

Przemysław Kordos 
University of Warsaw

Absent Women, the Modern Greek School Canon and – Maybe? – Communist Nostalgia in Greece¹

ABSTRACT: Although Greece was not incorporated into the Soviet Bloc and the beaten Communist partisans were forced to leave or to remain silent – and obedient, nevertheless contemporary Greek culture is permeated by nostalgia for Communism, by the thought: how it would have been if we had shared the Communist dogma with our northern neighbours? There is no 1989 milestone in Greece, but there is another transformation, that of 1974, with the fall of the ultra-rightist junta. Then the leftist political scene was finally un-gagged. Since then, the Communist sentiments – expressed through ideology, motives, and aesthetics – have been present in public life and in the literary canon. The text explores how the position of women is represented in the canon and how this may also be attributed to the nostalgia for Communism. Women are often depicted as if they came from Communist times: working-class, efficient, belligerent, with the stress put on their usefulness towards the society and not on their physical attributes, achievements or other personal traits. The source material is contemporary school literary texts, starting with the ballad about the enwalled wife in the folk song *The Bridge of Arta*.

KEYWORDS: Greek school canon, nostalgia for Communism, women in literature

¹ The text was written within the framework of the NCN project 2020/37/B/HS2/00152 entitled *The topos of an “immured woman” in the cultures of South-Eastern Europe and Hungary*, led by prof. Grażyna Szwat-Gyłybow.

Introduction

For a person “on the outside, looking in”, in this case for a Polish scholar dealing with Modern Greek topics, some cultural phenomena are nevertheless easy to grasp, to study, and even to explain sufficiently. At times, the whole cultural reality itself seems to evoke keys to its solution. In Modern Greece, for example, a grand key is about antiquity: to understand the process in linguistics, architecture, folk culture, traditions or religion, especially in a rural context, and to a myriad of other issues, antiquity, that is, Ancient Greek antiquity – its influence, its memory, its reception – is an inevitable factor not to be omitted in any study. It can be rejected after a thorough dispute, but it cannot be ignored.

Other phenomena, while lingering and even omnipresent, are blind spots of both popular and scholarly interests alike. Again, within the Modern Greek world, such topics with virtually no bibliography are the meaning and usage of *komboloi*, the so-called “worry-beads” or “laymen’s rosaries”. Many Greeks, especially older ones, and especially men, have and use them (play with them?), but any publication tackling this presence and practice from any perspective is virtually absent, but for several articles that give a fragmented view. In the meantime, *komboloi* workshops in Nauplio work in full swing. Roughly the same applies to the Greek abundance of “evil eye” talismans, with faiths and rituals surrounding them, though for years the blue-eyed motif reigns in tourist shops as part of versatile design pattern. The scholars venture to find links of this custom to the East or dive into the past, finding similarities in the ancient *baskania* rites, but, again, they do not fully address the widespread and very much alive beliefs. Or the importance and contemporary role of the Greek shadow theatre, named Karaghizos after its protagonist, that once was a solid political voice equal to newspaper debates, now a waning and more seldom with every year pastime for children after any Sunday liturgy.

However, there is a group of cultural phenomena that escape any attempt that tries to harness them, especially when it comes to cases where cultural studies meet deep, yet poorly documented presence in society itself. Such phenomena seem composed of elements from

apparently unchained regions of social life, often materialising on the verge of perception. They manifest as an inclination, a *zeitgeist*, or a certain “vibe”, for lack of a better word, bordering on an intuition that eludes any method of describing it. Thus, I put myself to drawing a touch nearer to such an out-of-grasp feeling, that sense of the Modern Greek nostalgia for communism.

Communist inspiration

The idea comes from Warsaw Syntagma, that is, Constitution Square that was rebuilt in the early 1950s as one of the most striking examples of the soc-realistic architectural complex. The stern, sandstone facades of buildings that surround the square are decorated with series of reliefs. One of these series depict eight bulky figures; the builders of the communist system. They represent eight roles, eight professions. The three depicted women are: a kindergarten teacher, a textile machine operator and a mother. The figure of mother is clearly depicted here as a social role, as a profession, not as a part of a family. She, the mother, is one of the key builders of communism, the one that – with the others – will rebuild the country in a new ideological frame. The individual did not matter in the system, that is a known fact, but I was struck by this blatant suppressing of a family life and assigning the once-intimate role to be a cog in an ideological machine.² Both places in the capital are left untouched, surrounded by growing modern edifices. They preserve memories of past, communist (socialist, in fact) times and in some these places evoke nostalgia for a different Warsaw: less happy, but also less commercialized. It is surely a reflexive nostalgia, in Svetlana Boym classic classification,³ pensive but not reactive.

I have been observing Modern Greek life and culture, chiefly letters, for the better part of 30 years now. I have come across such an elusive phenomenon once before, namely a concept of Modern Greekness as a bipolar construct.⁴ The concept states that in order to under-

² For more on the Square as well on the MDM district, see Obarska 2010.

³ Boym 2001.

⁴ Fermor 2004: 96ff.; Herzfeld 1996: 20ff. For discussion cf. Kordos 2019: 12–13.

stand Greeks better, it is advantageous for the sake of argumentation to assume that the Modern Greek identity consists of two opposing parts, one that weighs towards the ancient traditions, towards logic and critical thinking, the Hellen part, and the other, fascinated by Byzantium and its legacy, believing in improvisations and predominance of emotions (over thought), the Romaic part. Furthermore, indeed, explaining some events, processes and phenomena with this mental tool sometimes works wonders. However, it has its apparent limitations: the simplicity of the quasi-academic tool omits details and introduces a schizophrenia-like concept where there is none. In fact, it is better to think otherwise about this division: the crust of the Modern Greek identity is Antiquity-oriented, while its core leads to Romaic. Such a model, again, has its flaws, but sometimes explains cultural phenomena more successfully.⁵

In the eyes of a Polish scholar the Greek nostalgia for communism would be of a different type, beyond Boym scope, as a longing for something un-experienced: it comes straightforwardly from the fact that Greece was never a communist or even a socialist country. It came very close to becoming one just after World War 2 when numerous communist partisans tried to take over power. Their partisan army was defeated in the bitter civil war by the right royalists with substantial help from the British and then from the Americans. Their remnants had to leave the country, and their populations were scattered among the states on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain. The communist party and ideology were banned in the state rebuilt with Marshal Plan ample financial support. The Greeks, in some eyes, traded political ideals for rapid economic growth and the equally swift promotion of their war-devastated country to the Western world.

