world. Effecting this sort of neurotic expressiveness as an approach to realism is to interweave into pictorial and representational objectives the expression of a certain awkwardness, or a penchant for the mundane and the anti-aesthetic. Overall, a deeper interest was also underlined in «costumes as representations of garments standing in for psychological, social and historical ‘truths’ in the portrayal of a world of characters on stage».⁴¹

Designers exploit and subvert, notions of authenticity and nostalgia, projected desires and constructed glamour, in order to create a language of the body in performance shared with their audiences.⁴²

Conflations of fashion to costume: *Festen*⁴³

The dialogue of costume with clothing and fashion at the point of conflation informed the premiere production of *Festen/The Celebration* in Athens (2006). The production was furthermore characterized by the merging of film and theatre genres, which decisively affected the costume design choices. The production was based on David Eldridge’s stage

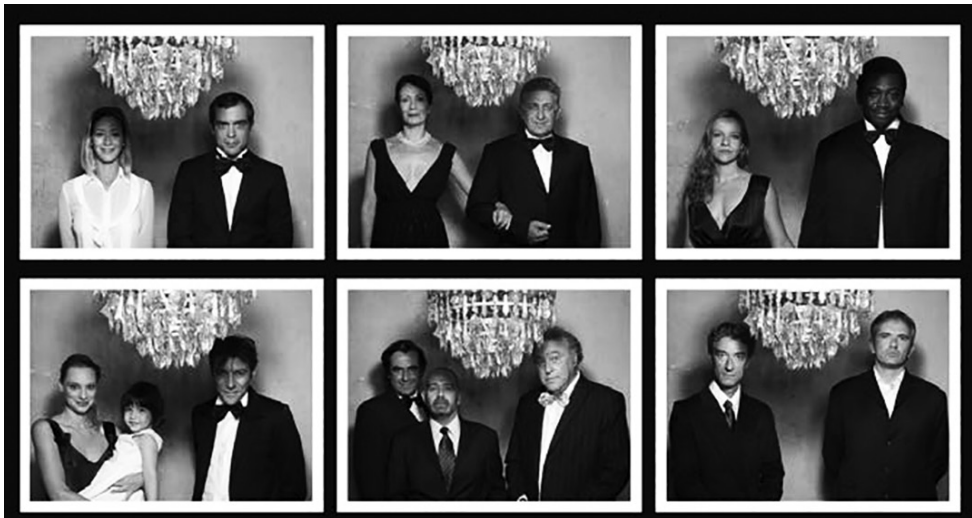
⁴⁰ Di Benedetto, *An Introduction*, p.104.

⁴¹ Barbieri, *Costume in Performance*, p. xxv.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Festen* [Οικογενειακή Γιορτή]; director: Aliki Danezi-Knutsen, set designer: Maria Konomi, costume/fashion designer Angelos Frentzos, Theseum Ensemble Theatre, Athens. For information on the identity of the show and the cast see .The show was nominated in nine categories, including set design and costume, for the Athinorama magazine Audience Awards.

adaptation of the 1998 award-winning black comedy-drama film by Danish filmmaker Thomas Vinterberg, which is considered a foundational film of the movement Dogme 95.⁴⁴ *Festen/The Celebration* has been playing with remarkable success on numerous world stages.⁴⁵ In its gradually explosive plot, the birthday celebrations of a wealthy sixty-year-old patriarch in his family run-hotel take an unexpected turn when his eldest son decides during dinner to reveal the dark secret of twin childhood sexual abuse, which led to the suicide of his twin sister Linda. The play unfolds like a psychological thriller, delving on a dark ironic journey into the forbidden family truth while constituting an allegory for the dysfunctional and oppressive family establishment.



Festen (2006). The star-studded cast photographed in production costume by fashion designer Angelos Frentzos following formal dress code.
Photo: <https://alikedaneziknutsen.com/festen>

The 2006 stage version at Theseum Arts Theatre featured a star-studded cast and played to sold-out seats for two consecutive theatre seasons. Coming from a film

⁴⁴ *Festen* was the first Dogme 95 film to win Jury Prize at Cannes Film Festival in 1998. Dogme 95, is an artistic filmmaking movement created by Danish directors Thomas Vinterberg and Lars von Trier. The movement preferred simple and analog production values to allow for the highlighting of plot and performance.

⁴⁵ See indicatively Claire, C. Thomson, *Thomas Vinterberg's Festen (The Celebration)*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 2013, p. 139-150. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvcwnmf3>.

director background, Aliki Danezi-Knutsen's resourceful mise-en-scène foregrounded a blend of theatricality and raw cinematic realism as the basis of the visual imagery and the aesthetics of the production.⁴⁶ Yet, theatricality was not eschewed altogether in the match of realism with abstraction in the scenography of the production. Scenographer Maria Konomi transformed the industrial theatre space of Theseum Arts into a family hotel with minimal scenic interventions in the space. A larger-than-life dining table was created with sparkling chandeliers above, to host the entire cast in a dynamic traverse stage configuration. The whole of the theatre building was put to inventive use while parallel action was shown through two overhead projection screens.⁴⁷ The quest for realism was supported by the genre of screen to stage adaptation, and intensified by the Dogme 95 legacy.⁴⁸ In all, cinema's relationship to photography and realism is considered foundational, hence most film costume design is rooted in varying degrees of realism.⁴⁹ In the stage version of *Festen*, costumes followed, in general, the screen aesthetic and turned to fashion for inspiration. Rooted in the socio-symbolic construction of identity and the specificities of time and place, fashion is defined as the style of dress accepted by members of a society as being appropriate for specific times and occasions.⁵⁰ Fashion holds a symbolic and communicative role having the capacity to express among other things one's unique style, identity, profession, social status, and gender or group affiliation.⁵¹ Weston Thomas maintains that «fashion in all its forms [...] is the best form of iconography we have to express individual identity». Costume shares many of these primary roles and functions adjusted to the requirements of the fictional world on the stage.

For the specific needs of the *Festen* production, fashion designer Angelos Frentzos, who had also worked occasionally as a costume designer was brought

⁴⁶ The Athens premiere in 2006 was well received and played to sold out audiences for two successive seasons; the show was nominated in nine categories, including set design and costume, for the Athinorama Audience Awards. See Dimitra Anagnostou, «Ανατροπές και αλήθειες: Omerta» [Upheavals and truths: Omerta], *Athens Voice*, 9 November 2006; also <https://alikedaneziknutsen.com/festen>

⁴⁷ Anagnostou, *op.cit.*

⁴⁸ Featuring a mixture of documentary style and fiction, the quest for authenticity and the notion of photography and cinema as a mirror of reality.

⁴⁹ See Deborah Nadoolman Landis, *Filmcraft: Costume Design*, Focal Press, Waltham, MA 2012; Sarah Street, *Costume and Cinema: Dress Codes in Popular Film*, Wallflower, London – New York 2001.

⁵⁰ Yuet See Monica Owyong, «Clothing semiotics and the social construction of power relations», *Social Semiotics* 19 (2), p. 191-211.

⁵¹ Pauline Weston Thomas, «Theories of fashion costume and fashion history», https://fashion-era.com/sociology_semiotics.htm#Fashion%20As%20A%20Sign%20System [18/12/2020].

into the creative team.⁵² In contrast to his fashion design trademark, showcasing a propensity for colour blocking, bold and graphic motifs, deconstructive tendencies and a flare for the eccentric,⁵³ Frentzos' costume designs for *Festen* were much less visually pronounced and followed a strict, formal dress code. Overall, it seems that Frentzos' signature fashion trends were not particularly influential to this specific costume design project. As with the film, this conventional etiquette approach was effective in presenting upper-class formal outfits appropriate for the social circle and the status of the characters. Yet these socio-economic specifics constitute just the supposedly invulnerable outer shell of the characters' core existence. The dramaturgy of the piece presented an unstable cohesion of a deeply dysfunctional family based on abuse of power, sexual abuse, violence, self-delusion, mendacity, and pretense, leading to the imposed oath of silence, 'omerta';⁵⁴ the celebration turns eventually a hellish dissolution of this fragile cohesion, leaving a pile of human ruins to face the disclosed events. Interestingly, the formal costume attire contrasted with this dramaturgy of character disintegration, exposing and amplifying the performance's underlying critical commentary to behavioral patterns of social hypocrisy.

Most male costumes were fashioning formal evening attire. Helge (Alexandros Mylonas), a so far respected businessman and family patriarch, as well as his two sons, Christian (Konstantinos Markoulakis) and Michael (Giannis Stankoglou) were all in formal black tuxedo suits, assorted with high collar white shirts and black bow ties. The uniformity of the formal attire of the status quo worked well in strong contrast to the rebellious acts of Helge's elder son Christian. The costumes were also consequently broken down to express the journey of the characters accordingly: as characters gradually crumble, formal etiquette gets sloppy and deconstructed. In unison, and following an all-black palette, the three main female characters were dressed in formal evening dresses with lush silk fabrics and plunging necklines (Helge's wife, Else (Themis Bazaka), her daughter, Helene (Angeliki Papatthemeli/ Roula Tzimou), and Michael's wife (Ekavi Douma)); Helge's toddler granddaughter appeared in a white princess dress breaking the black impression of the whole. Helene's boyfriend

⁵² Frentzos collaborated with an associate stylist for the *Festen* production, Venia Polychronaki. The fashion designer also sponsored the costumes, but it seems most unlikely that they came from the designer's own stock.

⁵³ See the designer's webpage <http://www.angelosfrentzos.eu/home.html>.

⁵⁴ Anagnostou, «Ανατροπές και αλήθειες: Omerta» [Upheavals and truths: Omerta].

(Manolis Afoliano), hotel staff (in their dressy kind of uniform) and male guests to the dinner completed the elegantly dressed cast in a colourwise mainly black and white approach.

In *Festen* costumes were approached as fashionable garments, with formal investigations of the overall silhouette, or the dress' individual parts subdued under the generic shapes and qualities of the garments used. A missed opportunity was perhaps expressive character differentiation through costume details and accessorizing. Interestingly, advances in fashion theory and semiotics have indicated that individual or secondary fashion details can produce an important degree of signification, weighing even more than the general overview.⁵⁵

Costume as Assemblage: *Ithaca*

One of the important observations Hann makes advocating critical costume is that compared to stage design the field of costume design was much less infiltrated by experimentation with avant-garde forms, concepts, and processes.⁵⁶ The human figure is in most cases a standard reference point for costume design, and with merges of costume, dress, and fashion, overall the quest for abstraction and a formal investigation was often significantly compromised - apart from distinct costume experimentations of the high modernist avant-garde.⁵⁷ However, the post-war avant-garde experimentation with form expanded well beyond the pictorialism-abstraction axis, while the visual and the performing arts many times converged in their artistic formulations.⁵⁸ In a similar context to the intersection of visual and performing arts, an alternative approach to contemporary dress, as a source for costume experimentation, was effected for the premiere production of *Ithaca* (2006) at Theseum Ensemble Theatre,⁵⁹ where contemporary garments were upcycled,⁶⁰ used in a deconstructed and reconstructed form, compiled in a process and a philosophy akin to assemblage.

⁵⁵ Fred Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago – London 1994.

⁵⁶ Hann, «Debating critical costume», p. 26.

⁵⁷ See Karakosta, «The Triadic Ballet», p. 16-33.

⁵⁸ See also work from the Critical Costume 2020 exhibition: <https://exhibition.costumeagency.com/>

⁵⁹ *Ithaca* [Ιθάκη] by Dimitris Dimitriadis; director: Sofia Karakantza, stage installation and costume design: Maria Konomi, music Telemachos Moussas, Theseum Ensemble, Athens; Chryssa Kapsouli plays Ithaca. For a full identity of the production see <https://www.dameblanche.gr/portfolio/ιθάκη>

⁶⁰ This is a term used for this sort of clothing recycling. Costume design practice and research has dedicated space to this method in various productions on the international stage and in programmes such as *Costume in Action* at WSD2013, see for more info: <http://www.wsd2013.com/whatson/costume-in-action/>



Chryssa Kapsouli (Ithaca) in her assemblage costume from recycled garments.

Photo: <https://www.dameblanche.gr/portfolio/ιθάκη>

The poetic and surreal monologue *Ithaca* (*Ιθάκη*) by Dimitris Dimitriadis presents core themes of destruction and mythological deconstruction.⁶¹ A poetic and political writer of eclectic affinities,⁶² Dimitriadis' *Ithaca* is the second of his three monologues

⁶¹ Dimitra Kondylaki, *The Theatrical Dimitris Dimitriadis*, Nefeli, Athens 2015; See also Kaiti Diamantakou – Dimitris Tsatsoulis – Dimitra Kondylaki, «The Theatrical Dimitris Dimitriadis», *ΧΡΟΝΟΣ* 34. 2 (2016). <http://www.chronosmag.eu/index.php/dimitriadis.html> [25/1/2021].

⁶² Lina Rozi, «Dimitris Dimitriadis, Jean Genet and Bernard-Marie Koltès: “eclectic affinities”» [Δημήτρης Δημητριάδης, Jean Genet και Bernard-Marie Koltès: “εκλεκτικές συγγένειες”], Platon Mavromoustakos – Sofia Felopoulou (eds), *Relations of Greece- France. Theatre from 1960 until today, Conference Proceedings*, Athens, p. 219-253.

(*Odysseus, Ithaca, Homer*), that constitute the theatrical triptych bearing the single title *Homeriad* (*Ομηριάδα*, 2007):⁶³ it is «a saga of the non-return, of the battle against nostalgia as a vital necessity for existence. Inverting the Homeric concept of ‘nostos’ Dimitriadis presents the return as opposing to the destination and the desire to return as a machine of destruction».⁶⁴ He revisions Odysseus’ return to his homeland as a dark, nightmarish homecoming. Ithaca is personified as his long awaiting mistress «in love to death» with him resembling Penelope. Dimitriadis treats the character of Ithaca symbolically as an archetype of the woman, the mother, the mistress, and homeland.⁶⁵ He demythologizes and rewrites the end of the Odyssey focusing on the return of Odysseus to the island of Ithaca. Mythical symbols are overturned whilst Homeric epic material is constantly present and under confutation. The landscape is nightmarish and death prevails. The bearer of destruction and death is Odysseus himself. Having been alienated during his absence, exasperated by the pleasure of war, he returns to destroy his motherland.⁶⁶

Written from a multifold female point of view, the text goes from the sensual and desiring body to the woes and pains of the suffering body, as the dream of Ulysses homecoming is transformed into a nightmare. As Tsatsoulis explicates:

Ithaca’s monologue takes place at their encounter; Odysseus is changed into a barbarian, an angry warrior, who sees in her the symbol of all his sufferings, for if she did not exist as his homeland, there would be no opposite: the foreign country, the «non-homeland», Troy; that is his reasoning for killing Ithaca and dismembering her.⁶⁷ Ithaca is sinking, dragging «under water» her history, her culture. Slaughtered at the sea bottom, she has lost her identity, and her name is now «Troy». Odysseus sinking with her loses his identity, he becomes «No-body». All that remains is the hope of rebirth through total annihilation.⁶⁸

⁶³ Dimitris Dimitriadis, *Ομηριάδα. Τρίπτυχο* [*Homeriad. Triptych*], Indiktos, Athens 2007.

⁶⁴ <http://www.greek-theatre.gr/public/gr/greekplay/index/playview/234> [20/1/2021].

⁶⁵ https://www.greek-language.gr/digitalResources/ancient_greek/navigator/browse.html?object_id=20113&fq%5B%5D%3A%5B%5D [18/12/2020]

⁶⁶ Dimitris Tsatsoulis, «Το θέατρο της στέρησης και της καταστροφής» [The theatre of deprivation and destruction], Epimer in Dimitriadis, *Ομηριάδα. Τρίπτυχο* [*Homeriad. Triptych*], p. 120-121.

⁶⁷ Giorgos Halatsis – K. Dimadis (ed.), *Ταυτότητες στον ελληνικό κόσμο (από το 1204 έως σήμερα), Πρακτικά Δ΄ Ευρωπαϊκού Συνεδρίου Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών (Γρανάδα, 9-12 Σεπτεμβρίου 2010)* [Identities in Greek World (from 1204 until today. Proceeding of the 4th European Conference of Modern Greek Studies (Granada, 9-12 September 2010)], vol. B’, European Society of Neohellenic Studies, Athens 2011, p. 374.

⁶⁸ Tsatsoulis, «Το θέατρο της στέρησης και της καταστροφής» [The theatre of deprivation and destruction], p. 120-121.

The scenography of the production was conceived as a scenic environment/installation with its primary element an assemblage of clothing⁶⁹. Many contemporary artists work with assemblage reinventing its material form from assembled, throwaway or scavenged, natural and everyday materials, as well as detritus, junk and found objects.

The scenography of the production manifested an assemblage of used clothes spread across the entire floor but also at various points in space, attached to hanging buoys as if floating underwater.⁷⁰ In this scenic installation, the assembled costume of the solo performer Chryssa Kapsouli as Ithaca played a pivotal role in providing the uppermost focal point of the audience's gaze. Furthermore, the costume was crucial for grounding the performer within the context of dramaturgy, as well as for granting her the potential for intense movement and gravitas concerning stage presence. According to Dimitriadis' conception of Ithaca, her character starts as a loving female subjectivity that very quickly transforms into a fragmented and subjugated object/subject. Her death by Ulysses converts her fate to a collective one, whereby the victims of Ithaca and Troy become interrelated and interconnected, fusing to a common collectivity of victims. In this context, it became important that Kapsouli/Ithaca's costume undertook in terms of visual cues, movement, and overall symbolism, overtones of this collective dimension, with the costume becoming a paradoxical hybrid solo/chorus costume. This particular expressive commitment shaped at large the pronounced agency of the costume in performance. According to Donatella Barbieri, «costume has agency, and nowhere more so than when it transforms the human body visually, physically, in motion and the charged context of a shared performance».⁷¹

Scenography and costume design were modeled according to this main concept of the collective chaos and destruction, in which Ithaca strives to tell her own story, as well as her people's story. On stage, the post-apocalyptic landscape of ravage, ruins, and debris was elaborated through the symbolic and material use of real, worn clothes as debris: the manipulation of clothes, as a common, ubiquitous everyday object, yet also ripe with symbolic significance bearing metonymically the connotation of the human

⁶⁹ For the art term assemblage, describing both art form, and end product and process, see <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/assemblage>.

⁷⁰ Many contemporary artists still work with assemblage reinventing its material form from assembled, throwaway or scavenged, natural and everyday materials, as well as detritus, junk and found objects.

⁷¹ Barbieri, *Costume in Performance*, p. 137.

body in its fragility, absence and physical decay, its violent death. Clothes of all sorts of gender and age groups were selectively gathered from second-hand shops, distressed, torched, and wrapped in clear plastic 'burial bags', creating the stage floor, a landscape of human debris and devastation. Only a few other objects were put on the stage (rope, buoys, tent), and these also intermingled with the garment material remains.

Ithaca's costume was in itself a manifestation of this personal/collective fate of the woman caught in the sufferings of war. Her costume was designed with the particular objective in mind to portray and express a collective predicament metaphorically, as well as physically. Hence, it was designed both as a protagonist and a chorus costume all in one. The voluminous, layered, and asymmetrical silhouette featured a trail of semi-fixed clothing parts at the back; this facilitated an enlarged movement of the performer on the stage, whereby all the different clothing parts of the absent garments/bodies were appearing to briefly acquire some motion and presence. Compiled by assembling ripped and disjointed parts of many different garments, the overall shape, and construction of the costume was achieved by upcycling materials as a basis for design: starting by an initial improvised deconstructive phase and followed by a selective re-assembly of various basic cuts.⁷² The patchwork effect was painstakingly formulated by resynthesizing, through modeling on the dolly and in successive costume fittings; the requirements of the performer's body concerning its intense movement and visual composition were all strongly taken into consideration during the process shaping the outcome.

For costume a wide array of inspiration was drawn: ranging from progressive fashion designers experimenting with asymmetrical patterns and mix and match synthesis like British designer Vivienne Westwood,⁷³ to the first wave of Japanese «fashion revolution» of the 1980s with the asymmetrical, «deconstructed» garments by Yohji Yamamoto.⁷⁴ In particular, Rei Kawakubo's designs of *Comme des Garçons* and her successor Junya Watanabe's deconstructivist - reconstructivist designs,⁷⁵ whose work I have been fortunate to have studied closely first hand and hands-on, have been highly influential for this work.⁷⁶ Besides, artists that have been working with clothes assemblages like Giannis Kounellis and especially Mi-

⁷² Inspiration is from acclaimed British designer Vivienne Westwood, who has described a similar approach to her pattern cutting knowledge building.

⁷³ Gene Krell, *Vivienne Westwood*, Thames and Hudson, London 1997.

⁷⁴ Yuniya Kawamura, *The Japanese Revolution*, Berg, Oxford 2004, p. 125-149.

⁷⁵ Andrew Bolton, *Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between*, Yale University Press, New Haven – Connecticut 2017.

⁷⁶ Over the years I have compiled a small private collection mainly for researching these fashion trends.

chelangelo Pistoletto from the Italian arte povera movement were also overall inspirational.⁷⁷ Overall, in *Ithaca*, in its form and philosophy, the costume presented challenging experimentation with materiality, theatricality, material agency and agency of form with regard to costume in performance. By refashioning used garments as raw material, the costume assemblage attempted to establish foremost a visual and material dramaturgy of the performing costume reflecting Dimitriadis landscape of human and mythical total annihilation.



Chryssa Kapsouli (*Ithaca*) in her assemblage costume and her found wedding dress.

Photo: <https://www.dameblanche.gr/portfolio/ιθάκη>

⁷⁷ See for example Pistoletto's work *Venus of the rags* (1967/1974). Alice Sanger maintains that «in their 'poorness' the rags demonstrate a willingness to deploy any and all aspects of life in art». <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/pistoletto-venus-of-the-rags-t12200> [10/1/2021].

Some closing remarks

Costume «is a material object that dresses the performing body» and «an active agent for performance-making».⁷⁸ Once underprivileged both in theory and performing practice, and regarded as subordinate to other hierarchies of performance like text, mise-en-scène, and stage design, now costume has often become a catalyst, a central contributor: «costume, like fashion and dress, is now viewed as an area of dynamic social significance and not simply as a passive reflector of a pre-conceived social state or practice».⁷⁹ Hann addresses costume both as «a vital practice and an interrogative act».⁸⁰

Realism is the rubric, under which Anglophone and European theatre has been costumed for the past century, but «realistic costume cannot be thought of as an opposite to spectacular or aesthetic/beautiful costume- realism is itself a stylized aesthetic».⁸¹ «Trends and tastes for realistic costume index modern concerns with “theatricality”, and modern and postmodern theatres’ navigations of the “fourth wall”, and theatrical illusion».⁸²

Aiming to contribute to a deeper understanding of costume and its artistic conceptualizations, we have analyzed three case studies produced for the Greek stage, with a marked emphasis on costume and its contextual interpretation. The choice of either costume design objective reflects and actively shapes the overall design aesthetic and style of production. Regarding *Wunschkonzert* we have exemplified an unfashionable theatricality of costume going beyond everyday dress, while in *Festen* we have problematized costume’s connection to fashion and the conflation of film and theatre genres for the costume. And finally, *Ithaca* was considered as a form of three-dimensional assemblage in motion, with an added focus in its experimental practice of recycling used garments. In addition, we highlighted the metaphoric and metonymic aspects of garments used, here, as both scenic elements and costume.

Overall, we have investigated a common thematic framework involving going beyond dress as representation, even if different key visual devices and performing strategies were used, presenting these costume designs as prolific experimentation with formal, expressive, and performative aspects of costume.

⁷⁸ Pantouvaki –McNeil, «Activating Costume», p. 1.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Hann, «Debating critical costume», p. 35.

⁸¹ Michelle Liu Carriger, «Costume», Arnold Aronson (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Scenography*, Routledge, London – New York 2020, p. 43.

⁸² *Ibid.*

ELINA DARAKLITSA

ELEMENTS OF LUIGI PIRANDELLO'S HUMOR THEORY
IN EDWARD ALBEE'S *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?*
AND TENNESSEE WILLIAMS' *THE ROSE TATTOO*

The theory of *Umorismo* contained in Luigi Pirandello's self-titled essay is written in 1908 and its principles are diffused throughout his work, fictional, theatrical and philosophical. This essay exposes Pirandello's entire aesthetic conception of humorous art and writing. These are the philosophical reflections and rules that run through even the slightest expression of the Pirandello universe and are inherent in all his texts. It should be noted that Pirandello's humorous conception of art and science comes, not from a mechanistic, literary or philosophical reasoning, but from a personal - psychological predisposition to the perception of situations.¹

His humorous disposition is not only evident in the work of his career, but also in that of his life.² He is characterized by a dark, critical attitude towards life, which does not sink into the infinity of melancholy and sterile sadness, but emerges on the surface, illuminating his intellect and fruitful reflection. His life is powered by the dual feeling of joy and sadness, laughter and crying, like a simultaneous cheerful lament of mental turmoil. His every thought and every emotion is expressed, even from his youth, through a primary bilingualism. Bilingualism speaks to the importance of over-treating the tragic through the comic, a position that is the first stage of humorous conception. He also refers to superficial laughter and, at the same time, the radical melting of the cry. The author himself states that the transcendence of the comic is realized through the comedy itself.

Pirandello's cheer acts as a reaction to a pessimistic worldview. The author had, from a very early age, understood the smallness of some everyday terrestrial circumstances and therefore had chosen their derision and irony, in order to eliminate

¹ Elina Daraklitsa, «Εισαγωγική μελέτη στην Αισθητική του χιούμορ», *Η αισθητική του χιούμορ του Λουίτζι Πιραντέλλο* [«Introductory Study in the Aesthetics of Humour», *The Aesthetics of Humour by Luigi Pirandello*], Polytropo, Athens 2016, p. 29-37; Arturo Lanocita, «Pirandello o dell'umorismo», *Scrittori del nostro tempo. Interviste*, Casa Editrice Ceschina, Milano 1928, p. 212-124; Giorgio Patrizi, *Pirandello e l'umorismo*, Edizioni Lithos, Collana: I nodi, Roma 1997 and Ulrich Schilz-Buschhaus, «“L'umorismo”: l'antiretorica e l'anti-sintesi di un secondo realismo», *Pirandello saggista*, Palermo 1982, p. 77-86.

² Paola Casella, *L'Umorismo di Pirandello. Ragioni intra e intertestuali*, Edizioni Cadmo, Firenze 2002, p. 13-20.

or appease sometimes roughness and cruelty, and sometimes brutal randomness by the aid of a bitter medium.

Pirandello claims humor is a *sense of contrast*.³ The *sense of contrast*, i.e. humor, is separated from the observation of contrast, i.e. the comic. The author explains that the comic is the direct and rapid perception of a funny situation that provokes laughter. Humor, however, does not provoke laughter, but the contemplation and reflection that rises from a comic stimulus taken from reality. It could also be linked to the dramatic, as anything humorous causes grief, as well as a bittersweet smile of consciousness. Humor does not stand in the visible and the tangible; in what is visible, has a smell and flesh, but penetrates into the substance from which the living being or the condition is made, stripping them off the false cloak they wear, giving shine to the blackness and their dark aspects, indicating the true truth and not the one that they themselves believe in. It arrives, in short, in the dramatization of the comic, touches the partial and the special by analyzing it, in order to come up with the general, contrary to his original, prevailing and true image. The «other» side of things, the «other» element to us is what, according to humor, represents the «εγώ» and the «είναι». «Φαίνεσθαι», on the other hand, is the side that everyone wishes to demonstrate.

Also, throughout Pirandello's work reigns an ambivalent feeling of love and hatred, an underestimation of humanity, a denial of reality, the present, of the social system and a desperate need to reveal and shake off the fictitious self. This multifaceted aspect, that breaks relationships and disintegrates personalities, dismembering them into multiple parts, is the process of producing a «humorous work of art», as he says. However, in order to produce a humorous work, the author must first undergo the process of personal decay and dismemberment. «No longer conscious of my existence, like a stone, like a plant, not even remembering my own name... to live only to live, without knowing that I live».⁴ These words express both the personality of the author and the way of his life and creation. A good creator, according to him, should lead through similar experiential stages both himself and his *dramatis personae*.

³ Benedetto Croce, *L'umorismo di Luigi Pirandello. Conversazioni critiche*, Laterza, Bari 1939, p. 43-48; Ernesto G. Caserta, «Croce, Pirandello e il concetto di umorismo», *Canadian Journal of Italian Studies* 2-3 (1983), p. 103-110; E. G. Caserta, «Croce, Pirandello e il problema estetico», *Italica* 51/1 (Spring, 1974), p. 20-42.

⁴ The phrase is often used by the author. It exists as an internal monologue by Tommasino Unzio, the main character of the novel *Canta l'epistola*, repeated in the monologue of Vitangelo Moscarda of *Uno, nessuno e centomila*, as well as in the sayings of many other theatrical characters of Pirandello. Cf., Daraklitsa, «Εισαγωγική μελέτη στην Αισθητική του χιούμορ», *Η αισθητική του χιούμορ του Λουίτζι Πιραντέλλο*, p. 35.

Humor could also be seen as a different conception of brutality, because it encourages or, better yet, forces its creations to shrink into miserable, mentally petty, humble and wretched creatures. Instead of embodying great and tragic heroes, they seek support, pleading for mercy and compassion. In this light, humor turns into a formation of diabolical pleasure and humility, forming around it a huge theatre of torture.⁵ Humor forms new formations and fertile textures, far and beyond any imitation of old indoctrination, dismembering or even breaking codes and exceeding the rules.⁶

Pirandello specifically states that humor «... is not a literary genre, such as poetry, comedy, novel, novella and so on. The truth is that each of these literary components can be humorous. Humor is a quality of expression».⁷ Indeed, humor, just as Pirandello wants to give it to us, is a quality of expression. At the same time, it must be a process of reasoning that takes place after the comic's first sense, so that it is possible to give birth to the sense of opposition and a measured distancing from the fact that prevents us from entering it, laughing at its funny side and tearing at its dramatic one.⁸ In conclusion, humor plays the role of a universal aesthetic distortion of art that encapsulates the crisis of the values of the time, of cancellation, of decline, as well as of desperate efforts for reconstruction, return and productive flourishing. This theory is presented not only as an insurance safeguard of the author, but also becomes the connecting point of all the warring theories that seek a foundational basis, a new reasoning with which literature, art and science can move, which in turn are not necessarily oriented towards a conscious goal, but to experimental and novel actions.

Art has the function of representation, pre-image and transfer of life to other more evolving and amenable spaces. And humor suggests a new path for art, perhaps a new art as well, where all the confusion and distortion of the cultural landscape is condensed beyond any classic protective diaphragm of the past, away from the restrictive laws and principles that tormented the archaic - reformist or neoclassical artistic tendencies.⁹

⁵ Giovanni Macchia, *Pirandello o la stanza della tortura*, Mondadori, Milano 2000, p. 112 and Luigi Pirandello, *Maschere nude, La nuova colonia, Lazzaro, I giganti della montagna*, Edizioni Garzanti, Roma 1995, p. xxii.

⁶ Umberto Eco, *Sugli specchi e altri saggi. Il segno, la rappresentazione, l'illusione, l'immagine*, Bompiani, Bologna 2001, p. 267-268.

⁷ Luigi Pirandello, *Η αισθητική του χιούμορ* [Aesthetics of Humor], tr. Elina Daraklitsa, Politropon, Athens 2016, p. 36, 147. More generally: Luigi Pirandello, *Saggi, poesie e scritti varii*, ed. by Manlio Lo Vecchio Musti, vol. 6, Mondadori, Milano 1993.

⁸ Marinella Cantelmo, *L'isola che ride. Teoria, poetica e retoriche dell'umorismo pirandelliano*, Bulzoni, Roma 1997, p. 69-88.

⁹ Luciano Bottoni, «Il saggio e la scienza: l'umorismo di Pirandello», *Intersezioni* 1985/1, p. 155-171.

The aforementioned theory of aesthetic humor is easily identified in two works of American dramaturgy. Those are *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by Edward Albee and *The Rose Tattoo* of Tennessee Williams. Both texts contain all those basic elements of Luigi Pirandello's philosophical and dramaturgical conception.

The three-act drama *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by Edward Albee encapsulates –as mentioned above– the principles of aesthetic humor.¹⁰ When Edward Albee, aka Edward Franklin Albee III,¹¹ writes the play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* in 1962, he aims to provoke the reactions of people of the spirit and artists, but does not imagine the great success that will be achieved by his text in later years. Unexpectedly for him, his particular work gives him his first Tony Award and the Best Work Award from The New York Drama Critics' Circle, putting him in the pantheon of American playwrights, alongside Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. Shortly afterwards, the Pulitzer Prize-winning theatre department nominates Albee for the award, while the management committee ignores this option because the play, in its opinion, does not qualify, meaning it «does not represent the healthy side of American life».¹²

Albee's sharp pen and the deep sarcasm behind his every word, referring in a particularly conspicuous way to Pirandello's theory of humor, move the audience and critics from the moment the play sees the lights of the stage, namely at Broadway's Billy Rose Theatre on October 13, 1962, on a production of Richard Barr and Clinton Wilder, directed by Alan Schneider and with Uta Hagen in the role of Martha. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, which takes its name from the title song that the main characters sing, is one of the most important texts of modern dramaturgy and has been presented many times in the theatrical stages of Greece.¹³

The principal characters of the play, George and Martha, are morally and spiritually stripped before the spectators, following a similar path to that of the Pirandello *dramatis personae* and then embark on a violent and at the same time tender, but also erotic game during which they strip the people around them.¹⁴

¹⁰ Antonio Illiano, «Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*: A comedy in the making», *Italica* 44/1 (1967), p. 1.

¹¹ Edward Albee is also well known for his plays: *The Zoo Story* (1958), *The Sand Box* (1959), *A Delicate Balance* (1966) and *Three Tall Women* (1994).

¹² Alvin Klein: «Albee's Tiny Alice, The Whole Enchilada», *The New York Times*, 24 May 1998.

¹³ Beginning at the «Art Theatre» where George Lazanis and Nelli Angelidou starred, directed by Karolos Koun (1962), was followed by Jenny Karezi with Costas Kazakos in 1982, while several of his productions with great actors have taken place, until today, such as that of «Simple Theatre», directed by Antonis Antipas in 2010.

¹⁴ Savas Patsalidis, «Η σύγχρονη αμερικανική κωμωδία» [The contemporary American comedy], *Hollinger, Θέατρο*

Initially, they dispose of their personal masks and secondly, they also dispose those around them of their masks. Those around them are the second couple in the play, Nick and Honey, who initially appear innocent, embarrassed because of what is heard, and cryptic, while they later turn out to be just as traumatized by social attacks and requirements. Having behind him the apprenticeship to Samuel Beckett, Jean Genet and Pirandello,¹⁵ Albee creates a dramaturgic landscape full of hidden meanings, extreme verbal statements and compositions, and ambiguous relationships.

While *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* has been described as a «heavy domestic drama», it does not contain the elements that would incorporate it into the purely *domestic drama*,¹⁶ instead it is expanded, reaching the scale of the *theatre of the absurd*,¹⁷ in direct relation to the *theatre of cruelty* of Antonin Artaud¹⁸ and the realistic theatre with its philosophical sequences. Also, in the text there are political mentions, as the author refers to the society of his time and country, while giving his characters the names of America's presidential couple. Martha and George's fictional child reflects the unfulfilled American dream. George and Martha, after a pleasant evening at a party, invite the young couple Nick and Honey for an after-midnight meeting. Eventually, the meeting of the four lasts until dawn and proves to be of catalytic importance to their lives. George is a professor in the history department of the university of which Martha's father is president; he is a humanist, has failed both in his career and personal life, he is aggressive and indifferent as concerns his marital obligations. Martha is a woman visibly unsatisfied,

104, Athens 2009, p. 4.

¹⁵ R. Brustein, *The Theatre of Revolt: An Approach to the Modern Drama*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston 1962, p. 316; Masoud Madahian, Hossein Pirajmuddin, «Ontological Foregrounding in Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*», *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences* 17/2 (2014), p. 70-79; Prohászka-Rád Boróka, «Discourses of the I: The panic of identity in Edward Albee's *Me, Myself and I*», *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae Philologica* 8/1 (2016), p. 36-37.

¹⁶ Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1956), Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1949), and Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour* (1934) are outstanding examples of *domestic drama*.

¹⁷ The works belonging to the *theatre of the absurd* place emphasis on the uncertainty and the precarious position of human life; elements discernable in Albee's work under review, and certainly included in the foundation of theory of aesthetic humor.

¹⁸ The *Théâtre de la cruauté* represents the double nature of human, since, according to Artaud, true human nature hides a dangerous side behind its everyday reality, one where the cosmic laws, similar to dolphins, rush to sink themselves into the black darkness of its waters. Pirandello's theory of aesthetic humor is run by similar beliefs; consequently, so is the total of his work, both his dramaturgic one and his fictional one. Cfr., Elina Daraklitsa, «Το θεατρικό είδωλο του Antonin Artaud» [Antonin Artaud's theatrical idol], nwspr *Elefhetorytpia-Istorika* [Ελευθεροτυπία-Ιστορικά], November 2005, p. 20-30; Camille Dumoulié, *Antonin Artaud*, Costa & Nolan, Genova 1998, p. 7-9 and Franco Ruffini, *I teatri di Artaud. Crudeltà, corpo-mente*, Il Mulino, Bologna 1996, more specifically, p. 76-78.

who has chosen to live a life imposed on her by society and her father. Nick is a newly appointed biologist, opportunist, ambitious and just as failed on a personal level; last comes Honey, the least talkative character of the play, who turns out to be the one more hurt and disappointed than the rest. George and Martha unleash repetitive insults on each other, they use sarcasm and self-sarcasm, they mock and degrade. Their purpose is not clear. The words on their lips look like weapons that cause bloody wounds. Each one reveals the sensitive and hidden aspects of the other's life, participating in a dizzying speed game.

According to Jacques Derrida's deconstruction theory, words retain ambiguity and contradiction in meaning, they also reveal multiple levels of concepts, without having a predetermined reference point, which is why the texts face and contradict each other.¹⁹ Albee's characters seem to be loyal to this process of verbal degradation. This deconstruction, however, takes place not only in words, but also in their actions and above all, in their existence, treading with confidence on the aesthetic theory of Pirandello's humor that indicates the internal, mental and emotional dismemberment of each hero, the transition from tragedy²⁰ and self-sarcasm to comedy and the loss of personal identity aimed at the fundamental rebirth of a genuine «humorous» hero.