On the other hand, tangible examples of this nostalgia are surprisingly few. There is a whole streak of rock music, originally created by such bards as Manos Loizos or Dionysios Savvopoulos bards (and later, seemingly forever, sung by such voices as Vassilis Papakonstatinou), there are two alternate history novels⁶ that depict Greece under communist rule. There is an Irini Dragasaki's short film *Ο μπαμπάς μου, ο*

⁵ Further details e.g. in Aggelaki 2022: 141–158.

⁶ Alexatos 2010; Fyssas 2011.

Λένιν και ο Φρέντυ (Daddy, Lenin and Freddy),⁷ there are communist party marches and Che Guevara T-shirts. There is, finally, a recently (2017) opened museum in Amaliada, devoted to Nikos Belogiannis, one of the most famous post-war communist martyrs (“martyrs”?). These are all incidental, they do not compose a firm constellation. They belong to the fringes of the social consciousness.

Greece lived its political landslide two generations ago. It came in 1974, with the fall of the junta, of the rightist military regime that tumbled under the weight of student protests and fatal meddling of junta rulers into Cypriot affairs. The new political system, which still exists today, has been a bipartisan democracy that substantially strengthened the leftist part of the political spectrum. The Greek Communist Party was made legitimate again in 1974, and since then, it has been continuously supported by 5% to 10% of contemporary society (as of the June 2023 elections – 8% support).

Since 1974 the Greek political system was strictly bipartisan. The only breach in this model was brought by the severe 2007 financial crisis, that (temporarily?) brought leftist PASOK down and brought to light the radical SYRIZA. The Tsipras government, 2015–2019, was the only socialising cabinet in power in the last 50 years. It too came down in a crash, but these several years of official radical leftists’ ideology apparently left little scars on communist supporters – as least so it seems from a Polish perspective where the left is permanently weak or even absent in the parliamentary scene.

Even in the pre-1974 era, communism ideology was perceived by some as a dream, as a utopian road not taken, and this longing, this nostalgia, is still subtly present in Greek art and letters. It has not been rightly studied, as maybe such research would demand a foreign perspective, an alien eye, possibly of someone who used to experience life under the communist regime to find these scattered markers pointed at another, much more leftist reality.⁸

Nevertheless, these markers are present in most unusual places, like the aesthetics of public statues. The Greeks are fond of sculptures, and

⁷ Filippaki 2016.

⁸ For more on junta period, its dissolution and aftermath, see e.g. Anastasakis, Lagos 2021.

their towns and countryside are decorated by many of them. Surprisingly few, though, depict women. Moreover, even if they do, women are displayed in roles, as role models, as or accessories to men, even “became men”. They depict mothers, allegories (Greece, Freedom, both of feminine gender in Greek) or, rarely – but famously – as fighters. Only few depict individuals, such as the famous “Sleeping Female Figure” (1878) by Yannoulis Chalepas, sculpted in marble for the tomb of 18-year-old Sofia Afentaki, or the much more recent bust of Melina Mercouri (1999), or a gilded statue of Maria Callas facing the southern slopes Acropolis – unveiled only in 2021. In Athens, mothers dominate the list, chiefly because of numerous mother depictions on courtyards of maternity hospitals. One cannot omit a famous centrally placed Piraeus “Statue of the Mother” (*Agalma tis Miteras*, 1959) by Yannis Pappas, carved from white Pentelic marble and standing at 3.6m. Or another powerful work – linking motherhood with national suffering – is “Mother of the Occupation Period” (*Mitera tis Katochis*) by Costas Valsamis, in bronze, installed in 1979 at the First Cemetery of Athens. Both these mothers hold their little children.

In Zagoria, near Albanian borders, there is a 6-metre-high statue of an “Epirot woman”, a village-dressed woman equipped with munitions that symbolises local support for the Greek Army fighting Italians in 1940 in the North Greece mountains, allegedly when women, elderly, children, and priests, all took part in a collective effort to relieve the troops. Elsewhere, in the Southern Peloponnese, there is a (modern?) statue of a fierce-looking woman armed with a sickle, the statue that commemorates a battle that took part in Pyrgos Dirou village during the Greek Revolution, in 1826, between women and elders (men were off, fighting Turks elsewhere) and an unsuccessful Turkish marine landing party. The monument’s plaque praises the women fighters and states clearly: “Glory to you, and three times glory, women, for you became men”.⁹

And indeed, their aesthetics are not at all Warsaw, especially from monuments and reliefs created during the Stalinist and early post-Stalinist era, and not only from the aforementioned Constitution Square.

⁹ Εύγε σας, μεταεύγε σας // γυναίκες άνδρες γίνετε // σαν ανδρειωμένες μάχεσθε // σαν Αμαζόνες κρούετε.

Many sculptures surrounding the Warsaw Palace of Culture and Sciences, the edifice completed in 1955 – so only a couple of years after the Constitution Square was finished – dominates the capital centre and, if these sculptures were moved to Athenian streets, they would not surprise anyone: they would blend in. As an outsider I dare to argue that the socialist realism aesthetic resonates with the Greek tendency to depict women in a functional, practical way – as members of society working toward the greater good and toward social prosperity and not as individuals praised for personal achievements. It does not exclude the plethora of individualist examples: of mothers, lovers, artists that praise individuality and live individually, but – in comparison to a gamut of male roles – women seem severely reduced. Like with the aforementioned Hellenic-Romaic identity model, this is the concept, flawed and simple, that – I believe – can explain several cultural phenomena.

Furthermore, I argue that communist nostalgia strengthens these aesthetics – and is visible in other cultural areas. The specific depiction of women and the distinctive positioning of women creators, exists in literature and – what is uncomplicated to observe – in literary school canon.

For the sake of this paper, I understand canon in a straightforward way: as the repository of works of letters that are regarded worthy and proper to be exhibited to children and teenagers through the national education system. Such canon is largely defined by the politics, and it is created by textbook authors whose work is in turn evaluated and accepted by the government institutions. I treat it not only as a list but – following the Greek etymology of the term – as a set of rules that make up any given canon. But what is most important for me is not how the canon has been created nor who has created it, but looking at it as source material, I try to envisage working rules and ideas behind it.

Thesis

Since 1974 leftist and less conservative texts have been incorporated in the school canon, text written by such writers as Nikos

Kazantzakis – suspicious due to his political views and leftist fascinations or Konstantinos Cavafy – treated suspiciously for his non-heterogenic views on love and relations, as well as regarded a cryptic poet. Nevertheless, some things were left unchanged. One is the surprising positioning of a female figure and the presence of women writers and protagonists in such a defined canon. I argue further that that is the lingering patriarchal worldview, a conservative notion on the role and position of women and – paradoxically – that of leftist nostalgia, now unchained and finally righteously represented: all these speak here in unison.