The answers to the existential questions that the play's 'humorous' dramatis personae express by following the course of Pirandello's aesthetic theory to the letter are not given by the dramatis personae themselves, but by the audience-readers who seek them, each following their own personal intellectual meanders. The two main characters stagger between fiction and reality, passionately playing the tug-of-war of Pirandello bilingualism between comic and tragic elements, engaging the young couple in the wild game of cynicism and their extreme realism.²¹

The conditions in the context of their increasing intoxication –internal and external– are being altered. Everyone knows his personal truth, but they rebel upon hearing it expressed with cruelty from the lips of others. They want to think it is something other than what it looks like. They wear the mask that is in their best interest, depend-

¹⁹ Regarding the theory of deconstruction: Jacques Derrida, *L'écriture et la différence*, Seuil, Paris 1967 = Jacques Derrida, *Η γραφή και η διαφορά*, Kastaniotis, Athens 2003, p. 297-305, as well as the study: Gerasimos Kakolyris: *Ο Ζακ Ντεριντά και η αποδομητική ανάγνωση* [Jacques Derrida and the deconstructing reading], Ekkremes, Athens 2004, p. 65-88.

²⁰ Marisa Rosaria de Rosa: «L'estetica psicologia di Theodor Lipps e l'umorismo' pirandelliano: la deformazione del tragico nel moderno», *Allegoria* (1999), p. 139-144.

²¹ Schilz-Buschhaus, «“L'umorismo”: l'anti-retorica el'anti-sintesi di un secondo realismo», p. 77-79.

ing on their social position, and they are covered behind it. We witness the conscious participation of characters in a *play within the play*,²² a technique very dear to Pirandello who laid its foundations in the world theatre. According to this technique, characters embody roles and create a theatrical act within another almost effortlessly and naturally.²³ They present a *play within the play*, having a playful disposition of irony and existential pursuit. Thus, in Albee's dramatic work, during the stage development of *play within the play*, all the protagonists play a second role. But in the last act, the masks fall off. Their need to live in illusion and delusion²⁴ leads them to self-awareness, to a face-to-face sighting of their true identity and their existential and social being, as happens in the Italian dramaturgist's dramaturgic and fictional work.

Albee also –just as Pirandello does in his plays, and always according to his theory of the aesthetic– deconstructs the image of the perfect family, of a well-functioning society as well as that of a reputable intellectual. Of course, the spectator may not know any of this, which does not affect the action of the play at all. This is because Albee has composed an exemplary story, which in essence shows the painful but necessary path that leads to the collapse of illusions. After all, doesn't Luigi Pirandello deal with the imposed illusions of the social and family web in *Henry IV*?

George and Martha go down the road to deconstruction, as do Nick and Honey –the younger couple the author has artfully created– during the apocalyptic night, while alcohol flows abundantly and insults become a main means of communication. A marital relationship has turned into a ruthless power play between two wounded people who can only express themselves through the only emotion they know: mentally hurting their other «half».²⁵

The end of the evening will find them on the threshold of a new beginning, free from the illusions they had constructed, and a crack of light will end the play.

It should be noted that in the last act, the revelation of the death of the mature couple's fictitious child also marks the beginning of the countdown of their life. The

²² Patrice Pavis, *Λεξικό του θεάτρου* [Theatre Lexicon], tr. Agni Stroubouli, Gutenberg, Athens 2006, p. 217-218.

²³ In the same stylistic and game-playing light, the Italian dramaturg writes: *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* (*Six Characters in search of an author*, 1921) and *Questa sera si recita a soggetto* (*Tonight we improvise*, 1930).

²⁴ William Flanagan: «The Art of Theater No. Edward Albee», *The Paris Review* 4/39 (1966), p. 42; Savas Patsalidis, «Ένα εκπαιδευτικό εγχειρίδιο για τη μελέτη του δράματος», *Το θέατρο ως μορφολογικό αγαθό και καλλιτεχνική έκφραση στην εκπαίδευση και την κοινωνία* [An educational manual for the study of drama. The theatre as an educational asset and artistic expression in education and society], Athens 2014, p. 51 and *Σύγχρονο θέατρο* [Contemporary theatre], p. 114. http://archeia.moec.gov.cy/sm/467/theatrologia_kef2_3_4_c_lyk.pdf 2.5.2021.

²⁵ Edward Albee and Thomas P. Adler, «Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*: A Long Night's Journey into Day», *Educational Theatre Journal* 25/1 (1973), p. 66-70.

child's idea had kept Martha and George trapped in the past until now, in the memories of their own childhood. That is why Martha is shocked when she is announced the news suddenly and aggressively. When George decides to «kill» their child to hurt Martha, he basically kills their inner child. She is now obliged to completely love her husband and cease to be the daughter of the president of the university. Honey, the woman who seems submitted to her husband, who is afraid to have a child because she does not want to grow up, goes down the same evolutionary path.

It is no coincidence that many scholars argue that Albee's texts are governed by a characteristic Darwinism. So, in the last moments of the meeting, nihilism,²⁶ what Albee calls a «cathartic consciousness of death», also manifests itself. The end defines death in the couple's relationship, but at the same time marks the beginning of a new life based on love and honesty, since heroes no longer have anything to hide from each other, but also nothing more to say.²⁷ Their words²⁸ and actions exceeded the permissible, healthy limits so that they closed their first life cycle by giving the baton to the beginning of a new course...

The stages of the evolutionary process of the personality of Albee's characters are the stages described by Pirandello in his theory of humor. The reflection that takes place during the period of the transition from the feeling of perception, i.e., the comic, to that of opposition, that is to say humor, manages to break down, even to radically alter or decompose the original funny image of the characters, by taking out the fictitious and the superficial and embodying its real sad dimension. The intellect of both Pirandello's characters and those of this Albee play has the ability to strip events and people of the veils that hide their true, hidden aspects.²⁹

Honey's progressive transformation from a shy, modest, and seemingly moralistic companion progresses to being a secretive, full of phobias and conscious wife in the context of a conventional and decadent marriage until she reaches the point of absolute self-awareness, which proves that she goes through all stages of the existential dismemberment of the philosophical universe of a typical character of Piran-

²⁶ Anthony Petrucci, «Nihilism, Errancy and Truth in Pirandello's *Così è (se vi pare)*», *Italica* 83/3-4 (2006), p. 433-467.

²⁷ Savas Patsalidis, «Θέατρο και παγκοσμιοποίηση. Αναζητώντας τη χαμένη ταυτότητα» [Theatre and globalisation. In search of the lost identity], *Pandoxeio*, (6/10/2019) and «Θεατρικός χώρος σαν πολιτιστικό παράδειγμα: Σύντομη διαχρονική αναφορά» [Theatre space as a cultural paradigm: A short longitudinal report] *Σύγκριση/Comparaison* 5 (1993), p. 95-117.

²⁸ With regard to the language and speech of the humorous characters: Max Pfister: «La creatività lessicale di Pirandello», *Pirandello dialettale*, Palumbo, Palermo (1983), p. 71-91 and Filippo Puglisi, *Pirandello e la sua lingua*, Nuova Cappelli, Bologna 1968.

²⁹ Daraklitsa, «Εισαγωγική μελέτη στην Αισθητική του χιούμορ», p. 68.

dello. Honey staggers between a dual existence, amenable to the antithetical feelings of a socially imposed innocence and a hidden terror, which lead her to the mature, final, tragic and cathartic exacerbation of awareness, that is to say to the perception of the feeling of opposition and therefore to the primary core of humor.

Another work of modern American dramaturgy encapsulates the principles of *umorismo theory*, this time with more obvious elements, as the personality of the main character seems to directly draw its characteristics from the popular culture of southern Italy, where Luigi Pirandello comes from.³⁰ That is the three-act drama *The Rose Tattoo* (1949-1950), by Tennessee Williams. *The Rose Tattoo* was first produced by Cberyl Crawford at the Erlanger Theatre in Chicago on 29 December 1950. It had its Broadway opening on 3 February 1951, at the Martin Beck Theatre in New York City, with Daniel Mann as director, setting by Boris Aronson and 'music by David Diamond.

The mourning, thirst for love and hope of *The Rose Tattoo* of Tennessee Williams have graced hundreds of stages around the world and certainly those of Greece. A performance worthy of reference is certainly the first to be staged at the «Art Theatre» in 1956, directed by Karolos Koun, but also its most contemporary version in the same theatre, during the 2006-2007 theatrical period, directed by Esther Andre Gonzalez in an atmosphere of popular humility, bouffonic jokes and primitive beauty.

Thomas Lanier Williams, who left his important mark in the world dramaturgy under the pseudonym Tennessee Williams, introduced in *The Rose Tattoo* his very endearing elements of human solitude, conjugal faith, insane love, but also at the same time infidelity, despair, social outcry and isolation. In *The Rose Tattoo*, as in most of the author's texts –*The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Summer and Smoke*, etc.– there are autobiographical references, while the female presence dominates, surrounded by male satellite faces.

The author's theatrical career was a constant bump between the accepted and the unacceptable, which helped him create peculiar stage creatures, into which he channeled the sensibilities of the many on the one hand, and his own views on diversity, on the other.³¹ Williams' female characters are overwhelmed by their intense sentimentality; they stagger between dream and reality and get lost in

³⁰ Alessandro Clericuzio, *Tennessee Williams and Italy. A Transcultural Perspective*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2016, p. 109-150.

³¹ Savas Patsalidis, «Ο θηλυκός κόσμος του Τένεσι Ουίλιαμς», nwspr *Kyriakatiki Eleftherotypia* [Κυριακάτικη Ελευθεροτυπία], <http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=256772>, 6/3/2011.

their illusions until a sign of their ideal or true world brings them back to the sea of consciousness, their original goal and reason. This sign in the case of Serafina delle Rose has two origins: the external environment, (the neighbors) and her inner world (her need for motherhood).

The words of Williams's *dramatis personae* are inspired by a deep interiority, as dark as their seemingly bright and simple personality.³² The words and actions of Williams's characters are an integral role model of Pirandello's humorous aesthetic. He also sought for his characters to seem fictitiously happy, even though they were internally unhappy. In fact, his own personality was also permeated by the same antithetical characteristics. More specifically, in a letter, while he has been diagnosed with a health problem, he states: «We are happy, aren't we? Oh, I'm so... Happy and smiling...».³³ Similarly characteristic are the words of his dramatic character Mattia Pascal, when he returns home and finds his wife married to another husband: «Now I am alive... You see, And I always want to be happy... happy! – as a friend of mine used to say every time he was drunk...».³⁴ The same conflicting emotions³⁵ accompany the *dramatis personae* of *The Rose Tattoo* even to the ending of the story. Pirandello's humorous characters leave spectators in a complex of raw, heterogeneous and unknown situations, because they like to raise questions of existential, social and philosophical texture. Williams's characters are distinguished by the same trend, but with greater emphasis on the problems of the social texture.

Serafina delle Rose, like most of Williams's dramatic characters, is dominated by nature's instincts, whether they are in their inner world, or in the surroundings, even in animals or plants.³⁶ It is worth mentioning that for Pirandello, human existence itself is symbolized by the element of water and its free flow that no one can stop. Any heterogeneous obstacles lurk for a while, since

³² Laura Michiels, «Transmuting Performance: Esotericism and Metatheatre in Tennessee Williams's *The Two-Character Play*», *Arcadia* 49/2 (2014), p. 392–412 and Sandra Dugo, *La fortuna delle opere drammaturgiche e narrative di Luigi Pirandello in Brasile*, Dottorato di Ricerca, Università Degli Studi di Roma «Tor Vergata», (2016), p. 21.

³³ Luigi Pirandello: «Lettere giovanili da Palermo a Roma (1891-1898). Con appendice di lettere sparse 1899-1919», introduction and comments by Elio Providenti, *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Studi Pirandelliani* 10, Bulzoni, Roma 1996, p. 245.

³⁴ Luigi Pirandello, *Tutti i romanzi*, ed. by Giovanni Macchia, Mondadori, Milano 1973, Vol. 1, p. 568.

³⁵ Daraklitsa, «Εισαγωγική μελέτη στην Αισθητική του χιούμορ», p. 31.

³⁶ Anthoullis Dimosthenous, «Η σημασία των ήχων της φύσης στο θεατρικό έργο του Τενεσί Ουίλιαμς *Ορφέας στον Άδη*. Οι σκηνοθετικές οδηγίες του συγγραφέα» [The importance of the sounds of nature in Tennessee Williams' play *Orpheus in Hades*. The author's stage directions], *Parabasis* 13/2 (2015), p. 50.

its torrential flow shatters everything it encounters in its course. The humorous characters of Pirandello are also overwhelmed by the same primary and dynamic anointing of the instinct of the characters of *The Rose Tattoo*, especially those whose works take place in Sicily.

In general, the theatrical universe of both Williams and Pirandello is a world of strong and aggressive women and sexually uncertain men, unable to create life, but capable of taking life. Williams writes like a torn bohemian, like an unstable puritan who managed to marry sex to death, pushing his creatures into a final transcendence or liberation. Pirandello also spoke of such an excess in his theory of humor:

For me humor, from any angle, is always a form of sentimentality. Or more appropriately—now I have a clearer picture—it is sentimentality itself, one face of it laughing and the other crying. It laughs at its tears, at its lost or vain dreams, at its disproportionate desires in comparison to the possibility of the will itself. It is certainly an excess that responds to another transcendence...³⁷

Tennessee Williams writes this play receiving influence and elements from the Italian culture³⁸ he met up close on a trip to Sicily in 1950. His wish was for the play to be interpreted by Anna Magnani, who eventually starred in his film adaptation (1955), directed by Daniel Mann, winning the Oscar for first female performance. Of course, the theatrical production of Luchino Visconti, who made Williams' most important works known in Italian theatre, is also worthy of mention.³⁹

The play is rich in symbolism⁴⁰ and phrases spoken in the Italian language, mainly by Sicilian characters, with warm and Mediterranean temperament, located in South America.⁴¹ It is worth noting that the South of Williams, where he comes from, has the place of «hell», but also of the «day of crisis». Behind the author's interest in

³⁷ Daraklitsa, «Εισαγωγική μελέτη στην Αισθητική του χιούμορ», p. 30-31.

³⁸ Ambra Meda, «L'italianità "naufregata": Rappresentazioni letterarie dell'emigrato italiano in America nell'odeporica del Ventennio», *Italica*, Vol. 90, No. 2 (2013), p. 210-226. Also, with regard to Pirandello's presence on the American continent, cfr.: Bonnie Marranca, «Pirandello: A Work in Progress», *Performing Arts Journal* 7/ 2 (1983), p. 7-28.

³⁹ Alessandro Clericuzio, «Tennessee Williams and Luchino Visconti. Various Stages of Censorship», *RSA Journal* 25 (2014), p. 35-41 and Clericuzio, *Tennessee Williams and Italy. A Transcultural Perspective*, p. 55-86.

⁴⁰ Regarding the symbolisms in Williams' plays: Daniel Brent Barnard, *The Symbolism of Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie: An Inductive Approach*, LSU Doctoral Dissertations, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College 2007.

⁴¹ Robert Rea, «Tennessee Williams's *The Rose Tattoo*: Sicilian Migration and the Mississippi Gulf Coast», *The Southern Literary Journal* 46/2 (2014), p. 140-154.

human despair and its contradictory need to seek solace in human relations and flight «lies the most direct denunciation of the intolerance of the South».⁴² The South of Italy is also a reference point for Pirandello in all his first dramaturgical works,⁴³ which are written in the Sicilian dialect.⁴⁴ Williams places elements of this dialect in the mouths of the dramatis personae of *The Rose Tattoo*.

Serafina delle Rose, an Italian settler of South America, appears at the start of the play waiting for her beloved husband Rosario (whose name refers to both the rose and the prayer), a banana carrier and drug smuggler. She is pregnant with two lives, according to her words, and also has a fifteen-year-old daughter, Rosa delle Rose (whose name means Rose of roses).

Serafina is a symbol herself. The symbol of female nature. The rose becomes a theatrical symbol. An occult Rosa Mystica that redeems people not only from reason, but also from puritanism. And so, in *The Rose Tattoo*, the rose comes out after each intercourse and the nomenclature shows the generation of a Dionysian father (Rosario delle Rose) and a stellar, super-worldly mother “without legs” (Estelle) who bring to the world the «Rose of roses» (Rosa delle Rose).

Events are overturned with Rosario’s sudden death. Serafina delle Rose’s behavior changes radically. She distances herself, isolates at home, walks around naked, receives no visits and stops working, vowing to the Virgin Mary eternal faith in the memory of her husband, whom she considers a role model of man and husband. The shift in her thinking begins to take place subconsciously, the moment she hears rumors about Rosario’s infidelity with Estelle Hohengarten, and consciously when Alvaro Mangiacavallo (whose last name means horse-eater) has entered her life. This shift involves something substantially and deeply hu-

⁴² C. W. E. Bigsby, *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama: Volume 2: Williams, Miller, Albee*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1984, p. 97.

⁴³ Plays of this period are: *La morsa* (1910), *Lumie di Sicilia* (1910), *Pensaci, Giacomino!* (1916), *Il dovere del medico* (1913), *Se non è così* (1915), *Liolà* (1916) and *Il berretto a sonagli* (1918). Cf. Luigi Pirandello, *Tutto il teatro in dialetto*, edited by Sara Zappulla Muscarà, Bompiani, Milano 2005, 2 vol.

⁴⁴ Lubello, «Lingua e dialetto in Luigi Pirandello: come lavorava l'autore», p. 489-502; Luciana Salibra, «Liolà: Pirandello autotraduttore dal siciliano», *Bollettino del Centro di Studi Filologici e Linguistici Siciliani*, XIII (1977), p. 257-292; Max Pfister, «Pirandello: lingua e dialetto. Osservazioni lessicali», Enzo Lauro (ed.), *Pirandello e la lingua. Atti del XXX Convegno Internazionale (Agrigento, 1-4 dicembre 1993)*, Mursia, Milano 1994, 1994, p. 7-22; Giovanni Nencioni, *Pirandello dialettologo*, introduzione alla ristampa anastatica di L. Pirandello, *Laute und Lautentwicklung der Mundart von Girgenti*, Edizioni Marlin, Pisa 1973 and *Tra grammatica e retorica. Da Dante a Pirandello*, Einaudi, Torino 1983, p. 176-190; Gabriella Giacomelli, «Dal dialetto alla lingua: le traduzioni pirandelliane de 'A Giarra e di Liolà», *Mille. I dibattiti del circolo linguistico fiorentino. 1945-70*, Olschki, Firenze 1970, p. 87-101. More generally, Sara Zappulla Muscarà (ed.), *Pirandello dialettale*, Palumbo, Palermo 1983.

morous. It is about the awareness of the internal conflict of her antithetical feelings that now rest in her soul: her love melted in the incandescent furnace of hatred and revenge. Serafina deeply understands the smallness of both the emotions she feeds and her existence in general. It should be noted that Pirandello's humorous view closes with the invocation to Leopardi's Copernicus, where two antithetical emotions reign, that of human smallness derived from the discovery of Copernicus, according to which the human being is just an infinitesimal part of the universe, and that of human greatness, derived from our participation in the vastness of the universe.⁴⁵

Alvaro has many of the characteristics of her late husband and with them a rose on the chest similar to that of Rosario. The symbols-omens and the confirmation of notoriety activate her femininity and her need for creation. It should be noted that in the aforementioned performance of the Athens Art Theatre, the Mexican director Esther Andre Gonzalez preferred an innovative interpretation of the text, on the one hand by modifying many elements of it or using them in a symbolic-realistic way, removing small sections of dialogues and secondary persons, and on the other hand introducing an image not described by the author. In particular, the three children Bruno, Salvatore and Vivi, described by Williams, are absent. The doll, which in the original text is dressed as a clown, in the performance of the Art Theatre takes shape and announces the events of the summer of 2005, caused by Cyclone Katrina in New Orleans, and projected from a screen in the form of short documentaries. In all her choices, the director respected the primary core of the work, the character of the *dramatis personae*, the melancholic and at the same time satirical-comic background of the situations with which the author wanted to emphasize the magic of human life, the mental strength, simplicity and sincerity of his creations. The image with which the work is continuously inoculated is that of Rosario and Estelle's passionate love.

Serafina struggles with her emotions from the beginning to the end of the play, coming into conflict with herself, her daughter and those around her, as a proper humorous character of Pirandello. Her personality involves a heroism expressed

⁴⁵ Davide De Camilli, «Leopardismo pirandelliano», *Studi in onore di Alberto Chiari*, Paideia, Brescia 1973, Vol. 1, p. 345-364; Antonella Del Gatto, «Spunti leopardiani nel saggio su "L'umorismo" di Pirandello», *Studi Medievali e Moderni* 2 (1992), p. 229-253; Dario Del Puppo, «Pirandello e il "Copernico" di Leopardi», *Canadian Journal of Italian Studies* 40-41 (1990), p. 28-37 and Carlo Ferrucci, «Due sguardi dal cosmo: Pirandello e Leopardi», *Quaderni della filologia italiana* 1 (1994), p. 93-101.

through a very personal and charming temperament. She's attractive, erotic, aggressive and vindictive. Alvaro is possessed of passion and original spontaneity that suits such a simplistic hero, from comedy and grotesque elements to his behavior reminiscent of the playful caricatures of *commedia dell'arte*, but also of the Neapolitan theatre of the early 20th century. The same passion distinguishes the personality of all Pirandello's characters and in particular the texts whose action unfolds in Sicily.⁴⁶

Young Rosa is possessed of childishness, vibrancy and innocence. She begins to know the other sex through her relationship with Jack, treating her mother's prohibitions with directness and self-denial. Jack possesses a proportionate and convincing innocence, but also a style that is characterized by a love for laughter. Estelle expresses a boldness in her behavior and is erotically assertive. Father de Leo possesses the proper wisdom of the status he carries and has a guiding attitude towards the other *dramatis personae* of the play, reflecting both the faith in God and, more specifically, in the Catholicism with which the Italian people of Pirandello, but also the main characters of the play are associated. Assunta offers clear admonishing support to all, leaving even more descriptive and other ethnic pieces of Sicily to be revealed. Peppina has the appropriate and emphatic energy regarding the «traditional» habit of social criticism of Southern Italy, brought to America. In the play, there is also the folk figure of Strega, bearing the metaphysical signs of the Italian medieval past, also having a sharp airiness, while Salesman fills in brilliant colors the painting of Italian immigrants' everyday life in South America.

In conclusion, these two famous texts of American dramaturgy involve common semantic codes, hidden concepts and philosophical substrate, capturing sometimes in an understandable and obvious way and sometimes in a difficult and dark way the most important principles of Luigi Pirandello's aesthetic theory. It is not known whether the two important American dramatists of the 20th century who sealed with their work the course of world theatre in both dramaturgy and theory, as well as theatrical practice, consciously chose to introduce elements of Pirandello's aesthetics into their work, or simply the influence of the latter unconsciously sipped into their particular texts due to their thorough study and deep knowledge of theatrical art. In any case, this dramaturgic phenomenon deserves further research, study and deepening on the part of the international scientific community.

⁴⁶ Regarding the passion from which the characters of Pirandello's works are distinguished: Hubert C. Heffner, «Pirandello and the nature of man», *The Tulane Drama Review* 1/3 (1957), p. 23-40.

AVRA SIDIROPOULOU

A RITUAL OF FAMILIAL MOURNING:
KATERINA EVANGELATOS' STAGING OF *HAMLET*
AS MEMORIAL SERVICE

Context

Katerina Evangelatos, one of the most innovative female directors of the contemporary Greek theatre scene and Artistic Director of the Athens and Epidaurus Festival,¹ directed Shakespeare's *Hamlet*² in a production-homage to her late father, acclaimed theatre director and academic Spyros Evangelatos, who had presented his version of *Hamlet* on the same stage, back in 1991.³ Evangelatos' production takes place in the emblematic «Amphitheatro» [Eng. «amphitheatre»]⁴ in *Plaka*, in the heart of historic Athens. This is a well-known venue which used to house her father's repertory productions from 1975 until its closing in 2011. The theatre remained shut for eight years, reopening on 11 December 2019, specifically for *Hamlet*, which comes twenty-eight years after Spyros Evangelatos' own *Hamlet* production. Significantly, no renovations took place in the space. This supported the concept of the two productions co-existing within an a-temporal present, but also reflected the director's ambition to welcome the passage of time and the frailty of human beings into the very walls of the theatre. By bridging the gap between the two productions, the director abrogates historical time, elasticizing it through memory.

¹ In most of her directing work so far, which focuses on revisionist interpretations of the dramatic canon, including plays by Shakespeare, Euripides, Williams and Büchner, Evangelatos has allowed a solid process of text analysis to inform her markedly conceptual vision.

² I would like to warmly thank Katerina Evangelatos for generously granting me permission to use select production photographs in my article.

³ Identity of the production: *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare at Amphitheatro, Athens. Produced by Lycophos. Translation: Giorgos Chimonas. Dramaturgy-Direction: Katerina Evangelatos. Set Design: Thaleia Melissa, Costume Design: Vassiliki Syrma. Choreography: Patricia Aperi. Music: Stavros Gasparatos. Lighting/Video/Images: Simos Sarketzi.

Cast: Hamlet: Odysseas Paspiliopoulos. Claudius: Nikos Psarras. Gertrude: Anna Mascha. Polonius: Dimitris Papanikolaou. Ophelia: Amalia Ninou. Horatio: Michalis Michalakidis. Laertes: Giorgos Zygouris. Actor/gravedigger: Yannis Kotsifas. Rosencrantz: Klearchos Papageorgiou. Guildenstern: Vassilis Boutsikos. Guest video appearance as the King's Ghost: Yannis Fertis

⁴ Spyros Evangelatos' «Amphitheatro» used to be one of the most active theatre venues in Greece. Founded in 1975, it ran successfully for 36 years, until it closed down in 2011.

Haunted by Ghosts

Marvin Carlson amply theorized on the relationship of theatre and memory, arguing that «every play is a memory play».⁵ He calls this complex mirroring of past into present «ghosting», in that «the present [theatrical] experience is always ghosted by previous experiences and associations while these ghosts are simultaneously shifted and modified by the processes of recycling and recollection».⁶ Carlson also compares the «waking dream of theatre» to dreaming itself, both of which «recycle past perceptions and experience in imaginary configurations», which are «haunted by a sense of repetition», also involving «the whole range of human activity and its context».⁷ From a different standpoint, Mary Luckhurst views the notion of «haunting» in the theatre as «a metaphor for the distinction or, perhaps more accurately, indistinction between illusion and reality» which «becomes infinitely complicated and paradoxical when linked to consciousness, embodiment and the actor».⁸

Evangelatos' production becomes a ghosting experience on many different and often intersecting levels. Not only does it «present the identical thing» (namely Shakespeare's play) the audiences have experienced before, «although now in a somewhat different context»,⁹ it also engages the spectator in a haunted revisiting of the site of performance, of actors, of actual footage from the 1991 performance of the tragedy, of scenic elements and props that were part of the old production. *Hamlet* beckons to the «ghost» of the father (that of the title character's as well as the director's), but also to a series of other ghosts. In a literal sense, Evangelatos' 2019 production evokes the ghosts of the previous production's actors, who now appear in a different, role. Ironically, the actor who had originally performed Hamlet, Yannis Fertis, is now digitally revived as the Ghost of Hamlet's father. By revisiting the now defunct «Amphitheatro», where the earlier production was staged, Evangelatos performs another kind of psycho-geographical ghosting, no doubt stirring up a number of mental associations in the minds of those spectators, who had attended her father's production, sitting in the same seats, sensing the special atmosphere of the specific theatre venue.

⁵ Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 2001, p. 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸ Mary Luckhurst, «Giving Up the Ghost: The Actor's Body as Haunted House», Mary Luckhurst and Emilie Morin (eds), *Theatre and Ghosts. Materiality, Performance and Modernity*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2014, p. 173.

⁹ Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*, p. 7.

Evidently, the choice of play is fundamental to this process of recycling-re-visitation: In the very text of *Hamlet*, the themes of mourning and familial duty, but also of ghosts returning to life to claim justice, is prevalent. King Hamlet's «remember me» becomes a mental and psychic leitmotif both in the text but also in the production, as if the spirit of the 1991 performance returns home, claiming a part in the contemporary version, mediated through technology; more importantly, it is inevitably inviting a number of associations and mental images as well as stylistic comparisons in the minds of the spectators and consequently, makes a meaningful, if somber, come back to the world of the living. The concurrent existence of past and present are there to remind us of theatre's ephemeral nature—at least on stage— but also of its potential for reincarnation across time and through different production histories. This double, complex identity calls to mind Jacques Derrida's conceptualization of «hauntology».¹⁰ Derrida in fact sets out to conjure up this quality of being beyond time, by describing the «spectral moment» as one that:

no longer belongs to time, if one understands by this word the linking of modalized presents (past present, actual present: “now,” future present). We are questioning in this instant, we are asking ourselves about this instant that is not docile to time, at least to what we call time. Furtive and untimely, the apparition of the spectre does not belong to that time, it does not give time, not that one: «Enter the ghost, exit the ghost, re-enter the ghost» (Hamlet).¹¹

Setting and Atmosphere

The stage of «Amphitheatro» is large, wide and essentially bare, reinforcing the prevailing mood of loneliness. Although its scale and shape—extending out to the three different sets of audience seats— could conceivably posit demands on the actors, they actually work to the production's advantage, revealing the char-

¹⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx. The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (tr. from the French: Peggy Kamuf), Routledge, New York and London 1994. Each time, says Derrida, «it is the event itself, a first time is a last time. Altogether other. Staging for the end of history. Let us call it a Hauntology.» (*Specters of Marx. The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, p. 10).

¹¹ Derrida, *Specters of Marx. The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, p. xix.

acters' insignificance within a corrupt, hostile universe. There are different playing areas and levels of height: to the audience right, there is a raised platform where the touring actors perform the Mousetrap (Act III, scene ii.), while the main scenographic element, a low mound of dirt upstage centre, focuses the audience's attention to Hamlet, who makes it his home, sitting on a chair on the top of it. Despite Hamlet's physical distance from the audience in this elongated thrust stage, a sense of intimacy builds effortlessly between the actor and the auditorium.

On the audience left hand side, there is a staircase, which seats Hamlet's companions as they watch out for the Ghost to make his appearance. This is also where some of the most startling entrances and exits in performance take place. «Planted» on stage is a conspicuous signpost from the previous production of the play, one of the very few set items on stage, but a powerful *memento mori* of the venue's past secrets. The legacy of Evangelatos' absent father is poignantly reflected in the set, where, on scenographer Thalia Melissa's decision, some of the relics of the old set installation remain in view. More than anything, the liminality of the theatre space nods at Hamlet's liminal personality. The encounter with the ghost of his father disrupts his fragile nonchalance at the beginning of the tragedy. The character plunges into the ground, ripping off the wooden floor, while repeating obsessively his father's exhortation: «Remember me». Hamlet's gradual descent into madness signals a quest for the truth about his family's story, and about the past, but also presents the philosophical implications of being confronted with one's consciousness and mortality.

The director's use of space creates dynamic relationships and reinforces the contrast between private and public, often uniting them in a single spatial dimension. More importantly, with the prevailing metaphor of Hamlet obsessively digging up the floor, the set becomes a metaphor for one's inner life and the futile attempt to uproot the layers of human suffering. The entrails of the theatre space reveal a construction site – the world is about to get turned inside out and be rebuilt from scratch. To that effect, the gravediggers' scene (Act V, scene i.) fully justifies the dominant conceit of the play as an open grave that duly awaits the living, artists and spectators alike.

All in all, there is an expansive feel to the space, while the props are minimal. Paradoxically, the atmosphere is both claustrophobic—supported by the dim lighting—and post-apocalyptic. Besides the stark scenography, the metaphysical ele-

ment is formally hinted at in the movement (Patricia Apergi), the lighting design (Simos Sarketzis) and the electronic music score (Stavros Gasparatos), all of which reverberate with echoes of transcendental minimalism. The director uses brief blackouts to indicate the change of scenes, each being underlined by an ill-boding musical note. Lighting, creating shadows and drawing attention to the fog exuded from the underbelly of the stage, builds an illusion of a medieval castle. The costumes (Vassiliki Syrma) are in cool colour tones, adding to overall chilling emotional temperature. It may be worth mentioning that even though the production's aesthetic reading opts for a timeless look, some anachronisms (such as phones ringing or emerging out of the dust) exist, without necessarily marring the generally abstract feel. Past and present, fact and memory coalesce into the graveyard of an inexorable now.

Staring into Hamlet's Void

One of the most iconic classics of all time, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1601)¹² documents the philosophical dimensions of human nature. The fundamental question of the play, «to be or not to be» is clearly the production's conceptual pivot. Young Hamlet, on a revenge mission, is set to bring the world of the dead –that of his father, King Hamlet, murdered by his brother Claudius– back to the world of the living –of his mother Gertrude who is newly wedded to his uncle, of the usurper Claudius and their royal entourage.

¹² My rereading of the play was based on *The Arden Shakespeare* edition. A. Thompson and N. Taylor (eds) Bloomsbury, London 2016.



Figure 1. Vasia Anagnostopoulou. «Hamlet's Soliloquy» (2019)
© Katerina Evangelatos

Evangelatos' generous textual cuts –including the omission of the Fortinbras sub-plot–reinforce the notion of time and historic progression as irrelevant. The main thing that validates history is the reconfirmation of the main character's (and indeed of the audience's) ontological void. The play, disguised as a revenge battle between Hamlet and his uncle, Claudius, tells of Hamlet's conflict with himself. The production never shies away from the eternal question –whether life is worth living for– that is at the heart of the play. Both Hamlet and Ophelia feel «real» in their restlessness and confusion. Hamlet, a young man dressed in black, with sunglasses and longish dark hair, is a recognizable rebel of our time.



Figure 2. Vasia Anagnostopoulou. «Hamlet» (2019)
© Katerina Evangelatos

To perform the character of Hamlet is both to follow and to challenge an entire tradition shaped by a number of acting legends. Odysseas Papaspiliopoulos, who plays the title character, is characterized by vitality and high energy, as he struggles to delve deeper into the horror of his emptiness. A sole spotlight sets the scene, as Hamlet sets himself up for his soliloquy, staging his madness and asking for an audience, while Ophelia, in parallel action is discovered reading from a book, concealing her eyes. This overt theatricalization of an inherently theatrical scene is accompanied by the entrance of Claudius, Gertrude and Polonius stage right, descending the staircase. The portrayal of unflinching resentment and cynicism is in tandem with the turmoil of an individual in conflict with the world. The director's strategy of de-psychologization, which sometimes informs different moments in the titular hero's performance, is also worth noting, especially as it reveals a recurrent attribute of formalist theatre.¹³

¹³ Indeed, directors' fear of «involving themselves and the audience in a passionate and emotionally committed 'affair' with the piece 'contagiously' flattens the actor's experience of the role. If anything, formalizing emotion is

Just like Hamlet, Evangelatos' Ophelia is a young woman of her times –clad in a light blue dress and white boots. Amalia Ninou's portrayal of the character shies away from melodrama and lets her teenage innocence speak for itself. In the end, the manipulation of her father and of Claudius crush her; she is on the verge of becoming a part of the system and submit to her Polonius' cunning manipulation, as he manhandles her together with the king. In her madness scene, she runs along the stage wearing only her father's overcoat, having first taken off her underwear in plain view. Performing naked, Ninou briefly diverts our attention from what should be a shirring lamentation. The power of the scene is, however, recaptured, when the back door of the theatre is thrust open, revealing a forlorn urban yard behind the venue, which spatially foreshadows Ophelia's suicide. Following that, she rushes to the dirt that covers the theatre floor, willing herself to be swollen by it. In one of the most stirring scenes of the production, the dead Ophelia is carried lovingly by Laertes towards her burial, and soon after, the royals toss dirt on her body, as it gradually disappears into the bowels of the earth.



Figure 3. Vasia Anagnostopoulou. «Dead Ophelia» (2019)
© Katerina Evangelatos

perhaps the safest way to tell an unsettling story», Avra Sidiropoulou, *Authoring Performance. The Director in Contemporary Theatre*, Routledge, New York 2011, p. 130.

Digital Mediation and Inter-textuality

The production's opening image is a video projection of Spyros Evangelatos' earlier reading of *Hamlet*, as the group of actors walk onto the stage to start the show. The video recording displays the old cast taking the final bow, amid audience applause. Bowing here becomes a metonymic ritual of succession, a change of turn between the old and the new, as it establishes visually from the onset of the performance the dialogue that exists between the twenty-first century production of *Hamlet* and its old counterpart. The double presence of Yannis Fertis –the actor who had performed Hamlet in 1991– as the digitally mediated Ghost of the King in the current production is a telling touch to this tribute. This presence once again echoes Carlson's stipulation that: «The recycled body of an actor, already a complex bearer of semiotic messages, will almost inevitably in a new role evoke the ghost or ghosts of previous roles».¹⁴ If these previous roles actually made a strong impression on the audience, Carlson further explains, this is bound to influence the process of reception in the current production.¹⁵ By extension,

The conscious recycling of a wide variety of elements from production-to-production forces repeating audiences (and the majority of audiences for such groups are repeating audiences) to recognize each new staging not only as one in a continuing series of works with important internal connections but also as works consciously constructed, with that constructedness foregrounded by the repeated elements.¹⁶

Adding to the director's interplay between the two productions, as the old performative tradition seeps into the new millennium, her intertextual vision also brings similar directing forms together. Her *Hamlet* borrows from the emblematic *Hamlet* by the Wooster Group (2007), in which video was applied to integrate absent performers into the live action. In that production, Scott Shepherd, the actor playing the title role, interacted with Richard Burton's grainy filmed version of the character in the 1964 Broadway production directed by John Gielgud, as projected on a large screen upstage. Throughout the show, the live performers mirrored the movements and speech of the actors in the projections and even the mechanics of sound were such that Shepherd's and Burton's voices

¹⁴ Carlson, *Haunted Stage*, p. 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

appeared to have merged.¹⁷ Indebted to the Wooster Group, in Evangelatos' production, the digital element ushers in the Ghost of King Hamlet on the back wall, with extreme close ups of the Ghost –often a faceless figure or a hand slowly lifting up, as well as the video portrait of Fertis, interacts with Papaspiliopoulos' Hamlet. The recorded voice of the Ghost and the video projection's extreme close-ups accentuate the uncanny correspondence between father and son, indeed between the Father/director (Spyros Evangelatos) and the Daughter/director (Katerina Evangelatos). The interplay between the live action and the digital element once again serves to suggest the circularity of history and the inevitable coming together of the living and the dead, which is at the core of the play.



Figure 4. Vasia Anagnostopoulou. «The Ghost of Hamlet's Father» (2019)
© Katerina Evangelatos

¹⁷ About the nostalgia that arises from the tension of the live and the mediated frames, see Avra Sidiropoulou. «Identity, Technology, Nostalgia: The Theatre of Ivo van Hove, Robert Lepage and The Wooster Group», *ARCHÉE, ARTS MÉDIATIQUES & CYBERCULTURE*, 12 November 2018 <www.archee.qc.ca/wordpress/identity-technology-nostalgia-the-theater-of-ivo-van-hove-robert-lepage-and-the-wooster-group/2018> [2/2/2021].

The final battlefield scene further opens up the space by retrieving the interface between the digital and the live element, tradition and innovation. Just before the end of the play, rather than physically enact the climactic duel scene between Laertes and Hamlet, Evangelatos chooses to project the 1991 video recording of the said scene. The loan from the Wooster Group becomes even more pronounced. Actors, having their backs to the audience, watch the video of the earlier production, mimicking the words of the original actors engaged in the duel sequence. The two realities (live and mediated) compete for our attention: we hear the voices of the live actors, but we can't help focusing our attention on the black and white images in the background. Such spectral experience is part of the deliberate disorientation caused by intermediality. Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink and Sigrid Merx describe intermedial performance as one which «often plays with or even explicitly deconstructs perceptual expectations and produces sensations ranging from subtle experiences of surprise or confusion, to more uncanny experiences of dislocation, displacement or alienation».¹⁸ In the scene in question, «the clash between digitally influenced perceptions and embodied presence manifests itself particularly as a disturbance of the senses and results in a blurring of realities».¹⁹

While imagistically stunning, such reliance on the interceded images momentarily risks stripping the scene off of its immediacy and of the vitality of the present moment. There are moments where Evangelatos' formalism²⁰ works at its best, where sound, set design and the starkness of blocking blend smoothly to create long-lasting images of starkness that give clarity to Hamlet's existential torment, as when, for example, Hamlet explodes manically tearing the ground apart amid the enveloping fog.

¹⁸ Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink – Sigrid Merx, «Presence and Perception: Analysing Intermediality in Performance», Sarah Bay-Cheng – C. Kattenbelt – A. Lavender – R. Nelson (eds), *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2010, p. 219.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ A signature style for the director, as evident in her most notable works, including, among others, Roland Schimmelpfennig's *Idomeneus* (2014), Euripides' *Rhesus* (2015), George Orwell's *1984* (2016), Euripides' *Alceste* (2017) and Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* (2018).

MICHAELA ANTONIOU

CRISIS, KRISIS AND COLLECTIVE LIVE ENCOUNTER:
PERFORMING DURING THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Since 2009, and for a period of about ten years, Greece and the Greek people have been in a state of crisis, a condition commonly understood as a state of panic, which, nevertheless, holds the promise of a better day that will adequately reward the Greek state and population for their efforts and sacrifices. As this better day drifted further and further away, and while people's everyday lives had been fundamentally altered, the Greeks became accustomed to this state of terror and uncertainty. The aim of this article is to map out the way that this "crisis" is reflected on theatre audiences as well as on the stage and to show how theatre productions ultimately illuminate a *krisis* (critical evaluation, judgement) of this crisis. The two productions discussed will illustrate how the Greek paradigm of performing in times of crisis are indicative of two diametrically opposed approaches and positions within Greek theatre. The first is the collective creation *Interview* by the Emeis [We] Collective Cultural Group, which was presented for four successive years (2013-2016) in small venues in Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras and Zurich. It was a piece that directly addressed the social, moral, financial and labour-related issues brought forward by the economic crisis. The second is the production of Aristophanes' *The Birds* by actor and director Nikos Karathanos, who, in the summer of 2016, directed the play at the Theatre of Epidaurus, produced by the Onassis Foundation, a wealthy and powerful organisation.

Theatre – the power of collective live encounter

On 9 February 2010 the Greek Prime Minister, Georgios Papandreou, in a dramatic speech that can be claimed to have set in motion the ongoing period of Greek crisis, announced what would be the first of the many austerity measures that were to follow. By 2017 the Greek parliament had voted on and passed 14 austerity packages, including the three Economic Adjustment Programmes.¹ The resulting impact on the Greek

¹ For example, see *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως* [Official Government Gazette] 40/1 (2010), p. 437-451; *Εφημερίς της*

economic and labour field was enormous, and social, financial and work-related standards were radically altered. It is revealing that the unemployment rate in February 2010, when the first measures were introduced, was 11.4%, climbing to 28% in July 2013 and only dropping to 20.7% by October 2017.² The impact the economic crisis has had on the cultural and creative industries has been immense, as the Panteion University Study in this area exposes. The study covered the years 2008 to 2014, and it revealed that added value dropped by 55.1%, the number of persons employed by 29.5% and the number of enterprises by 27.9%.³

Nevertheless, the cultural and creative industries still comprised an essential pillar of the Greek economy in comparison with other fields.⁴ Moreover, it is important to note that in 2011 attendances at theatre productions and concerts by inactive consumers, namely people who did not participate in cultural activities,⁵ presented a decrease of 5% compared with 2007, before the beginning of the crisis, even though inactive consumers maintained a high rate of up to 49.8%. Furthermore, there was a 3.3% increase in audiences at theatre productions or concerts from one to six times a year and a 1.4% increase in those who attended more than six per annum.⁶

There are three main explanations for this significant growth in theatre attendance. First, the majority of theatres, from powerful organisations such as the National Theatre of Greece and the Onassis Cultural Centre to small venues all over Athens, introduced performances with reduced-price tickets for the unemployed, or ones where all tickets were priced lower, or, even, productions where an individual audience member's contribution was optional, as was the case with the *Interview* production by the Emeis Group. This enabled people whose incomes had been reduced or who were unemployed, had ample time and who had not been able to attend theatre

Κυβερνήσεως [Official Government Gazette] 65/1 (2010), p. 1321-1384; *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως* [Official Government Gazette] 151/1 (2011), p. 3215-3233; *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως* [Official Government Gazette] 31/1 (2012), p. 877-891; *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως* [Official Government Gazette] 152/1 (2015), p. 1889-1900.

² Hellenic Statistical Authority – ELSTAT, «Employment status and unemployment rate (January 2004–October 2017)», 2018, [http://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/-/publication/SJO02/- \[2/2/2018\]](http://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/-/publication/SJO02/- [2/2/2018]).

³ Vasilis Avdikos – Martha Michailidou – Georgios M. Klimis – Aggelos Mimis, *Χαρτογράφηση της Πολιτιστικής – Δημιουργικής Βιομηχανίας στην Ελλάδα*, [Study for the Mapping of the Cultural – Creative Industry in Greece] Ministry of Culture and Sports and Regional Development Institute, Athens 2016, p. 22 [http://ep.culture.gr/el/Documents/ΟΔΗΓΟΙ-ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΙ/ΜΕΛΕΤΕΣ/Χartografisi.Full.1.pdf \[2/2/2018\]](http://ep.culture.gr/el/Documents/ΟΔΗΓΟΙ-ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΙ/ΜΕΛΕΤΕΣ/Χartografisi.Full.1.pdf [2/2/2018]).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵ W.T. Chan – J.H. Goldthorpe, «The Social Stratification of Cultural Consumption: Some Policy Implications of a Research Project», *Cultural Trends* 16/4 (2007), p. 373–384.

⁶ Avdikos – Michailidou – Klimis – Mimis, *Χαρτογράφηση της Πολιτιστικής – Δημιουργικής Βιομηχανίας στην Ελλάδα*, p. 82-84.

performances because of their straitened circumstances to be included in theatrical activities. Second, because of the crisis in the television industry –where the number of persons employed dropped by 53%–⁷ productions of Greek dramas were limited and seasons were shorter. There were plenty of reality shows, but no more than six to ten prime-time shows per year compared with 20 to 30 between 1999 and 2006.⁸ Thus people who enjoyed watching dramas with strong storylines were not being satisfied by television and had to seek entertainment in other artistic fields. It is also interesting to note that there was a decrease in cinema attendances of up to 6.1% in 2011 compared with 2007,⁹ and this leads to my last argument.

There is what I will call the need for a *collective live encounter* in times of crisis,¹⁰ which describes the phenomenon of the gathering of the people in the theatre, namely, the need of «every society in crisis to resort to theatre in order to redefine its identity and historical orientation»,¹¹ which I will explain now. It has been observed that during periods of crisis in Greece the theatre has occupied a significant position in the lives of the people of Athens, the capital where the majority of Greek theatre productions are presented. I will take as examples three periods of crisis in recent Greek history to claim that theatre has had a strong impact on everyday life: the Italian and German Occupation (1941-4), the Regime of the Colonels (1967-74) and the economic crisis (since 2009).

First, during the years of the Italian and German Occupation, from January 1941 to November 1944, 167 productions were put on in the capital, which in 1940 had a population of less than 481,000. The number of productions in comparison with the population is enormous, and it maintains a greater importance if one considers the dangers that Athenians faced from the terror of imprisonment, torture, execution and starvation, as Athens suffered more than any other Greek city.¹² However, people gathered at the theatre to fulfil a need to communicate socially, politically, artisti-

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸ See, Antenna, 2018, <https://www.antenna.gr/> [15/3/2018]; Mega, 2018, <http://www.megatv.com/default.asp> [15/3/2018]; Skai, 2018 <http://www.skai.gr/> [15/2/2018]; Star, 2018 <http://www.star.gr/> [15/2/2018].

⁹ Avdikos – Michailidou – Klimis– Mimis, *Χαρτογράφηση της Πολιτιστικής – Δημιουργικής Βιομηχανίας στην Ελλάδα*, p. 83.

¹⁰ An encounter that was fundamentally challenged during the COVID-19 pandemic, which, nonetheless, functioned under similar parameters, though a specific research will reveal the differentiating denominators.

¹¹ Giorgos P. Pefanis, «Το θέατρο και η κατοχική Αθήνα» [Theatre and Occupied Athens], *Τοπία της δραματικής γραφής* [Landscapes of Dramatic Writing], Kostas and Eleni Ourani Foundation, Athens 2003, p. 497. All translations in this article are by the author unless otherwise indicated.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 495-496.

cally and emotionally despite the difficult conditions under which they were living. The force of the collective encounter that joined people together allowed audiences to detect even in the most apolitical plays –which underwent a triple censorship imposed by the Italians, the Germans and, unfortunately, the Greeks themselves– an opposition to the occupying forces as well as the hope for better days ahead.¹³

Similarly, during the seven years of the Junta, theatre, one of the few forms of public gathering permitted by the regime, became a platform from which a form of resistance was encouraged in a covert manner.¹⁴ The mere attendance at a production that addressed everyday life's problems was acknowledged by the audience as a form of political action.¹⁵ Thus a number of small and unknown theatre groups produced original Greek plays written during that period, or famous plays with political innuendoes, including the production of *Our Grand Circus* by Iakovos Kampanelis, a play that established a communication with a wider public, causing turmoil and granting to theatre a focus around which unite against oppression.¹⁶

Since 2009, circumstances have been profoundly different. There existed neither an actual occupation of the land by foreign forces nor the imposition of a tyrannical regime. However, the inability to react to the economic-austerity measures and the pressure that the European Union, the IMF, the markets and the banks imposed upon the Greek state and subsequently on the Greek people had all the appearances of a nation under attack. The bubble of affluence and prosperity in which the Greeks had lived in recent years exploded, and people felt betrayed, deceived, disorientated and powerless to do anything about it. This is not the time or the place to analyse the particulars that led to the economic crisis. The focus is placed on the aftermath of the crisis that deeply affected the people and social structures. As a result of this turmoil, people turned to theatre to find consolation in an artistic expression that can provide entertainment and recreation and thus a diversion from the harsh realities of everyday life, but also represents a congregation of people who are coming together in order to see an artistic version and a critical evaluation and critique (*krisis*) –I will return to this in due course– of the events that influence their lives.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 499-500.

¹⁴ See on this topic, Michaela Antoniou, «Metaphoric theatricality, theatricality as a weapon for resistance», Andrew Quick – Richard Rushton (eds), *Theatricality and the Arts: Film, Art, Theatre*, Edinburgh University Press (forthcoming).

¹⁵ Platon Mavromoustakos, *Το ελληνικό θέατρο 1940-2000. Μια επισκόπηση* [The Greek Theatre 1940-2000. An Overview], Kastaniotis, Athens 2006, p. 138.

¹⁶ Cf. Pefanis, «Το θέατρο και η κατοχική Αθήνα», *passim*; Antoniou, «Metaphoric theatricality», *passim*.

Some data have already been provided above about the increase in theatre attendances. It is also worth noting that in Athens there were 1,050 productions in 2013, 1,447 in 2014, 1,542 in 2015 and in 2016 the number of shows exceeded 1,700.¹⁷ The increase in the number of productions along with the growth in attendance highlights the fact that in a time when unemployment increased, salaries were heavily slashed, the centre of Athens was a deplorable sight with numerous vacant shops in the main commercial boulevards and a large number of homeless people sleeping in the streets, audiences attended the theatre in greater numbers than before. Even though the parameters have changed—for instance, there is no censorship nor is there an occupying regime or a dictatorship—the severe economic measures that completely altered the Greek way of life have forced people to seek a collective communion.

In order to explain this collective live encounter, we must refer to the social function of the theatre. As Jean Duvignaud explains, the audience enters a theatre to watch a story, an artistic simulation of life.¹⁸ Even though much could be argued about the phrase ‘simulation of life’ in relation to contemporary performances, I believe that the artistic aspect offers audiences a multiplicity of signs with which they can identify and through which they finally manage to enter a condition that relates to the Aristotelian concept of catharsis.¹⁹ This catharsis occurs within a venue, where people subsume their individualities into a common, collective one, establishing the fact that people are not isolated and that similar problems torment their fellow women and men. It is a catharsis that can have numerous manifestations: it can refer to the entertainment element of theatre, through which people feel empowered and emboldened to hope and to carry on; it can be achieved through directly addressing the social and political problems that concern the audience, making them think and seek solutions; it can be a satire that elicits laughter and makes light of the problems of everyday life, so diminishing them and making them easier to cope with; or it can be a metaphor with which audiences can associate and thus be encouraged to reflect and to connect with one another.

This live encounter presupposes a common cultural background and the destabilisation of pre-existing conditions, which together force people to search for a com-

¹⁷ Eirini Moundraki, «Greece on Stage», *Critical Stages*. 16 (December 2017) <https://www.critical-stages.org/16/greece-on-stage/> [26/7/2022]; Avdikos – Michailidou – Klimis – Mimis, *Study for the Mapping of the Cultural – Creative Industry in Greece*, p. 16.

¹⁸ Jean Duvignaud, *Sociologie du théâtre. Sociologie des ombres collectives*, Quadrige/Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1999, p. 16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

mon explanation. It allows the formation of a congregation in order to contemplate shared problems, exchange ideas and/or experience relief. This encounter, however, fundamentally differs from sporting events and/or public assembly in coffee shops (καφενεία), bars, clubs and so on, which, without question, can also satisfy many of the aforementioned parameters. It is an encounter that has as its main characteristic artistic form and content, and it ultimately unites audiences with theatre practitioners, the creative individuals who are also experiencing the same problems.

During this last period of crisis, plays or productions did not need to directly address issues pertaining to the crisis *per se*, because even if a work of art does not mention or refer to specific incidents relating to the current crisis it is still a work of art conceived, developed and presented during this specific period and *for* this specific period. Therefore, time and space acquire the Bakhtinian perspective of the chronotope, which «expresses the inseparability of space and time». And even though Bakhtin discussed the literary artistic chronotope, similar conditions can be detected on the stage as a palpable example of reflecting chronotopic relations, since «spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole», that is the stage, and «[t]ime, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history».²⁰ Thus theatrical productions become a mirror of the spatial and temporal conditions within which they are presented. Peter Hitchcock also commented and introduced the dialectic between the chronotope and the parameter of social crisis in particular. He discussed how this relationship is reflected upon a literary work and claimed that «the space of time says that all crisis is ... a question for how space and time are conceptualized, articulated, or narrated, but it is also a distillation of such processes which literature dares to imagine as the expressive content of socialization as such».²¹ Similarly, the stage concentrates and distils aspirations, tensions and conflicts that concern the social conglomeration and enforces the live collective encounter, producing works that discuss the crisis, even if that is not automatically perceived.

In short, it is evident that audiences are brought together through the theatre into a collective life. To follow Duvignaud's paradigm once more, what is true of the

²⁰ Mikhail Bakhtin, «Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel», Michael Holquist (ed.), *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin* (tr. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist), University of Texas Press, Austin 1981, p. 84-85.

²¹ Peter Hitchcock, «The Space of Time: Chronotopes and Crisis», *Primerjalna književnost* 2/36 (2013), p. 69 <https://www.dlib.si/stream/URN:NBN:SI:DOC-DNZL3G0E/da2fca38-0161-4e84-b062-74e7b5cf8c50/PDF> [20/2/2018].

proletariat in Industrial Revolutionary France, for whom theatre was the sole path for social inclusion,²² can also apply to the starving Athenian of the 1940s, the muted audience of the Junta or the unemployed worker of today who strives to maintain a connection with social norms, to find a voice and to hope. In such times theatre exposes «its social function, becoming an inclusive community where suffering is a form of resistance to real action».²³ This resistance has a twofold significance: on the one hand, it is a real, tangible action that shows audiences' determination to participate in a social activity such as the theatre; and, on the other, it reinforces imaginative power and allows people to hope for change, to dream, to connect with what is happening, and so to liberate themselves.

A comprehensive study that would delineate the particularities of each period, the function of the repertoire and the different positions of each theatre company within the Greek theatre field, although not yet undertaken, would be a valuable exercise, as it would describe and define the concept of the collective live encounter. Moreover, a comparative study that would illustrate the conditions of theatre productions and attendance in other countries during periods of crisis would offer an instrument for further research.

The focus here will now be on the current economic crisis and the performances of *Interview* and of *The Birds* in order to illustrate the conditions for performing during this period of Greek crisis and investigate the particularities encountered, revealing the ways with which both productions provided a *krisis* of a state in crisis.

***Interview* – a collective creation by the Emeis Collective Cultural Group**

The Emeis Collective Cultural Group was founded in 2009, a few months before Georgios Papandreou's speech at the Greek parliament on 9 February 2010. The company's name signifies its aim to promote the ideas of solidarity and cooperation²⁴—«emeis» meaning «we»—and places at its core the notion of bringing people together in a common «I» that is multiplied and becomes a «we», encouraging social inclusion and access to the arts. The Group's goals include the exchange of

²² Jean Duvignaud, *L'acteur. Esquisse d'une sociologie du comédien*, Gallimard, NRF/Bibliothèque des idées, Paris 1965, p. 245./

²³ Duvignaud, *Sociologie du théâtre*, p. 21.

²⁴ Liminal, «*Interview* at Liminal», 2018 <http://liminal.eu/interview-by-the-theatre-group-emeis/?lang=en> [14/1/2018].

ideas, the development of actions, workshops, art exhibitions and organising festivals.²⁵ In a period of crisis this group of artists came together to provide for the people –particularly the young and the unemployed– and to give them full access to their work. This will be made clearer when the synthesis of their company/group is examined, the theme of their most successful production, *Interview*, presented and analysed, and their ticket policy, as well as their choice of venues and prison performances, evaluated.

The collective creation *Interview* –a socio-political black comedy as their creators describes it–²⁶ was inspired by an idea from the founding members of the company: director and actor Christos Thanos and actor Sofia Kapsambeli. It was developed during rehearsals by Thanos and Kapsambeli along with the other actors and the Group's regular collaborators: Maria Zervou, Sotiris Douvris, Vasilis Tourkomenis and Christos Papamichael. The director explains that «the members of the Group co-created the play, did the public relations, painted boxes, built the sets, wrote advertising copy, put up posters and acted».²⁷ They all supported the ideas of solidarity and cooperation, are actors who mainly work in the theatre rather than television or the cinema and are not known to the mass audience. However, especially after their participation in *Interview*, they are now acknowledged «by the set of producers who produce for other producers, their competitors, i.e. by the autonomous self-sufficient world of 'art for art's sake', meaning art for artists».²⁸ And while this is the case and the members of the Group do enjoy recognition from their fellow actors, they also managed to create a performance that was seen by a large number of people. As Pierre Bourdieu explains, the theatre, «which directly experiences the immediate sanction of the bourgeois public, with its values and conformisms, can earn the institutionalized consecration of academies and official honours as well as money».²⁹ Bourdieu links the immediate sanction of a production –and, I would add, its participants– with the bourgeois public, which, within Bourdieu's concept, equals high attendance and economic success. However, the Group, as previously mentioned, did not target the bourgeois public, while not excluding it, and economic success was not a prerequisite for this particular produc-

²⁵ Emeis – Collective Cultural Group, 2018 <http://emeis.net.gr/> and <http://emeis.net.gr/interview/> [2/3/2018].

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Christos Thanos, *Interview to Michaela Antoniou*, 18 January 2018.

²⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production. Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. Randal Johnson, Polity, Cambridge 1993, p. 50–51.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

tion or for its actors, as the Group implemented a policy of optional contribution by its audiences, a policy that was triggered by the belief that everyone should have access to art.³⁰ They aimed at those who were unable to pay for, and were therefore excluded from, productions with entry fees. They produced a successful production that did not measure its success through economic compensation, and thus its artistic, social and political intent was fortified and their work consecrated.³¹

The play that the Group created collectively directly tackles issues concerning contemporary social and political problems.³² It is set in a waiting room where four candidates –representatives of four different social and labour groups (a manual worker, an unskilled worker, an artist and a scientist), which were first and foremost affected by the economic crisis– go through an interview for an unspecified job that they all desperately need. On the stage the candidates are exposed to the cruel voice of their potential employer, a character the audience never actually sees. The employer's voice comes from a loudspeaker and guides the candidates through various extreme, humiliating and/or inappropriate tasks. Each candidate has a sticker attached to her/his chest (*Interview* trailer – video 1), and the audience wears similar stickers, making it clear that they are all potential candidates for this insane interview.

The basic concept of the play focuses on the exploration of the polar opposites of power/control and subordination, the socio-political system and citizenship, capital and consumers, employers and employees, which are visually and audibly presented and perceived through the conflict of the voice of the employer with the candidates, who are unnamed and are addressed only by the numbers they have stuck to their clothes. As the company explains: «In a time when the two opposing poles are steadily and rapidly drifting apart, WE [Emeis] present their tragicomic relationship, exploring its boundaries, aiming to de-demonise them through laughter and ridicule, dispelling darkness and despair».³³ The success of this production lies particularly in the power of the script and the acting to elicit laughter despite the profoundly serious and depressing situation represented on the stage. Thus, it aims at a catharsis, which, while it directly addresses social and political issues, it also raises laughter and so assuages the effects of the des-

³⁰ Thanos, *Interview to Michaela Antoniou*.

³¹ It would be interesting to find and compare similar examples for the Italian and German Occupation, the Junta or other productions in other countries.

³² The play was also presented by the Social Collective Association (Koin.S.Ep.) «things and wonders» in Kalamata and by the Greek Cultural Center in New York, Thanos, *Interview to Michaela Antoniou*.

³³ Emeis – Collective Cultural Group, <http://emeis.net.gr/interview>.

perate problems of unemployment and economic recession, turning desperation to hope, creating the will to carry on and to act.

The production was a success, as testified by the fact that it ran for almost four years between 2013 and 2016 and that it was honoured, in March 2014, by the Unesco Club of Piraeus and Islands. It was performed in theatres in Athens, Thessaloniki and Patras and was presented at the Women's Detention Facility and the Therapeutic Centre for Drug-Addict Prisoners in Eleonas/Thibes. The play was also part of the First Greek Theatre Festival of Switzerland in Zurich. The last performance by the Group, in collaboration with the Liminal Cultural Organisation, provided audio descriptions for the blind and visually impaired, Greek Sign Language Interpretation, Greek SDH subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing as well as English subtitles, extending their intention of inclusivity to people with hearing and visibility impairments.³⁴ The Group gave approximately 230 performances of *Interview*, all of which were fully accessible to the public, as there was no ticket fee, and members of the audience were asked to contribute what they could at the end of the performance. Moreover, the performances at the prisons in Eleonas, which were both accompanied by workshops with the inmates,³⁵ highlighted the Group's aim to create an artistic work in which everyone is included.

***The Birds* – a production by the Onassis Cultural Centre**

Aristophanes' *The Birds*, directed by Nikos Karathanos and produced by the Onassis Cultural Centre, premiered in August 2016 at the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus.

³⁴ The production premiered on 10 May 2013 at the Fabrica Athens theatre in Kerameikos. On the 2 June 2013 –the last day of their scheduled performance– due to its success, the company decided to present it the following year. They performed from 2 November 2013 until 25 May 2014 at the Anadisi Theatre in Kerameikos, and, as a result of the enormous audience attendance, they decided once more to continue their performances for the following theatrical winter season. In March 2014 the Group participated with *Interview* at the First Antifascist Festival of Performing Arts. From 17 October 2014 they performed at the new Blackbox stage at the Theatro Victoria. On 5 April 2015, they gave their 175th, and last, performance at the Blackbox. On 20 October 2014 they gave four performances at the Aristoteleion Theatre in Thessaloniki. On 20 January 2015 they performed at the Women's Detention Facility in Eleonas/Thibes and on 17 April of the same year at the Therapeutic Centre for Drug-Addict Prisoners in Eleonas/Thibes. On 24 April 2015 they participated at the First Greek Theatre Festival of Switzerland in Zurich. On 17 September 2015 *Interview* was presented at the Evripideio open-air theatre in Halandri as part of Our Festival, the First Meeting of Sovereign Artists, a festival organised by the Emeis Cultural Group. From 24 to 27 September 2015 it was performed at the Epikentro Plus Theatre in Patras. On 4 December 2015 they returned to the Fabrica Athens for the rest of the season. From 13 to 15 May 2016 they went back to Patras and, on 4 May 2017, they performed, in collaboration with Liminal, at the Maria and Anna Kalouta Theatre in Neos Kosmos. The play has been presented by two more theatre companies in New York and Kalamata (Emeis 2018).

³⁵ Emeis – Collective Cultural Group, <http://emeis.net.gr/interview>.

This Aristophanic comedy has been unequivocally linked to Koun's 1959 landmark production, which enjoys a prominent position in contemporary Greek theatre/performance history and has been associated with a form of innovation regarding the mounting of ancient Greek comedy on the Greek stage.³⁶ The Centre, a foundation with an abundance of funds and the prestige of an internationally recognised organisation, chose this particular play as its first production at the Epidaurus Festival, an established institution within the Greek theatre field. The triptych of the Centre, the Festival and the play guaranteed the production a prominent position in the cultural events of the summer of 2016.³⁷

The Birds was also Karathanos's first attempt to direct an ancient play. Karathanos, who had up to this time exclusively collaborated as a director with the National Theatre of Greece, the Centre and the Festival of Athens, had created successful productions such as *Golfo*, the National's 2013 production that premiered on the Rex Stage –and was also performed at the Epidaurus theatre in August 2013– and ran for two seasons in the state theatre's repertoire.³⁸ A talented director who experiments and gives alternative readings of the plays he directs, he is acknowledged in the theatre field as well as by the public. For his productions Karathanos employs gifted, high-profile cast members who are known to the mass audience through their cinema and television work. These include the actors Alexandra Aidini, Aliki Alexandraki, Fotini Baxevasi, Christos Loulis and Aris Servetakis, the performer and visual artist Aggelos Papadimitriou, the Paralympic champion Yannis Sevdikalis and the well-known singer Natasha Bofiliou.

In his inspired approach to the ancient comedy, he wanted to present a «production for our times» and aimed to construct a performance that would have «nothing to do» with «the state or the current politics because, after six years 'in

³⁶ A production with which contemporary Greek audiences were familiar through its many reprises in 1960, 1962, 1975, 1997 and 2008. For Koun's production, indicatively see, Gonda van Steen, «From Scandal to Success Story: Aristophanes' *Birds* as Staged by Karolos Koun», Edith Hall – Amanda Wrigley (eds), *Aristophanes in Performance 421 BC to AD 2007*, Legenda, Oxford 2007, p. 155-178.

³⁷ For an analysis of this dynamic and details of articles and reviews concerning the production, see Michaela Antoniou, «Aristophanes' *The Birds* under the auspice of the Onassis Cultural Centre at the Epidaurus Festival, 2016», *New Theatre Quarterly* 39/2 (2018), p. 272-282; Michaela Antoniou, «Ο “άλλος” κόσμος στους *Όρνιθες* του Νίκου Καραθάνου» [The “other” world in Nikos Karathanos's *The Birds*], *Επιστημονική Επετηρίς της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών*, 2022 (forthcoming).

³⁸ Karathanos's directorial credits – the National Theatre of Greece: Witold Gombrowicz's *Operetta* (2017), Giovanni Boccaccio's *The Decameron* (2014), Nikos Peresiadis's *Golfo* (2013), Edmond Rostan's *Cyrano de Bergerac* (2010); at the Onassis Cultural Centre: Aristophanes' *The Birds* (2016) and Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* (2015); and at the Athens Festival: Robert Toma's *Eight Women Accused* (2008) with an all-male cast.

crisis', anything that was related to politicians and the existing state of affairs repelled us». ³⁹ Thus Karathanos avoided all direct references to politics, staging a performance that had at its core existential and humanitarian concerns. An optimistic view of the future was offered, as the Nephelococcygia (Nubicuculia or Cloud Cuckoo Land) that Karathanos created was a place where individuals were free to express their otherness, to be/exist as they want and create a society that had nothing to do with the ills of the past. ⁴⁰ Nevertheless, as will be discussed in the final section of this article, in the end he did present a performance that addressed and evaluated the current situation.

In order to promote Karathanos's performance the Centre carried out a comprehensive marketing campaign that commenced five months before the play premiered and included a large-scale poster campaign in Athens and Epidaurus and interviews with the actors and collaborators across the media. ⁴¹ The production was presented for only seven performances (19 and 20 August at the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus, and 17, 18, 21, 22 and 23 September at the Central Stage of the Onassis Cultural Centre) ⁴² and was seen by approximately 25,000 to 30,000 people, which is, unequivocally, an enormous number for the Greek theatre. ⁴³ Tickets ranged from 45 down to 5 euros, as reduced-price tickets were available for the unemployed and people with disabilities. However, there were limited numbers of cheap tickets for the unemployed and seating was confined to the upper tiers of the Epidaurus theatre and the restricted-visibility balcony seats of the Centre's main stage. ⁴⁴ This can be directly juxtaposed to the Emeis Group's policy of embracing all audience members equally. Thus, even though the Centre was inclusive with regard to people who were unable to pay much for a show, it

³⁹ Nikos Karathanos, *Interview to Michaela Antoniou*, 5 December 2017.

⁴⁰ Antoniou, «Aristophanes' *The Birds*», p. 275-276.

⁴¹ For example, see, Maria Kriou, «*Όρνιθες*: Από τον Κουν στον Καραθάνο» [*The Birds*: From Koun to Karathanos], *Athinorama*, 18 March 2016 http://www.athinorama.gr/theatre/article/ornithes_apo_ton_koun_ston_karathano-2513024.html [20/2/2018]; Vlasios Kostouros, «*Οι Όρνιθες πετάνε για Επίδαυρο*» [*The Birds Fly to Epidaurus*], *nwspr Efimerida ton Sintakton*, 1 July 2016, p. 23; Myrto Loverdou, «*Ο Αριστοφάνης δεν είναι πλάκα*» [*Aristophanes Is Not a Joke*], *nwspr To Vima tis Kiriakis – Culture*, 10 July 2016, p. 4; Yota Sykka, «*Πτήσεις χαράς στην Επίδαυρο*» [*Joy Flights in Epidaurus*], *nwspr Kathimerini tis Kiriakis – Arts*, 24 July 2016, p. 1; Iliana Dimadi, «*Νίκος Καραθάνος. Δεν είναι έργο οι Όρνιθες. Κοσμογονία, πανηγύρι κι αντάμωμα είναι!*» [Nikos Karathanos. *The Birds Is Not a Play. It's Cosmogony, Feast and Gathering!*], *Athinorama* 842, p. 12-17.

⁴² It was also presented in New York in May 2018 and there is a making-off film that was created by Babis Makridis, *Birds (Or How To Be One)*.

⁴³ The calculation is based on the fact that all seven performances were sold out and that the Epidaurus theatre can host about 10,000 to 12,000 people and the Centre's theatre 1,100.

⁴⁴ Onassis Cultural Centre, 2018 <http://www.sgt.gr/> [20/2/2018].

did not give them the same prominent position offered by the Emeis Group. This can be explained by the fact that the Centre is a large organisation with many employees and a financial strategy was required to amortise the money spent on the production and its promotion.

The Centre aimed at, and succeeded in, creating a production that was both commercially and artistically successful. Bourdieu's explanation of the theatre's ability to experience «the immediate sanction of the bourgeois public with its values and conformisms» while at the same time being able to «earn the institutionalized consecration of academies and official honours, as well as money»,⁴⁵ applies to this production. However, the Centre's financial power, which enabled the organisation to spend large amounts of money on marketing and advertising, gave a significant boost to its chances of success and predetermined the triumph of the production. The practice of dominating the cultural field economically and its *autonomy*, as explained and analysed by Bourdieu,⁴⁶ poses serious questions regarding the condition of the cultural field. The sociologist explains this in his article «La marchandisation de la culture»: «The independence [of the field] [...] has been secured with difficulty; the balance of production and cultural circulation with economic necessities is endangered today [...] by the intrusion of commercial logic in all stages of the production and circulation of cultural goods».⁴⁷ Accordingly, the Centre has managed to manipulate the forces of the Greek theatre field by dominating it financially and imposing its own productions during a period when financial issues plagues the majority of theatre companies.

If the above evidence is compared with the Emeis Group's production we can detect substantial differences arising from the different positioning of the two companies and/or productions within the Greek theatre field, as the Centre occupies a dominant and domineering position, while the Emeis Group represents a less powerful, alternative, albeit autonomous, one. In contrast with the Centre, Emeis had limited access to the media to begin with and did not have the financial resources to conduct a similar marketing campaign.⁴⁸ The Group managed to increase its

⁴⁵ Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, p. 51.

⁴⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art* (eds. Werner Hamacher – David E. Wellbery, tr. Susan Emanuel), Susan Emanuel, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1996.

⁴⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, «La marchandisation de la culture», *Inter* 80 (2001), p. (5-9) 5.

⁴⁸ It is significant that few articles exist, see, for example, the director's interview: Poly Krimnioti, «Χρήστος Θάνος. "Η... φωνή της Αργής"» [Christos Thanos. 'The ... Voice of Avgi'], *nwspr Avgi*, 8 February 2015, or the actor's and director's interview: Apostolis Zavitsanos, «Μήπως ήρθε η ώρα να δούμε τους ΕΜΕΙΣ» [Has the Time Come to

audience gradually, relying on its policy, its philosophy and the power of word-of-mouth. So, the production, over the course of its 230-performance, four-year run, was seen by approximately 10,000 to 12,000 people, a considerable number for such an endeavour.⁴⁹ Second, the company comprised less-well-known actors – who, additionally, were responsible for every aspect of the production, including public relations, set construction and so on. Finally, *Interview* was a play directly concerned with the existing socio-political conditions. Because of the nature of the company, and its philosophy, namely, its opposition to commercialism, the fact that it was not being run by accountants and its socio-political concerns, the Group could be a model for the future of free expression and diversity within the Greek theatre field. As Bourdieu clarifies:

The position of the more autonomous cultural producers, who slowly lose control of the means of production, and, most importantly, of diffusion, has never been more threatened, and more delicate, but also never before has it been so rare, useful, and precious. Strangely, the producers the most «pure», the most free, the most «formal», are found today, usually without their knowledge, at the forefront of the battle for the defence of the highest values of humanity. By defending their singularity, they defend the most universal values.⁵⁰

A krisis of a state in crisis

The ancient Greek word *krisis* (κρίσις) has several meanings: first, the notion of separating or distinguishing, and thus the process of choosing; second, the power to decide, to elect and define; third, the ability to judge, put to trial, as well as the outcome of this judgement; forth, to interpret; and, finally, the sudden and acute

Watch EMEIS?'] <https://www.rejoin.gr/synentefxeis/3719-mipos-irthe-i-ora-na-deis-tous-emeis> [2/3/2018]. Their advertising policy relied on the websites of the theatres at which they presented their production, see, for example, Fabrica Athens, 2018 <https://www.fabricaathens.gr/artplace/interview-emeis-fabrica/> [26/7/2022], Liminal, 2018. <https://www.facebook.com/emeisinterview/> [3/5/2020], the company's own website and Facebook pages: <https://www.facebook.com/emeisinterview/> [3/5/2020], *Interview*, 2018 <https://www.facebook.com/emeisinterview/> [3/5/2020].

⁴⁹ Calculating approximately 50 audience members per performance and taking into account that Fabrica Athens Theatre has 49 seats, Anadisi theatre 85 and Blackbox 60.

⁵⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, « La marchandisation de la culture », p. 9.

Interview's socio-political theme directly introduces and confronts the problem of the ways in which individuals are governed by the present social and economic structures. The power that the voice exercises upon the four candidates, ruling and humiliating them, symbolises the control that socio-political and socio-economical forces impose upon people. When, at the production's finale, Candidate 14 is obliged to cut off his finger in order to be considered for the job, the play reveals

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 47.

the cruelty of the existing system. The audience is clearly empowered to consider and to criticise the system's injustice and become conscious of the need to act and to react to what is happening to them. This is how they understand the realities of the politics imposed upon them.

By contrast, *The Birds* follows a different route. The construction of this production's Nephelococcygia (Nubicuculia or Cloud Cuckoo Land) is not linked to existing political conditions, although it aims to lay the foundations of a new world from the outset. Nevertheless, this does not signify that it does not reflect upon its chronotope. This would be impossible, because the specific time and place of the performance involves the audience, all of whom are aware of what has been happening in their own lives. So, it can be assumed that the creation of this new world is a rejection of contemporary reality. The state of complete rejection, however, poses another problem. If *The Birds* is considered to be a production that explores «the work done at the limits of ourselves», namely the need to restructure a society because the existing one has been a failure and leaves people unprotected, then, as Foucault explains, it «must, on the one hand, open up a realm of historical inquiry and, on the other, put itself to the test of reality, of contemporary reality, to grasp the points where change is possible and desirable, and to determine the precise form this change should take».⁵⁶ If this practice is not followed it can lead «to the return of the most dangerous traditions»,⁵⁷ and the perpetuation of a vicious circle. It is true that both prerequisites are not met by Karathanos's production, which is set in an ahistorical environment.