Women included in the canon are rarely authors of any source material. If so, their texts often concern men or their relations with men. Otherwise, many texts are presented mainly as an accessory to men. Women's voices speak in unison with men's representations of women characters. They most often play roles in the family – mothers (grandmothers), sisters, and wives. They are helpers in men's work, supporting their chores and accompanying their tasks. In an extreme case, they are bizarre literary phenomena, writing a type of literature on the fringes of its interest and identity. The change is there, but is not yet getting momentum. It starts in a less restricted environment: children and YA books and hopefully, through years, will reach the school canon.¹⁰

Texts and sources

To look at this phenomenon in detail, I decided to analyse only contemporary schoolbooks for Modern Greek language and literature, from the first year of elementary school, through gymnasium (middle school) until the last year of lyceum (high school).¹¹ I examined the textbooks that accompany the process of mastering the mother tongue, that is, the

¹⁰ Cf. Kanatsouli 2008.

¹¹ The books are all available in digital form on the ministry project *Psyfiako Scholeio* (Digital School) webpage.

textbooks for *Glossa* (Language) – obligatory for classes in elementary education, and chose most of the texts written by or solely on women.¹²

Moreover, the Greeks introduced in high schools (gymnasium and lyceum) a particular school subject – *Logotechnia* – devoted to literature, primarily Greek. There the literary canon is virtually part of the school curriculum from its beginning to its end. These schoolbooks are anthologies of texts, with modest introductions and a small number of exercises that are supposed to open the discussion on a given text and give students tasks for their homework. The order of the literary texts is sometimes composed thematically and sometimes, on later levels, historically. The examples mentioned below do not exhaust all the female-written and female-themed texts, but they are representative as I found and read them all. In a given category I decided to exhibit the most striking examples.

Now, women continue to occupy a marginal position in the literary canon – both as writers and as central characters.¹³ Although conservative views from the pre-1974 period still cast a long shadow, even the narratives shaped by leftist nostalgia have not managed to open space for female expression.¹⁴ These two seemingly contrasting ideologies end up rhyming in their silence on this issue. Margarita Gerouki's research into Greek biology textbooks – particularly sections concerning sex education – clearly demonstrates that the material is outdated in regard to evolving social norms. Attempts at curricular innovation are consistently blocked by influential conservative groups, including the Orthodox Church, which contributes to the persistence of gender stereotypes.¹⁵ Elsewhere, in Modern Greek literature, women are typically assigned supporting roles, cast as mothers, sisters, or wives.¹⁶ Historical textbooks similarly maintain outdated gender portrayals, minimising women's historical significance. Meselidis finds that these texts often present women through a stereotypical lens, which shapes social perceptions of gender roles.¹⁷ A notable example is the idealised

¹² An evaluation of new set of textbooks, and hopefully new canon, is pending.

¹³ Gouvias, Alexopoulos 2016.

¹⁴ Koulouri, Venturas 1994.

¹⁵ Gerouki 2008: 338–340.

¹⁶ Alexopoulos, Stamou, Papadopoulou 2022.

¹⁷ Meselidis 2009.

image of Greek women during the harsh winter of 1940–1941, who are portrayed as carrying ammunition to aid male soldiers fighting in the Greco-Italian War in Epirus.

An overview of current Greek language and literature textbooks – spanning primary to secondary education – confirms the scarcity of texts by or about women.¹⁸ Greek literary culture remains heavily male-centric; female writers receive little acknowledgment and are frequently relegated to the realm of genre or popular fiction. The label of “women’s literature” is often used dismissively and these books are physically segregated in bookstores by their unmistakable covers. As Stamatios Papadakis also notes in his examination of school materials, even including informatics textbooks, depictions of women and their roles in contemporary Greek society remain dominated by clichés and traditional stereotypes.¹⁹

A starting point is a folk song, now in the curriculum of the second year in middle-grade schools, a ballad entitled *Tou giofyriou tis Artas*.²⁰ It follows a story of a bridge being erected, without much success, in the Epirote town of Arta. The builders are in despair, but when a bodiless voice from heaven commits them to sacrifice a human being in the bridge foundation for the construction to be finished, they move with this plan without any word of defiance. The victim is supposed not to be random – it has to be a woman, the wife of *protomastoras*, the chief constructor, the master builder. She is summoned – a messenger is a talking bird – she gladly comes; she is tricked inside a bridge pillar to look for the allegedly lost wedding ring of her husband, and while inside, she is walled alive by all the builders, and her husband throws the first enormous boulder. With her last breath, she curses the bridge, but is convinced to reverse the curse because what if her brother would cross it and fall from it? She does as she is asked to.

Therefore, it is a story of the ultimate sacrifice for the public good and of the victim that is deprived of everything, even of revenge. Let us take a detailed look at the exercise planned for discussion over this text. The tasks are divided into simple exercises and more complex thematic

¹⁸ Papadakis 2018.

¹⁹ Papadakis 2018.

²⁰ The Bridge of Arta; *Tou giofyriou tis Artas*: 12–15.

activities aimed at expanding the reading of the text to other, not necessarily literary, contexts.

(A) EXERCISES²¹

Task 1: Identify the sections of the poem and give a title for each.

Task 2: How is the difficulty of building the bridge expressed and how is the project predicted to be accomplished?

Task 3: What is the role of the bird in the development of the narrative?

Task 4: What adverb does the master builder use in his order and which one does the winged messenger of the message use? What does the choice of adverb indicate in the first case and in the second case?

Task 5: How does the wife of the master builder react to the unexpected trial, and what are her feelings towards her husband?

Task 6: Which elements of this song prove that it belongs to the genre of ballad folk-song?

In exercises, the questions are only analytical: the expected answers are retracing the structure of the narrative along pre-supposed lines, and answers are often connected to quoting a particular word or phrase. Task 5 allows for some subtle interpreting, attributing intentions and feelings to two main characters, always along safe interpretative lines. In contrast, the last task comes back to the poem's form as the example of a specific type of folk-songs.

(B) THEMATIC ACTIVITIES

[1.] Search for bibliographic information and find details about the construction of stone bridges in Greece. If possible, visit an area with such a bridge.

[2.] In collaboration with Geography and Technology teachers, organize research groups with the aim of collecting information about the location, function, and broader significance of bridges, both in old times and in the modern era of significant technological development.

²¹ As I quote excessively the source material (in my translation) I put it in order by listing it at the end of text and showing the original texts: it is marked with the letters A to F.

The contextual tasks move away from literature towards the tradition of stone bridge construction (which in Greece is indeed plentiful) and then to bridges in general, as if the text's primary focus had been around construction, not the theme of sacrifice.²²

At no point does the lesson plan allow us to ask fundamental questions about this narrative: why the victim is the woman, why she does not protest, why she accepts her fate. Just like men – builders do not oppose a supernatural voice, the woman does not oppose her fate – and her only act of revenge, of self-preservation (cursing the bridge), is neutralised, revered and turned to the greater social good, exactly like her sacrifice. Nevertheless, these concepts are not explored in the textbook; the hierarchy, the genre roles, and the social order are preserved and unquestioned.

Analysis

While collecting texts on women or written by women in contemporary schoolbooks, one quickly concludes how few these texts are. Indeed, mainstream female writers are not a standard figure even now, in the third decade of the 21st century. Few female names came through to be recognised in the Modern Greek world of letters, traditionally dominated by men – and, from my perspective, the change is slow. Women more often write genre literature, chiefly romance – and the so-called female literature, dubbed sometimes *para-logotechnia* – that is para-literature – is positioned separately in bookshops, and its books are easily identifiable by a particular cover style. It is no surprise then that Modern Greek children and youths hear and read so few stories from a female perspective: it is a well-constructed canon and represents the overall literary tendencies. Moreover, the woman has been traditionally frequently portrayed as a sexual object – fatal, alienated, or absent; oppressed, deprived, magical, exotic, unreachable (Romanticism!), and so

²² An interesting addition here is another text in the school canon, a fragment from Maria Iordanidou's *I auli mas* (originally written in 1981). One of the parts chosen concentrated on the metaphysical element and, as the book puts it, superstitions (*prolipseis*) around it.

on. Her relationships with men have often been framed in terms of victim and aggressor, submission and dominance, love and hatred, want and servitude.

To give some examples and to put them in order, for the sake of this paper, I singled out three categories of the texts, divided according to a role assigned to a female: a mother, a lover, and a rebel. These three categories represent three prominent roles I set apart while treating the collected material. There are also a few uncategorised examples definitely worth mentioning, that are included at the end of this enumeration.

A mother

Texts that are primarily short poems about mothers are already present in elementary school, for example by Lefteris Papadopoulos²³ or Niki-foros Vrettakos.²⁴ Mothers are depicted as loving but religious and all too traditional, to the point that they do not know nor accept the progress in their modern or modernised children. Later only in the more advanced texts, like that of Vrettakos²⁵ – again – the picture receives some depth for the middle school, as two mothers who lost their sons are described. Although the picture is less one-dimensional, the fact remains that these mothers are related in roles to their male relatives, soldiers – victims of war. They are not agents, that is, active participants of events, and their sorrow is the passive reaction to facts; they are not contributors nor witnesses. For high school, Viktoria Theodorou²⁶ expands a mother's picture, describing one that is put to jail for political reasons but manages to provide for her daughter.

(C) [The last stanza] The brave have been glorified, and the heroes,
those who held onto Life and guarded Justice.

²³ Papadopoulos n.d.: 81–82.

²⁴ Vrettakos n.d.a: 77–79.

²⁵ Vrettakos n.d.b: 264–265.

²⁶ Theodorou n.d.: 68–70.

Now you pass with timid steps, weary steps, and your Humility enters the Hall of Heroes.

Wear the garments of labour and the apron,
carry your plate with the prison food
— with these sacred robes, we want you to enter
the glory of eternity!

Mother as a heroine, a role upon a role: she is uplifted from mediocrity or even humility of life in prison to eternal glory: justly playing her assigned role and remaining a caring mother no matter what obstacles. Furthermore, this sacrifice, again, deserves the highest praise.²⁷

A lover

Schoolbooks explore earlier texts, like those written in Crete in the 17th century, as a literary part of the so-called Cretan Renaissance. Two long poems are referred to, both having a female protagonist: Vitsentzos Kornaros's *Aretousa*²⁸ and Georgios Chortatsis's *Erofil*.²⁹ *Aretousa* – in a fragment intended for the very first years of elementary school – is depicted as a perfect baby daughter and then a baby girl. At the same time, *Erofil* is a model lover for her *Panaretos*, a woman that votes love eternal and is a paragon of virtue, a perfect lover for a perfect man, a dream. Though *Erotokritos* is a tragedy, a part of tragic events is the perfection of this feeling and both figures. However, a reader is faced only with a fragment that establishes the setting from the beginning of the play.

This motif also encompasses love poems by Maria Polidouri,³⁰ a chief representative of expressive and sensual love poetry depicted

²⁷ An additional dimension here is depicted Greece, the Homeland (both conveniently of the feminine gender) as Mother Mothers are represented widely in a number of other texts, and in varying contexts: as a head of a family abroad (Sari n.d.), as a soon-to-be divorcee (Tinga n.d.), or a struggling single mother (with a father in forced emigration, Alexiou n.d.).

²⁸ From *Erotokritos*, Kornaros n.d.: 20–21.

²⁹ From *Erofil*, Chortatsis n.d.: 16–19.

³⁰ Polidouri n.d.a: 192 and Polidouri n.d.b: 153–154.

through a woman's eyes and sensitivity. It continues to a text by Grigorios Xenopoulos,³¹ who, in his realistic novel *Stella Violanti* describes a fate of love not accepted by the family's father. In the fragment prepared for high school pupils, the protagonist, Stella, is advised by her mother to beg her father for forgiveness and denounce her feelings. She chooses not to and – as the introductory comment states – *marazonei apo ton kaimo tis* (103) – “[in the end] she withers from her sorrow”. Even the protagonist is not free from entanglement with male actions – her fiancé marries someone else eventually. A modest poem by Zoi Karelli³² stands out: it is an apostrophe to summer, depicting it as an attractive young boy, an object of feelings, maybe even of desire, expressed by the poem's narrator. The reading is somewhat disturbing, considering the planned, young audience.

(D) About the summer

The blond-haired boy of summer
has a blue line on his smooth forehead.
He holds the sun's rays in his chestnut eyes, half-closing his shadowed
eyelids,
playfully brushing his freckled eyelashes.
Sun-kissed, his radiant body stands tall,
carefree, smiling aimlessly.
His teeth appear pure white,
resembling freshly washed white pebbles,
on the shore of the azure and crystalline water.

While summer metaphors are apparent, the erotic tension is equally visible. As in the cases of Polidouri and later – Melissanthi,³³ the young reader is faced with a different writing: sensual and appealing to senses: to poetry that is not to be untangled, solved to be understood, but to be felt. A clear line is drawn between the male and female perspectives, confirming stereotypes and affirming the separation.

³¹ Xenopoulos n.d.: 103–107.

³² Karelli n.d.: 246–247.

³³ Melissanthi n.d.: 229.

A rebel

There is a number of texts evoked in the later stages of education for teenagers, written by female writers who were exceptional, original and, to a point, subversive in their literary creation. Melpo Axioti's interwar novel *Dyskoles nyctes*³⁴ was surrealistic, almost unpleasant to follow, without clear markers as to where and when the plot happens; this memoir of a teenage girl can be a shock for conservative readers.