While Karathanos's work may not be political –in the sense that it is not concerned with the state, current politics and politicians– it is not asocial or not concerned with the politics regarding their treatment of citizens. It discusses human beings within a society, their bad habits and their fallibility but also their will to create a new city, a new social structure. It is in contact with cultural changes within society and supports the manifestation of otherness within the contemporary world.⁵⁸ As such, it is concerned with ontological qualities and attitudes and is not dissociated from the current social circumstances, and it con-

⁵⁶ Michel Foucault, «What is Enlightenment?», Paul Rabinow (ed.), *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth. The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954–1984*, Volume One (tr. Robert Hurley et al.), The New Press, New York 1997, p. 316.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ See Antoniou, «Aristophanes' *The Birds*», passim; Antoniou, «Ο “άλλος” κόσμος στους *Ορνιθες* του Νίκου Καραθάνου», passim.

tains the hope of the creation of a new world that will free human beings from oppression and change the way that they live together. It criticises the ontological aspect of people within their society and thus has a close affinity with the historical time in which it has been staged. It offers an alternative perspective, one of «not being governed quite so much», that springs from solidarity, love and respect for fellow humans and their peculiarities, because, as Foucault explains:

The critical ontology of ourselves must be considered not, certainly, as a theory, a doctrine, nor even as a permanent body of knowledge that is accumulating; it must be conceived as an attitude, an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them.⁵⁹

Both productions are examples of the dynamics and the conflicts within the contemporary Greek theatre field, as they occupy opposing positions: the first, Emeis, in an autonomous and marginal position; the second, the Centre, in a dominant and mainstream one. However, they both offered a *krisis* of a state in crisis, that is, a critical perception, understanding and evaluation of the circumstances during the economic and social crisis. These circumstances have gathered people together and increased theatre attendance, and in doing so have allowed audiences to experience what has been described as a collective live encounter. This article touches upon this, relating it to three different periods of contemporary Greek history, and focuses on the years of the current economic crisis. However, a more comprehensive study that will describe and outline the particularities of this encounter during each crisis period of Greek history in the 20th and 21st centuries would be a valuable tool for future research. Moreover, taking into account the recent crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, it would be valuable to explore the concept of a digital collective ‘live’ encounter and the ways theatre can create communication.

⁵⁹ Michel Foucault, «What is Enlightenment?», p. 319.

VARVARA GEORGOPOULOU – ZOE VERVEROPOULOU –
ALIKI ANTONOPOULOU – EVAGELIA SPIROPOULOU

DISCOURSE, AESTHETICS AND IDEOLOGY OF THEATRE
CRITICISM IN LITERARY AND ART JOURNALS (1900-1950):
A RESEARCH PROJECT

«**T**here is something incomplete about a work, written, rehearsed and open to the theatre-going public, until its existence also extends to the reading public», as the British critic Irving Wardle observed,¹ recognizing, essentially, that criticism constitutes a vital component of the theatrical event, in that «it completes the circle of public attention». Within this framework, the critic operates as an expert spectator, who both chronicles and extends the existence of a performance in the public sphere, while providing points of view and criteria for its interpretation and evaluation, investigating the mechanisms and structures through which the performance functions and produces meaning.²

Theatre criticism, however, does not constitute a mere fleeting resonance of the artistic event; neither is its impact limited in time to the duration of its object. Its specific cultural role emerges more complex as time passes: something of the intangible and ephemeral nature of the live spectacle is preserved for the future spectator, whose knowledge of the former living performance is dependent on the descriptions and commentaries of the critic -particularly for the time before audiovisual recordings were possible. Thus, by recreating the details of a performance, together with its aesthetic and social contexts, in the long term criticism offers itself as an act of witness, as irreplaceable evidence for the history of the theatre; that is, it undergoes

¹ Irving Wardle, *Theatre Criticism*, Routledge, London-New York 1994, p. 6.

² George Pefanis, *Σκηνές της θεωρίας. Ανοιχτά πεδία στη θεωρία και την κριτική του θεάτρου* [Σκηνές της θεωρίας. Ανοιχτά πεδία στη θεωρία και την κριτική του θεάτρου], Papazisis, Athens 2007, p. 423-430; Zoe Ververopoulou, «Η ιδιοσυγκρασία της θεατρικής κριτικής: ζεύξεις, τομές, μεταίχμια» [The temperament of theatre criticism: couplings, intersections, transitions], *K 19* (2009), p. 144; Savas Patsalidis, «Περί θεατρικής κριτικής και φαντασμάτων» [On theatre criticism and ghosts], Andreas Dimitriadis et alii (eds), *Συνέχειες και ρήξεις: σκηνική πράξη στο μεταπολεμικό θέατρο. Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου* [Continuities and ruptures: stage action in post-war theatre. Conference Proceedings], Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki 2014, p. 457.

transformation from a consumable journalistic text into an academically valuable archive for the study of theatre and performance, and for their evaluation.³

Following up such thinking, the project «Discourse, Aesthetics and Ideology of Theatre Criticism in Literary and Art Journals (1900-1950)»,⁴ sets out to contribute to research into the history and criticism of modern Greek theatre, assembling for the first time, and making generally available to researchers, a unified corpus of reviews published by the cultural press in the first half of the 20th century.⁵ At the same time, crucial data have been collected on criticism itself, both as a historical praxis and as a hybrid textual type, swaying between theoretical-essayist discourse on art and more easily accessible journalistic writing.⁶ Furthermore, tracing the progress and features of criticism permits the emergence of useful information on the history of the specialised press, and, in general, on the cultural debates of that period.

The time frame of this study covers a half-century of great historical interest (1900-1950), a period which saw significant developments both in modern Greek theatre and in its critical reception.

The first twenty years (1900-1920) saw the first appearance of modernism, as naturalism, realism and symbolism entered the stage⁷ where socio-political drama was dominant,⁸ as well as the institution of the director in stage practice.⁹ The functioning

³ Wardle, *Theatre Criticism*, p. 12; Ververopoulou, «Η ιδιοσυγκρασία της θεατρικής κριτικής: ζεύξεις, τομές μεταίχμια», p. 149; Zoe Ververopoulou, «Η κριτική θεάτρου στον Τύπο» [Theatre criticism in the press], Periklis Politis (ed.), *Ο λόγος της μαζικής επικοινωνίας. Το ελληνικό παράδειγμα* [The discourse of the mass communication. The Greek example], Institute of Modern Greek Studies (Manolis Triantaphyllidis Foundation), Thessaloniki 2008, p. 446.

⁴ This research is co-financed by Greece and the European Union (European Social Fund - ESF) through the Operational Programme «Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning 2014-2020», in the context of the project «Discourse, Aesthetics and Ideology of Theatre Criticism in Literary and Art Journals 1900-1950» (MIS 5048990). It was approved for the second cycle of the action «Support for Researchers with emphasis on New Researchers» (approval number 525/28-01-2020) and is implemented within the institutional framework of the University of the Peloponnese; the academic advisor is associate professor Varvara Georgopoulou (Department of Theatre Studies, University of the Peloponnese); the deputy academic advisor is assistant professor Zoe Ververopoulou (Department of Journalism and Communications, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki); the other members of the research group are PhD candidates Alikí Antonopoulou and Evagelia Spiropoulou.

⁵ While reviews have been used as a source for the study of the theatre in the period in question, this is the first time that a systematic record of critical texts published in cultural journals has been carried out. Furthermore, theatre criticism in the press has been studied for the inter-war period (Varvara Georgopoulou, *Η θεατρική κριτική στην Αθήνα του Μεσοπολέμου* [Theatrical criticism in interwar Athens], vol. A' & B', Aegokeros, Athens 2008 & 2009), but not for the whole period 1900-1950, and not exclusively for cultural journals, which is the specific focus of this research programme.

⁶ Ververopoulou, «Η ιδιοσυγκρασία της θεατρικής κριτικής: ζεύξεις, τομές μεταίχμια», p. 144.

⁷ Walter Puchner, *Κείμενα και Αντικείμενα* [Texts and Objects], Kastaniotis, Athens 1997, p. 311-354.

⁸ Nikiforos Papandreou, *Ο Ίψεν στην Ελλάδα* [Ibsen in Greece], Kedros, Athens 1983, p. 21-33; Walter Puchner, *Φιλολογικά και θεατρολογικά ανάλεκτα* [Literary and theatrical selections], Kastaniotis, Athens 1995, p. 375-391.

⁹ Antonis Glytzouris, *Η ανάδυση και εδραίωση της τέχνης του σκηνοθέτη στο Νεοελληνικό Θέατρο* [The emergence

of the Royal Theatre and the Nea Skini (New Stage), together with the reception of Ibsen's dramaturgy, mark a zenith, which would be cut short by historical events: the Balkan Wars, the First World War and the Asia Minor Catastrophe. Theatre would suffer the consequences, returning to ethnographic issues, while during the second decade of the inter-war period the demand for innovation would lead to creative discussions with tradition as a motif.¹⁰ The foundation of the National Theatre of Greece in 1932 brought about significant change in theatrical practice, change that would sweep through commercial theatre too.¹¹ In the crucial decade 1940-1950, the historical circumstances of war, the Nazi Occupation and the ensuing Civil War would also leave visible marks on the theatrical world, a large part of which was pledged to the service of national aims and ideological confrontation. New forms of political theatre emerged, and the «craftsmen of Dionysus» would serve these passionately.¹²

As for theatre criticism from 1900 to 1950, the inter-war period has been studied systematically, while for the previous twenty years, 1900-1920, and for the immediate post-war, there are no independent studies.¹³ We therefore hope that our current project will contribute significantly to the promotion of research, which, of course, needs to be completed by further studies on the daily press of the time. Taking the above into consideration, the first stage of this project was to locate literary and art journals that had carried a theatre column, for which we made use of the Library of Parliament (Βιβλιοθήκη της Βουλής) and the Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive (ΕΛΙΑ), as well as of two digital collections in the University of Patras' library, «Pleias» and «Kosmopolis».¹⁴ Once the distinction between the terms «journal» and «newspaper» had been established,¹⁵ then 70 journals were assembled and classified

and consolidation of the art of the director in Modern Greek Theatre], Ellinika Grammata, Athens 2001, p. 37-60.

¹⁰ Areti Vasileiou, *Εκσυγχρονισμός ή Παράδοση; Το Θέατρο πρόξας στην Αθήνα του Μεσοπολέμου* [Modernization or Tradition? The Prose Theatre in interwar Athens], Metaichmio, Athens 2005, p. 289-293, 419-426.

¹¹ Georgopoulou, *Η θεατρική κριτική στην Αθήνα του Μεσοπολέμου*, vol. Β', p. 262-287.

¹² Varvara Georgopoulou, «Εθνική και κοινωνική προσφορά των Ελλήνων ηθοποιών 1940-1947» [National and social contribution of Greek actors 1940-1947], Chrysothemis Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou (ed.), *80 χρόνια του Σ.Ε.Η 1917-1997* [Eighty years of the Society of Greek Actors 1917-1997], K. & P. Smpilias, Athens 1999, p. 283-324.

¹³ The doctoral thesis of Evagelia Spiropoulou (a member of this research group) on theatre criticism in Athens from the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century (1800-1922) is a work in progress.

¹⁴ Haralambos L. Karaoglou's study has been particularly useful to our analysis of the journals of that era (Haralambos L. Karaoglou (supervisor) & research group, *Περιοδικά Λόγου και Τέχνης (1901-1940)* [Magazines of Literature and Art (1901-1940)], vol. Α' & Β', University Studio Press, Thessaloniki 1996 & 2002). It should also be noted that our research was carried out both online and in physical libraries, despite the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁵ Some art journals used to carry the indication «newspaper», but their weekly, fortnightly or monthly publication and their specialised content, without coverage of general news, leads to the conclusion that they do not belong to the daily

into three major categories: a) literary journals b) theatre journals c) journals of criticism (as mentioned in their titles or secondary titles). The following table presents the journals alphabetically, with their years of publication.¹⁶

Since there was a great variety of columns on theatre, it was important to define criteria which would make selection clearly consistent with the specific textual identity of theatre reviews. Once it had been decided that the principal criterion was that the text should necessarily include the author's evaluation of the performance,¹⁷ the articles that met this condition were classified on the basis of the following features: a) the publication (journal) b) the issue number c) the reviewer's name d) the name of the column e) the title of the performance (the play) f) the playwright g) the director h) the company i) the theatre (institution-location) and j) the theatrical season and/or dates of performance. In all, 1806 reviews of theatrical performances of 1006 plays by about 500 Greek and foreign playwrights were recorded. Furthermore, 237 different authors of reviews were identified, and were catalogued in accordance with the way they signed their texts (initials, full names and/or pen names).

In the course of our research, pen names were cross-linked to the actual details of quite a few critics,¹⁸ while confirmation was found for the hypothesis that the majority of critics of the era were males. Their specialisations varied. Apart from journalists, there were among them many writers and literary critics, such as Giorgos Theotokas, Timos Moraitinis, Angelos Terzakis, Petros Pikros, Grigorios Xenopoulos, and others; the same applies to the small number of female critics, such as Eleni Ourani, Galateia Kazantzaki, Evgenia Zografou, and others. In fact, Greek intellectuals appear to be highly involved and strongly interested in matters of theatre criticism. In the inter-war period, theatre productions are also reviewed by

press. This may have to do with the French word «journal» (=newspaper), which came to be used of specialised journals (cf. Anna Tabaki «“Εφημερίς” ή “περιοδικό”; Προς μια τυπολογία του περιοδικού τύπου εν τη γενέσει» [Newspaper or magazine? Towards a typology of the periodical press in the making], Loukia Droulia (ed.), *Ο ελληνικός τύπος 1784 έως σήμερα. Ιστορικές και θεωρητικές προσεγγίσεις. Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου* [The Greek press from 1784 to the present day. Historical and theoretical approaches. Conference Proceedings], Athens 2005, p. 92-99).

¹⁶ *Néa Estia* (Nea Estia) is not included in our study as the critical writings of Alkis Thrylos (Eleni Ourani) have already been collected in twelve volumes, from 1927 to 1971, the year of Ourani's death.

¹⁷ Evaluation is considered to be the main communicative purpose of a critical text, and it is this that differentiates a critique from other articles on theatre that appear in the press. (cf. Richard H. Palmer, *The Critics' Canon: Standards of Theatrical Reviewing in America*, Greenwood Press, Westport Conn. 1988, p. 8' Ververopoulou, «Η ιδιοσυγκρασία της θεατρικής κριτικής: ζεύξεις, τομές μεταίχμια», p. 145-146.

¹⁸ Kyriakos Delopoulos, *Νεοελληνικά Φιλολογικά Ψευδώνυμα 1800-1981* [Modern Greek Literary Pseudonyms 1800-1981], ELIA, Athens 1983 and *Νεοελληνικά Φιλολογικά Ψευδώνυμα* [Modern Greek Literary Pseudonyms] (New Complete Edition), Estia, Athens 2005.

theatre professionals (actors and directors), such as Panos Kalogerikos, Vasilis Rotas, Takis Mouzenidis, Sokratis Karantinos.

All the material was scanned and digitalised, and then, following the developments in the field of Digital Humanities, up-to-date technological tools were utilized, to create a searchable open-access database, under the name «Sibylla». This is housed in the website of the Department of Theatre Studies, University of the Peloponnese (<http://sibylla.uop.gr/index.html>). All the reviews are available as full-text pdf files, while the user can search on the basis of five different criteria: a) Publication (journal) b) Critic c) Playwright d) Play (performance) e) Theatre company. Information about each review is also available (date, issue number, the name of the column, and the page numbers as printed), as well as basic information about the journals, such as the years of circulation and the publisher/director. In fact, this collection constitutes a new, fully updated and functionally organized archive,¹⁹ providing primary source documentation on the theatre and criticism in the first half of the twentieth century.

On the basis of an extensive, Greek and international, bibliography on theatre and criticism, which was assembled, then deployed to meet the project's need for theoretical and methodological support, the research group proceeded with a systematic examination of the material, making a preliminary series of observations concerning the following points:

- Two great figures with significant contributions to the new field of theatre criticism dominate the period 1900-1920: Grigorios Xenopoulos and Kostis Palamas, who opened the way for the systematisation of that institution as well as for its development in depth and breadth. However, compared to literary criticism and until the inter-war years, theatre criticism would still seem to be in a secondary position, being subject to those same rules of subjection and dependency that defined the relationship between literature and theatre. The situation changed between the wars: theatre criticism gained independence, exploring its own limits of power and creativity. We observe a leap forward, in comparison with the previous twenty years, a sudden culmination which allows us, borrowing Panagiotis Moullas' comment on literary criticism in this period, to speak of «euphoria in critical discourse»²⁰ or, in other words, of the consolidation of

¹⁹ Research resources are a matter of particular concern in modern Theatre Studies (cf. Alexia Altouva, *Πηγές της έρευνας στη σύγχρονη ελληνική θεατρολογία. Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου* [Sources of research in contemporary Greek theatre studies. Conference Proceedings], National and Kapodistrian University of Athens 2021).

²⁰ Panagiotis Moullas, *Η μεσοπολεμική πεζογραφία* [The inter-war prose literature], vol. A', Sokoli, Athens 1993, p.141.

theatre criticism. Better conditions for the daily and the periodical press, as well as a wider and more solid knowledge about modern theatre, reinforced by the contact of the critics with European trends, are some of the reasons for this dramatic upturn. Then, during the nineteen-forties, historical circumstances (the Greek-Italian War, the German occupation, the Civil War) have a definitive effect in the critical landscape, where first place is now taken by ideological (and often very confrontational) schemes and filters, with a direct impact on the critic's value judgments.

- Various critical texts types were found, including versions that broaden the traditional definition of a theatre review; some gave just a brief descriptive account of the theatrical event (notices or basic reviews) displaying informational and journalistic aims, rather than evaluative; others, however, are more analytic and more thorough, taking an investigative stance, with argumentation that justifies the critical assertion (criticism, critiques).²¹ In certain journals (*Panathinaia*, *Noumas*) the writing is of a clearly superior kind, at times of the nature of an essay, reflecting the identity of the writer, who is often a prominent public figure. Some other varieties of writing are appropriate for more popular or «light» columns. Others take up a single subject: they concern and critique either the whole repertoire of a company, or an institution, such as the National Theatre; some deal only with the play or just the cast of actors; printed articles have also been found that treat of a specific actor and her/his performances (a kind of profile feature article). Those that sum up the theatrical activity of a certain period are generally positive and tend towards journalistic reporting, rather than opinion writing and reviewing. The texts are of between 400 and 800 words, rarely longer.

- The critical approach is for the most part centered on the dramatic text; a detailed plot summary seems to be a strict requirement, remaining sometimes the exclusive object of the critic's interest. The reviewers sanctify the text above all else, as they have neither instruction in theatre arts nor clear criteria for studying a performance, particularly in the first two decades of the century. Theatre is understood simply as a dramatized form of literature, and the critiques tend mostly to literary-linguistic comments. Such attitudes have certainly to do with the fact that some critics are also literary authors.

- In many cases, nothing at all is said about the direction of the play, choice related to the delay in recognising the vital work of the director in theatre. However, relevant comments occur more and more frequently in reviews during the inter-war

²¹ This distinction has already been fully recorded in the literature, but with reference to modern times. (cf. Palmer, *The Critics' Canon: Standards of Theatrical Reviewing in America*, p. 1; Ververopoulou, «Η κριτική θεάτρου στον Τύπο», p. 448).

years and after, echoing important developments in the role of the director, which led to a wider appreciation of his contribution to the final artistic result.

- The art of the stage is identified with the work of the actors and as a result the evaluation of their performances -mainly of the protagonists'- is the critics' principal concern; rather often, it is the only element of performance that they deal with. It is worth noting that, at least during the first decade of our period, there is talk of «recitation», not of acting or the interpretation of the role. The actors' vocal abilities and body language receive comment, while the most valued skills are: believability in terms of characterization (meaning the shared characteristics of the actor and the role), passion, liveliness, inspiration and fluency of expression, as well as the artiste's emotional impact on the audience.

- Criticism, like theatrical production, is influenced and even determined by the national, political and ideological issues of its time. Conservative or more progressive critics are variously welcomed by different journals, that correspond to their respective personal positions.

- During the first two decades of the century, there would seem to be no specialised, professional theatre critics, as most of them combine various qualities and careers. After 1920, the institutional role of criticism is reinforced, as is its existence as a profession.²² There are more and more regular columns, by well-known and professional reviewers, who closely follow the life of the theatre and its innovations, as well as the various movements in European drama.²³ Criteria for judging performance become gradually clearer, while being updated and improved.

- There seems to exist a theatrical «network», within which exact roles can be interchanged. Playwrights such as Dimitris Bogris, Alekos Lidorikis or Grigorios Xenopoulos, translators such as Vasilis Rotas, but also actors or directors such as Panos Kalogerikos or Pelos Katselis, used to review theatre performances; this evidences interconnection and interaction, while it has to do not only with the quality standards adopted by certain critics, but also with the emphasis they place on particular aspects of theatre. For instance, Sokratis Karantinos, the principal theatre critic for *Neoellinika Grammata* (Νεοελληνικά Γράμματα), dedicates significant space to

²² The Union of Greek Critics for Drama and Music (Ενωση Ελλήνων Θεατρικών και Μουσικών Κριτικών) was founded on 16 November 1927. It was the brainchild of Professor A. Andreadis, an economist and theatre critic for the newspaper *Estia* (Εστία). The founding document of the Union refers to the aims of «systematising criticism in Greece and protecting the intellectual and material rights of the members» (Ενωση Ελλήνων Θεατρικών και Μουσικών Κριτικών. 50 Χρόνια [Union of Greek Critics for Drama and Music. 50 Years], Difros, Athens 1981, p. 4).

²³ Charles W Meister, *Dramatic Criticism: A History*, McFarland, Jefferson NC 1985, p.142-157.

the creative interpretation of the director, to scenography (sets, lighting, costume), to the style and the homogeneity of the performance.

- The language question and its ideological dimensions are intensely reflected in theatre criticism. Disputes on the matter reached a peak when questions arose of whether to translate ancient Greek tragedies into puristic «Katharevousa» or into Demotic Greek.

- Translation (including that from foreign languages) generally constitutes an aspect of the performance upon which critics commented most meticulously.

- Ancient Greek drama seems to be one of the most controversial issues in theatre debates; considered to convey the core meaning of Hellenism (which had to remain «untouchable»), it was hard for critics to accept or approve any directorial innovations.

- Critics show often moralistic and didactic intentions, judging openly the «ethics» of the play or the performance.

- Negative reviews are by no means rare and their language can be particularly sharp. There is often strict advice to the artists (the playwright, the actors) as to how they should be doing their jobs.

- The distinction between serious and light theatre (such as revues) systematically informs critical thought.

- France and Germany are the countries with the greatest influence on the life of Greek theatre. References to the views of famous foreign critics are not rare, while reviews for foreign theatre shows are regularly published in the Greek literary and art journals.

- According to the critics' opinion, the main challenges for theatre artists during the first half of the 20th century were a) the avoidance of slavish imitation of foreign esthetic models b) the production of high-quality Greek plays c) the general need for the country's theatre to find its own creative identity.

- Interesting meta-critical texts can be identified, in which the writers seek to express their concerns and their own ideas for the mission and principles of theatre criticism.

In conclusion, the study of theatre criticism between 1900-1950 not only promotes our knowledge on the theatre of the era, but also provides a broad view of the events, influences and transformations which have shaped Greek theatre, its current state and evolution. The plentiful research material unfolds an inexhaustible, scientifically valuable information potential, which on the one hand confirms the importance and the necessity of critical discourse on theatre, and on the other, thanks to the easily accessible digital resource «Sibylla», is freely offered for the support of further inquiries and

interpretations. For, as Brecht explained,²⁴ «What they say about my plays doesn't matter, my plays will survive the critics, but what they say about my productions matters very much, because what they write is all that posterity will know of the subject».

Literary and Art Journals (1900-1950)						
Αθήναι (1934-1935)	Εικονογραφημένη, Η (1904-1936)	Ερωτόκριτος (1924-1925)	Καλλιτεχνική Ηχώ (1945)	Νέα Επιθεώρηση (1928-1934)	Νέον Πνεύμα (1944-1945)	Ποντιακό Θέατρο (1950)
Ακαδημαϊκή Βιβλιοθήκη (1926-1929)	Ελεύθερα Γράμματα (1945- 1951)	Θεατής, Ο (1925-1945)	Καλλιτεχνικός Κόσμος (1943-1944)	Νέα Εποχή, Η (1935- 1936)	Νουμάς, Ο (1903-1931)	Πρωτοπορία (1929-1931)
Ακρίτας (1904-1906)	Ελεύθερη Τέχνη (1945)	Θεατρικά Χρονικά (1930-1931)	Κόσμος Σμύρνης (1921)	Νέα Ζωή (1904-1927)	Νυκτερίς (1901-1902)	Πρωτοπόροι (1930-1932)
Ανθρωπότης (1919-1921)	Ελληνικά Γράμματα (1927- 1930)	Θεατρική Τέχνη (1935- 1936)	Κριτική (1903)	Νέα Ζωή (1945)	Ξεκίνημα, Το (1933- 1934)	Ρυθμός (1932-1934)
Απόλλων (1919-1934)	Ελληνική Δημιουργία (1948-1954)	Θέατρο (1938)	Κριτική και Τέχνη (1924- 1926)	Νέα Τέχνη (1902)	Ορίζοντες (1944, 1970- 1971)	Σήμερα (1933-1934)
Αρτίστας, Ο (1946)	Ελληνική Επιθεώρησης (1907-1940)	Θέατρο, Το (1944-1945, 1952)	Κύκλος (1931-1937)	Νέα Τέχνη (1924-1927)	Παναθήναια (1900-1915)	Σινέ Αυλαία (1947)
Αυλαία (1945)	Ελληνική Σκηνή (1904)	Καλλιτέχνης, Ο (1910- 1914)	Λόγος, Ο (1930-1931, 1936)	Νεοελληνικά Γράμματα (1935-1941)	Παρασκήνια, Τα (1924- 1928)	Στούντιο (1933)
Γράμματα (1911-1921)	Ελληνική Τέχνη (1924-1925)	Καλλιτέχνης, Ο (1944- 1946)	Λυτρωμός (1933)	Νεοελληνική Λογοτεχνία (1937-1940)	Παρασκήνια, Τα (1938- 1940)	Τέχνη και Θέατρον (1916)
Δελτίο Κριτικής (1931)	Ελληνικόν Θέατρον, Το (1926-1936)	Καλλιτεχνία (1920-1921)	Μορφές (1936-1954)	Νέοι Ανθρωποι (1930)	Πνευματική Ζωή (1936- 1941)	Φιλική Εταιρεία (1925)
Διανοούμενος (1929-1930)	Ελληνίς (1921- 1940)	Καλλιτεχνικά Νέα (1943- 1944)	Μούσα (1920- 1923)	Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι (1931-1936)	Πνοή (1928- 1930)	Φυλότεχνος (Βόλου) (1926-1927)

²⁴ Cited in Eric Bentley, *Bentley on Brecht* (3rd edition), Northwestern University Press, Evanston-Illinois 2008, p. 415.

BOJAN MUSIL – CLIO FANOURAKI – MICHAELA ANTONIOU –
KARIN BAKRAČEVIČ – SARA TEMENT – SAŠA ZORJAN

SHOULD I PLAY OUT MY BAD EXPERIENCES?
THE CONCEPTION AND EVALUATION
OF THE «ACT IT OUT!» TRAINING COURSE FOR PEOPLE
WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES EXPERIENCING
AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

1. Introduction

In recent years there were significant efforts to shift the attention to mental health, a neglected part of global efforts to improve health in the previous era.¹ From the systemic point of view, the mental health field has a problem concerning the accessibility and quality of the mental health care system and accompanying social services. Still, more concretely, people with mental health issues more often have other physical health problems and face widespread human rights violations, discrimination, and stigma.

The *Lancet* Commission on Global Mental Health and Sustainable Development (*The Lancet Commission on Global Mental Health and Sustainable Development - The Lancet*, n.d.) proposes that the primary goal of psychosocial interventions in the field of mental health is «to facilitate the acquisition of skills to address the risk factors, mediators, or consequences of mental health conditions and to enable social circumstances for the patient's recovery».² Consequently, mental health promotion, prevention, treatment, and recovery are no longer exclusively focused on the work of a limited range of professions such as psychiatrists or psychologists. Interventions are increasingly carried out by other professionals and individuals with mental health issues are encouraged to play a central and active role.

¹ Vikram Patel – Shekhar Saxena – Crick Lund – Graham Thornicroft – Florence Baingana – Paul Bolton – Dan Chisholm – Pamela Y Collins – Janice L Cooper – Julian Eaton – Helen Herrman – Mohammad M Herzallah – Yueqin Huang – Mark J D Jordans – Arthur Kleinman et al., «The *Lancet* Commission on global mental health and sustainable development», *The Lancet* 392/10157 (2018), p. 1553-1598, doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(18)31612-X [15/3/2022].

² *Ibid*, p. 1573.

In the context of this more contextual approach to mental health with a more active role of the target group (i.e., people with mental health issues), the partners from Spain (Fundacion INTRAS), Greece (EDRA and National and Kapodistrian University of Athens), Germany (CJD and CLAMOTTA), Ireland (SMASHING TIMES), and Slovenia (University of Maribor) collaborated in the EU funded project «ACTitude: Improvisation techniques training program for mental health professionals to empower patients with mental health issues to act against emotional and verbal violence».³ The project's goal was to address the recovery, and the central aim was to develop a training course, designed to be used by people experiencing any type of mental health issue and who want to improve their quality of life. The course curriculum empowers individuals with mental issues to recognize when they are being subjected to verbal/relational aggression and react accordingly. Additionally, it provides professionals dealing with mental health issues with a set of activities and tools. More precisely, the training encompasses activities in the area of emotions, emotion regulation, coping strategies, social and problem-solving skills. It uses an innovative approach based on improvisational theatre to confront the target group with situations in which they experience social rejection, verbal abuse and relational aggression and develop skills to deal with them. Through the training course, the participants learn to verbalize their emotions and gain benefit from this in terms of wellbeing. Additionally, the participants gain critical competencies and abilities needed in daily life, such as communication, empathy, self-management, organizational skills, problem-solving, and self-esteem. As the training is carried out in small groups, the participants develop a sense of community, belonging and personal safety.

1.1. The «ACT IT OUT!» training course: Key concepts and structure

The central goal of the «ACT IT OUT!» training course is to empower people with mental health issues in the process of recovery. The training builds on several key concepts such as experiences of victimization, emotion regulation, coping strategies, social and problem-solving skills, and techniques from the improvisational theatre. All forms and techniques of Improv Theatre interact with improvisational techniques in order to encourage autonomous activity, transformative creativity, and the process of changing oneself into a protagonist of his/her own life. Primary goal of these ex-

³ See <https://actitude-project.eu/> [30/6/2023].

ercises is to create an atmosphere within which the participants would feel comfortable and relaxed and, therefore, have the opportunity to express themselves freely. Moreover, guided improvisations were created, where participants followed with their body and imagination an ever-evolving story with changing conditions.⁴ The concept of replacement also played an important role in the planning philosophy of theatrical actions, as attributed by the Forum Theatre of Augusto Boal, with the dynamics offered to the victim by the replacement of the role of the victim played by the actor-performer.⁵

In general, creative and expressive art therapies can address mental health problems across the life-span by providing potentially destigmatized, non-invasive approaches to mental health care. In recent systematic review,⁶ studies evaluating art therapy interventions reported high efficacy of these therapies in emerging adults.

The «ACT IT OUT!» course is a practical user-centered training tool for professional use in the mental health sector. It is based on most common scenarios or situations in which individuals with mental health issues are victims of verbal and relational aggression and other types of violence. On the one hand, it helps the professionals to understand and identify emotions experienced by the subjects with mental health issues in context of these scenarios and, on the other hand, it offers a set of practical tools based on techniques from improvisational theatre that can help the professionals to tackle the aspects of emotional regulation or management for the participants and also to prepare them to act against the situations in which they are subject to aggression or violence.

Addressing the recovery of people with mental health challenges as the ultimate goal of our intervention, we adopted the definition of the *Lancet* Commission on Global Mental Health and Sustainable Development,⁷ where recovery is seen from the perspective of an active (empowered) individual with preferences and priorities, embedded in a social context. Additionally, we followed the CHIME scheme, the conceptual framework for personal recovery in mental health, combining categories of connectedness, hope and optimism about the

⁴ Jacques Lecoq, *The Moving Body (Le Corps Poétique): Teaching Creative Theatre*, Bloomsberry, London 2002.

⁵ Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, Routledge, London 2021.

⁶ Diva Smriti – Siddhant Ambulkar – Qiongyu Meng – Girija Kaimal – Kevin Ramotar – Sun Young Park – Jina Huh-Yoo, «Creative arts therapies for the mental health of emerging adults: A systematic review», *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 77/101861(2022), p. 1-13, doi: 10.1016/j.aip.2021.101861 [30/6/2023]

⁷ Vikram et al., «The *Lancet* Commission on global mental health and sustainable development».

future, identity, meaning in life, and empowerment.⁸ More concretely, *Connectedness* from the CHIME scheme can be fostered by organized activities where the participants engage in social sharing of emotions, traumatic experiences, and experiences related to their mental illness.⁹ Next, *Hope* is related to the exercises aimed at positively thinking about one's life situation and *Identity* with a reflection of the wide range of one's roles and activities to expand their self-perception.¹⁰ In *Meaning in life*, the participants' attention is turned to the meaningful life roles activities. The CHIME scheme ends with *Empowerment*, focusing on personal strengths, responsibility, self-control, and self-management.

Initially highlighted and supported with different studies,¹¹ stigma and stigmatization are central in influencing any recovery-oriented practice. According to previous studies,¹² the stigma as a vital part of someone's self-definition (identity) influences self-esteem and aspirations, self-efficacy and confidence in social interactions. A powerful means of development, enforcement, and maintenance of social stigma in the context of mental illness are episodes of aggression and violence these individuals were/are exposed to.

Individuals with mental health issues are often subject to open demonstrations of social rejection and various forms of aggressive or even violent episodes, such as disrespectful comments, insults, and mockery. These offenses may come from different persons. Verbal aggression, in particular, can be defined as a negative attitude

⁸ Mary Leamy – Victori Bird – Clair. Le Boutillier – Julie Williams – Mike Slade, «Conceptual framework for personal recovery in mental health: Systematic review and narrative synthesis», *The British Journal of Psychiatry: The Journal of Mental Science* 199/6 (2011), p. 445-452, doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.110.083733 [30/6/2023]

⁹ Kate P. Nurser – Imogen Rushworth – Tom Shakespeare – Deirdre Williams, «Personal storytelling in mental health recovery», *Mental Health Review Journal* 23/1 (2018), p. 25-36, doi: 10.1108/MHRJ-08-2017-0034 [30/6/2023]

¹⁰ Karen Bakračević – Saša Zorjan – Sara Tement – Louise Christie – Bojan Musil, «Emotions in our lives: The evaluation of a user-centered training course "living e-Motions" in the context of recovery of people with mental health challenges», *Mental Health Review Journal* 27/2 (2022), p. 137-145, doi: 10.1108/MHRJ-03-2021-0021 [30/6/2023]

¹¹ Bianca Brijnath, «Applying the CHIME recovery framework in two culturally diverse Australian communities: Qualitative results», *The International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 61/7 (2015), p. 660-667, doi: 10.1177/0020764015573084; Jaap van Weeghel – Catherine van Zelst – Dienke Boertien – Ilanit Hasson-Ohayon, «Conceptualizations, assessments, and implications of personal recovery in mental illness: A scoping review of systematic reviews and meta-analyses», *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 42/2 (2019), p. 169-181, doi: 10.1037/prj0000356; Lorna Wood – Sarah Alsawy, «Recovery in psychosis from a service user perspective: A systematic review and thematic synthesis of current qualitative evidence», *Community Mental Health Journal*, 54/6 (2018), p. 793–804, doi: 10.1007/s10597-017-0185-9

¹² Jerry Tew – Shula Ramon – Mike Slade – Victoria Bird – Jane Melton – Clair Le Boutillier, «Social factors and recovery from mental health difficulties: A review of the evidence», *The British Journal of Social Work* 42/3 (2012), p. 443-460, doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcr076

towards someone expressed directly by content (e.g., saying hurtful things and calling someone mean names) and style of speech (e.g., yelling at someone or threatening him). In contrast, relational aggression is more indirect and includes purposeful manipulation and attempts to harm another person's friendships or feelings of inclusion.¹³ The consequences of these offenses are emotional problems and low self-esteem, which can form a crucial obstacle to recovery. The victims of abuse often see the insults received as truth and consider they deserve it; they accept the role of a victim and adopt a passive attitude.

Focus groups discussion and analysis conducted at the beginning of the «ACTitude» project revealed that behaviours such as criticism, humiliation, and negativity are common types of verbal and emotional aggression experienced by persons with prolonged mental illness. Participants reported emotions often felt in these situations, such as anger, contempt, sadness, embarrassment, and fear. Since these most frequent and representative emotions experienced by persons with severe and prolonged mental illness in different situations in which these persons are exposed to forms of non-physical aggression, with a focus on recognition and regulation of emotions, development of psychological coping strategies, we foster the development of intrapsychic safety and stability of the clients.

Intensive emotions can sometimes be overpowering, and in many situations, they can be disruptive and lead to poor performance. Consequently, it is vital that we know how to manage or regulate our emotions – to what emotions we experience, when and how we experience and express them.¹⁴ Recognizing and regulating one's own emotions is very important in the following situations: emotional regulation may increase positive expectations in social interactions, heighten the use of effective strategies, allow for flexible attention focus, advance effective decision-making in stressful situations and provide support for executive functions in relation to the coordination of the diverse skills required for effective social behaviour.¹⁵ Emotion regulation strategies are often straightforward and can be learned, and research has shown that training these skills can help with coping in the long term.¹⁶

¹³ Mona .E. Solberg – Dan. Olweus, «Prevalence estimation of school bullying with the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire», *Aggressive Behavior* 29/3 (2003), p. 239-268, doi: 10.1002/ab.10047

¹⁴ James J. Gross, «Emotion regulation: Affective, cognitive, and social consequences», *Psychophysiology* 39/3 (2002), p. 281-291, doi: 10.1017/s0048577201393198

¹⁵ Paulo N. Lopes – Peter Salovey – Stéphane Coté – Michael Beers, «Emotion regulation abilities and the quality of social interaction», *Emotion (Washington, D.C.)* 5/1 (2005), p. 113-118, doi: 10.1037/1528-3542.5.1.113

¹⁶ Sara LeBlanc – Bilge Uzun – Katere Pourseied – Changiz Mohiyeddini, «Effect of an emotion regulation training

Emotion regulation is part of self-regulation capabilities. According to Rueda et al., self-regulation in general refers to many processes by which the human psyche exercises control over its functions, states, and inner processes. Self-regulation is a complex construct and includes controlling and regulating one's own actions, cognition, and emotions.¹⁷

However, social context as a learning-group environment is also of great importance. According to Tew and colleagues, three CHIME categories of recovery are particularly social and each of these categories addresses special (subordinate) themes or processes in the recovery; namely, connectedness is related to interpersonal relationships, family/systems approaches, social inclusion, occupation and employment, and community development; identity is related to social identities, discrimination (race, gender, etc.), mental illness stigma, and anti-stigma/anti-discriminatory interventions; and empowerment to self-efficacy, power together with others, strengths approach, self-directed support, and peer-organized services.¹⁸ These various recovery processes from the superordinate categories address both socially oriented and self-oriented strategies of possible recovery interventions, particularly to our training course operationalized as objectives of establishing the atmosphere of social support and trust, and on the other side of enhancing strategies and activities of sharing emotions in social settings.