(E) "Do you see? Another unexpected visitor has arrived!" said the father when the robber left. "Did you like his pants? Did you see how many waves were around him?"

Everyone in the house was very surprised and frightened.

"Oh my Lady, my Virgin Mary," said Aunt Dialehti, thinking that he had come to slaughter us! But Sofido understood his kind heart. He offered her a rosemary twig from his hand, and the knoll of it smelled beautifully, as if it were a mountain brought down. She offered him that seat, and he hesitated before taking it, half-smiled, and said the years are many, and he learned to sit.

"Turn on the lights." The evening has come. At the hour when the lanterns are emptied and lit with fresh olive oil. The skewers of the spit-turner were moved forward, capturing the gathered people, and their shadow wraps around the wall like a beast. Resting on his staff, he leans, arms open, and relaxes, while we all stretch to reach his eyes. The evening has come, when the lanterns are emptied and lit with fresh olive oil, when we were overshadowed because the night is deep, because it is a murderer. "I've got hungry," he said, "and I've come." He has been starved this year. "Such drought, such desolation."

"Oh my Panagia, my All-Holy Lady, even if you were to satisfy him, he would still complain! We are not accustomed to eating meat in the evening..."

"Close the doors," said the father, "let nothing special happen tonight. Our own dinner. Let there be no loud noises... – a little quiet – close the doors."

³⁴ Difficult nights, Axioti n.d.a: 368–374.

Crossing herself, and with her kidneys aching, Aunt Dialechti opened up. "A troublesome year this year... Whatever fate has in store for you, you will endure it. Locked in with the thief!... And this again? How did it seem to you? The bitterness of laurel juices, such a fate this year!..."

An absurd setting, an evening spent with a "kind-hearted" thief? Furthermore, the family slowly opens up to an unwelcome guest, traversing the order of things, the customs, and the expectations. However, what struck me most was the form – events expressed through dialogues rendered in everyday speech. The reader must reconstruct the setting, the situation, and the plot and fill in the gaps left by the surrealist-inspired writer.

Margarita Lymberaki's afterwar novel *Psafina Kapela*³⁵ even a modest fragment put to read by pupils, is a much more organised form but an outstanding topic of female liberation – the story is to follow three young girls and three paths to adulthood, some more and some much less traditional than – maybe – expected. Finally, Rea Galanaki and a fragment from *O vios tou Ismail Ferik Pasa*,³⁶ an important and impressive historical novel on Crete in the 19th century and on two brothers. One is abducted as a child by the Osmans and trained as a soldier; the other stays on the island and becomes an anti-Osman partisan. Their paths cross again to tragic results. The fragment given to the reader recalls events when the Muslim-turned brother returned to his father's house as an Osman soldier, for the first time since he had been kidnapped. Though initially published in 1989, Galanaki's novel – a rare example of historical fiction – is still regarded as revolutionary in her way of depicting the convoluted history of Greek regions during the Osman rule, the way she tries to move away from stereotypes and half-truths toward the complex, ambiguous and gruesome reality of these times.

In way, for the pupils in the last gymnasium class two similar texts were prepared. They are to read an excerpt from the autobiography of the first (?) modern Greek female writer, Elizabeth Moutzan-Martinegou (orig. published in 1881, decades after her death). She was

³⁵ Straw hats, Lymberaki n.d.: 52–55.

³⁶ Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha, Galanaki n.d.b.: 385–389.

a prolific playwright, poet and translator, but still, it is her own account of these experiences that is truly striking, as a female voice in a male dominated work. The text is aptly rhymed with a fragment from *Eleni, i o Kanenas*, a fictionalised biography of a first female educated painter, Eleni Boukoura-Altamoura by Rea Galanaki.³⁷ In the given fragment entitled *Metamfiesi*, i.e. “Dressing up”, the heroine has to wear a man’s clothes to be admitted to an Italian art school.

What is left

Some texts certainly remain outside of these three impromptu categories.³⁸ In these texts, we can encounter a poem on life and death in general by a famous interwar love-poet Melissanthi, a sad childhood story of poverty and depreciation by Natasa Kesmeti³⁹ and a description of vanishing folk culture in the Greek island of Mykonos again by Axioti.⁴⁰ Or a fragment by Zorz Sari about her friendship with another famous writer, then a teenager, Alki Zei.⁴¹

There are also poems by a most distinguished female poet of the late 20th and early 21st century, Kiki Dimoula, an excellent Greek candidate for the Nobel Prize until she died in 2020. Just four of her poems are proposed for the pupils – one in the gymnasium and three in the lyceum, among them one on the rain and hope and the other on the mobility of things (to show the exquisite themes). These are the most difficult texts pupils would encounter during their literary education. The poem for high-school 3rd-grade teenagers⁴² is just 30 odd verses long and has as many as nine footnotes that sometimes interpret one or two whole verses to make understanding the poem easier. Nevertheless, Dimoula’s example stands out and is an exception, even in modern Greek literature’s universal, not only female part. I decided to quote the better part of the poem with its footnotes, introduction, and exercises to show

³⁷ Galanaki n.d.a.

³⁸ Most profoundly, the Orthodox Christian perspective is omitted.

³⁹ Kesmeti n.d.: 379–394.

⁴⁰ Axioti n.d.b: 216–219.

⁴¹ Sari n.d.b: 179–183.

⁴² Dimoula n.d.a: 93–95.

the strategy in approaching this text, standing out with its originality and intricacy.

(F1 – introduction) From the collection *To ligo tou kosmou* (Some of the world, 1971). What you particularly need to pay attention to in the poem is that the poet a) does not limit herself to a static and objective description of the external world but presents it through images, characterized mainly by their mobility (e.g., a white paper awakens – a roof flaps its wings), and b) the images express her emotions or intertwine with them (e.g., the sea resembles oblivion: we have been forgotten).

(F2 – poem) *Untimely and extraordinary* [1 – footnotes, below]

Between night and dawn

I found the untimely hour wedged.

Irreverent bird mirth woke me up so early, and I went out into the blind alleys of darkness. [2]

My balcony gleams calmly
in shallow colours. [3]

Gardens are still dreaming
of the arrival of unknown flowers.

The infamous horizon unfolds slowly
like a cheap ribbon of measurement.

The sea resembles oblivion: we have been forgotten.

Infinity resembles oblivion. Oblivious infinity.

A small boat detunes in the distance,
distance takes it and it plays with it.

The level of colours rises with murmurs. [4] Shapes draw nearer with
a walking pace. [5]

A white paper awakens,
a roof flaps its wings,
a window leaflet flutters.

An alarmed bell tower wakes up,
guilty: faith must wake up first.

First of all.

(F3 – footnotes)

[1] “Untimely and extraordinary”: To grasp the real meaning of the verses, you need to consider that “untimely” refers to premature or unripe, and “extraordinary” refers to out of season.

[2] “I went out into the blind alleys of darkness”: I went out at the time when darkness retreats (metaphor from the retreat of the sea).

[3] “Shallow colours”: Colours that are still faint.

[4] “The level of colours rises with murmurs”: Colours gradually become clearer and more vibrant.

[5] “Shapes draw nearer with a walking pace”: The shapes of objects appear as if they are advancing because they gradually become clearer, like colours.

(F4 – exercises)

[1.] The poem consists of two sections. The first section presents the images of things when there is still uncertainty (due to the hour) regarding their colours, shapes, etc., while in the second section, the images of things have become clear. Based on this observation and the comments, answer the following questions:

[2.] How are the images of things presented in the first section? (Identify the relevant words and phrases; consider the introductory note before answering.)

[3.] What psychological state does the first section express?

This text and its handling are a treatment that moves away from a genderised approach to literature. The text is so complex, that it demands much attention, while any mention of a woman writer is not only toned down, it is non-existent. The only focus is on the text itself – how to decode metaphors and connect them into a system of meaning. This example is a simple lesson on how to read modern poetry, regardless of the poet, regardless of their gender (and – maybe – regardless of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, of all and any of their identity components). Nevertheless, as I underlined, it is an exceptional treatment, a boldest move within the canon, a move against the overall current.

Two ending glosses

a. The case of Ersi Sotiropoulou

Through radically expanded and diversified after 1974, the school canon is still very cautious and conventional at specific points. It even has its outcasts. It can be exemplified by a scandal that touched Modern Greek school life in 2007 when Ersi's Sotiropoulou book *Zigzag stis nerantzies*,⁴³ when an extreme right-wing politician brought charges against the novel, claiming that it contained “pornographic, obscene and immoral” scenes. While waiting for the court's sentence to be pronounced, the book was eventually removed from all school libraries in the country. However, the author won the lawsuit and the court overturned the ban and re-introduced the book to school libraries in 2009.⁴⁴

b. Lena Divani – will she become canonical?

A distinguished archaeology scholar, Lena Divani, recently republished *Ergazomeno agori* (A working boy, 2023, orig. 2000). It is a farce on matriarchal Greece and tells a story of a young Cretan boy forced by his mother to enter an arranged marriage with a much older, affluent and influential female member of Parliament. He decides to rebel against the power of women and escapes home in search of a better life, a life where a young man can fulfil his dream against all odds. It is highly improbable that such an odd novel was even considered to be embraced by any canon. However, the fact remains that the absolute dominance of the patriarchal perspective is recognised and – so far timidly – opposed.

Coming back to Arta

In summing up paragraphs, I would like to recall a personal experience. In October 2022, I had the opportunity to visit Arta. I walked the famous bridge, trying to guess which of its five supporting pillars contained the poor wife of a master builder. I also talked with the director of a recent play based on the legend, which was performed in July

⁴³ Zigzag through the bitter-orange trees, Sotiropoulou 1999.

⁴⁴ Boukalas 2008.

2022 by the very bridge. It was entitled *I thysia tou promastora* (The sacrifice of the master builder).

Moreover, as I deduced from the title and the director confirmed, she wanted to show the sacrifice made by the wife and her husband, who loses his wife in the process. The female director adopted a male version of the legend to justify his pains. The heroine stayed the accessory and was reduced to a function, just like many others depicted in literature or put onto pedestals. Later I discovered something that did not come out in our conversation: that the text was based not only on the folk ballad but Giorgos Theotokas's post-war play⁴⁵ that conservatively treats the song's source material. It was more important for the director to stay faithful to the official interpretation, with a touch of ancient influence (choruses, aesthetics).

Looking at most adaptations written and staged until today, the overall reading of the immured woman motif stays within lines of the school canon, or even, surprisingly, in its centre – and the questions about the validity of the victim, about the inferior role of the woman, about the unpunished complicity of men, about the woman's compliance and unconditional forgiveness are never addressed. Regarding Greek women, the ideology of statism stays at times alive: in many texts it is the greater common good that counts more and just like in the communist ideology – the value of an individual is measured by his or instead her contribution to the efforts of the society.

But the change is coming and it will come. One of its indictors is surely the recent verdict of the Academy of Athens that awarded a 2024 National Novel Award to Ioanna Bourazopoulou, for a last part of a fantasy trilogy. So not only do the Greeks have another female laureate,⁴⁶ but for the first time in the awards history – a speculative fiction book (still treated widely as para-literature) that is finally being appreciated.

⁴⁵ Theotokas 1959, though originally written in 1942.

⁴⁶ In 21st century the Novel Award went 8 times to women and 17 times to men – and it is a relatively good proportion if one takes under consideration earlier award editions (running since 1956).

References

- Aggelaki R.-T., 2022, 'Το οικοδόμημα της ελληνικής διαχρονίας στην Παιδική λογοτεχνία: Η Ιστορία της βυζαντινής περιόδου ως ενδιάμεσος κρίκος μεταξύ αρχαίας και νεότερης Ελλάδας [Το oikodomima tis ellinikis diachronias stin Paidiki logotechnia: I Istoría tis vyzantinís periodou os endiamesos krikos metaksy archaias kai neoteris Elladas]', [in:] *33ο Διεθνές Συνέδριο με κριτές Ελληνισμός, Ελληνικός πολιτισμός και Εκπαίδευση: από την αρχαιότητα μέχρι το 1821 και η εξέλιξή τους στο νέο ελληνικό κράτος. Πάτρα, 22–24 Οκτωβρίου 2021*, Π. Γεωργογιάννης [33ο Diethnes Synedrio me krites Ellinismos, Ellinikos politismos kai Ekpaidefsi: apo tin archaiotita mechri to 1821 kai i ekseliksi tous sto neo elliniko kratós. Patra, 22–24 Oktovriou 2021, P. Georgogiannis] (ed.), Πάτρα [Patra], pp. 141–158.
- Alexatos G., 2010, *Πλατεία Μπελογιάννη*, Αθήνα [Plateia Belogianni, Athina].
- Alexiou E., n.d., 'Όταν ο μπαμπάς δεν ερχόταν [Otan o bambas den erchotan]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Β' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Ε. Γαραντούδης, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Θ. Μέντη [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (B' Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti, E. Jarandudis, S. Chadzidimitriou, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Ahtina], pp. 194–198.
- Alexopoulos Ch., Stamou A.G., Papadopoulou P., 2022, 'Gender Representations in the Greek Primary School Language Textbooks: Synthesizing Content with Critical Discourse Analysis', *International Journal on Social and Education Sciences* 4/2, pp. 257–274, <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijoneses.317>.
- Anastasakis O., Lagos K., 2021, *The Greek Military Dictatorship: Revisiting a Troubled Past, 1967–1974*, O. Anastasakis, K. Lagos (eds), New York.
- Axioti M., n.d.a, 'Δύσκολες νύχτες [Dyskoles nychtes]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Β'. Β' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos V'. V' taksi genikou lykeiou, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 368–374.
- Axioti M., n.d.b, 'Η ψυχή του νησιού [I psychi tou nisiou]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Γ' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Π. Καγιαλής, Χ. Ντουσιά, Θ. Μέντη [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (G Gymnasiu) – Vivlio Mathiti, P. Kajalis, Ch. Dunia, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 216–219.
- Boukalas P., 2008, 'Ζιγκ ζαγκ στη λογοκρισία', *Καθημερινή* ['Zing zang sti logokrisia', *Kathimerini*], 19 April 2008, <https://www.kathimerini.gr/opinion/708890/zigk-zagk-sti-logokrisia/>.
- Boym S., 2001, *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York.