The «ACT IT OUT!» training course has been designed as a learning experience for the participants with challenges in mental health where the trainer induces activities and facilitates this learning experience.

The training course is composed of twelve sessions that occur once or twice a week and last approximately one hour and a half under the guidance of the trainer. The trainers do not need to be experts in mental health; however, it is preferable that they have some experience in delivering group work or using participative training approaches. The title of each session (Table 1) is extracted from the case scenario, initial activity in the session where participants discussed an anecdotal episode of aggression or violence against the actor with mental health issues. For this activity, trainers have a list of possible questions and answers from the pre-training with pro-

program on mental well-being», *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy* 67/1 (2017), p. 108-123, doi: 10.1080/00207284.2016.1203585

¹⁷ M. Rosario Rueda – Michael I. Posner – Mary K. Rothbart, «The development of executive attention: Contributions to the emergence of self-regulation», *Developmental Neuropsychology* 28/2 (2005), p. 573–594, doi: 10.1207/s15326942dn2802_2

¹⁸ Tew, «Social factors and recovery from mental health difficulties», p. 447.

professionals to foster the discussion in the group. Subsequent activities in the sessions address the complexity of the situation in the scenario (type of aggression, typical emotions, and contextual stressors, as depicted in Table 1) with a series of physical or verbal group exercises. They cover crucial aspects of the group dynamics (climate of acceptance and cooperation, encouraging learning group context) and with the specific characteristics from the initial case scenario through the frame of the video, story, or keywords and in the context of techniques from improvisational theatre represent the means for fostering self-awareness, emotion regulation, and social skills of the participants. Each session ends with the reflection of the activities, especially from the perspective of the individuals.

Table 1. The structure of the «ACT IT OUT!» training course.

<i>Sessions</i>	<i>Type of aggression</i>	<i>Emotions</i>	<i>Contextual stressors</i>
1. Dealing with exiled autistic students	Relational aggression - exclusion, ostracism	Anger	Mental illness / social rejection
2. Unspeakable mental illness	Relational aggression	Fear	Mental illness / social stigma
3. Dealing with body shaming	Relational aggression - bullying	Shame	Mental illness / victimization
4. Dealing relationship issues with parents	Relational aggression – escapism	Anger, disappointment	Mental illness / social stigma and self-stigma
5. Ignored and invisible	Relational aggression – escapism	Anger, disappointment	Mental illness / social stigma and self-stigma
6. Dealing with patronizing and controlling	Relational aggression - emotional violence	Anxiety, sadness	Mental illness / social stigma
7. Undervalued	Relational aggression - emotional violence	Guilt, shame	Mental illness / victimization and self-stigma
8. Memories of verbal violence	Verbal aggression - emotional violence	Anger, shame	Mental illness / victimization and self-stigma
9. Mockery in the street	Verbal aggression	Sadness, shame	Mental illness / social stigma and self-stigma
10. This is my home too!	Verbal aggression, relational aggression	Anger, disgust	mental illness / social rejection

11. I never get angry	Verbal aggression	Anger, guilt	Mental illness / victimization and self-stigma
12. Why don't you leave me alone!	Verbal, postural, and physical aggression	Fear	Mental illness / victimization and self-stigma

* A detailed description of the training course and sessions is available on: <https://actitude-project.eu>

1.2. Aims of the study

The study aimed to evaluate the «ACT IT OUT!» training course. More specifically, we followed groups of pilot participants from three countries throughout training and measured several outcomes (i.e., satisfaction with life, emotion regulation, coping with stress and positive and negative affect) before and immediately after the training.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Participants

Participants were recruited through three different organizations (i.e., INTRAS in Spain, EDRA in Greece, and SMASHING TIMES in Ireland) where the pilot tests of the training course took place. A total of 35 participants (81.71% male) took part in the pilot study. Age ranged from 16 to 66 years ($M = 38.11$ years, $SD = 20.25$). Participants reported their current psychiatric diagnosis. Eighteen participants reported having a diagnosis on the psychotic spectrum, followed by four participants reporting depression and/or anxiety. Due to practical issues, a large portion of the sample ($n = 15$) did not report a specific diagnosis, but they did identify themselves as having mental health issues in general. The analyses were also repeated with the exclusion of this subsample, and the conclusions remained the same. Due to the low sample size, we present the analyses conducted on the entire sample ($N = 35$).

2.2. Questionnaires

The questionnaires were completed by participants before the training (i.e., baseline) and after completing the training course (i.e., follow-up).

*Satisfaction with life.*¹⁹ The scale includes 5 –items assessing global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one’s life. Participants rate each item using a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) according to their agreement. The internal consistency of the scale was excellent at both time-points (pre: $\alpha = .97$, post: .94)

*Emotion regulation.*²⁰ The scale assesses emotion regulation problems among adolescents and adults. Participants rate the items on a 5-point scale from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always) regarding how often certain statements apply to them. The internal consistency of the scale was satisfactory at both time-points (pre: $\alpha = .90$, post: .88)

*Coping with stressful situations.*²¹ The inventory measures different ways of dealing with stress and assesses 14 different strategies. The brief form includes a total of 28 items, with two items per strategy. Participants are asked to rate each item using a 4-point scale (1 = I don’t usually do that, 4 = I often do that).

*Positive and negative emotionality*²² is a self-report questionnaire assessing positive and negative affect (10 items each). Participants rate the items using a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much) regarding how they felt during the past week. The internal consistencies of the questionnaire were as follows: positive affect (pre: $\alpha = .94$, post: $\alpha = .94$), negative affect (pre: $\alpha = .85$, post: $\alpha = .93$).

2.3. Procedure

The participants in pilot groups in Spain, Greece, and Ireland were followed throughout 12 sessions. Outcomes (listed in 2.2. Questionnaires) were assessed before the training and immediately after completing the training.

It is recommended that the learning group comprises from 6 to 20 people. In Spain, 7 and 8 participants were included in two pilot groups with one session per

¹⁹ Ed Diener – Robert A. Emmons – Randy J. Larsen – Sharon Griffin, «The satisfaction with life scale», *Journal of Personality Assessment* 49/1 (1985), p. 71-75, doi: 10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13

²⁰ Erin Kaufman – Mangya Xia – Gregory Fosco – Mona Yaptangco – Chloe Skidmore – Sheila Crowell, «The difficulties in emotion regulation scale short form (DERS-SF): Validation and replication in adolescent and adult samples», *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment* 38 (2016), doi: 10.1007/s10862-015-9529-3

²¹ Charles S. Carver, «You want to measure coping but your protocol’s too long: Consider the brief COPE», *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 4/1 (1997), p. 92-100, doi: 10.1207/s15327558ijbm0401_6

²² David Watson – Lee Anna Clark – Auke Tellegen, «Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales», *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 54/6 (1998), p. 1063-1070, doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.54.6.1063

week (the course lasted 12 weeks with complete data for 14 participants). In Greece, 6 participants were included in one pilot group with two sessions per week (the course lasted 6 weeks). In Ireland, 15 participants were included in one pilot group with two sessions per week (the course lasted 6 weeks). Each session lasted for around one hour and a half.

3. Results

Below, the descriptive statistics (the means and standard deviations) for the total scores of each scale are presented.

Table 2. Mean scores (and SDs) on satisfaction of life, emotion regulation difficulties, coping with stress, and positive and negative affect before and after the pilot training

	SWLS		DERS		PA		NA	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Pre	4.47	2.04	2.29	.71	2.73	.99	1.70	.77
Post	4.70	1.84	2.29	.71	3.00	.95	1.62	.82

Note. SWLS = satisfaction of life, DERS = difficulties in emotion regulation, PA = positive affect, NA = negative affect.

Table 2 shows the anticipated trends. More specifically, participants scored slightly higher after the complete training (relative to before) on satisfaction of life, coping with stress and positive affect. Furthermore, they scored slightly lower on emotion regulation difficulties and negative affect. The scores from pre- to post-training were compared using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test due to the small sample and deviations from normality of the dependent variables. The results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that the changes in mean scores of the questionnaires were not statistically significant (satisfaction of life: $Z = -.32, p = .75$; difficulties in emotion regulation: $Z = -.31, p = .75$; negative affect: $Z = -.13, p = .90$).

The change from before to after training positive affect ($Z = -1.92, p = .06$) approached statistical significance.

We also compared the subscales of the COPE inventory. For most of the subscales the change in scores from pre- to post-training were not statistically significant ($ps > .11$). Nevertheless, there were some exceptions. More specifically, when comparing scores from before the training to after the training, participants reported more frequent use of self-distraction ($M_{pre} = 2.07, SD_{pre} = .58, M_{post} = 2.35, SD_{post} = .73, Z = -2.20, p = .03$), behavioral disengagement ($M_{pre} = 1.96, SD_{pre} = .94, M_{post} = 2.16, SD_{post} = .96, Z = -2.25, p = .02$) and humor ($M_{pre} = 1.99, SD_{pre} = .55, M_{post} = 2.19, SD_{post} = .77, Z = -2.03, p = .04$). The same trend was also observed for the frequency of reported instrumental support ($M_{pre} = 2.08, SD_{pre} = .49, M_{post} = 2.24, SD_{post} = .48$), but it did not reach statistical significance ($Z = -1.71, p = .09$).

4. Discussion

The present manuscript presents a preliminary evaluation of the «ACT IT OUT!» training course, which was developed to assist individuals with mental health issues with their process of recovery. The course focuses on negative experiences those individuals might encounter on their recovery journeys, such as aggression and violence, and provides participants with knowledge about emotion regulation strategies through improvisational theatre techniques. Participants took part in a 6 to 12-week course and completed a series of questionnaires assessing their satisfaction with life, coping with stress, emotion regulation difficulties, and positive and negative affect immediately before starting with the course and immediately upon completing the course.

We focused on constructs such as satisfaction with life, coping with stress, and positive and negative affect. Although these outcomes are not a direct measure of symptoms that individuals with mental health issues experience, they can offer insight into meaningful outcomes for individuals.²³ It is important to note that studies show that symptom-based measures are often not congruent with people's experience of recovery.²⁴

²³ Premila Trivedi – Til Wykes, «From passive subjects to equal partners: Qualitative review of user involvement in research», *The British Journal of Psychiatry: The Journal of Mental Science* 181 (2002), p. 468-472, doi.org/10.1192/bjp.181.6.468.

²⁴ Alison Faulkner – Phil Thomas, «User-led research and evidence-based medicine», *The British Journal of Psy-*

The observed trends were in line with our expectations. The overall means of satisfaction with life, and positive affect were somewhat higher after the training than before. Furthermore, the reported difficulties in emotion regulation and negative affect were slightly lower after the training, relative to before the training. However, the differences were not statistically significant. This was somewhat expected due to the limited sample size and the heterogeneity of the sample, which could be two possible explanations for the non-significant findings. From the descriptive point of view, however, the results of this pilot study seem to be promising and now await further examination using larger and more homogenous samples.

We did find significant changes in the reported frequency of use of some of the strategies for coping with stress. More specifically, participants reported using self-distraction, behavioral disengagement, and humor more frequently after the course relative to before. Furthermore, more frequent use of instrumental support also approached statistical significance. Self-distraction is defined as turning to other activities to think less about the stressful and emotional situation, behavioral disengagement represents giving up trying to cope with the situation and humor involves making jokes about the situation one finds themselves in.²⁵

Interestingly, participants reported more frequent use of strategies that some authors describe as avoidance-orienting, meaning that they represent different ways that an individual ignores or withdraws from the stressor or associated feelings – usually associated with negative outcomes in the literature.²⁶ However, it should be noted that recent work in the field of emotion regulation cautions against the “good vs. bad” categorizations of stress management and emotion regulation strategies that are prominent in the literature. Many of the coping strategies described before would be categorized as maladaptive.²⁷ However, it’s important to note that research consistently shows that certain strategies, that are usually denoted as maladaptive (e.g., distraction) are actually more effective in certain contexts (i.e., when emotional in-

chiatry: *The Journal of Mental Science* 180 (2002), p. 1-3, doi: 10.1192/bjp.180.1.1

²⁵ Charles S. Carver, «You want to measure coping but your protocol’s too long: Consider the brief COPE», *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 4/1 (1997), p. 92-100, doi: 10.1207/s15327558ijbm0401_6

²⁶ Jordan A. Litman, «The COPE inventory: Dimensionality and relationships with approach- and avoidance-motives and positive and negative traits», *Personality and Individual Differences* 41/2 (2006), p. 273-284, doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2005.11.032 · Susan Roth – Lawrence J. Cohen, «Approach, avoidance, and coping with stress», *American Psychologist* 41/7(1986), p. 813-819, doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.41.7.813

²⁷ Amelia Aldao – Susan Nolen-Hoeksema – Susanne Schweizer, «Emotion-regulation strategies across psychopathology: A meta-analytic review», *Clinical Psychology Review* 30/2 (2010), p. 217-237, doi: 10.1016/j.cpr.2009.11.004

tensity is high), compared to strategies that would usually be categorized as more adaptive (e.g., reappraisal). For a detailed review, see Sheppes.²⁸ Since the focus of the training course were situations linked with violence and aggression (emotional situations with high intensity), it seems that participants learned to frequently resort to strategies that are more suitable and effective for these types of situations.²⁹

Given the formative nature of the presented study, the following limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the results. Firstly, the study included a heterogeneous sample with a limited sample size. It would be necessary for future studies to evaluate the training on larger and more homogeneous samples. Second, it would be critical for future studies to adopt a randomized-controlled design that would also include a control group, as this would enable more clear conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the training. Lastly, it would be necessary for future studies also to include a follow-up assessment (e.g., three months or six months after completion of the training program) to evaluate whether the training program leads to long-term changes.

4.1. Conclusions

Overall, the initial evaluation of the «ACT IT OUT!» training program shows promising results. More specifically, we found that the training course results in more frequent use of effective coping strategies in situations with high emotional intensity – such as aggression and violence. However, due to limitations linked with the size and heterogeneity of our sample, additional randomized-controlled studies would be needed to understand the effectiveness of the training course better.

²⁸ Gal Sheppes «Transcending the “good & bad” and “here & now” in emotion regulation: Costs and benefits of strategies across regulatory stages», *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 61 (2020), p. 185-236, doi: 10.1016/bs.aesp.2019.09.00

²⁹ Roni Shafir – Naama Schwartz – Jens Blechert – Gal Sheppes, «Emotional intensity influences pre-implementation and implementation of distraction and reappraisal», *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* 10/10(2015), p. 1329-1337, doi: 10.1093/scan/nsv022

EXPLORATION OF PRESERVED MEMORIES
AND HUMANIST VALUES IN EUROPEAN CULTURE:
A YEAR AFTER ATTENDING AESCHYLUS' *SEVEN
AGAINST THEBES* THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE

Introduction

It has long been acknowledged that theater has the ability to transport audiences to other worlds and connect with them on a deeply personal level.¹ This form of art captivates the senses, resulting in a distinctive and a vivid storytelling.² One such drama that has a significant effect on its viewers is Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*. Through an examination of leadership, morality, and the human condition, it offers a timeless narrative that resonates with audiences across epochs.

Despite the recognized power of theatre, empirical studies into audience reception, particularly in terms of memory retention and interpretation of theatrical performances, are relatively sparse. Moreover, few studies have probed the lasting impact of specific directorial and staging choices on audience recollection and interpretation, an area that remains largely uncharted in academic research.³

Given this background, our study aimed to delve into these aspects, focusing specifically on the long-term (one-year post-performance) audience reception of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*.⁴ We sought to examine how elements such as character portrayal, conveyed humanistic values, and specific directorial choices

¹ Graham Ley, «Towards a theoretical history for Greek tragedy», *New Theatre Quarterly* 31/2 (2015), p. 144-163, doi: 10.1017/S0266464X15000251 [14/06/2022]; Maria Kladaki – Konstantinos Mastrothanas, «Shakespeare's plays at the Royal Theatre in Athens in the early 20th century», *European Journal of Language and Culture Studies* 1/6 (2022), p. 52-58, doi: 10.24018/ejlang.2022.1.6.53 [22/03/2023]

² Theodore Grammatas, «The reception of ancient Greek tragedy in late modernity: From the citizen viewer of the city-State to the consumer viewer of the global cosmopolis», *Gramma: Journal of Theory and Criticism* 22/1 (2014), p. 41-52; doi: 10.26262/GRAMMA.V22I1.6235 [06/03/2020]; Theodore Grammatas, *Το θέατρο ως πολιτισμικό φαινόμενο* [Theater as a cultural phenomenon], Papazisis Press, Athens 2015.

³ Konstantinos Mastrothanas – Theodore Grammatas, «Reception of the values of the Aeschylus drama and mnemonic imprints by ancient tragedy spectators», *Open Research Europe* 2/124 (2022), p. 1-14, doi: 10.12688/open-research.15179.1 [12/11/2022]; Spyros Syropoulos, «Which audience does Euripides address? The reception of the poet in respect to the political intelligence of his audience», *ELECTRYONE* 4/1 (2012), p. 26-43.

⁴ Isabelle Torrance, *Aeschylus: Seven against Thebes*, Bloomsbury Academic, London 2007.

and stage elements are remembered and interpreted by the audience. Furthermore, we aimed to understand how these aspects contribute to the transmission of timeless values, thus affirming the continuing relevance of ancient Greek tragedies in contemporary society.

We hypothesized that character portrayal and the communication of values, underpinned by judicious directorial choices and staging elements, significantly impact audience memory and interpretation, enhancing the potency of theatre in inculcating timeless values.⁵ This study could yield important insights into audience engagement and memory retention, illuminating the enduring power of theatre and offering valuable inputs for theatre makers and researchers alike.

Humanist Values through Contemporary Performances of Ancient Greek Tragedies

The power of theatrical performances of ancient Greek tragedies on Humanist Values has been slightly studied and documented in academic research. These performances have been shown to have a profound impact on individuals and society, promoting values such as justice, social concerns, and cultural identity.⁶

One study by Menninghaus et al. explores the enjoyment of negative emotions in art reception, including the interpretation of ancient Greek tragedies.⁷ The researchers suggest that tragedy, when truly appreciated, is not simply sad but rather an homage to the great and exceptional in humanity. This perspective aligns with the understanding of tragedy promoted by philosophers like Hegel and Bullough.⁸

⁵ Theodore Grammatas – Konstantinos Mastrothanas – Alexia Papakosta, *The Values of Ancient Greek Drama and Theatre in Space and Time: The Present of the Values*, National and Kapodistrian University Press, Athens 2023.

⁶ Theodore Grammatas – Maria Dimaki-Zora, «Memories of heroines in memories of spectators. Mythic, dramatic and theatrical time from the ancient drama to modern Greek theatre», Vayos Liapis – Maria Pavlou – Antonis Petrides (eds.), *Debating with the Eumenides. Aspects of the Reception of Greek Tragedy in Modern Greece*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle 2018, p. 121-311; Maria Kladaki, «Η έννοια της αρχαιοελληνικής μίμησης ως αφετηριακό σημείο της έννοιας του θεάτρου» [The concept of ancient Greek imitation as a starting point for the concept of theater], *Filologiki* 112 (2010), p. 38-42; Maria Kladaki – Konstantinos Mastrothanas, «Gender representations in dramatic texts for children and youth», *International Journal of Literature Studies* 2/2 (2022), p. 103-112, doi: 10.32996/ijls.2022.2.2.10 [29/01/2023]; Stephe Harrop, «Greek tragedy, agonistic space, and contemporary performance», *New Theatre Quarterly* 34/2 (2018), p. 99-114, doi: 10.1017/S0266464X18000027 [14/02/2021]; Theodore Grammatas, «The reception of ancient drama values by the modern audience: *Seven against Thebes* - Audience Research», *International journal of arts, humanities & social science* 3/3 (2022), p. 47-52.

⁷ Winfried Menninghaus – Valentin Wagner – Julian Hanich – Eugen Wassiliwizky – Thomas Jacobsen – Stefan Koelsch, «The distancing-embracing model of the enjoyment of negative emotions in art reception», *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 40 (2017), e347. doi:10.1017/S0140525X17000309 [21/06/2021]

⁸ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen Über Die Ästhetik*. Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Verl, Verlag 1970; Edward

Powers investigates how live theatrical productions on the US stage have reimagined Greek tragedy to address political and social concerns, showcasing the power of ancient drama as a tool for pursuing justice.⁹ Powers emphasizes the capacity of engaged performances to dispel long-held stereotypes and advance the representation and participation of underrepresented communities.

In the recent study of Mastrothanasis and Grammatas, the authors focused on the humanitarian values expressed in ancient Greek ancient drama and their projection through modern theatrical performance.¹⁰ The research involved the spectators watching a performance of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* and the recordings of their beliefs immediately after the performance and six months later. The findings indicate that the values and messages of the tragedy remain unchanged for spectators over time, highlighting the lasting impact of these performances. Taxidou explores the encounters between modernist theatre makers and Greek tragedy, by analyzing how these encounters shaped modernist experiments in performance.¹¹ Taxidou also proposes a modernist aesthetic of Greek tragedy based on Hellenism as theatricality, which reconfigures the relationships between stage, play-text, and actors. As a result, theatrical experimentation that simultaneously looks backwards to Greek tragedy and forwards to new artistic possibilities, are allowed.

Furthermore, Yaari examines theatrical productions which are created in the wake of a significant event. The study analyzes how the creators of post-dramatic theatre used Greek classical tragedy to deliver humanistic, political, and artistic concerns.¹² By reimagining and reconstructing the texts, these creators were able to address their concerns about the present and future of their society. The power of theatrical performances in ancient Greece is also explored in the study of Peters regarding the value and meaning of performance in the Athenian lawcourt.¹³ Peters examines the poetics of lawcourt performance and conflicting views on the use and abuse of theatre for law. It highlights the potential toxicity of legal theatricality but also recognizes its power to rouse virtuous

Bullough, «“Psychical distance” as a factor in Art and an aesthetic principle», *British Journal of Psychology* 5 (1912) p. 87–118. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8295.1912.tb00057.x [15/03/2023]

⁹ Melinda Powers, *Diversifying Greek Tragedy on the Contemporary US Stage*, University Press, Oxford 2018.

¹⁰ Mastrothanasis – Grammatas, «Reception of the values of the Aeschylus drama and mnemonic imprints by ancient tragedy spectators», p. 8–9.

¹¹ Olga Taxidou, *Greek Tragedy and Modernist Performance*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2021.

¹² Nurit Yaari, *Between Jerusalem and Athens*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018.

¹³ Julie Peters, *Law as Performance*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2022.

emotions and contribute to righteous judgment. In addition, Lane discusses the democratic turn in classical studies of Greek tragedy, emphasizing the performative and ideological relationships between tragedy and ancient Athenian democracy.¹⁴ Lane argues that tragedy opens up questions of agency and the boundaries of the political, challenging traditional assumptions about Greek texts' invisibility in early modern England's dramatic landscape. Lastly, Pollard argues that ancient Greek drama had a powerful influence on early modern England's dramatic landscape.¹⁵ She focuses on the response of early modern readers and audiences to specific Greek plays and themes, particularly tragedies by Euripides that centered on bereaved mothers and sacrificial daughters. These plays acquired a privileged status as synecdoches for the tragic theater and its ability to evoke sympathetic emotions in audiences.

Purpose of the Research and Research Questions

The purpose of this research was to explore the lasting impact of directorial and staging choices in theatrical performances, specifically within the context of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, on the audience's memory and perception of the performance and its conveyed humanistic values. The research examined how various elements of the performance, including the portrayal of the character Eteocles, the communication of moral, intellectual, political, and social values, and the specific directorial and staging decisions, were recalled and interpreted by the audience a year after viewing the performance. Based on this purpose, the following research questions were investigated:

1. How do individual differences among audience members influence the retention and interpretation of the humanistic values conveyed through a performance of a classical Greek tragedy, such as Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*?
2. How does the theatrical performance of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* influence the long-term memory retention of timeless humanistic values among the audience, and to what extent are these values perceived as relevant in the context of contemporary Greek and European societies?

¹⁴ Melissa Lane, «Sophocles, sisterhood, and individuality», *Political Theory* 43/1 (2015), p. 118-127, doi: 10.1177/0090591714566906 [20/01/2019]

¹⁵ Tanya Pollard, *Greek Tragic Women on Shakespearean Stages*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2017.

3. How do directorial choices and stage elements influence the audience's long-term retention and interpretation of a theatrical performance, particularly in terms of conveying timeless humanistic values?

Materials and Methods

Participants

The present study comprised a longitudinal investigation involving a sample of 20 individuals, who were aged 18 to 60. These individuals had the shared experience of having attended a performance of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* tragedy, directed by Cezaris Grauzinis, a year prior to the commencement of the study.¹⁶

Questionnaire

To address the research objectives and to provide answers to the research questions, a structured questionnaire was utilized as the primary instrument for data collection. Containing mainly of closed and open-ended queries, the questionnaire was designed to ensure comprehensive coverage of all aspects of the research subject. It consisted of 21 questions that were formulated to capture the participants' recall, interpretation, and overall experience of the theatrical performance. Each question was created with careful attention to language, and context, to ensure clarity, avoid bias, and minimize any potential confusion. The use of closed and open-ended questions enabled the participants of the research to provide specific, short responses that were easily quantified. This design not only provided an efficient data collection process but also facilitated straightforward analysis and interpretation of the collected data. The questionnaire was given to the participants one year after they had attended the performance of the ancient Greek tragedy directed by Grauzinis. This timing was chosen on purpose to explore the long-term impacts of the performance, to investigate the enduring influence of the play and its directorial choices on audience's memory and perception.

¹⁶ For this performance and some of its fundamental semiotic and semantic aspects, in comparison with other earlier modern Greek performances of the *Seven against Thebes*, see the article by the member of the VAST research team Kaiti Diamantakou, « «Επτά επί Θήβας: Ο νοερός “άλλος” και οι δυνατότητες της σκηνικής αναπαράστασής του» [Seven against Thebes: The visualized “other” and the possibilities of his scenic actualization], *15th International Symposium of Ancient Greek Drama: The Civil Conflicts*, Cyprus Center of International Theatre Institute (ITI), Nicosia 2020, p. 51-70.

Data Analysis

The content analysis approach was used in the analysis of the gathered data.¹⁷ Key words as well as phrases were identified within the responses from the questionnaire and were categorized for a meaningful interpretation of the data. The creation of categories was based on a combination of both deductive and inductive approaches. Initial categories were informed by the study objectives and questionnaire structure, while additional categories emerged organically from recurring themes, patterns, and ideas within the data. Upon completion of the coding process, frequency counts (N) were performed for each category, transforming the qualitative data into quantifiable units. This allowed for the identification of dominant themes and perspectives in the data, contributing to an overarching narrative about the enduring impression of the performance. A total of 504 mentions emerged from the content of the questionnaires of all the participants in the study, which were grouped into 15 categories relating to 3 themes: a) Character and persona of Eteocles, b) perception and retention of humanistic values and c) recall and interpretation of directorial choices and stage elements.

Results

Character and Persona of Eteocles

In evaluating the participants' recall of Eteocles' character from the performance a year prior, it is striking that a quarter of respondents (25%, n=5) admitted to not remembering his portrayal. This points towards certain limits in long-term recall of specific character details from theatrical performances. Yet, the remaining 75% of participants were able to provide various interpretations of Eteocles' character. The same number as those who couldn't recall at all (25%, n=5) perceived Eteocles as a «Dynamic leader trying to control the city, temperate, and sober». Fewer participants, 15% (n=3), interpreted him as «Pious towards the gods, though opposed to the supplicating action of the Chorus». A tenth of the participants recalled Eteocles as a «Prudent and devoted king to his city, with complete self-control and composure» (10%, n=2), the same proportion who described him as being «Out of control and angry» (10%, n=2) or «Contemptuous of women and their reactions» (10%, n=2). The smallest fraction of respondents (5%, n=1) remembered Eteocles as be-

Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis. An Introduction to Its Methodology*, Sage Publications, California 2018.

ing «Aware of his troubled past». These results demonstrate a spectrum of mnemonic impressions relating to Eteocles' character, underscoring both the diversity of interpretations and the challenges of long-term memory retention in the context of theatrical performances (Table 1).

Table 1. Frequency (N) and Relative Frequency (N%) of participant responses to the characterization of Eteocles in the Prologue and his initial dialogue with the Chorus

Responses	N	N%
I don't remember	5	25,00%
Dynamic leader trying to control the city. Temperate and sober	5	25,00%
Pious towards the gods, though opposed to the supplicating action of the Chorus	3	15,00%
Prudent and devoted king to his city, with complete self-control and composure	2	10,00%
Out of control and angry	2	10,00%
Contemptuous of women and their reactions	2	10,00%
Aware of his troubled past	1	5,00%
Total	20	100%

Inquiring into the audience's interpretation of Eteocles' climactic decision to face his brother Polynices at the seventh gate, the participants offered a variety of perspectives, highlighting differing interpretations of Eteocles' motivations and the forces at play. A striking half of the participants (50%, n=10) perceived his decision as «A combination of the fatal check and the hero's free will». A considerable number, 30% (n=6), saw it as a «Personal free choice, driven by the passion of revenge and power». A smaller segment, 10% (n=2), viewed the decision as «Fateful and imposed by the divine will, the hero's burdened ancestral past, and Oedipus' curse». Minimal percentages of the audience perceived it as a «Manly act of ul-

timate self-fulfilment and emancipation of the hero from his ancestral and social bonds» (5%, n=1) or were unable to recall (5%, n=1). The wide variety of interpretations of Eteocles' final act underscores the multifaceted nature of his character and the complex factors that contributed to his ultimate decision, as understood by the audience even after a year (Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency (N) and Relative Frequency (N%) of Participant Interpretations of Eteocles' Final Decision to Face Polynices at the Seventh Gate

Responses	N	N%
A combination of the fatal check and the hero's free will	10	50,00%
Personal free choice, driven by the passion of revenge and power	6	30,00%
Fateful and imposed by the divine will, the hero's burdened ancestral past and Oedipus' curse	2	10,00%
Manly act of ultimate self-fulfilment and emancipation of the hero from his ancestral and social bonds	1	5,00%
I don't remember	1	5,00%
Total	20	100%

When asked to interpret the confrontation between the two brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, the participants largely agreed on a single perspective. A significant majority of the audience (65%, n=13) viewed the fratricide as a «Necessity/Tragic destiny». This perception aligns with the classical Greek understanding of tragedy as a product of destiny and fateful circumstances. However, not all participants retained a clear memory of this aspect of the performance. Notably, 15% (n=3) of respondents stated that they did not remember. This is a critical observation for our study, emphasizing the variable retention of thematic aspects of the performance among the audience a year later. On the other hand, an equal proportion (15%, n=3) characterized the fratricide as «Cursed», implying an understanding influenced by the thematic elements of curse and doom in the narrative.

Finally, a very small fraction of respondents (5%, $n=1$) perceived the fratricide as a «Selfish» act, suggesting a more personal, perhaps less traditional interpretation of the event. These responses collectively demonstrate the audience's enduring memory of the performance's main event, despite variations in interpretation and the fading of specific memories over time.

Table 3. Frequency (N) and Relative Frequency (N%) of Participant Interpretations of the Confrontation between Eteocles and Polynices

Responses	N	N%
Necessity/Tragic destiny	13	65,00%
I don't remember	3	15,00%
Cursed	3	15,00%
Selfish	1	5,00%
Total	20	100%

When queried about Eteocles' dialogue with the women of the Chorus — and specifically, whether he contrasts the fatalistic disposition of women with the active and dynamic attitude of men — participants responded with varied degrees of agreement. Exactly half of the participants (50%, $n=10$) indicated strong agreement («very much» or «very») with the proposition, suggesting that a significant proportion of the audience discerned a gender-based contrast in attitudes towards fate and action in the dialogue. Meanwhile, 30% ($n=6$) of participants offered a more moderate view («so and so»), indicating that they perceived some degree of contrast, but perhaps not as pronounced as others did. Contrastingly, 10% ($n=2$) of the respondents stated they did not recall the scene at all, which, although a small proportion, is significant in a study focusing on memory retention. Finally, an equal proportion (10%, $n=2$) expressed minimal or no agreement («not at all» or «a little») with the proposed contrast. These results show a broad spectrum of audience memory and interpretation, from strong recollection and agreement to no memory of the scene at all (Table 4).

Table 4. Frequency (N) and Relative Frequency (N%) of Participant Interpretations of the Contrast in Attitudes towards Fate and Action in Eteocles' Dialogue with the Chorus

Responses	N	N%
Very or very much	10	50,00%
So and so	6	30,00%
I don't remember the scene at all	2	10,00%
Not at all or a little	2	10,00%
Total	20	100%

Perception and Retention of Humanistic Values

In the analysis of the participants' recollection and perception of the humanistic values conveyed in the performance of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, a range of moral, intellectual, political, and social concepts were brought to the fore. The most frequently recognized value pertained to «The destructive effects of authoritarianism and ambition», as cited by 20 participants, constituting 15.27% of the responses. This resonates with the dominant themes of power and ambition found in the play and its lead character, Eteocles. Equally significant was the participants' recollection of «The discipline and restraint of the people as important assets in managing difficult political situations and crises», and «Respect for the gods and faith in their help as a life-saving solution in managing difficult political situations and crises», both of which were highlighted by 19 participants each, amounting to 14.5% of the responses. Further, «Respect for the dead and the universal right to burial» was recalled by 17 participants (12.98% of responses), echoing the profound emphasis Aeschylus places on funerary rites and respect for the deceased in his play. «Moderation as a way of life» and «Reason and dialogue as a means of resolving disputes», along with «The value and uniqueness of human life» were identified by 11 and 10 participants respectively, suggesting that the audience had also retained these fundamental humanistic principles a year after the performance. Other values recognized include «Dialogue as a characteristic of democracy» (9 responses, 6.87%), and «The equality of women with men (gender equality)» along

with «Respect for the personality of others» (8 responses each, 6.11%). These values highlight the play's enduring relevance in the context of contemporary social and political discourse (Table 5).

Table 5. Frequency (N) and Relative Frequency (N%) of Perceived Humanistic Values from the Performance of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*

Humanist Values	N	N%
The destructive effects of authoritarianism and ambition.	20	15,27%
The discipline and restraint of the people as important assets in managing difficult political situations and crises.	19	14,50%
Respect for the gods and faith in their help as a life-saving solution in managing difficult political situations and crises.	19	14,50%
Respect for the dead and the universal right to burial.	17	12,98%
Moderation as a way of life.	11	8,40%
Reason and dialogue as a means of resolving disputes.	10	7,63%
The value and uniqueness of human life.	10	7,63%
Dialogue as a characteristic of democracy.	9	6,87%
The equality of women with men (gender equality).	8	6,11%
Respect for the personality of others.	8	6,11%
Total	131	100,00%

In the exploration of the enduring humanistic values imparted by Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, the respondents identified a range of key thematic messages. A significant proportion of the audience, representing 32.73% of responses, identified The «suffering of a civil war» as a primary value bestowed by the drama, underscoring the enduring emotional resonance and relevance of the play's central conflict. Furthermore, «The value of human life» was acknowledged by 20% of respondents, emphasizing the timeless humanistic perspective imbued within the narrative. A recognition of «The alternation of persons in power» was noted by 16.36% of the respondents, resonating with the political themes underpinning the play. Also of significance was the perception of values pertaining to «Respect for the other» (12.73% of responses), «The importance of dialogue» (10.91%), and «The equality of women with men» (7.27%). These values shed light on the socially progressive aspects of the play, and their enduring impact on the contemporary audience a year after the performance (Table 6).

Table 6. Frequency (N) and Relative Frequency (N%) of Bequeathed Values from the Performance of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*

Humanistic Messages	N	N%
The suffering of a civil war	18	32.73%
The value of human life	11	20.00%
The alternation of persons in power	9	16.36%
Respect for the other	7	12.73%
The importance of dialogue	6	10.91%
The equality of women with men	4	7.27%
Total	55	100.00%

One year after the theatrical performance, the majority of survey participants concurred that the production was successful in highlighting the conceptual and value content of Aeschylus' work. Specifically, 50% of respondents felt that the play

significantly highlighted these aspects, using the descriptor «Too much». A closely aligned 45% used the term «Very» to express a strong agreement with the proposition that the performance effectively brought to light Aeschylus' conceptual and value content. Notably, only a marginal 5% of respondents considered the play to be mediocre or «So and so» in highlighting the conceptual and value content. This suggests that the theatrical performance was generally successful in conveying the integral themes and values of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* to its audience, and these perceptions have persisted a year after attending the performance (Table 7).

Table 7. Audience Perceptions on Highlighting Conceptual and Value Content in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* Performance

Response	N	N%
Too much	10	50.00%
Very	9	45.00%
So and so	1	5.00%
Total	20	100.00%

Upon probing for the perceived correlation between the authoritative discourse of the protagonists in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* and contemporary politicians, a significant proportion of the respondents, 60%, claimed to see extensive similarities, indicated by the descriptor «Too much». This implies a profound relevance and resonance of the play's themes with current political discourse, as perceived by the audience one year after attending the performance. A quarter of the respondents (25%) perceived moderate, or «So and so», parallels between the protagonists' discourse and contemporary politics, indicating that these viewers discerned some degree of correlation, though not as extensively as the majority. 10% of respondents perceived significant («Very») similarities between the drama's discourse and modern political dialogues. Remarkably, only 5% of respondents stated they do not remember anything about this aspect from the performance, underscoring the enduring impact of the play's authoritative discourse on the audience (Table 8).