- Chortatsis G., n.d., ‘Ερωφύλη [Erofilii]’, [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Γ΄ Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Π. Καγιαλής, Χ. Ντουσιά, Θ. Μέντη [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (G Gymnasiu) – Vivlio Mathiti*, P. Kajalis, Ch. Dunia, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 16–19.
- Dimoula K., n.d.a, ‘Αώρα και παράωρα [Aora kie paraora]’, [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Γ΄ (1945–2000). Γ΄ τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos G΄ (1945–2000). G΄ taksi genikou lyikeiou*, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 93–95.
- Dimoula K., n.d.b, ‘Τα πάθη της βροχής [Ta pathi tis vrochis]’, [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Γ΄ Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Π. Καγιαλής, Χ. Ντουσιά, Θ. Μέντη [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (G Gymnasiu) – Vivlio Mathiti*, P. Kajalis, Ch. Dunia, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 224–227.
- Divani L., 2023, *Εργαζόμενο αγόρι*, Αθήνα [Ergazomeno agori, Athina].
- Fermor P.L., 2004, *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece*, London.
- Filippaki I., 2016, ‘Missing Communism in 1985 and 2015 Greece: Nostalgia in Rinio Dragasaki’s Short Film *Dad, Lenin and Freddy*’, *Twentieth Century Communism* 11, pp. 147–158, <https://doi.org/10.3898/175864316819698486>.
- Fyssas D., 2011, *Πλατεία Λένιν, πρώην Συντάγματος*, Αθήνα [Plateia Lenin, proin Syntagmatos, Athina].
- Galanaki R., n.d.b, ‘Επιστροφή στο πατρικό σπίτι [Epistrofi sto patriko spiti]’, [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Γ΄ (1945–2000). Γ΄ τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos G΄ (1945–2000). G΄ taksi genikou lyikeiou*, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 385–389.
- Galanaki R., n.d.a, ‘Η Ελένη, ή ο Κανένας [H Eleni, i o Kanenas]’, [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Γ΄ Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Π. Καγιαλής, Χ. Ντουσιά, Θ. Μέντη [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (G Gymnasiu) – Vivlio Mathiti*, P. Kajalis, Ch. Dunia, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 244–248.
- Gerouki M., 2008, ‘Pushed to the Margins – Sex and Relationships in Greek Primary Textbooks’, *Sex Education* 8/3, pp. 329–343, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681810802218429>.
- Gouvias D., Alexopoulos Ch., 2016, ‘Sexist Stereotypes in the Language Textbooks of the Greek Primary School: A Multidimensional Approach’, *Gender and Education* 30/5, pp. 642–662, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1237620>.
- Herzfeld M., 1996, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece*, New York, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1tbhr3q>.

- Iordanidou M., n.d., 'Η αυλή μας [I avli mas]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Α' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Θ. Πυλαρινός, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Λ. Βαρελάς [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (A Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti, T. Pilarinos, S. Chadzidimitriou, L. Warelas] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 29–31.
- Kanatsouli M.D., 2008, *Ο ήρωας και η ηρωίδα με τα χίλια πρόσωπα. Νέες απόψεις για το φύλο στην παιδική λογοτεχνία*, Αθήνα [O iroas kai i iroida me ta chilia prosopa. Nees aporseis gia to fylo stin paidiki logotechnia, Athina].
- Karelli Z., n.d., 'Του καλοκαιριού [Tu kalokieriu]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Β'. Β' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos V'. V' taksi genikou lykeiou, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 246–247.
- Kesmeti N.A., n.d., 'Το αιώνιο ρολόι [To aionio roloi]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Γ' (1945–2000). Γ' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos G' (1945–2000). G' taksi genikou lykeiou, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 379–384.
- Kordos P., 2019, *Beyond Greekness: Studies in Contemporary Modern Greek Prose*, Warsaw.
- Kornaros V., n.d., 'Η Αρετούσα [I Aretusa]', [in:] *Ανθολόγιο Λογοτεχνικών Κειμένων Α' & Β' Δημοτικού. Το δελφίνι*, Τ. Τασούλα [Anthologio Logotechnikon Keimenon A & B Dimotikou. To delfini, T. Tasula] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 20–21.
- Koulouri Ch., Venturas L., 1994, 'Research on Greek Textbooks: A Survey of Current Trends', *Paradigm* 14, pp. 42–46.
- Lymberaki M., n.d., 'Οι Κυριακές στη θάλασσα [Oi Kyriakies sti thalasa]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Β' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Ε. Γαραντούδης, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Θ. Μέντη [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (V' Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti, E. Garantudis, S. Chadzidimitriou, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 52–55.
- Melissanthi, n.d., 'Στη νύχτα που έρχεται [Stinichta pu erchete]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Β'. Β' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos V'. V' taksi genikou lykeiou, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], p. 229.
- Meselidis S., 2009, 'Gender Stereotypes, Class Prejudice and Female Warriors in the Depiction of Women in Year 6 Greek Primary School History Textbooks (1970–1983 and 1997–2006)', [in:] *Race, Ethnicity and Gender in Education: Cross-Cultural Understandings*, J. Zajda, K. Freeman (eds), Springer, pp. 165–181, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9739-3_9.