Table 8. Comparison of Authoritative Discourse in *Seven Against Thebes* and Contemporary Politics

Response	N	N%
Too much	12	60.00%
So and so	5	25.00%
Very	2	10.00%
I don't remember anything about it from the performance	1	5.00%
Total	20	100.0%

Question 20, an integral part of the theme «Perception and Retention of Humanistic Values», aimed to assess the extent to which respondents believe Aeschylus's drama confronts values and issues pertinent to contemporary Greek and European citizens. The results showed a striking consensus among the respondents. Half of the respondents, equivalent to 50% of the audience, strongly felt that Aeschylus' drama text deals considerably with values and issues that are of relevance to contemporary Greek and European society, indicating their response as «Too much». The other half of the respondents, making up the remaining 50%, also expressed significant agreement with this sentiment, rating the level of relevance as «Very». Notably, none of the respondents expressed ambivalence or denial about the relevance of the play's themes to current issues, and there were no instances of respondents failing to remember this aspect of the play, underscoring the lasting impact and enduring relevance of Aeschylus's text a year after the theatrical performance (Table 9).

Table 8. Relevance of Aeschylus's Drama to Contemporary Greek and European Values and Issues

Response	N	N%
Too much	10	50.0%

Very	10	50.0%
Total	20	100.0%

Recall and Interpretation of Directorial Choices and Stage Elements

Table 9 indicates the audience's recollections of the symbolism conveyed by the stairs used by the brothers Eteocles and Polyneices in the theatrical performance. The symbolism was interpreted in various ways by the audience, demonstrating the multifaceted nature of the directorial and scenographic choices. The most commonly perceived symbolism, as reported by 42.55% of respondents, was the rise and fall of power, emphasizing the key theme of power dynamics in the play. Changes in human life and happiness were also noted by 25.53% of respondents, indicating a deeper reflection on the fleeting and unstable nature of human fortunes. Interestingly, despite the passage of a year since the performance, 2.13% of the audience still remembers a more nuanced interpretation, associating the stairs with the 'greatness' and bravery of the two Theban brothers.

Table 9. Audience Perceptions of the Symbolism of the Stairs
in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*

Responses	N	N%
The rise and fall of power	20	42.55%
The changes in human life and happiness	12	25.53%
The arrogance and ambition of the two Theban brothers, sons of Oedipus	10	21.28%
The rise and fall of the Theban royal house	4	8.51%
The 'greatness' and bravery of the two Theban brothers, sons of Oedipus	1	2.13%
Total	47	100.00%

Table 10 displays the audience's assessment of the directorial handling of the «scene of the seven shields», with the selection of the warlords by the on-stage Chorus and their on-stage equipment. The majority of the respondents (55.56%) perceived the directorial approach to be highly original and functionally effective in a figurative sense as it vivified the otherwise static and verbal action. A significant proportion of the audience (40.74%) found it to be original and functional due to its introduction of an ironic comedic element that intensified the tragic situations of the performance. The data reveals that despite the passing of a year, only a small fraction (3.7%) of respondents could not recall this element of the performance, thus further emphasizing the memorable nature of the directorial decisions employed in the «scene of the seven shields».

Table 10. Audience Evaluation of the Directorial Handling of the «Scene of the Seven Shields»

Response	N	N%
Very original and functional figuratively because it “brings to life” the static and verbal action.	15	55.56%
Very original and functional, because it introduces an ironic comedy that exacerbates the tragedy of the situations.	11	40.74%
I don't remember this scene.	1	3.70%
Total	27	100.00%

Table 11 presents the audience's perception of the role of music in contributing to the dramatic tension during the performance, particularly in the fratricide scene. It is evident from the responses that a significant majority (80%) of the respondents felt that the music greatly augmented the dramatic tension, with 40% opining that it contributed «Too much» and an equivalent 40% deeming it to be «Very» effective. A minor segment of the audience (10%) was ambivalent, expressing a «So and so» reaction, while an equivalent fraction (10%) could not recall the musical element a year after the performance. The data suggests that music was a potent tool in en-

hancing the emotional impact and memorability of the performance, as illustrated by the audience's high recall and appraisal of its effectiveness.

Table 11. Audience Evaluation of the Impact of Music during the Performance

Response	N	N%
Too much	8	40.00%
Very	8	40.00%
So and so	2	10.00%
I do not remember	2	10.00%
Total	20	100.00%

Table 12 depicts the audience's interpretations of the last scene's staging, specifically the immobilization of the Chorus and the actions of Antigone and Ismene. A plurality of respondents (39.29%) perceived the Chorus as trapped by the leaders' decisions. Others saw the Chorus' inaction as a reflection of its nature as a collective rather than an individual entity (21.43%), or as an inability to choose sides (17.86%). Another interpretation, held by 14.29% of respondents, posited that the Chorus feigned immobility to avoid explicitly choosing between Antigone (and by implication, Polynices) and Ismene (implicitly Eteocles). Notably, a minor fraction of the audience (7.14%) did not remember this particular scene. These findings underscore the complexity of the directorial choices and the richness of interpretations they evoked, contributing to the overall memorability and impact of the performance.

Table 12. Audience Interpretation of the Last Scene's Staging

Response	N	N%
The Chorus finds itself trapped because of the choices and actions of its leaders.	11	39.29%

The Chorus is unable to act and take any dynamic initiative, precisely because he is a Chorus and not an individualized dramatic person.	6	21.43%
The Chorus is unable to choose whose side to take.	5	17.86%
The Chorus pretends that he cannot move because he does not want to declare his choice between Antigone (thus implicitly Polynices) and Ismene (thus implicitly Eteocles).	4	14.29%
I do not remember this scene.	2	7.14%
Total	28	100.00%

Table 13 represents the audience's responses to whether they believed the direction underscored the suffering of war and the necessity for reconciliation. The vast majority of respondents (95%) affirmed that these themes were prominently accentuated in the theatrical performance. A minimal percentage (5%), however, could not recall the specific directorial emphasis on these aspects. These data highlight the successful communication and long-term memory retention of key themes imbued within the director's interpretation of the play, providing meaningful evidence on the effectiveness of the directorial choices.

Table 13. Audience Perception of Direction's Emphasis
on War Suffering and Reconciliation

Response	N	N%
Yes	19	95.00%
I don't remember	1	5.00%
Total	20	100.00%

Table 14 delineates the elements of the theatrical performance that remained salient in the audience's memory one year following the theatrical performance. Acting and interpretation by the actors were the most frequently mentioned elements, making up 36.11% of responses. The scenography was also remembered by a significant portion of the audience (27.78%). Other elements, including the visual framework and stage objects, and music and sound code, were mentioned by 19.44% and 8.33% of respondents, respectively. Performance lighting was also noted as a memorable element by 8.33% of participants. These findings underscore the importance of various directorial and staging choices in enhancing the memorable qualities of the performance and its potential for long-term audience impact.

Table 14. Persistent Memory of Theatrical Performance Elements
One Year After the Performance

Response	N	N%
Acting, interpretation of actors	13	36.11%
Scenography	10	27.78%
Visual framework and stage objects	7	19.44%
Sound code of the performance	3	8.33%
Performance lighting	3	8.33%
Total	36	100.00%

Discussion

Our analysis of the survey responses reveals intriguing insights about the enduring impression of Eteocles' character and the transfer of timeless values to the contemporary audience a year after the performance. Eteocles' personality and actions, as presented in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, appear to have left a lasting imprint on a majority of the audience. The participants displayed strong recollection and consistent interpretation of key aspects of Eteocles' character,

from his leadership style to his fatal confrontation with his brother, Polynices. One year after the performance, most audience members showed a strong memory of Eteocles as a dynamic, determined character confronting his destiny. This memory retention is most notable in dialog between Eteocles and the Chorus, since a significant number perceived a contrast between the philosophical disposition of women and the more active, dynamic attitude of men. However, the data also highlights variability in memory retention and interpretation, as some participants either did not recall specific scenes or understood them differently. This finding indicates that while the performance may communicate its intended message and values to a large extent, individual differences among audience members can influence the interpretation and retention of these messages over time. Importantly, the enduring memory of Eteocles' character and the narrative of *Seven Against Thebes* exemplify the potential of classical Greek tragedy to engage contemporary audiences and convey humanistic values of European culture. This timeless resonance affirms the cultural and artistic significance of such works, extending beyond their historical and geographic origins.¹⁸

The second theme of the survey, «Perception and Retention of Humanistic Values» underscored the enduring resonance of the moral, intellectual, political, and social values conveyed in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, one-year post-performance. The powerful preservation of these humanistic values in the audience's memory, and their perceived relevance to contemporary Greek and European societies, signal the timeless nature and global relevance of these ancient Greek dramas. A remarkable consensus emerged among the respondents, with significant majorities affirming the prominence of humanistic values in the play, and the contemporary relevance of these themes. Most notably, the dominant view was that the play robustly addresses issues germane to the lives of contemporary Greek and European citizens, with none of the respondents expressing ambiguity or denial about the play's relevance. Moreover, the authoritative discourse of the protagonists was identified as having strong parallels to modern political discourses, reinforcing the timeless nature of the moral and ethical dilemmas embedded within the play. This echoes the findings regarding the lasting impression of the character Eteocles, suggesting that the primary drivers of memory retention are the play's moral lessons

¹⁸ Mastrothanas – Grammatas, «Reception of the values of the Aeschylus drama and mnemonic imprints by ancient tragedy spectators», p. 8-9.

and their real-world applications. These findings reflect the potency of theatre, and in particular, Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, in inculcating timeless values, offering ethical guidance, and provoking critical thought about current societal issues. They also indicate a strong need for the continued inclusion and promotion of such historical texts within the cultural canon, given their enduring capacity to engage audiences and stimulate reflection on enduring humanistic principles.¹⁹

The analyses of the responses related to the theme «Recollection and Interpretation of Directorial Choices and Stage Elements» reveal several significant insights. It is clear from the data that directorial and staging choices substantially influence the audience's long-term retention and interpretation of a theatrical performance.²⁰ These choices, such as the use of music and specific stage objects, play a crucial role in shaping the audience's memory and perception of the performance, even a year later. The use of symbolic objects, such as the stairs in the theatrical performance, were not only remembered by the majority of the audience members but also interpreted in various insightful ways. These interpretations bring forth the audience's engagement with the performance and its thematic content. Similarly, the use of music was largely considered a powerful element, particularly in heightening dramatic tension. Other directorial choices, like the handling of the «scene of the seven shields», were perceived as original and functional, bringing static and verbal actions to life and introducing a sense of ironic comedy that worsened the tragedy of the situations. Furthermore, the audience could still recall various elements of the performance one year later, when it comes to acting and scenography as well as specific visual and auditory elements. These results demonstrate the lasting impact of the performance and the effectiveness of these directorial choices in making the theatrical performance a memorable experience. The directorial choices also played a crucial role in communicating and reinforcing the timeless humanistic

¹⁹ Grammatas – Mastrothanasis – Papakosta, *The values of Ancient Greek Drama and Theatre in Space and Time: The Present of the Values*, p. 121-133.

²⁰ Alexia Papakosta – Konstantinos Mastrothanasis – Afrodite Andreou – Ioanna Blouti, «Psychometric evaluation of recall and recognition tasks for the measurement of young spectators' theatrical memory», *Journal of Literary Education* 3 (2020), p. 177-199, doi: 10.7203/JLE.3.14835 [09/08/2020]; Konstantinos Mastrothanasis, «Ψυχομετρικές εκτιμήσεις της μακρόχρονης μνήμης του ανήλικου θεατή για θεατρικές παραγωγές με καλλιτεχνική στόχευση ανήλικου κοινό» [Psychometric assessments of the long-term memory of the minor spectator for theatrical productions with artistic target], Theodore Grammatas and Simos Papadopoulos (eds.), *Ο χρόνος στο θέατρο. Θεατρική μνήμη ενός άχρονου παρόντος* [Time in the Theater. Theatrical memory of a timeless present], Papazisis, Athens 2021, p. 285-303.

values of the play. By enhancing the dramatic tension, emphasizing the suffering of war and need for reconciliation, and making symbolic use of stage objects, the directorial choices served to imprint these values deeply in the minds of the audience.

Conclusion

The findings of this research emphasize the continuing power of theatrical performances in embedding timeless humanistic values in audiences' long-term memory. Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* permitted a lasting impression on the audience, particularly through the character Eteocles and the conveyance of moral and intellectual themes that resonated with contemporary societal issues.²¹ The effectiveness of directorial capabilities, such as the use of music and symbolic stage objects, further enhanced this impact, showcasing their significant role in shaping audiences' experience and recollection. The study demonstrated that theatre, specifically classical Greek tragedy, remains an engaging and relevant medium that can communicate timeless values, stimulate critical thought, and resonate with audiences even long after the performance.

One of the main limitations of this study concerns its reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to recall bias and individual interpretation. Furthermore, the audience's recollection and interpretation of the performance could have been influenced by external factors not accounted for in this study, such as their individual backgrounds, knowledge, and previous exposure to Greek tragedies. However, this is also a strength, as the study provides valuable insights into the audience's individual experiences and interpretations, which are crucial in understanding the impact of theatrical performances on different demographics. Another limitation is the potential for variation in the specific production of *Seven Against Thebes*, directed by Grauzinis, viewed by participants. Differences in directorial choices, staging, and actors across different performances could have influenced the audience's recollections and interpretations. However, the research findings still provide valuable insights into the general impact of such theatrical performances and offer a basis for future research to investigate these variations further.²²

²¹ Grammatas – Mastrothanasis – Papakosta, *The Values of Ancient Greek Drama and Theatre in Space and Time: The Present of the Values*, p. 121-133.

²² See supra n. 16.

The study's strengths include its novel focus on long-term memory retention of theatrical performances and its in-depth exploration of various aspects of the performance, from character interpretation to directorial choices and stage elements. This comprehensive approach provides a richer understanding of the enduring impact of theatrical performances.

The implications of this research are manifold. First, it highlights the potential of theatre as a tool for communicating and instilling timeless humanistic values in audiences. This suggests the importance of including historical texts within the cultural canon for their enduring relevance and capacity to engage audiences. Second, the study underscores the critical role of directorial and staging choices in enhancing audience engagement, stimulating memory retention, and reinforcing the thematic content of the performance. This insight can be valuable for theatre professionals in crafting memorable and impactful performances. Lastly, the research signals the need for further studies exploring individual differences in the interpretation and recollection of theatrical performances and the impact of specific elements of the performance, such as music, symbolic objects, and specific directorial decisions.

Conflict of interest



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BOOK REVIEWS

JANA DOLEČKI – SENAD HALIBAŠIĆ – STEFAN HULFELD (eds), *Theatre in the Context of the Yugoslav Wars*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham/Switzerland 2018, S. XVII, 339, Abb. ISBN 978-3-319-98892-4.

SENAD HALIBAŠIĆ, «*Spielende und Zuschauende sowie eine Granate, die weit genug entfernt ist*». – *Theater in Bosnien und Herzegowina 1992 bis 1995*, unveröff. Diss. der Theater-, Film- und Medienwissenschaft, Universität Wien, 2018, S. 380.

Der Titel der Monographie bezieht sich auf einen Satz des bosnischen Schriftstellers D. Karahasan in seinem *Tagebuch der Aussiedlung* (Klagenfurt 1993), wo er die Arbeit seiner Studierenden an der Akademie der Szenischen Künste Sarajevos während der ersten Monate der Belagerung beschreibt: «In weniger als zwei Monaten erarbeiteten [die Studierenden] vier Vorstellungen, die in der ganzen Stadt gespielt wurden. Ohne elektrische Beleuchtung, ohne eine vom Zuschauerraum getrennte Bühne, ohne Dekoration, die man hätte transportieren müssen. Einfach ohne alles, außer mit spieldurstigen Schauspielern, einem Text und theaterhungrigen Zuschauern als einem wichtigen Element des normalen Lebens. Bei den ersten Proben wurden sie durch Granaten gestört, die in der Nähe einschlugen. Da verloren sie noch die Konzentration, machten Pausen, hörten für einen Moment auf. Mit der Zeit gewöhnten sie sich so sehr daran, daß sie einfach nicht mehr auf die Granaten reagierten, ja, manche sogar eine Möglichkeit fanden, die Granaten ins Spiel einzubinden, als ‘Szeneneffekt’ oder als Ausdrucksmittel. Ähnlich war es mit den Zuschauern – am Anfang reagierten sie auf die Granaten, doch dann überließen sie sich der Vorstellung mit mehr Genuß als seinerzeit im Frieden. Wir stellen eine Definition des Theaters in Sarajevo auf: Theater – das sind ein Schauspieler und ein Zuschauer in aktiver, durch dramatische Texte artikulierter Wechselbeziehung, sowie eine Granate, die weit genug entfernt ist, um weder Schauspieler noch Zuschauer zu töten. Dieses Theater hütet und schützt vor der Angst wie ein warmer Mutterleib» (S. 44-45). Die mehrjährige Belagerung von Sarajewo begann im April 1992.

Das englische Buch ist eine Publikation, die auf eine Tagung, welche vom Institut für Theater-, Film und Medienwissenschaft an der Universität Wien unter dem Titel «Theatre during the Yugoslav Wars», in Wien vom 9-21. Nov. 2015 organisiert wur-

de (<https://tdyw2015.univie.ac.at/>) und auch öffentliche panel-Diskussionen umfaßte, zurückgeht, und vom österreichischen Bundeskanzleramt, zusammen mit den einschlägigen Forschungsprogrammen, gefördert wurde. Bei der Dissertation von Halilbašić, die diesen Sammelband von Studien in willkommener Weise ergänzt und ebenfalls von Forschungsstipendien gefördert wurde, bildet insofern eine Ausnahme, als unveröffentlichte Dissertationen im allgemeinen nicht besprochen werden. Doch scheint es bloß eine Frage der Zeit zu sein, bis die Arbeit veröffentlicht wird.

Die relevante Literatur ist nicht sehr umfangreich: S. Jestrovic, *Performance, Space, Utopia. Cities of War, Cities of Exile*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2013 (über Belgrad, Sarajewo, und Exiltheater in Toronto); D. Barnett, *DAH Theatre: A Sourcebook*, Lanham, Lexington Books 2016; zum institutionellen Theaterschaffen Serbiens 1990er Jahre, I. Šentevska, *The Swinging 90s: pozorišta i društvena realnost u Srbiji u 29 slika*, Belgrad 2016. Gleich zu Beginn sei erwähnt, daß der zeitliche Rahmen das ganze Jahrzehnt von 1990, also von der Unabhängigkeitserklärung von Kroatien und Slowenien über den Bosnienkrieg bis Srebrenica und den serbisch-albanischen Konflikten 1998/99. Damit ist der Plural des Titels gerechtfertigt. Das erklärt die «Introduction» der Herausgeber (1-36), wo auch eine Photographie einer Bühne im Kulturzentrum von Pilica in der Repulika Srpska mit graffiti gezeigt wird, wo 1992 750 Muslime vor ihrer nachfolgenden Exekution gefangen gehalten wurden. Hier ist auch festgehalten, daß es sich um den ersten Studienband zum jüngsten europäischen «Kriegstheater» handelt. Das Phänomen «Kriegstheater» ist in der historischen Theaterwissenschaft schon mehrfach untersucht worden, aber die Produktions- und Rezeptionsverhältnisse im polyethnischen und multireligiösen Ex-Jugoslawien bildet ein einmaliges puzzle aufgrund der Komplexität der lokalen Verhältnisse: praktisch jede größere Stadt, analog zur Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und abhängig von den mobile Fronten, weist ein anderes Profil auf; die Nationalisierung der Bühnen äußert sich in zwei gegenläufigen Tendenzen: der ethnonationalistischen Propagandaarbeit (manchmal auch etwas zurückhaltend) bzw. einem beschwichtigenden Unterhaltungsspielplan, der die Kampfhandlungen zu ignorieren versucht. Die 35 Nationalbühnen, die es vorher im vereinten Jugoslawien gegeben hat, werden meist privatisiert und in den Dienst der lokalnationalen Sache gestellt. Die Studien sind nicht vollkommen flächendeckend, was bei dem sehr unterschiedlichen Forschungsstand und dem ganz verschiedenen Impakt, den der Krieg auf das Theater hatte, auch gar nicht möglich ist. Viele Materialien dazu sind verlogengegangen oder befinden sich in schwer zugänglichen Privatarchiven.

Einen Sonderfall bildet die *Antigone*-Aufführung von 1993 in Slowenien, verfaßt von Dušan Jovanović und inszeniert von Meta Hočevar. Ebenso die Produktion von Susan Sontags *Waiting for Godot* im belagerten Sarajevo. Das resistente Sarajevski Ratni Teatar SARTR ist zwar kurz behandelt (ausführlich dazu Silvija Jestrovic), doch dafür wird das bedeutsame Stück *Sklonište* behandelt, das vorwiegend einen Dialog des Regisseurs mit dem Dramaturgen im Keller des Theaters darstellt, mit dem Theme der Rolle des Theaters in der belagerten Stadt bzw. der Eigenheit des Kriegstheaters. Der Band freilich eröffnet weitere Problemfelder, die die Theaterwissenschaft auch in Zukunft beschäftigen werden, wie die Frage der Verantwortung, der Opportunismus, die Änderung der Sichtweisen vom Ausbruch der Feindseligkeiten bis hin zu den Massakern, die persönliche Verarbeitung der Traumata, Schauspielerschicksale, Spielplangestaltung, Publikumsverhalten usw. Die enorme Diversität, die die dreifache ethnonationale und religiöse Spaltung hervorgerufen hat, erschwert freilich verallgemeinernde Ergebnisse.

Die zwölf Studien und die fünf Augenzeugenberichte (testimonies) von Theaterleuten sind in drei thematische Gruppen untergeteilt: 1) Mobilisation of Theatre Institutions, 2) Shifting Stages und 3) Subsequent and External Perspectives. Zum institutionalisierten Theater äußert sich zuerst Irena Šentevska, «Stages of Denial: State-Funded Theatres in Serbia and the Yugoslav Wars» (45-62), wo der Spielplan der serbischen Nationaltheater unter die Lupe genommen wird, der sich wenig beeinflusst von den Ereignissen ausnimmt (mit Ausnahme von *Troilus and Cressida* von Shakespeare und *Die letzten Tag der Menschheit* von Karl Kraus). Senad Halilbašić geht in der Folge ein auf «Bosnia and Herzegovina's national theatres in the Context of Language Politics During the War» (63-81), eine Fragestellung, die aus seiner Dissertation stammt (vgl. in der Folge) und sich äußert in der nun strengen Scheidung von *pozorište* (serbisch) und *kazalište* (kroatisch, daneben noch das slowenische *gledališče*) neben dem Universalterminus *teatar*. Der nächste Beitrag geht auf die Formierung des albanophonen Theaters in Kosovo ein: Jeton Neziraj, «Theatre as Resistance: The Dodona Theatre in Kosovo» (87-105). Den Abschnitt beschließt Ksenija Radulavić, «War Discourse in Institutional Stages: Serbian Theatre 1991-1995» (107-122); neben dem bereits angeführten Spielplan geht die Studie vor allem auf das 1993 eröffnete Kult-Teatar in Belgrad ein und das Premierstück *Tamna je noć* (Dark is the Night), das die studentischen Protestkundgebungen von 1992 zum Thema hatte.

Mit unkonventionellen Theaterformen setzt sich der zweite Themenzyklus «Shifting Stages» auseinander, beginnend mit Jana Dolečki, «Theatre on the Front

Lines: Ad Hoc Cabaret in Croatia, 1991-1992» (125-150), ein regelrechtes Front-theater auf kroatischer Seite. Die Ethnologin Lada Čale Feldman, «Within and Beyond Theatre: President Tudman's Birthday Celebration at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb» (151-171) analysiert das messianistisch-royalistischen Mysterienspiel *Seh križneh putov konec i kraj* (Of Ways of the Cross the Final End) am 14. Mai 1997 nach dem Vorbild der Tito-Feiern. Besonders interessant der Fall, den Milena Dragičević Šešić, «Culture of Dissent, Art of Rebellion: The Psychiatric Hospital as a Theatre Stage in the Work of Zorica Jevremović» (177-198) vorlegt: die Dramaturgin, Mitglied der wichtigsten Theatergruppe der 80er Jahre, dem Kazalište Pozorište Gledalište Teatar (KPGT), organisierte von 1992 bis 1995 in der psychiatrischen Klinik von Laza Lazarević in der *Freiheit der Irren* alternative Theatervorstellungen mit Patienten, die zu den subversivsten in Belgrad gehörten. Mit der Theatergruppe der KPGT setzt sich auch Ana Dević auseinander: «Theatre of Diversity and Avant-Garde in Late Socialist Yugoslavia and Beyond: Paradoxes of the Disintegration and Cultural Subversion» (199-219, zu dieser autonomen Gruppe vor allem D. Klaić, Teatar razlike, Novi Sad 1989); die Gruppe hatte ihren Sitz in Ljubljana, war aber in ganz Jugoslawien tätig; im Laufe des Krieges schwenkte der Nachfolgedirektor auf eine eher regierungstreue Linie und die Gruppe wurde subventioniert; unter anderem führte man auch Handke-Stücke auf.

Die dritte Themenkategorie, «Subsequent and External Perspectives», enthält vier Arbeiten, beginnend mit Barbara Orel, «The Theatre Exchange Between Slovenia and the Republics of Former Yugoslavia in the 1990s» (227-242); nach dem Ausbruch der Jugoslawien-Kriege bewahrte das slowenische Theater eine gewisse ästhetische Autonomie, wobei vor allem die Antikenaufführungen vorherrschten (*König Ödipus* im slowenischen Theater von Triest, *Orestie* in Maribor 1993, *Antigone* in Ljubljana, *Sieben gegen Theben* in Triest, *Philoktet* in Ljubljana 1996, *Iphigenia* 1998, *König Ödipus* im Madinsko Teatar 1998); daneben gab es auch zwei slowenische Antikendramen: *Antigone* von Dušan Jovanović 1993 bei den Wiener Festwochen, und *Cassandra* von Boris A. Novak 2001. In der Folge geht Branislav Jakovlević kritisch auf Handkes *Fahrt im Einbaum* und die Burgtheateraufführung ein: «Fording the Stream of Conscience: Peter Handke's River Journeys» (243-270), seine Serbienreise, die Agitation und sein proserbisches Schrifttum um den Kriegsverbrecherprozeß. Es folgt Darko Lukić, «Strategies for Challenging Official Mythologies in War Trauma Plays: The Croatia Playwright Ivan Vidić» (277-296) mit der Analyse von *Veliki bijeli zec* (Big White Rabbit) 2002, Endpunkt einer ganzen

Reihe von dramatischen Unterminierungen des kroatischen Ethno-Mythos, welche hauptsächlich in alternativen Theatern gespielt wurden und mit dem Terminus «Trauma-Drama» belegt werden. Mit einer anderen Gruppe setzt sich der letzte Beitrag auseinander: Aleksandra Jovičević, «Postmodern Antigones: Women in Black and the Performance of Involuntary Memory» (297-314); es geht um Erinnerungs-Protestaktionen und performances über das Massaker von Srebrenica in Belgrad (*Srebrenica* 8372), organisiert von einer internationalen antimilitaristischen feministischen Organisation, deren serbischer Zweig 10,000 Frauen umfaßt.

Zusammen mit den panel-Diskussionen und den Testimonies vereinigt der Band enormes Informationsmaterial zu einem Zweig der Künste im Krieg, der bisher noch nicht systematisch im Zentrum gestanden hat und noch viele Fragen offen läßt: die Rolle der Fiktion in Zeiten der unausweichlichen Faktizität. Die Darstellungskomponente des Theaters erhöht freilich den kathartischen Effekt. Diesem theaterwissenschaftlichen und balkanologischen Forschungsdefizit, das die Wiener Initiative des Schweizer Theaterprofessors Stefan Hulfeld offenlegt, ist auch die Dissertation von Halilbašić verpflichtet. Sie beschränkt sich auf den Raum von Bosnien-Herzegowina, in den alle Kriegsnationen verwickelt waren, behandelt die größten Städte der Region, Mostar, Tuzla, Banja Luka und Sarajevo, welche alle ein unterschiedliches Bevölkerungsprofil aufweisen und in Bezug auf das Theater differente Entwicklungen durchlaufen.

Es beginnt mit einer «Einleitung – zum Spannungsverhältnis von Theater, (Bosnien-)Krieg und Historiographie» (5-23), wo terminologische und methodische Fragen abgehandelt werden und praktische Belange zur Sprache kommen (chronologische Übersicht zentraler Geschehnisse, ein Glossar mit Abkürzungen von Parteien und Armeen sowie von Theaterinstitutionen und Theatergruppen). Auch wird hervorgehoben, daß die Materialerhebung z. T. schwierig war und daß für manche Theaterphänomene kaum Quellen existieren. Das erste Kapitel ist Mostar gewidmet («Mostar – Theatergründungen im Spiegel der Stadtgeschichte», 24-94), die Stadt, die drei Bevölkerungsgruppen umfaßt (aus heutiger Sicht «Nationen» genannt), aber nur ein Nationaltheater besessen hat (das Narodno Pozorište Mostar). Mit der Teilung der Stadt kam es auch zu einer Teilung der Theater: ein Nationaltheater von Laienschauspielern wurde 1993 im muslimischen Osten der Stadt geschaffen (zuerst Café-Restaurant «Teatar»), wo 1994 die berühmte Ballade der *Hasanaginica* in einer dramatischen Bearbeitung zur Aufführung kam (auf die Frage der «Zugehörigkeit» und Bezeichnung in der Literatur, «serbisch», «serbokroatisch», «bosnisch» usw., wird

eingegangen), die deutlich ein muslimisches Ambiente widerpiegelt. Im Westteil der Stadt wurde darauf das kroatische mobile «Kriegstheater HVO» gegründet, das 1994 zum Nationaltheater erklärt wurde, pflegte aber keinen dezidiert propagandistischen Kurs (außer der Verwendung der kroatischen Sprache). Man kann also von einer Theatergeschichte des Trennenden sprechen, was mutatis mutandis für fast alle polyethnischen und multireligiösen Städte der Region gilt. Anfang 2015 wurde auf Initiative von Regisseuren und Schauspielern ein Stück aufgeführt, *Ajmo na Fuka* (Lass uns Kaffee trinken), das zu einem Publikumserfolg wurde und sowohl im westlichen wie im östlichen Nationaltheater der Stadt gespielt wurde.

Es folgt das Kapitel zu «Tuzla – Identitätsdiskurse auf den Bühnen einer paradoxen Stadt» (95-183). Die fast zur Hälfte von Muslimen besiedelte Industriestadt bildet insofern eine Ausnahme, als die nationalistischen Parteien niemals die Oberhand gewinnen konnten und auch die Stadtverwaltung diese Tendenzen nicht begünstigte. Tuzla war auch der Verlagsort einer Theaterzeitschrift. Die Spieltätigkeit wurde zwischen 1992 und 1995 nicht unterbrochen und kann auf 12 Premieren zurückblicken, mit zunehmender Thematik allerdings die Zeit der Osmanenherrschaft in Bosnien betreffend. Als Beispiel dieser vorwiegend muslimischen Dramatik wird *Godine Prevare* (Die Jahre des Betrugs) 1993, Erfolgsstück von Emir Hadžihafizbegović, der auch die Hauptrolle gespielt hat, analysiert, wobei eine existierende Videoaufnahme eine Aufführungsanalyse lege artis erlaubt. Dies war jedoch eine externe Produktion, die deutlich nationalistischen Fanatismus promovierte, obwohl solche Tendenzen im allgemeinen nicht gefördert wurden.

Anders ist die Situation im großteils serbischen Banja Luka («Banja Luka – “Als ob da jemand Regie geführt hätte”», 184-290), das sich fern aller Kriegsereignisse halten konnte, allerdings von starken Zu- und Aussiedlungen betroffen war. Hier ist der Spielplan geprägt von geschichtsrevisierenden Tragödien, glorifizierenden serbisch-orthodoxen ekklesialen Mythen und komödiantischen Vaudevilles. Die ethnisch-religiöse Pluralität änderte sich unter dem Zunehmen der Radikalität. Die Medien wurden gleichgeschaltet und Massenkundgebungen organisiert, das Stadtbild neugestaltet und das Alltagsleben nach ethnischen Kriterien organisiert. Die Wandlung des Nationaltheaters der bosnischen Krajina zum Nationaltheater der Republika Srpska wird nachgezeichnet und der Spielplan analysiert (die *Volks-tragödie* Đeneral Milan Nedić zum Zweiten Weltkrieg als normativer Geschichtsunterricht und Opferkult, das Mysterienspiel *Princ Rastko-Monah Sava*, eine Tragödie über den Hl. Sava, eine eskapistische Dramatisierung von *Grk Zorbas*, zu

der man auch Mikis Theodorakis eingeladen hat usw.). Hier war das Theater ein Propagandamittel zur ethnischen Säuberung.

Das letzte Kapitel ist Sarajevo gewidmet: «Theater im “Sarajevoer Roulette”» (281-329, die Bezeichnung Roulette betrifft die Überlebenschancen bei jeglichem Aufenthalt im Freien aufgrund der Scharfschützen), jene Stadt die 1425 Tage Belagerung aushalten mußte und ständig unter Granatfeuer der bosnischen Serben stand (dazu gibt es eine Reihe von Literatur, vgl. indizierend H. Sundhaussen, *Sarajevo. Die Geschichte einer Stadt*, Wien etc. 2014, 324-341, auch Memoirenliteratur). Hier hat Susan Sontag *Warten auf Godot* inszeniert (dies., «Waiting for Godot in Sarajevo», *Performing Arts Journal* 16/2, 1994, 87-106). Auch das Theaterleben ist einigermaßen gut dokumentiert (Jestrovic, *op. cit.*, D. Diklić, *Teatar u Ratnom Sarajevu - Svedočanstva*, Sarajevo 2004, und in englischer Übersetzung ders., *Theater in Sarajevo During the War 1992-1995 – Testimonies*, Sarajevo 2017 dokumentiert über 3000 künstlerische und kulturelle Ereignisse in der belagerten Stadt), so daß sich der Autor einer Dramenanalyse eines ganz spezifischen Werkes widmet: *Sklonište* (Schutzraum, shelter), verfaßt von D. Bibanović und S. Plakalo und im September 1992 im Teatar Mladih der Stadt durch die Gruppe SARTR, gleich nach dem Beginn der Belagerung als Sarajevoer Kriegstheater gegründet, aufgeführt. Es ist ein Vierpersonstück, in dem zwei anonyme Bühnencharaktere, der Regisseur und der Dramaturg, von einem Granatangriff im Keller des Theater, wo sich der Fundus und Requisitenraum befindet, Schutz suchen und dort auf ein bejahrtes Ehepaar treffen. Die Theaterleute diskutieren über das Für und Wider, in einer belagerten Stadt Theater spielen zu wollen, ein theatertheoretischer Diskurs über Kriegstheater; dazu kommen noch andere Flüchtige vor der Artilleriefeuer. Der gewählte Schutzraum ist selbst Teil des Theaters, auch die Fiktion des Bühnenscheins wird belagert, ebenso wie das Theaterpublikum. Krieg und Theater werden zur Metapher um den ontologischen Seinsstatus der Bühnenwirklichkeit. Dies ist spannend und intellektuell anregend zu lesen, da das Stück seine eigene Wirklichkeit und die des Publikums thematisiert.

In den Schlussbetrachtungen (330-342) wird auch auf die Schwierigkeit der Feldforschung, der Interviews, der Materialkollektion eingegangen, da der Autor als muslimischer Bosnier, allerdings im fernen Wien lebend und studierend, identifiziert wurde. Die Studie ist sorgfältig verfaßt und luzid in ihren Ausführungen; sie bildet ein komplexes Bild der Differenziertheit der Situation von Theaterproduktionen in einem Land mit bürgerkriegsartigen Zuständen. Hercegbosna bildet regional vielleicht das komplizierteste Bild, so daß jede der größeren Städte der Region den Bos-

nienkrieg ganz unterschiedlich erfahren hat. Darüberhinaus ist sie ein wichtiger Beitrag zur historischen Theaterwissenschaft, die sich mit dem Kapitel: Theaterspiel während Belagerungen beschäftigt (z. B. für Griechenland vgl. W. Puchner, «Θέατρο και πολιορκία», im Studienband *Ράμπα και παλκοσένικο*, Athen 2004, 15-28). Die Dissertation, die sicher eine Druckfassung verdient, endet mit einem Anhang, der auch die sorgfältig redigierte Bibliographie bringt (350-378).

Mit beiden Publikationen ist ein Forschungsfeld angeschnitten, das sicher noch weitere Studien nach ziehen wird. An der Univ. Kreta ist eine Dissertation über dasselbe Thema im Entstehen. Als zentraler Koordinator der drei Ausschreibungen des internationalen Dramenwettbewerbs der Onassis-Stiftung (1996/7, 2000/2001 und 2003-06) habe ich ein ganze Reihe von solchen Theatertücken zum Jugoslawienkrieg gelesen und begutachtet, nicht nur von jugoslawischen Autoren, sondern auch von Amerikanern und Europäern, die die Ereignisse unter ganz verschiedenen Gesichtspunkten und mit unterschiedlichen Bühnenpersonen sehen und beurteilen. Wie Halilbašić anmerkt, hat er für das Stück *Sklonište* eine deutsche Übersetzung erstellt. Vielleicht lohnt es sich, diesen Text einer breiteren Öffentlichkeit zugänglich zu machen.

IRENA BOGDANOVIĆ, *Το θέατρο της Αναγέννησης και του Μπαρόκ στη Βαλκανική Χερσόνησο και στα νησιά της* [Das Renaissance- und Barocktheater auf der Balkanhalbinsel und ihren Inseln], Herodot-Verlag, Athen 2019 (Theatrologica IX), S. 561, ISBN 978-960-485-248-2.

Die umfangreiche und bahnbrechende Arbeit einer systematischen und detaillierten Komparation der dalmatinisch-südslawischen und kretisch-griechischen Dramatik (zusammen mit der der ionischen und ägäischen Inselwelt) der Renaissance und des Barockzeitalters (bis in die 1. Hälfte des 18. Jh.s), die es nun erlaubt, die praemoderne Theateraktivität und Dramenproduktion im östlichen Mittelmeerraum großräumig vergleichend zu untersuchen (vgl. W. Puchner, «Cretan theatre in Mediterranean perspective», *Parabasis* 13/1 (2015) 91-98 und ders., *Die Literaturen Südosteuropas, 15. bis frühes 20. Jahrhundert*, Wien/Köln/Weimar 2015, 91-208) geht auf eine Dissertation am Institut für Theaterwissenschaft an der Universität Athen zurück, die wiederum von einigen meiner einschlägigen Studien seit 1978 ihren Ausgang genommen hat. Diese Komparation kann nun

grosso modo als abgeschlossen gelten, da inzwischen auch die Entität des religiösen Theaters im Ägäisraum als eigenständiges Kapitel der griechischen Dramatik und Theatergeschichte der Neuzeit in den Kanon der voraufklärerischen Kulturtätigkeit im Inselraum eingegangen ist (W. Puchner, *Griechisches Schuldrama und religiöses Barocktheater im ägäischen Raum zur Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1580-1750)*, Wien 1999 (ÖAW, phil.-hist. Denkschriften, 277, ders., *Greek Theatre between Antiquity and Independence. A History of Reinvention from the Third Century BC to 1830*, Cambridge Univ. Pr. 2017, 196-245). Damit ist die Theateraktivität im maritimen Raum der Adria, des Ionischen Meers, des östlichen Mittelmeers und dem Archipelagus der Ägäis (sowie den Meerengen des Bosphorus) bis ins frühe 18. Jh. flächendeckend erfaßt. Die Erforschung des Dramas und Theater am dalaminatischen Küstenstreifen, den östlichen Adria-inseln und Ragusa/Dubrovnik, durch Texteditionen und Archivmaterial relativ reich belegt, kann gewisse Informationlücken des griechischen Inseltheaters komparativ abdecken, denn die generelle Kulturabhängigkeit von Italien und speziell Venedig noch bis ins 18. Jh. ist in beiden Fällen gegeben; für den Ägäisraum hat diese Rolle der Jesuitenorden übernommen, der auch in Ragusa und den Küstenstädten der Ostadria seine Aktivität im religiösen Schultheater entfaltet hat. Darüberhinaus gibt es auch Direktkontakte zwischen Kreta und Ragusa, etwa bei Musikern oder auch Architekten (der proveditore Pietro Semitecolo etwa war sowohl auf Korfu wie in Dalmatien tätig).

Dies ist also ein Kapitel komparativer Theatergeschichte Südosteuropas, das besonders spannend und wissenshältig ist, denn bislang hat es dazu kaum Studien gegeben. Die Verfasserin, gebürtige Serbin in Griechenland lebend, hat jahrelange erschöpfende Studien in Belgrad, Dubrovnik, in italienischen und griechischen Bibliotheken betrieben und auch die letzte Bibliographie (bis etwa 2010) berücksichtigt, hat eine tatsächlich erschöpfende Komparativstudie geliefert und damit die traditionell nationalen und sprachorientierten Studientraditionen durchbrochen. Dies ist auch ganz bewußt im Sinne einer vergleichenden Balkanologie geschehen. Demnach ist der Aufbau der Arbeit auch konsequent komparatistisch angelegt und vermeidet, in Separatkapiteln den südslawischen und hellephonen Bereich gesondert darzustellen.

Die Gliederung geht nach Dramenkategorien vor. Innerhalb der Einzelkapitel werden chronologische Kriterien zur Anwendung gebracht, die Dramengruppen komparativ gegenübergestellt und nach Themenwahl und dramatischen Techni-

ken verglichen. Nach einem Vorwort und einer Einleitung beschäftigt sich das erste Kapitel mit den historischen, gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Rahmenbedingungen sowie den frühesten Spuren einer Spieltätigkeit (25-46). Das zweite Kapitel ist dem religiösen Theater gewidmet (47-118), das aufgrund der konfessionellen Unterschiede eine differente Entwicklung durchmacht: der dalmatinische Küstenstreifen nimmt an der spätmittelalterlichen Entwicklung des geistlichen Drama teil, die orthodoxen griechischen Inseln kennen eine solche Entwicklung nicht, wo sich religiöses Theater erst unter dem Einfluß des Jesuitenordens als Schultheater zu formen beginnt (fast ausschließlich auf den Ägäisinseln). Kapitel 3 ist dem bukolischen Drama gewidmet (119-188), das mit der italienischen Schäfermode in beide Bereiche gelangt ist und in Ragusa besonders beliebt war: der "Pastor Fido" wurde sowohl in Ragusa übersetzt als auch in die kretische Mundart und in den heptanesischen Lokaldialekt. Dominierend ist jedoch (außer den Ägäisinseln) in beiden Sprachbereichen die Komödie (189-284). Hier macht sich bereits der Stil- und Themenunterschied zwischen Renaissance und Barock deutlich: die Typenkomödie wird in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jh. bereits auch auf ernsthaftere Themen angewendet. Die Tragödie erfährt unterschiedliche Ausformungen (285-350): schon die drei kretischen Tragödien sind sehr unterschiedlich ("Erofile" hat als Mustertragödie die griechische Literatur bis etwa 1800 beeinflußt), die Gattung war in Ragusa nicht so beliebt. Dies ganz im Unterschied zu den Tragikomödien (*melodram* nach der südslawischen Terminologie) und den Intermedien (351-439), die eine ganz spezifische aufführungsbezogene Gattung darstellen, stärkeren Musikgebrauch und erhöhte Spektakularität aufweisen und vielfach mythologische Thematiken bevorzugen.

Die Arbeit ist unglaublich materialreich und bibliographisch ausgezeichnet belegt, endet mit einer Zusammenfassung (400-408), einem Epilog (449-458), der reichhaltigen und unschätzbaren Bibliographie (459-528), den ausführlichen Registern zu Personen und Werktiteln (529-548), einer griechischen Synopse und einem English summary (549-556). Speziell hervorzuheben ist aber auch das detaillierte Inhaltsverzeichnis, das die Einzelkapitel detailreich aufgliedert und somit die Auffindung von Spezialthemen erleichtert. Die Bedeutung der Monographie als Grundlagenwerk der südosteuropäischen Theatergeschichte ist kaum zu überschätzen; alle Werke, die sich mit diesem Themenfeld beschäftigen wollen, werden dieses Hilfsmittel gern benutzen. Insofern wäre eine Übersetzung in eine der europäischen Hauptsprachen angezeigt.

Λογείον/Logeion. Περιοδικό για το αρχαίο θέατρο /Journal of Ancient Theatre 9 (2019), S. 412, Abb., ISSN 2241-2417.

Das theaterwissenschaftliche Institut an der Univ. Patras gibt einen Widmungsband über das antike Dionysos-Theater heraus, dem in vieler Hinsicht wahrscheinlich wichtigsten Theater der gesamten Antike. Der Widmungsband geht auf eine einschlägige Konferenz zurück, die im November 2018 an der Univ. Patras abgehalten wurde, organisiert von der Abteilung für Theaterstudien und der Abteilung für Architektur unter einem interdisziplinären Zugang, der auch Philosophie, Archäologie und Architektur umfaßte. Kernidee der Tagung war, das erhaltene Textmaterial der Theaterstücke zusammen mit der archäologischen Evidenz (Vasenmalerei, Theaterarchitektur) daraufhin zu untersuchen, wie man sich die Bühnengestaltung in den verschiedenen Bau- und Architekturphasen des Dionysos-Theaters in Athen, von der Beginn an bis in die Kaiserzeit, vorzustellen habe.

Den Reigen der Konferenzbeiträge eröffnet M. Tiverios mit einer griechischen Studie zu drei theatralischen Vasenmalereien aus der Zeit des Peloponnesischen Krieges (1-44), gefolgt von Agis Marinis, «Realism' and Reflexions of Art in Aeschylean Stage Settings (*Persae, Supplices, Theoroi*)» (45-79), V. Liapis referiert in einem griechischen Beitrag zum szenischen und dramatischen Raum in *Sieben gegen Theben* (80-102). Mit dem szenischen Raum beschäftigt sich auch I. A. Panoussis, «De texte tragique de Sophocle à l'espace scénique du Théâtre de Dionysos: des questions et des responses possibles» (103-120), im Konkreten zum Bühnenhaus, der Anzahl der Türen und der Wahrscheinlichkeit einer leicht erhöhten Bühne.

Einen umfangreichen Beitrag liefert St. Tsitsiridis, der die Szene des Euripides aufgrund der erhaltenen Tragödiendtexte einer systematischen Untersuchung unterwirft (121-208); die Ergebnisse seien aus dem English summary zitiert: «The interpretation of the extant corpus suggests that the stage building in the last quarter of the fifth century seems to have a tripartite structure with *paraskenia* at each of the two sides and may be reminiscent of the Propylaea at the Acropolis. It probably had three doors (including two side doors at the *paraskenia*), a flat roof and windows at the *paraskenia*, and involved the use of stage machinery (*mechane, ekkyklema*). The existence of a slightly raised stage, a crepidoma and a portico is highly likely. What remains unclear so far is the exact form of the central door (did it comprise a permanent porch?), the question of the overall height of the skene building, as well as the form of the levels on which stage action evolved in each case». I. Ka-

ramanou hingegen untersucht den Gebrauch des Bühnenraums in den Tragödienfragmenten von Euripides (209-242). Ergebnis: «Overall, the testimonies of fragmentary tragedies in combination with those of the extant plays suggest that Euripides' staging practice seems to have been part of an evolutionary process conditioned by dramatic needs, his experimentation with tragic genre and the expansion of staging possibilities from the mid-fifth century onwards».

I. M. Konstantakos referiert in einem ebenfalls umfangreichen Beitrag zu Tür, Fenster und erhöhter Bühne in der aristophanischen Komödie (243-300). Auch hier sind die Ergebnisse erhellend: «Two simultaneously operating doors are necessary for the staging of some Aristophanic plays (*Acharnians*, *Clouds*), while others (*Peace*, *Ecclesiazusae*, cf. fr. 48 from Eupolis' *Autolycus*) indicate the existence of three. Secondly, two Aristophanic comedies (*Wasps* and *Ecclesiazusae*) attest the use of another opening, which was situated on a higher level of the *skene* façade and represented a window of one of the houses allocated on the background. Plays which dramatized affairs of adultery, whether in the form of mythological burlesque or in an urban setting, may also have used the window as a focal point of the adulterer's schemes. Thirdly, some Aristophanic passages point to the presence of a moderately raised stage platform in front of the *skene* building. This platform was destined for the actors and must have been low enough, so that the performers could easily mount on it and descend to ground level». K. Philippides liefert «Remarks on the performance of Menander's comedies in the Athenian theater of Dionysus» (301-334), wo bereits eine andere Bühnenform anzunehmen ist: «The issues under discussion are as follows: use of a stage with three doors (as entrances either to three houses or to a temple and two houses); the lack of a door in the case of shrines; representation of a two-story house; on-stage dances; use of an altar; the staging of internal scenes; the possible existence of a raised stage separating the chorus from the characters; and relics of the tradition incorporating the chorus into the action». Eher architektonisch ist der Zugang von V. di Napoli und M. Vitti zu Form und Funktion der Orchestra im Dionysus-Theater in der Kaiserzeit (335-359). Bislang waren die Beiträge chronologisch geordnet. M. Mikedaki reflektiert über den Zusammenhang von Heilung und Kult: das Dionsus-Theater und das danebenliegende Asklepieion (360-386) und den Koferenzband beschließt ein etwas abständiger Beitrag von V. Petridou zum Dionysus-Theater in den Augen von Gustav Larroumet (387-396), dem Korrespondenten von *Le Temps*, der 1896 Athen zu den Olympischen Spielen

besucht hat, und im Institut de France in Paris eine Konferenz zum Bacchus-Theater organisierte, wobei sein Beitrag in der Zeitung veröffentlicht wurde.

Den Zeitschriftenband beschließen zwei Rezensionen: G. M. Chesi, «Euripides and the Devine» zu P. Pucci, *Euripides' Revolution under Cover*, Ithaca/London 2016 und A. Marinis zu R. F. Kennedy, *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Aeschylus*, Leiden/Boston 2017 und R. Lauriola/K. N. Demetriou, *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Sophocles*, Leiden/Boston 2017. Die Konferenz zum Dionysos-Theater hat die Balance zwischen antikem Theater und der Neuzeit bzw. Gegenwart, die in vielen der Zeitschriftenbände eingehalten wurde, diesmal aus der Waagschale geworfen.

WALTER PUCHNER

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΕΙΣ - SUMMARIES

ΜΙΧΑΕΛΑ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΥ
MICHAELA ANTONIOU

Η κρίση, η *κρίσις* και η συλλογική διά ζώσης αλληλεπίδραση: Παραστασιακά γεγονότα στη Ελλάδα της οικονομικής κρίσης του εικοστού πρώτου αιώνα

Το παρόν άρθρο εστιάζεται σε δυο παραστάσεις/παραστασιακά γεγονότα που καταλαμβάνουν διαφορετικές θέσεις στο ελληνικό θεατρικό πεδίο κατά τη χρονική περίοδο της οικονομικής κρίσης. Στόχος του είναι να καταγράψει τον τρόπο με τον οποίο αυτή η κρίση αντανάκλαται στο θεατρικό κοινό καθώς και στη σκηνή και να καταδείξει πώς αυτές οι δυο θεατρικές παραγωγές αντικατοπτρίζουν τελικά μια *κρίση* (κριτική αξιολόγηση, *critique*) αυτής της κρίσης, εστιάζοντας στις σκηνοθετικές, δραματουργικές και υποκριτικές επιλογές. Η πρώτη παράσταση είναι η συλλογική δημιουργία *Interview* της Ομάδας Συλλογικού Πολιτισμού Εμείς, η οποία παρουσιάστηκε για τέσσερα συνεχόμενα έτη (2013-2016) σε μικρές σκηνές στην Αθήνα, τη Θεσσαλονίκη, την Πάτρα και τη Ζυρίχη. Η δεύτερη είναι η παράσταση των *Ορνίθων* του Αριστοφάνη σε σκηνοθεσία του Νίκου Καραθάνου, ο οποίος, το καλοκαίρι του 2016, παρουσίασε το συγκεκριμένο έργο στο Θέατρο της Επιδαύρου, σε παραγωγή του Ιδρύματος Ωνάση, ενός εύπορου και ισχυρού οργανισμού. Και οι δύο παραγωγές αποτελούν παραδείγματα των συγκρούσεων μέσα στο σύγχρονο ελληνικό θεατρικό πεδίο, καθώς καταλαμβάνουν αντίθετες θέσεις. Ωστόσο, και οι δύο προσέφεραν μια κριτική ενός κράτους σε κρίση, δηλαδή μια κριτική θεώρηση, κατανόηση και αξιολόγηση των συνθηκών κατά τη διάρκεια της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής κρίσης. Οι συνθήκες αυτές συσπείρωσαν ανθρώπους και επέτρεψαν στο κοινό να βιώσει αυτό που θα περιγραφεί ως συλλογική διά ζώσης αλληλεπίδραση.

ΓΩΓΩ Κ. ΒΑΡΖΕΛΙΩΤΗ
GOGO K. VARZELIOTI

Η κρητοβενετική διάλεκτος στην κρητική κωμωδία της Αναγέννησης:
Ιστορικό πλαίσιο, δραματουργική αξιολόγηση και σκηνική λειτουργία

Η γλώσσα των τριών κρητικών αναγεννησιακών κωμωδιών, δηλαδή η ομιλούμενη κρητοβενετική διάλεκτος της εποχής συγγραφής τους, αποτελεί κατεξοχήν προϊόν

των αλληλεπιδράσεων που συντελέστηκαν κατά τη μακραίωνη συγκατοίκηση Ελλήνων και Βενετών στην Κρήτη. Αντικείμενο αυτής της εργασίας αποτελεί η διερεύνηση των μηχανισμών που συνέβαλαν στον σχηματισμό αυτού του μικτού γλωσσικού ιδιώματος, κατανοητού από το σύνολο των κατοίκων του νησιού, και η διαμόρφωσή του σε λογοτεχνικό όργανο. Η γλώσσα είναι πηγαία και χειμαρρώδης, τόσο στη λυρική της εκδοχή όσο και στις κωμικές της εκφάνσεις, με τη δημιουργία παρεξηγήσεων, ευφάνταστων λογοπαιγνίων, ακόμα και μικρών συμπλοκών. Η χρήση αυτής της τοπικής διαλέκτου τοποθετεί τα συγκεκριμένα κείμενα στο επίκεντρο της αναγεννησιακής δραματουργικής αισθητικής, προσδίδοντας ταυτόχρονα ιδιαίτερη δυναμική στη σκηνική τους απόδοση.

ΒΑΡΒΑΡΑ ΓΕΩΡΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ – ΖΩΗ ΒΕΡΒΕΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ –
ΑΛΙΚΗ ΑΝΤΩΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ – ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΑ ΣΠΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ
VARVARA GEORGOPOULOU – ZOE VERVEROPOULOU –
ALIKI ANTONOPOULOU – EVAGELIA SPIROPOULOU

Λόγος, αισθητική και ιδεολογία της θεατρικής κριτικής σε περιοδικά
Λόγου και Τέχνης (1900-1950): Ένα ερευνητικό πρόγραμμα

Το παρόν άρθρο παρουσιάζει το ερευνητικό πρόγραμμα «Λόγος, αισθητική και ιδεολογία της θεατρικής κριτικής σε περιοδικά λόγου και τέχνης (1900-1950)» καθώς και το θεωρητικό-ιστορικό πλαίσιο, τους στόχους και τα πρώτα αποτελέσματά του. Το εν λόγω έργο (MIS 5048990) εγκρίθηκε στο πλαίσιο του Β΄ κύκλου της πράξης «Υποστήριξη Ερευνητών με έμφαση στους Νέους Ερευνητές» και συγχρηματοδοτείται από την Ελλάδα και την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο) μέσω του Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού, Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση 2014-2020». Επίσης, παρουσιάζεται η νέα θεατρολογική πηγή που δημιουργήθηκε κατά τη διάρκεια της έρευνας: το ψηφιακό ευρετήριο ανοιχτής πρόσβασης «Σίβυλλα», όπου περιλαμβάνονται οι θεατρικές κριτικές (με όλα τα στοιχεία τους) που δημοσιεύτηκαν στον περιοδικό τύπο κατά το πρώτο μισό του 20ού αιώνα.

ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΑΣ – ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΣ ΜΑΣΤΡΟΘΑΝΑΣΗΣ
THEODORE GRAMMATAS – KONSTANTINOS MASTROTHANASIS

Διερεύνηση των ενθυμήσεων και των ανθρωπιστικών αξιών
στον ευρωπαϊκό πολιτισμό: Έναν χρόνο μετά την παρακολούθηση της θεατρικής
παράστασης *Επτά επί Θήβας* του Αισχύλου

Η μελέτη, η οποία επικεντρώνεται στους *Επτά επί Θήβας* του Αισχύλου, εξετάζει τις μακροπρόθεσμες επιδράσεις των σκηνοθετικών αποφάσεων και των σκηνικών στοιχείων των θεατρικών παραστάσεων στην πρόσληψη θεατρικών παραστάσεων αρχαιοελληνικού δράματος από τους σύγχρονους θεατές. Στόχος της είναι να αποσαφηνιστεί η λειτουργία του θεάτρου στην έκφραση ανθρωπιστικών αξιών και να κατανοηθεί πώς οι διάφορες πτυχές της παράστασης απομνημονεύονται και ερμηνεύονται από το κοινό ένα χρόνο μετά την παρακολούθησή της. Στην έρευνα συμμετείχαν είκοσι άτομα τα οποία πήραν μέρος σε μία διαχρονικού σχεδιασμού μελέτη που διήρκεσε έναν χρόνο. Τα αποτελέσματα της μελέτης έδειξαν ότι το κοινό αποκόμισε αναμνήσεις από την απεικόνιση των χαρακτήρων, ιδιαίτερα του Ετεοκλή, καθώς και από την επικοινωνία ηθικών, πνευματικών, πολιτικών και κοινωνικών αξιών του αρχαιοελληνικού δράματος μέσα από την παράσταση. Η μνήμη και η ερμηνεία του κοινού επηρεάστηκαν από τις σκηνοθετικές επιλογές και τα σκηνικά στοιχεία που βελτίωσαν τη συνολική θεατρική εμπειρία και διευκόλυναν την προώθηση των ανθρωπιστικών αξιών. Η μελέτη υπογραμμίζει τη δύναμη της κλασικής ελληνικής τραγωδίας να ενσωματώνει διαχρονικές αξίες στη μακροπρόθεσμη μνήμη του κοινού, επιβεβαιώνοντας έτσι τη σημασία της στη σύγχρονη κοινωνία.

ΜΑΡΙΑ ΚΟΝΟΜΗ

MARIA KONOMI

Πέρα από την ενδυμασία:

Κριτικές διερευνήσεις της ενδυματολογικής πρακτικής στο θέατρο

Παρά τον κεντρικό του ρόλο στην παράσταση, το κοστούμι δεν έχει εκπροσωπηθεί επαρκώς στην ανάλυση της παράστασης. Το άρθρο αυτό στοχεύει στο να συμβάλει προς την ανάπτυξη μιας άλλης κατεύθυνσης με επίκεντρο το κοστούμι, λαμβάνοντας παράλληλα υπόψη ορισμένες σημαντικές εξελίξεις στον χώρο της δημοσιευμένης

ακαδημαϊκής έρευνας για το κοστούμι και το ένδυμα στο θέατρο, προς μια κατεύθυνση περισσότερο κριτική και λιγότερο περιγραφική. Η κύρια γραμμή συζήτησης αφορά την προβληματοποίηση του όρου ένδυμα (ή ρούχο) σε σχέση με το θεατρικό κοστούμι, σχέση που συχνά καθιστά το όποιο θεατρικό στοιχείο του κοστουμιού υποδεέστερο και 'αόρατο'. Παράλληλο στόχο αποτελεί η ανάδειξη της πολυπλοκότητας και της πολυποικιλότητας των ενδυματολογικών προσεγγίσεων και στοχεύσεων, καθώς συχνά κατά τον σχεδιασμό, την παραγωγή και τη συνθήκη της παράστασης καθίσταται περίπλοκη η σχέση των δύο παραπάνω κατηγοριών, υπερβαίνοντας τα στεγανά αξιακά δίπολα, όπως ρούχο/κοστούμι. Η διερεύνησή μας αξιοποιεί ιδιαίτερες περιπτώσεις ενδυματολογικού σχεδιασμού που συμμετέχουν στην παραπάνω συζήτηση και προβληματοποίηση: στο *Wunschkonzert* προβάλλει μια αδιόρατη θεατρικότητα του κοστουμιού πέρα από το καθημερινό ρούχο και τη μόδα, ενώ στο *Festen* τίθεται εντονότερα ο προβληματισμός ως προς τη σχέση μόδας-κοστουμιού και της σύμφυρης θεατρικών και κινηματογραφικών συμβάσεων· και παρακάτω, στην *Hλέκτρα* των Βιτέζ και Κόκκου το σύγχρονο ρούχο τοποθετείται ανάμεσα στον ρεαλισμό και την αφαίρεση, ενώ χρησιμοποιείται για τον εκσυγχρονισμό του κλασικού κειμένου· τέλος, στην *Ιθάκη* έμφαση δίνεται στην πειραματική υλικότητα, με την ανακύκλωση χρησιμοποιημένων ενδυμάτων και τη σύσταση του κοστουμιού ως ένα τρισδιάστατο *assemblage* στον χώρο, συμφύροντας το συλλογικό με το ατομικό.

ΜΠΟΓΙΑΝ ΜΟΥΣΙΑ – ΚΛΕΙΩ ΦΑΝΟΥΡΑΚΗ – ΜΙΧΑΕΛΑ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΥ –
 ΚΑΡΙΝ ΜΠΑΚΡΑΤΣΕΒΙΤΣ – ΣΑΡΑ ΤΕΜΕΝΤ – ΣΑΣΑ ΖΟΡΓΙΑΝ
 BOJAN MUSIL – CLIO FANOURAKI – MICHAELA ANTONIOU
 – KARIN BAKRAČEVIČ – SARA TEMENT – SAŠA ZORJAN

Θα πρέπει να παίξω τις κακές μου εμπειρίες; Η σύλληψη και η αξιολόγηση του εκπαιδευτικού προγράμματος «ACT IT OUT!» για άτομα με προβλήματα ψυχικής υγείας που βιώνουν επιθετικότητα και βία

Στο πλαίσιο κοινής ερευνητικής δράσης εταίρων από την Ισπανία, την Ελλάδα, τη Γερμανία, την Ιρλανδία και τη Σλοβενία, αναπτύχθηκε το εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα «ACT IT OUT!» για άτομα με προβλήματα ψυχικής υγείας, με σκοπό την αντιμετώπιση των μακροχρόνιων επιπτώσεων τραυματικών εμπειριών με επιθετικά και βίαια επεισόδια στην καθημερινή ζωή των συμμετεχόντων. Το μάθημα έχει

σχεδιαστεί για να χρησιμοποιηθεί από άτομα με προβλήματα ψυχικής υγείας που θέλουν να αντιμετωπίσουν επιθετικές και βίαιες εμπειρίες και κατά συνέπεια να βελτιώσουν την ποιότητα ζωής τους. Η διδακτέα ύλη του μαθήματος επικεντρώνεται στη συναισθηματική εκπαίδευση και χρησιμοποιεί τεχνικές του αυτοσχεδιαστικού θεάτρου ως μέσο ώστε οι συμμετέχοντες να εξερευνήσουν και να ρυθμίσουν τα συναισθήματά τους και κατά συνέπεια να βελτιώσουν την ποιότητα ζωής τους. Στη μελέτη αξιολόγησης από την πιλοτική εκπαίδευση, η οποία διεξήχθη στην Ισπανία, την Ελλάδα και την Ιρλανδία, αξιολογούμε συγκεκριμένους στόχους από το πρόγραμμα, που σχετίζονται με τις πιθανές βελτιώσεις σε κρίσιμες ικανότητες και δεξιότητες που απαιτούνται στην καθημερινή ζωή, συγκεκριμένα στη ρύθμιση των συναισθημάτων, στη θετική και την αρνητική επίδραση, την ικανοποίηση από τη ζωή και τις στρατηγικές αντιμετώπισης του στρες.

ΘΑΛΕΙΑ ΜΠΟΥΣΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ
THALIA BOUSIOPOULOU

Από το απεδαφικοποιημένο τραγικό δραματικό πρόσωπο στο μεταμορφωμένο
τραγικό πρόσωπο: τροχιές προς μια συγκροτητική ετερότητα

Η διερεύνηση της έννοιας του τραγικού προσώπου στο σύγχρονο θέατρο φαίνεται να οδηγεί στην ανάγκη προσέγγισης όχι μόνο της έννοιας του τραγικού, όπως αυτή μπορεί να νοηθεί σήμερα, αλλά και εκείνης του προσώπου υπό τη φιλοσοφική διάστασή της, η οποία άλλωστε, συχνά, δεν στερείται μιας ορισμένης θεατρικότητας. Η διαλεκτική φύση του τραγικού, όπως διατυπώθηκε από τη γερμανική φιλοσοφία του 19ου αιώνα, η οποία εστίασε το ενδιαφέρον της στην αρχαία ελληνική τραγωδία, μοιάζει να συνοδεύει και τις σύγχρονες εκφάνσεις του· αν οι έννοιες του Θεού ή της μοίρας, ως δυνάμεις έξωθεν του ανθρώπου, σήμερα απουσιάζουν, υπάρχουν εντούτοις άλλου είδους «αντικειμενικοί» καθορισμοί, όπως η επιθυμία, η οποία, σύμφωνα με τον Lacan, διαφεύγει του ελέγχου της συνείδησης, οδηγώντας έτσι στην έννοια του Άλλου ως παρουσίας θεμελιώδους για τον εαυτό αλλά και διαμορφώνοντας την ετερότητα εντός του υποκειμένου. Μέσα από την προσέγγιση δύο σύγχρονων θεατρικών έργων, του *Littoral* του Wajdi Mouawad και του *Προς Ελευσίνα* του Παύλου Μάτεσι, αναδύεται η έννοια της «απεδαφικοποίησης», κατά την ορολογία του G. Deleuze, του τραγικού δραματικού προσώπου, της απόσπασής του, δηλαδή, από τις εκάστοτε σταθερές

του εαυτού και της εισαγωγής του στο γίνεσθαι αλλά και της «επανεδαφικοποίησής» του στο πεδίο, αυτή τη φορά, του τραγικού προσώπου.

ΕΛΙΝΑ ΝΤΑΡΑΚΛΙΤΣΑ

ELINA DARAKLITSA

Στοιχεία της θεωρίας του χιούμορ του Luigi Pirandello στα έργα *Ποιος φοβάται τη Βιρτζίνια Γουλφ*; του E. Albee και *Τριαντάφυλλο στο στήθος* του T. Williams

Η παρούσα μελέτη εξετάζει δύο έργα της σύγχρονης αμερικανικής δραματουργίας υπό το φως της αισθητικής επιρροής της θεωρίας του χιούμορ –ή αλλιώς *umorismo*– του Luigi Pirandello. Ο λόγος για τα *Ποιος φοβάται τη Βιρτζίνια Γουλφ*; (*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*) του Edward Albee και *Τριαντάφυλλο στο στήθος* (*The Rose Tattoo*) του Tennessee Williams. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, τα δύο αυτά κείμενα ενέχουν κοινούς σημειολογικούς κώδικες, κρυμμένες έννοιες και φιλοσοφικό υπόστρωμα, αποτυπώνοντας, άλλοτε με εύληπτο και εμφανή τρόπο και άλλοτε με δύσληπτο και ερεβώδη, τις πιο σημαντικές αρχές της θεωρίας του Luigi Pirandello. Δεν είναι γνωστό αν οι δύο σημαντικοί Αμερικανοί δραματουργοί του 20ού αιώνα, που άφησαν ανεξίτηλα ίχνη στην πορεία του διεθνούς θεάτρου, τόσο στον τομέα της δραματουργίας όσο και σε αυτόν της θεατρικής πρακτικής, επέλεξαν συνειδητά να εισαγάγουν στοιχεία της αισθητικής του Pirandello στο έργο τους ή απλώς η επιρροή του τελευταίου εμφώλευσε ασυνείδητα σε αυτό λόγω της εντρύφησής τους στη θεατρική τέχνη. Επίσης, στα δύο υπό εξέταση έργα, φωτίζονται τα λαογραφικά και ηθογραφικά στοιχεία που είναι αντλημένα από τον ιταλικό πολιτισμό, επιβεβαιώνοντας ότι το εν λόγω δραματουργικό φαινόμενο αξίζει περαιτέρω έρευνας και εμβάθυνσης από τη μεριά της διεθνούς επιστήμης.

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΠΕΤΡΑΚΟΥ

KYRIAKI PETRAKOU

Η εικόνα του Λόρδου Βύρωνα στο ελληνικό θέατρο και τον κινηματογράφο

Σε όλη τη διάρκεια του 19ου αιώνα η ποίηση του Βύρωνα διαβαζόταν με πάθος στην Ελλάδα, επηρεάζοντας την ελληνική ποίηση και τη δραματουργία, ενώ ο ίδιος ο ποιητής εξιδανικευόταν λόγω της συμβολής του στην Ελληνική Επανάσταση του

1821 με την περιουσία του, το γόητρό του και τον (σχεδόν ηρωικό) θάνατό του. Η προσωπικότητά του ήταν επίσης πρόσφορη προς δραματοποίηση: είτε ως δραματουργικός άξονας είτε ως θεατρικό πρόσωπο, ο Βύρων εμφανίζεται σε διάφορα έργα που γράφτηκαν διεθνώς στο πρώτο μισό του 19ου αιώνα ως εκφάνσεις του κινήματος και του πνεύματος του φιλελληνισμού. Εντούτοις, δεν γράφτηκε κανένα ελληνικό έργο που να περιέχει τον Βύρωνα σε όλη τη διάρκεια του 19ου αιώνα. Ο πρώτος που έγραψε τέτοιο έργο, με τίτλο *Ο Βύρων*, ήταν ο συγγραφέας και εκδότης Σπύρος Ποταμιάνος, το 1909, το οποίο παραστάθηκε, αλλά δεν δημοσιεύτηκε. Ο Αλέκος Λιδωρίκης έγραψε τον *Λόρδο Βύρωνα* το 1944, έργο το οποίο ανέβηκε στο νεοπαγές Εθνικό Θέατρο. Προκάλεσε κάποια αναταραχή, επειδή παρουσιάζει επί σκηνής τις σκανδαλώδεις πτυχές της ζωής του ποιητή. Ο Μανώλης Σκουλούδης έγραψε τη δική του *Τραγωδία του Λόρδου Βύρωνα* το 1955. Το 1992 παρουσιάστηκε (και) στην Ελλάδα το κινηματογραφικό έργο του Νίκου Κούνδουρου *Byron, Ballad for a Daemon*, βασισμένο σε σενάριο του ίδιου και του Φώτη Κωνσταντινίδη. Το σενάριο με τους διαλόγους είναι γραμμένο στα αγγλικά με λίγες ρήσεις στα ελληνικά. Ήταν διεθνής παραγωγή, γυρίστηκε στη Ρωσία με Έλληνες κα ξένους ηθοποιούς και άλλους παράγοντες. Εδώ αναλύονται όλα τα έργα αυτά με αναφορά στην κριτική τους πρόσληψη.

БАΛТЕР ПΟΥХНЕР

WALTER PUCHNER

Ερασιτέχνες ηθοποιοί και δραματουργοί ως μαχητές για την ελευθερία
στην Ελληνική Επανάσταση του 1821

Το άρθρο δίνει μια λεπτομερειακή εικόνα των ηθοποιών των ερασιτεχνικών ελληνικών σκηνών στο Βουκουρέστι, το Ιάσιο και την Οδησό, καθώς και των δραματουργών που συμμετείχαν στην ολέθρια μάχη του Δραγατσανίου τον Ιούνιο του 1821, σκοτώθηκαν ή τραυματίστηκαν εκεί ή κατόρθωσαν να διαφύγουν, και φωτίζει τη μετέπειτα δράση τους στο θέατρο του πολέμου και στο θέατρο της σκηνής κατά τη διάρκεια του Αγώνα και στα αμέσως μετέπειτα χρόνια.

ΑΥΡΑ ΣΙΔΗΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ

AVRA SIDIROPOULOU

Ο *Άμλετ* της Κατερίνας Ευαγγελάτου

ως επιμνημόσυνη επιτέλεση οικογενειακού πένθους

Η παράσταση *Άμλετ* της Κατερίνας Ευαγγελάτου στη σκηνή Αμφιθέατρο στην Αθήνα (2019) αποτελεί έναν ιδιότυπο φόρο τιμής στην παραγωγή του έργου που σκηνοθέτησε το 1991 ο αείμνηστος πατέρας της σκηνοθέτριας Σπύρος Ευαγγελάτος. Κινηματογραφημένα πλάνα από την παράσταση του Ευαγγελάτου προβάλλονται σε συναισθηματικά φορτισμένες σκηνές, δημιουργώντας συνεχείς νοηματικές και αισθητικές διαστρωματώσεις, που συνδυάζουν διαφορετικές θεατρικές παραδόσεις. Η αλληλεπίδραση μεταξύ της ζωντανής δράσης και του ψηφιακού στοιχείου χρησιμεύει, επίσης, για να υποδηλώσει την κυκλικότητα της ιστορίας και την αναπόφευκτη συνένωση των ζωντανών και των νεκρών, που βρίσκεται στον πυρήνα του έργου. Το «φάντασμα» της παραγωγής του 1991 έρχεται να «στοιχειώσει» τη σύγχρονη ανάγνωση του σαιξπηρικού αριστουργήματος, ξυπνώντας μνήμες και δοκιμάζοντας τις αντιληπτικές δυνατότητες των θεατών. Οι δύο παραγωγές συνυπάρχουν μέσα σε ένα άχρονο παρόν, μια σκηνοθετική επιλογή που επιχειρεί να συμφιλιώσει τον θεατή με το πέρασμα του χρόνου και με την ανθρώπινη θνητότητα, προβάλλοντας τη συμφιλίωση αυτή μέσα από την εφήμερη τέχνη του θεάτρου, που ωστόσο «αενάως αναγεννάται» και διατηρείται στη μνήμη μέσα από τη διαδικασία της ανακύκλωσης και της διακειμενικότητας. Γεφυρώνοντας το χάσμα μεταξύ των δύο παραγωγών, η σκηνοθέτρια καταργεί τον ιστορικό χρόνο, ελαστικοποιώντας τον μέσω της μνήμης.

ΔΗΜΟΣΘΕΝΗΣ ΦΙΣΤΟΥΡΗΣ

DIMOSTHENIS FISTOURIS

Το θέμα της Ελληνικής Επανάστασης του 1821 στην οπερατική σκηνή υπό το πρίσμα του Φιλελληνισμού-Οριενταλισμού από Ευρωπαίους συνθέτες και του Φολκλορισμού-Εθνικισμού από Έλληνες συνθέτες

Ο θαυμασμός της Ευρώπης για τα επιτεύγματα του αρχαίου ελληνικού πολιτισμού, όπως εκδηλώθηκε κατά τον Διαφωτισμό, στη συνέχεια μετασχηματίστηκε σε μια ιδεολογική και πολιτική κίνηση ηθικής και υλικής ενίσχυσης των Ελλήνων προ και

κατά τη διάρκεια της Επανάστασης του 1821, πυροδοτώντας το κίνημα του Φιλελληνισμού. Παράλληλα, την περίοδο εκείνη, οι αποικιοκρατικές κατακτήσεις της Ευρώπης ενίσχυσαν το κίνημα του Οριενταλισμού, που σταδιακά οδηγήθηκε σε έναν αφομοιωτικό εξωτισμό. Ο Φιλελληνισμός στη μουσική, και ιδιαίτερα στις λυρικές σκηνές, αναπτύχθηκε πρωτίστως στη Γαλλία μέχρι τα τέλη του 1830, και μετά στην Ιταλία μέχρι τα μέσα του 19ου αιώνα, ενώ στη συνέχεια μετασχηματίστηκε σε έκφραση έντονης εθνικής αφύπνισης στα χέρια των Ελλήνων δημιουργών. Στην οπερατική αυτή δημιουργία γαλλικών, ιταλικών και ελληνικών έργων συγκαταλέγονται έργα που άντεξαν στο χρόνο και άλλα που έπεσαν σε λήθη. Όσον αφορά στους Έλληνες δημιουργούς, τελικά κατάφεραν να προετοιμάσουν το έδαφος για την ανάπτυξη της νεοελληνικής έντεχνης μουσικής, παρά τις αντιξοότητες που αντιμετώπισαν, ένεκα των μικροπολιτικών σκοπιμοτήτων, των ανταγωνισμών, των οικονομικών και λειτουργικών δυσχερειών. Η παρούσα εργασία εξετάζει, αφενός, την εργογραφία αυτή χρονολογικά στο διάβα του 19ου αιώνα, και αφετέρου, τα στοιχεία εκείνα που άπτονται των τάσεων φιλελληνισμού, οριενταλισμού, εξωτισμού, φολκλορισμού και εθνικισμού, για την αισθητική θεώρηση αυτών των έργων μέσα στο ευρύτερο πλαίσιο του Ρομαντισμού.

THE AUTHORS OF THE VOLUME

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https://www.theatre.uoa.gr/anthropino_dynamiko/meli_dep/ntaraklitsa_elina/

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Clio Fanouraki Assistant Professor in Theatrology–Theatre Didactics (Theory & Praxis), Department of Theatre Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Director, Writer, Performer. Her scientific interests and research focus on theatre/drama education, contemporary theatre and digital theatre/drama, language arts, multicultural drama education, writing, teaching and directing drama and theatre for children, teenagers and adults. She has conducted multiple research training workshops on the didactics of theatre. Clio Fanouraki has been active in teaching, writing and directing theatre and film for children, young people and adults. (Feature film: *Xamou* (2016). Short films: *Medea* (2012), *Ftou! Freedom for All* (2010), theatre performances etc.). She has worked in the field of research, production and performing for documentaries, film, theatre and art festivals.

See: https://en.theatre.uoa.gr/el/human_resources/faculty_members/fanouraki_clio/

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Theodore Grammatas He was born in Mytilene, Greece, in 1951. He graduated from the Department of Philosophy of the University of Athens in 1975. He pursued his postgraduate studies at the Universities Paris X-Nanterre and École Pratique des Hautes Études from where he received his D.E.A diploma in 1976 and his Doctorat de 3e cycle in 1979 with the thesis *La notion de Liberté chez Nikos Kazantzakis*. He has been a professor of the Department of Primary Education of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens since 1994, where he has taught

undergraduate and postgraduate courses concentrating on «New Greek theatre and society», «Theatre for children and youth», «Theatre and Education», «History of the Modern Greek theatre». He has participated in numerous Greek and international conferences, seminars and symposia directly related to his field of scientific interest and teaching. He is a member of many scientific associations and research centers in Greece and abroad. He was director of the Art and Speech Laboratory of the Human Studies Sector of the Department of Primary Education of the University of Athens. He has published many monographs on ancient and modern Greek drama/ theatre, theatre pedagogy and theatre for children, in Greek and foreign journals and conference proceedings.

Dimosthenis Fistouris Ph.D. in Historical and Systematic Musicology from the Department of Music Studies at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. He holds diplomas in vocal arts, byzantine music, harmony, counterpoint and fugue. Currently, he is a collaborative adjunct lecturer in the Department of Music Studies at the University of Ioannina and the European University Cyprus as well. He is also the instructor of an e-learning program titled «History of the Opera» at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. He is the author of the book *The Operas of Spyros Samaras: Music-Dramaturgical Analysis and Aesthetic Interpretation* (2017) and of many articles and papers published in peer-reviewed international conference proceedings. Thanks to a scholarship from the Alexandros Onassis Foundation, he fulfilled his vocal studies/opera in Italy with eminent singers-masters such as Luigi Alva, Paride Venturi, Arrigo Pola, Carlo Bergonzi, Renata Scotto and Enzo Spatola. Furthermore, he is an active freelance tenor and he has collaborated as a soloist with the National Opera of Greece, the Megaron Moussikis (Megaron – The Athens Concert Hall) and the Opera - Festival of Thessalonica. Additionally, he is currently a professor of vocal training and choral conducting in conservatoires and superior faculties of dramatic arts in Athens. He has also composed music for theatrical performances receiving favorable reviews. Moreover, he has received his undergraduate degree from the Metallurgy Department of the National Technical University of Athens.

Maria Konomi Assistant Professor of Theatre Studies, Scenography and Costume at the Department of Theatre Studies at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, teaching at graduate and postgraduate levels. She holds a degree in Literature

and Modern Greek Studies, as well as a BA (Hons) in Theatre Design (Wimbledon School of Art) and a Master of Arts in Scenography (Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design). She completed her Doctoral Thesis cum laude at the Department of Theatre Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (2011). She has participated in postdoctoral research and staff mobility programmes at various European Universities in Europe (Oxford, the University of Lodz, Artes University in Cologne and Ca' Foscari University in Venice, as well as at the University of Copenhagen). She has organized seminars, workshops and lectures in Greece and abroad and has participated in international exhibitions. She has published in scientific journals, collective volumes and conference proceedings. Her publications include *Modern and Contemporary Scenography: Landmarks and Developments* (in Greek, Kappa Editions 2021). She has more than ninety (90) production credits for scenography and costume design in theatre, performance, opera and film, presenting her work in important theatrical organizations and art and film festivals in Greece and abroad. Her research and publications focus on contemporary staging and expanded scenography, theatre and performance in public space, new spatial forms of theatre and site-specific performance, critical approaches to performance, scenography and costume. She curated «Site-Specifics», a series of lectures at the Benaki Museum, Athens, 2016. She was Co-Curator for Theory for the Participation of Greece at the Prague Quadrennial '15, and Co-Curator for the Participation of Greece in Prague Quadrennial '23 (PQ23) for both the professional (Countries and Regions Exhibition) and the Student Exhibition sections. She is a founding member of the Greek Theatre Designers Association (GTDA), a member of its Board of Directors (2014-2022), and a member of OISTAT and IFTR.

Konstantinos Mastrothanasis is a teacher and a Ph.D. holder from the Department of Primary Education at the University of the Aegean, specializing in Theatre Pedagogy. He currently serves as the Head of K.E.P.E.A. Viotia. He also serves as an Adjunct Professor at the University of the Aegean and at A.S.P.A.I.T.E. He has participated in several teacher training/development programs, as well as in European research projects. He is a registered trainer for the Institute of Educational Policy (I.E.P.) for the New Study Programs in Theatrical Education and the Induction Training of newly appointed teachers. His research has been published in reputable Greek and international journals, conference proceedings, and collective volumes. He has received awards for his work from the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences and from the Scientific Association for the Pro-

motion of Educational Innovation. Lastly, he serves as a reviewer for international scientific journals and conferences.

Bojan Musil Associate Professor of psychology and the head of the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, Slovenia. He obtained his Ph.D. Psychology in 2005 from University of Ljubljana. He does research in the field of social psychology. Additionally, his research interests also lie at the intersection of psychology and technology.

Kyriaki Petrakou Professor Emerita in the Department of Theatre Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She was appointed lecturer in the same department in 1998, of which she is also a doctor (1996). The main object of her special academic interest is Modern Greek Theatre, from nineteenth century up to nowadays. Together with Savvas Gogos, she also wrote a dictionary on ancient (Greek and Roman) theatre. Besides her regular teaching of European and Greek Drama and History of the Theatre in the Department of Theatre Studies, on under-graduate and post-graduate level, she has participated in a great number of conferences in Greece and abroad, and often gives lectures on cultural topics, mostly theatrical. She has taught seminars on Modern Greek Theatre in the University of Vienna (2000) and the University of Silesia (Slaski, 2002). She also taught European Drama and History of the Theatre post graduate level in the Open University of Cyprus, mainly through e-class (2011-2013). She has published twelve (12) books and about a hundred and eighty (180) papers in several languages.

Walter Puchner Born in Vienna in 1947. He studied Theatrology at the University of Vienna and in 1972 he received his doctorate from the Faculty of Philosophy with a thesis on the modern Greek shadow theatre. In 1977 he was awarded a postdoctoral professorship at the same university with a thesis on the birth of theatre in Greek popular culture. Since then, he has settled permanently in Greece, but has continued to teach for 30 years at the University of Vienna in the form of intensive courses. In 1987 he was elected President of the Department of Philology in Rethymno. At the same time, he was visiting professor (Gastordinarius) at the University of Graz, Austria, in the chair of *Ethnologia Europaea* (1985-86, 1988). Since 1989 he has been Professor at the National and Kapodis-

trian University of Athens, first in the Department of Philology and since 1991 in the Department of Theatre Studies, where he has continuously served as Chair and Deputy Chair. He has been invited several times as a visiting professor at European and American universities. In 1994 he was elected a Corresponding Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, in 1995 he was a visiting professor at the Institute of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at the University of Vienna. In 2001 he was awarded the highest distinction of the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art for his scientific achievements. In 2002 he was elected First Vice President of the Hellenic Folklore Society. He has published around 125 books, almost 550 studies and almost 1500 book reviews and book presentations (a total of around 2200 publications, excluding 15 literary publications). His research interests include the history and theory of Greek, Mediterranean and Balkan theatre, comparative folklore, Byzantine and modern Greek studies, literary and historical issues, textual editing, and the theory of theatre and drama. In November 2018 he was awarded the title of Honorary Professor by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. In May 2022 he was awarded the title of Honorary Doctorate of the Department of History & Ethnology at the Faculty of Classics & Humanities Studies of the Democritus University of Thrace.

Avra Sidiropoulou Associate Professor of Theatre at the Open University of Cyprus and Artistic Director of Athens-based Persona Theatre Company. She has published extensively on directing theory and practice, contemporary performance and dramaturgy and is the author of *Directions for Directing. Theatre and Method* (Routledge 2018) and *Authoring Performance: The Director in Contemporary Theatre* (Palgrave Macmillan 2011). She is also the co-editor of *Adapting Greek Tragedy. Contemporary Contexts for Ancient Texts* (CUP 2021) and editor of *Staging 21st Century Tragedies: Theatre, Politics and Global Crisis* (Routledge, 2022) and is currently co-editing (with Adam Ledger) a special issue on Director Training for TDPT. Her main areas of scholarly specialization include directing theory, the ethics of adaptation, contemporary dramaturgy and practice as research. She was a Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, the Martin E. Segal Centre at CUNY, MIT, the Universities of Leeds and Surrey, the Institute of Theatre Studies at Freie University, the Berlin and a Japan Foundation Fellow at the University of Tokyo. As the Artistic Director of Athens-based Persona Theatre Company (<https://persona.gr/en/>), she has directed works from the classical and contemporary repertory,

lectured and conducted directing workshops in various parts of the world. Her theatre company has received state subsidy and funding from several private foundations, as well as the E.U. Her most recent directing works include Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal* at the Cyprus Theatre Organization (2022), *Enter Hamlet* (her script) at the Verona Shakespeare Fringe Festival (2022) and Karen Malpede's *Troy Too* at Here Arts Center in New York (May 2023). In 2020 she was nominated for the Gilder/Coigney International Theatre Award by the League of Professional Theatre Women.

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Evagelia Spiropoulou Born in Athens. She graduated from the School of Theology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and works in Secondary Education in a position of responsibility, as the school principal. She has also graduated from the Department of Theater Studies of the University of Peloponnese. At present, she is working on her PhD titled: *Theater Criticism in 19th century Athens, start of 20th century*. Furthermore, she participated in the research project: «Supporting researchers with an emphasis on young researchers, in the project: Discourse, Aesthetics and Ideology of Theater Criticism on articles of speech and art (1900-1950)». Additionally, she has contributed on the study of history and criticism of the modern Greek theater, where criticisms of the time were brought together for the first time on a single corpus, making it easier for researchers and scholars to access. These criticisms were first published in the cultural magazine *Typos* during the first half of the 20th century. This research project has been approved by the second cycle of the act «Supporting researchers with an emphasis on Young Researchers» and is co-financed by Greece and the EU (European Social Fund-ESF), through the Operational Programme «Human Resource Development, Education and Lifelong Learning 2014-2020». The operational body was the University of Peloponnese, with associate professor Varvara Georgopoulou (Department of Theatre Studies, University of Peloponnese) as scientific manager and responsible, assistant professor Zoe Ververopoulou (Department of Journalism and Media, AUTH) as deputy academic advisor and PhD Alikí Antonopoulou and PhD Candidate Evagelia Spiropoulou as members of the research team.

Sara Tement Associate Professor of psychology at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, Slovenia. She obtained her Ph.D.

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Gogo K. Varzelioti Associate Professor at the Department of Theater Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. After graduating from the undergraduate and postgraduate programs of the NKUA, she conducted the research for her doctoral thesis in the State Archive of Venice, as a scholar of the Academy of Athens, at the Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies. The thesis was published in 2011 (*Κρητική κωμωδία και καθημερινή ζωή: σχέση σκηνικής εικόνας και κοινωνίας στο βενετοκρατούμενο Χάνδακα*, Athens-Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies publ., Series «Tommaso Flangini», 2011). She carried out research missions to the Vatican, in the Archive of the Propaganda Fede, within the framework of the program of the Academy of Athens entitled «Greek theater and drama in the era of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Ottoman Empire» (2002, 2003) and worked at the Center for Research on Medieval and Modern Hellenism of the Academy of Athens as a scientific associate (2004-2009). She has participated in several research programs and scientific conferences in Greece and abroad, has published papers in scientific journals and collective volumes, and has taught in undergraduate and postgraduate seminars in Athens, Venice and Prague. She has edited various scientific volumes and Proceedings of Conferences in Greece and in Venice, and she was the editor of the Scientific Journal of the Department of Theater Studies, NKUA, *Parabasis* from 2013 to 2023. She is a member of the editorial team of the magazine *Artes Renascentes*, *semestrale dell'associazione internazionale «Artes Renascentes»* and a founding member of the European Network of Research and Documentation of Performances of Ancient Greek Drama (Arc-Net).

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Contemporary Theatre of the Real (Papazissis 2023). She is also a theatre critic, member of the Hellenic Association of Theatre and Performing Arts Critics.

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DISSERTATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE STUDIES NKUA

ELENI ALEFANTINO

Cultivating Creativity through Theatre Education Using the «Comic»:
An Experimental Research in Primary School Students [2022]

Supervisor: Aikaterini (Kaiti) Diamantakou

The object of study and research of this doctoral dissertation is the educational dimensions of the use and perception of the *comic*. We attempt the correlation of creativity, *comic* and theatrical education in our effort to approach and highlight new teaching/didactic perspectives harmonized with modern teaching methods that can effectively enhance modern study curricula, which aim at the comprehensive development of student's personality. The purpose of the theoretical part is to investigate the pedagogical dimensions of the *comic* and its didactic abilities, both as a tool in the teaching of other courses and as a teaching material of a –potentially– autonomous didactic topic, combined in both cases with the utilization of the techniques of Theatrical Education, and aiming at enhancing students' creative, communicative and humorous skills.

In the context of the dissertation, an experimental research was conducted on elementary school students aged 7-10 years old, who were divided into two groups (control group and experimental group). In the experimental group of students, a specifically designed lesson plan was applied (with the teaching method that of the techniques of drama/theatre education and the subject of teaching being the *comic*). The assessment of the results was performed using the psychometric tests of creativity, Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (Figural A and Figural B), for which we obtained a permission to use license from Scholastic Testing Service Inc. The data analysis findings revealed that the students of the experimental groups demonstrated a steady improvement in their performance during the second creativity test compared to the control groups. The present research study, therefore, confirms the results of similar research studies that correlate the *comic* with the cultivation of creativity. Furthermore, concerning the cultivation of students'

humorous skills, data analysis revealed a tendency of relative increase of the *comic* during the second test in the experimental group of students.

We could, therefore, conclude that the creation of a pleasant humorous environment or the activation of students' innate humorous skills contributes to the enhancement of human creativity and indirectly contributes to the educational and learning process. At this point, however, the following concerns arise: Does all this approach involve something ephemeral? Based on the modern pedagogical theories, should the aim for the teaching of the *comic* be the substantial and deeper practice of the students with it and not –only– the simple activation of the *comic* for the sole purpose of indirectly contributing to the creation of a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom and to the achievement of better learning results? What could the educational policy authorities do to ensure the optimal and most effective cultivation of students' humorous skills? Our opinion is that, apart from the decisive contribution that *comic* demonstrates as a teaching tool, the *comic* can also stand and function as an autonomous teaching subject. In our opinion –and this could be the proposal and the practical benefit of this dissertation– the *comic* should be considered as an autonomous subject of study and –based on this fundamental view– a curriculum, that includes the teaching of the *comic* in primary and secondary education, as is the case of other subjects, should be designed.

IOANNA ALEXANDRI

Stage Objects in Greek Dramaturgy of the 1990s:
Function, Meaning, Perception [2022]

Supervisor: George P. Pefanis

The aim of this doctoral thesis is to examine the way stage objects function and contribute to the emergence of meaning in the Greek drama plays of the 1990s. The study focuses exclusively on the dramatic text. Stage objects detected in the plays of the reference period are being classified in four major categories which illustrate their relation to the capital textual structures: dramatic space, dramatic time, dramatic character, dramatic discourse. Within these four major categories minor conceptual axes are being formed according to the dominant functions of the stage objects in the plays. The methodology adopted for the study constitutes a combination of two

different theories: semiotics and phenomenology. On the one hand, semiotics provides analysis with a systematic view over the structures of the dramatic text, offering a solid ground for the examination of the referential aspect of stage objects. Phenomenology, on the other hand, placing emphasis on the concepts of corporeality and multi-sensory perception of the world of things, establishes a certain view on the materiality of objects. Thus, it activates alternative interpretive approaches which illuminate aspects of the performative power of objects.

The first section deals with the ways stage objects interact with dramatic space, discussing cases of problematization of space, cases of redefining relation to space and cases of contribution of space to self-perception. The second section examines the relation with the dramatic time through objects related to time, objects linked to mnemonic processes, transitional objects, as well as objects which highlight the time of theatre. The third section explores objects which function as personal belongings, objects which serve to the persons as inner shelters or temporary resorts and objects which prompt identity questions or even broader ontological issues. The fourth section provides an outline of the relation of stage objects to the dramatic discourse in terms of either promoting action or undermining dramatic discourse.

The research aims to highlight the ‘discourse’ of stage objects in the Greek dramaturgy of the 1990s, i.e., the way in which the meaning of dramatic texts is articulated through stage objects. In this way, a panorama is formed not only of the functions and meanings of the stage objects, but also of the dramatic production of the 1990s and its dominant style and aesthetics.

DIMITRIOS ASIMAKOPOULOS

Priests and Seers in Ancient Greek Tragedy:

The Dramatic Depiction of the Earthly Representation of the Divine [2022]

Supervisor: Ekaterini (Kaiti) Diamantakou

The thesis is dealing in detail with the role and function of seers and priests in the extant dramatic corpus of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, while at the same time all the references to the representatives and to the action of divination and ritual practices in the works of the three tragedians are also being meticulously identified and collected. A detailed mapping of the dramatic field has been further developed

through the specific lyrical references of the Chorus as they occur in each play per se, in order to facilitate the drawing of safe conclusions at the end of our research. Along with the primary sources, the historical, spiritual and literary context of the classical writing era is examined and a comparative approach to the different ways of dramatic development and semantic investment of seers and priests by each tragic poet and in each dramatic work is attempted.

The thesis investigates the relationship of the divine factor with the priests and seers with respect to the evolution of their action in each work. At the same time, it studies the favorable or negative development of the action in each play for each dramatic person who either gave oracles or performed some priestly acts or looked for or accepted them. In addition, the thesis traces the way of dealing with the racial and national identity of the seers and priests in the works of the three tragedians. The infallible or non-infallible nature of the content of the oracles in the development of the plot in each play is also examined, as well as the margins of freedom of action of the dramatic heroes to whom it refers.

The thesis, attempting a specialized synthetic and comprehensive research in the field of ancient drama, aspires to be a helpful contribution to interdisciplinary research in this area as well as to help comprehend the historical existence and social role of priests and seers during the period under review through all the surviving works of ancient Greek tragedy.

EVDOKIA DELIPETROU

Aspects of Greek Identity in the Performance of History.

National Theatre of Greece, 1932-1967 [2023]

Supervisor: Platon Mavromoustakos

The topic of study is the stage manifestations of the national identity, through the theatrical performance of History which took place at the National Theatre of Greece, in the period 1932-1967. The body of the research comprises the productions of twelve (12) plays, which contribute to national self-awareness, due to their historical topics. (Vassilis Rotas, *Na zei to Mesolonghi* [*Long Live the Messolonghi*]; Alekos Lidorikis, *Lord Byron*; Aristomenes Proveleggios, *Rigas*; Spyros Melas, *Papaflissas, Rigas Velesinlis*; Ilias Venezis, *Blok C*; Nikos Kazantzakis, *Kapodistrias*; Dimitris

Bogris, *Haravgi* [*Daybreak*], *Skotinia ston Epachto* [*Darkness in Epachtos*]; Dionysis Romas, *Treis kosmoi – mia zoe* [*Three worlds – a life*]; Giorgos Theotokas, *Synapandima stin Penteli* [*Meeting in Penteli*]; Pantelis Prevelakis, *To ifaisteio* [*The volcano*]). The main part of the study is divided into three sections, which are determined by the periodization of the body of research: The last interwar decade – The first postwar years – Postwar period. The analytical approach of the performances focuses on the historical dramaturgical content, the theatrical aesthetics of the performances and the contexts of the productions (directors: Fotos Politis, Dimitris Rondiris, Pelos Katselis, Sokratis Karatinos, Kostis Michaelidis, Stelios Papadakis, Alexis Solomos, Dinos Dimopoulos, Alexis Minotis). Methodologically, a broadening of the research field is sought in the combination of theatrical historiography and performance analysis with concepts of historical and cultural studies.

The elements which characterize the representation of Greek history, on the stage of the National Theatre of Greece, are discussed in the Conclusions, in terms of the performative manifestations of national identity, the dialectic of memory and oblivion in the performances, the historical conditions and the response of a state institution to its national role. On the stage of the National Theatre of Greece, oblivion covers not only the disturbing dimensions of the past but primarily those vibrations of the present that could cause cracks in the national identity. Mechanisms of representation, performance and communication are developed through repertoire, direction, scenography and public discourse, contributing to the aesthetic and ideological entrenchment of historical performances within the context of Greekness. To a large extent, an idealised image of Greece is presented, cleansed of its nationally unacceptable dimensions, in the same way that history is presented cleansed of its dark, nationally unacceptable or uninteresting aspects.

FOTEINI GRITSOPOULOU

Dance in Athenian Revue (1950-2000). Themes, Trends and Attitudes through the Study of Fotis Metaxopoulos' Archive [2023]

Supervisor: Konstantza Georgakaki

Fotis Metaxopoulos is one of the greatest dancers and choreographers in the Athenian Revue and throughout his career in theater, cinema and on the Athenian dance floors,

he collected material (photographic, audio, theatrical, journalistic). This material has recently been classified with his own valuable advice and provided essential information about the world of theater at the time it describes. This thesis concerns Dance in Athenian Revue and covers the second half of the 20th century.

In the 1st chapter of the thesis, dance in the 20th century is studied, through the study of the dance trends that prevailed worldwide since the beginning of the century and their adoption in Greece. Another subject of study is the relationship between dance and theater. There is a reference to dance education in Greece and an attempt was made to record the dance schools and the education they provided, drawing information from the Press of the time. In the same chapter, there is a reference in the art of choreography and the ways in which each choreographer develops his own way of expression through choreography. In the 2nd chapter of the thesis, the first steps of Fotis Metaxopoulos's life are presented, up to the beginning of his involvement with the Musical Theatre: His childhood, the reason for becoming a dancer, his first contact with dance at Myriam Choisy's school, his first dance job with Nikos Hadjiskos, the years he danced in the Musical Theatre, his career at the National Opera but also his cooperation with Katherine Dunham, provide essential information for the study and understanding of his career as a dancer and choreographer. The 3rd chapter concerns Fotis Metaxopoulos's establishment in the Athenian Revue. In the 4th chapter his presence in theatrical Musical and cinema is studied, and at last, the 5th chapter focuses on his presence in Revue (Athenian Floor Dance). The recording and study of his archive is important for further research on the Musical Theatre.

ELENA KAMILARI

Radio Adaptations of Stage Plays for the Hellenic Radio Foundation (EIP) between
1953 and 1967: Adaptation Strategies [2022]

Supervisor: Platon Mavromoustakos

This dissertation focuses on the unexplored field of radio adaptations of stage plays. During the '50s and '60s, the adaptation of theatre plays for the radio became a major part of the drama output of the Hellenic National Radio Foundation (EIP). The research is based on three archives: a) the archive of the Hellenic National Radio

Foundation (EIP), which includes more than 1500 radio scripts (adaptations of stage plays) produced during the '50s and '60s b) the archive of the magazine *Ραδιοτηλεόραση*, which includes the titles of the plays that were adapted and broadcast, the names of adapters, directors and actors and articles about the productions and c) the Hellenic Radio Foundation Archive of broadcasts.

The study approaches radio adaptations from a perspective that integrates theatre, drama and radio semiotics and post- classical narratology in the context of media studies. Special emphasis is placed on the relations between narrative structure, its semiotic realization and recontextualization. This approach works with categories like narrator, focalization, story time and discourse time and focuses on the narrative agency in charge of the presentation of the story, the selection of what is to be told, from which perspective and how the sequences are put together. In the analysis of radio adaptations, particular attention has been paid to other sign systems beside language that can also transmit narratological meaning (voices, music, noises, but also technical features like cutting and mixing). The objective of this research is not a comparative examination between source text and target text but the analysis of what is being told (story) and how it is being told (discourse).

The first chapter is an overview of the history and praxis of radio adaptations as cultural practice in Great Britain, Germany and Greece. The second chapter presents the methodological tools borrowed from semiotics of drama and radio and post classical narratology, which are applied in order to compare the source-texts with the target-texts and analyze the adaptation strategies. The following chapters are structured according to the narrative components of drama: a) division into segments, b) *dramatis personae*, c) dramatic space, d) dramatic time, e) dramatic text and f) plot vs fabula.

Using rare archival material as case studies the dissertation offers documented answers to the following questions: a) which signs and combination of signs produce narrative functions on the discourse level and which are these functions and b) to what extend are radio codes exploited. Due to the presentation, documentation and analysis of a wide range of primary archive material and the combination of different methodological tools and theories, this thesis attempts to highlight a crucial missing piece of the history of modern Greek drama and modern Greek radio and to set up a particular interpretative model for the approach of radio adaptations. By treating adapted stage plays as radio drama, this essay explores the relationship between the printed text and its audio manifestation. It also reveals the aesthetics of playwrights,

directors and actors, who used radio as a site of experimentation and turned radio's supposed limitations into an advantage.

NATALIE KATSOU

Spectral Figures in Contemporary Greek Dramaturgy
from the 1974 Regime Change (Metapolitefsi) to 2020 [2023]

Supervisor: George P. Pefanis

The PhD thesis under the title *Spectral figures in contemporary Greek dramaturgy from the 1974 regime change (Metapolitefsi) to 2020* investigates ghosts and other spectral figures that appear in contemporary theatre texts suggesting the perspective of an active dramaturgy reading, combining philosophical, theoretical and drama analysis perspectives. The question of the ontology of the spectrum is present throughout the study of the various spectral figures, during the exploration of the relationship between the Derridean «revenant» with the developing frame of the Freudian uncanny, in conjunction with memory and ways of creating history/histories. As a «revenant», the spectrum surges from the margins and it acquires the position of an active agent within dramaturgy. Since all characters on paper and on stage are products of the imagination, the spectrum invites to a deeper investigation of the other and it turns response –per Waldenfels– to a necessary term of being on a wider scale. Its appearance sheds the sense of the uncanny, whilst it shatters the concept of time and questions any linear reading.

In order to trace and restore the fractures the spectrum causes, a study into memory and history, as well as into the once-familiar-turned-unfamiliar is needed. Memory (or memories) and history (or histories) synthesize the narratives on stage whilst mirroring the narratives from off-stage. In the exploration of this double narrative, spectral figures function as a powerful search tool for multiple layers of meaning. The combination of semiotics-hermeneutical structures to phenomenological extensions and the overall presentation aims further to help establish the role of the dramaturg as a creative researcher that analyses the parameters and offers the tools to the processing and the reception of a theatre text both as performance material for the stage and as an independent and self-sufficient reading material.

In regard to the structure of the thesis, each chapter introduces a theoretical frame and then presents analyses of specific representative examples. The frame gathers theoretical, philosophical and aesthetical approaches that, on one hand discuss concepts that are tied to each category of spectral figures, and on the other hand offer a three-dimensional construction that traces the wider socio-historical and creative context within which the questions related to each group of spectral figures are shaped. The theorists and philosophers are selected according to some intellectual affinities, whilst drawing a temporal arc that embraces both the topics of the plays and the evolution of contemporary continental philosophy. The theatre plays/examples are mainly selected according to their levels of tension and dynamics, and their position within each given category in relation to their ability to cover some representative characteristics for their group, and sometimes for their exceptional qualities.

KONSTANTINOS KYRIAKOU

Life and Works of Chrysanthos Vostantzoglou (Bost): Ideological and Aesthetic Components of Analysis of his Known and Unknown Theatrical Course [2023]

Supervisor: Grigorios Ioannidis

The subject of research and examination of this doctoral (PhD) thesis is the case of Chrysanthos Vostantzoglou, or Mentis Bostantzoglou, known by the pseudonym Bost, whose artistic production spans the boundaries of almost an entire period of fifty years, from the late 1940s to the mid-1990s, when he passed away. Bost was a very rare phenomenon for Greek standards, since he was a painter, hagiographer, columnist, chronicler, novelist, lyricist, poet, advertising writer, a bit of screenwriter and translator, a lot of caricaturist and cartoonist, who filled the rectangular frame of his political cartoons with misspelled and asyntactic texts and who made his mark with his ironic figures and with the intense socio-political criticism in his sketching. Above all, however, Bost was a playwright, set designer and costume designer with a very personal and unique style.

The research found a large gap regarding Bost's theatrical corpus, which has led to a false impression of the playwright, which is why this PhD thesis attempts an extensive, thorough and comprehensive approach to his theatrical and dramaturgical corpus, as they

were discovered by the author –both in Bost’s personal archive and in archives of Bost’s collaborators– unknown plays –unperformed, but also performed that remained unpublished. By publicizing and examining these textual finds, the thesis brings to light new titles of plays that far exceed the number known so far, significantly enriching our knowledge of the theatrical Bost, and proving that it is far from negligible quantitatively it was his unknown dramaturgy, which has so far not been examined by scholars and theoreticians. At the same time, the most important characteristic elements of Bost’s playwriting are analyzed, which are idiosyncratic language, burlesque parody, overt satire, erratic humor and penetrating irony, and which form the aesthetic, stylistic, and ideological components of his plays. In this way, the thesis sheds light on both known and unknown aspects of his dramaturgy, as in the majority of these texts there are significant deviations from the «Bostic» norms we have known until now. On the other hand, with the presentation and analysis of some translation attempts of Bost’s plays, it is examined whether the statement regarding the untranslatability of Bost’s corpus is valid.

Also, the PhD thesis makes a significant restoration of inaccuracies, ambiguities and mis-recordings that have been identified in Bost’s biography and ergography. Based on recorded and confirmed data, the thesis even proceeds to reveal Bost’s unknown collaborations in the theatre, not recorded in any of his biographical notes. Finally, many questions regarding Bost are answered, such as: as a playwright, is he a humorist or a satirist; is his theatre absurd, surrealistic or unique; how many and which plays did he write, how many of them remained unperformed; does he compose his texts in rhyming or prose; does he follow some rules of rhyming or not; can he be translated or is he untranslatable; and, most importantly, does he write asyntactic or anorthography? In short, the general, basic question that is answered through this thesis is: after all, how well did we know theatrical Bost until today?

OLGA PAPAZAFEIROPOULOU

The Theatre of Greek Immigrants in Australia:
The Preliminary Phase (1900-1940) [2023]

Supervisor: Chrysothemis Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou

The dissertation with title *The Theater of Greek immigrants in Australia: The preliminary phase 1900-1940* studies the Greek pre-war theater in Australia. More

specifically, it studies the performances of Greek expatriates and touring troupes from Athens, Australian productions with Greek participation as well as performances of ancient Greek plays. Such theatrical activities have been also associated with the presence of the Greek diaspora in the cinema and theaters.

In Sydney the first expatriates presented various plays inspired by the Greek national History, such as *Sklava* (*Slave*) in 1916 (“Hellenic Philodramatic Society”) and *Athanasios Diakos* in 1930. Likewise, in Brisbane in 1921 the Dramatic Society presented *Esme* and in 1930 *The Killing of Ali Pasha*. In Melbourne, the Panhellenic Association «Orpheus» has presented since 1923 works such as: *The Two Sergeants*, *Thymiula Galaxidiotissa*, *Political Windmill*, *Submarine*, *Golfo*, *Esme the Turkish*. Several original plays were also presented in Adelaide, such as: *Ah! These five women*, *The Volunteers*, *The Secretary*, around 1935. From 1930-1940 in Perth, D. Ioannidis wrote various works: *The Newcomer to Australia*, *Australomania*, *Ananias in Australia* and two English-language musical works (*Athenian nights* και *Somewhere in Perth*). In 1923, Greek expatriates and Australians had the chance to attend performances by the Athenian Company and Vrysoula Pantopoulos, in all Australian cities. There was also an attempt for the foundation of a permanent parish troupe in Sydney 1915 and 1931. In 1936, the Amateur Metropolitan Association of Agia Sophia was founded· however such troupes were usually short-lived.

Traveling tragedians from Europe, university students and local Australian troupes performed all the works of ancient Greek literature. In Sydney from 1922, Adam Tavlaridis and Georgios Paizis participated in Australian theater or film projects, as actors, directors, producers. The soprano Angela Parcellis, Raoul Kardamatis the set designer-producer, the flautist John Lemmone, Dimitrios Kolyvas (Rudy Rico), Artemis Linou, became renowned in the Australian audience.

From 1867 onwards, John Hatzopoulos and the illusionist Alexander Canaris toured Australia presenting multi-spectacular shows. In 1939, Leonidas Foteinos brought his puppets to Australia. From the 1910s, expatriates engaged in entertainment businesses, managed, or built their own theaters, such as: Marino Lucas, George Conson, Vretos Margetis, Antonios Loukas, G. Laurantus, J. Kouvelis, Andronicos, Konomos brothers, Hatsatouri family. In 1924, the first play by a Greek writer, Kon. Kyriazopoulos, was published, *O Adiakritos musafiris* (*The indiscreet Visitor*) which had been staged in Melbourne in 1917. Theatrical poems (in a dialogue form), as well as a one-act comedy by an unknown person, *The Assembly of Assemblies*, saw the light of day publicity, through the columns of the national newspaper *Panhellenios*

Kyryx, in the period 1926-1930, while from 1913 the monologue *Letter to the mother* was written and published.

The pre-war presence of the pioneering Greek expatriates in the regional and Australian theater proves to be multifaceted and important.

PASCALINA-ATHINA SARANTIDI

L' évolution de l'usage du chœur dans l'opéra baroque. Depuis les initiateurs du genre jusqu'à Ranieri De'Calzabigi.

Le cas spécial et la contribution du crétois Apostolo Zeno [2022]

Co-superviseurs : Platon Mavromoustakos – Alessandro Di Profio

Cette dissertation tente d'éclairer l'un des moments de la création théâtrale et musicale au cours duquel le monde grec antique a connu sa renaissance littéraire à travers les œuvres de l'opéra baroque. Elle étudie la manière dont le chœur de la tragédie grecque antique a été redéfini à travers ces textes. En d'autres termes, elle traite des différentes manifestations que cet élément de la tragédie grecque antique a prises dans l'opéra et de la manière dont il a évolué selon le compositeur ou le poète, le pays et l'époque. Des artistes typiques de différentes périodes entre 1600 et 1750 ont été sélectionnés à des fins de comparaison. En particulier, la dissertation commence par les premières œuvres lyriques nées au sein de la Camerata Fiorentina à Florence, ainsi que l'œuvre musicale de Francesco Cavalli à Venise et d'Alessandro Scarlatti et Giovanni Battista Pergolesi à Naples.

La recherche ensuite focalise sur l'apport et la diffusion de l'utilisation de l'élément du chœur à travers l'œuvre d'Apostolo Zeno, d'abord à Venise puis à Vienne, où le poète, né à Venise mais d'origine grecque (crétoise), a vécu. L'étude de l'œuvre d'un autre poète qui a succédé à Apostolo Zeno à la cour de l'empereur Charles IV commence dans la même ville : il s'agit de Pietro Metastasio. La dissertation se poursuit par un bref rappel des tragédies en musique, telles qu'elles sont nées et se sont développées à travers l'œuvre de Jean-Baptiste Lully et de Philippe Quinault dans le Paris du milieu du XVII^e siècle. De ces œuvres, nous passons aux textes de Ranieri de'Calzabigi, étroitement associé à Christoph Willibald Gluck dans le cadre de la réforme de l'opéra. Pour ce qui est de la question du chœur, la présence de cet élément dans d'autres œuvres du compositeur est étudiée.

En outre, on recherche la manière dont l'élément du chœur a été traité dans l'œuvre de Georg Friedrich Haendel, d'Henry Purcell et de Johann Christoph Pepusch, telle qu'elle a été façonnée en Angleterre. Parallèlement, une rétrospective de l'œuvre de Jean-Philippe Rameau, d'André Campra et de Voltaire est tentée afin d'établir un lien entre l'œuvre de Calzabigi et de Gluck et, d'autre part, les encyclopédistes et la réforme totale de l'opéra, au milieu du dix-huitième siècle.

ALEXANDRA VOUTZOURAKI

Gregorios Xenopoulos as Theatre Critic and Scholar [2022]

Supervisor: George P. Pefanis

There are times in the history of a country, of a civilization, of the whole world that a person or a group of people with vision, perception and combativeness find themselves in historical and social conditions that allow a step, or even a leap, of evolution. Grigorios Xenopoulos was such a person. Polymath, brilliant, visionary and talented, came to Athens during a period of intellectual agitation and claimed for himself a leading role. Perhaps he didn't have the special talent of Palamas or Karkavitsas, nevertheless with cautious and steady steps developed a unique style of his own and wasn't afraid to turn to all forms of literature seeking the one that fitted better to his talent and ambition. That was the theatre. His career as a playwright traverses five decades and earned him the title: «father of modern Greek theatre». His dozens of plays aren't his only offer to modern Greek stage. He was also among the founders of theatre criticism and theory of theatre in Greece. The present research illuminates this aspect of his work.

Through his theatrical critics, his essays about the theatre and his chronographs with relevant subject, his critical thought and principles are presented and analyzed. Due to the fact that the critical speech is indissolubly connected to the mental core of the person who articulates it, a holistic method was used in studying Xenopoulos. His political views, his opinions on social matters, his linguistic and aesthetic beliefs and anything in his texts that would help the investigator to form a clear picture of his mind through the course of his life, were gathered, registered, studied and presented. The theatrical critics, being the core of this investigation, are presented in detail and compared to the theatrical and literary criticism of his time. In order to examine

whether Xenopoulos follows his own principles as critic when he is judged, his intercourse and disputes with other critics are presented and commented as well. Finally, there is a detailed presentation of his articles about Greek and foreign actors, playwrights and directors, his essays about theatre and critics, his opinions on current theatrical matters such as the foundation of the National Theatre and its repertoire, the censorship, the relationship between the theatre and cinema etc.

Xenopoulos' polygraphy and engagement in every form of literature offers a unique opportunity to explore the foundation of his critical thought which is, in a way, the foundation of theatrical criticism in modern Greece. This aspect of his work has been neglected by the investigators in the past, compared to his literary work, autobiographical writings, work in the magazine *Diaplasis ton paidon* and literary criticism. The present study intends to fill this void and complete the picture of a great intellectual, illuminating through him the foundations of modern Greek theatre criticism.