- Moutzan-Martinegkou E., n.d., 'Αυτοβιογραφία [Aftoviografia]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Β' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Ε. Γαραντούδης, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Θ. Μέντη [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (V' Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti*, E. Garantudis, S. Chadzidimitriou, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 50–52.
- Obarska M., 2010, *MDM – między utopią a codziennością*, Warszawa.
- Papadakis S., 2018, 'Gender Stereotypes in Greek Computer Science School Textbooks', *International Journal of Teaching and Case Studies* 9/1, pp. 48–71, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1504/IJTCS.2018.10011123>.
- Papadopoulos L., n.d., 'Η μάνα μου [I mana mu]', [in:] *Με λογισμό και μ' όνειρο. Ανθολόγιο λογοτεχνικών κειμένων. Ε' και ΣΤ' τάξη δημοτικού*, Α. Κατσίκη-Γκίβαλου [*Me logismo kai m' oneiro. Anthologio logotechnikon keimenon. E' kai ST' taksi dimotikou*, A. Katsiki-Gkivalou] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 81–82.
- Polidouri M., n.d.b, 'Γιατί μ' αγάπησες [Giati m' agapises]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Β' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Ε. Γαραντούδης, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Θ. Μέντη [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (V' Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti*, E. Garantudis, S. Chadzidimitriou, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 153–154.
- Polidouri M., n.d.a, 'Κοντά σου [Konda su]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Β'. Β' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos V'. V' taksi genikou lykeiou*, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], p. 192.
- 'Ψηφιακό Σχολείο [Psifiako Scholeio]', [in:] *ebooks.edu.gr*, <http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/>.
- Sari Z., n.d.b, 'Ε.Π. [E.P.]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Β' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Ε. Γαραντούδης, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Θ. Μέντη [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (V' Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti*, E. Garantudis, S. Chadzidimitriou, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 179–183.
- Sari Z., n.d.a, 'Νινέτ [Ninet]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Α' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Θ. Πυλαρινός, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Α. Βαρελάς [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (A' Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti*, T. Pilarinos, S. Chadzidimitriou, L. Varelas] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 45–48.
- Sotiropoulou E., 1999, *Ζιγκ-ζαγκ στις νεραντζιές*, Αθήνα [*Zing-zang stis nerantzies*, Athina].
- Theodorou V., n.d., 'Εγκώμιο [Enkomio]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Γ' (1945–2000). Γ' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [*Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos G' (1945–*

- 2000). *G' taksi genikou lykeiou*, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 68–70.
- Theotokas G., 1959, *To γεφύρι της Άρτας: έργο σε πέντε εικόνες*, Αθήνα [To *gefyri tis Artas: ergo se pente eikones*, Athina].
- Tinga T., n.d., 'Η εποχή των βακίνθων [I epochi ton iakinthon]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Α' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Θ. Πυλαρινός, Σ. Χατζηδημητρίου, Λ. Βαρελάς [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (A Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti, T. Pilarinos, S. Chadzidimitriou, L. Varelas] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 49–52.
- Του γιοφυριού της Άρτας* [Tou giofiriou tis Artas], [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Γ' Γυμνασίου) – Βιβλίο Μαθητή*, Π. Καγιαλής, Χ. Ντουσιά, Θ. Μέντη [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias (G Gymnasiou) – Vivlio Mathiti, P. Kagialis, Ch. Dunia, T. Menti] (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 12–15.
- Vrettakos N., n.d.b, 'Δυο μητέρες νομίζουν πως είναι μόνες στον κόσμο [Dio miteres nomizoun pos einai mones ston kosmo]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Β'. Β' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos V'. V' taksi genikou lykeiou, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 264–265.
- Vrettakos N., n.d.a, 'Η μητέρα μου στην εκκλησία [I mitera mou stin ekklesia]', [in:] *Με λογισμό και μ' όνειρο. Ανθολόγιο λογοτεχνικών κειμένων. Ε' και ΣΤ' τάξη δημοτικού, Α. Κατσίκη-Γκίβαλου [Me logismo kai m' oneiro. Antologio logotechnikon keimenon. E' kai ST' taksi dimotikou, A. Katsiki-Gkivalou] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 77–79.*
- Xenopoulos G., n.d., 'Στέλλα Βιολάντη [Stela Violanti]', [in:] *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Τεύχος Β'. Β' τάξη γενικού λυκείου*, Ν. Γρηγοριάδης [Keimena Neoellinikis Logotechnias. Tefchos V'. W' taksi genikou lykeiou, N. Grigoriadis] et al. (eds), Αθήνα [Athina], pp. 103–107.

Greek original texts

(A) ΕΡΓΑΣΙΕΣ

1 Διακρίνετε τις ενότητες του ποιήματος και δώστε έναν τίτλο για την καθεμιά.

2 Πώς δηλώνεται η δυσκολία της θεμελίωσης του γεφυριού και με ποιον τρόπο προβλέπεται να πραγματοποιηθεί το

έργο;

3 Ποιος είναι ο ρόλος του πουλιού στην εξέλιξη της αφήγησης;

4 Ποιο επίρρημα χρησιμοποιεί στην παραγγελία του ο πρωτομάστορας και ποιο ο φτερωτός αγγελιαφόρος του μηνύματος; Τι δείχνει η επιλογή του επιρρήματος στην πρώτη περίπτωση και τι στη δεύτερη;

5 Πώς αντιδρά η γυναίκα του πρωτομάστορα στην απρόσμενη δοκιμασία της, και ποια είναι τα συναισθήματά της για το σύζυγό της;

6

Ποια στοιχεία αυτού του τραγουδιού αποδεικνύουν ότι ανήκει στο είδος των παραλογών;

(B) ΔΙΑΘΕΜΑΤΙΚΕΣ ΔΡΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΤΗΤΕΣ

Αναζητήστε βιβλιογραφικά στοιχεία και βρείτε πληροφορίες για την κατασκευή των πέτρινων γεφυριών στην Ελλάδα. Επισκεφθείτε, αν μπορείτε, μια περιοχή με ένα τέτοιο γεφύρι.

Σε συνεργασία με τους καθηγητές της Γεωγραφίας και της Τεχνολογίας, οργανώστε ερευνητικές ομάδες, με σκοπό τη συλλογή στοιχείων για την τοποθεσία, τη λειτουργία και την ευρύτερη σημασία των γεφυριών, τόσο στην παλιά όσο και στη σύγχρονη εποχή της μεγάλης τεχνολογικής ανάπτυξης.

(C) Οι γενναίοι δοξαστήκανε κι οι ήρωες,

όσοι κρατήσαν τη Ζωή και φύλαξαν το Δίκιο.

Τώρα περνάς εσύ με το δειλό περπάτημα, το κουρασμένο, και μπαίνει η Ταπεινότη σου στο Ηρώο.

Φόριε τα ρούχα της δουλειάς και το τσεμπέρι,

βάστα και το ταγάρι σου με το φαΐ της φυλακής

— με τούτα τα ιερά άμφια σε θέλουμε να μπεις

στης αιωνιότητας τη δόξα!

(D) Του καλοκαιριού

Το ξανθό παλικάρι του καλοκαιριού
έχει μια γαλανή γραμμή πάνω στο λείο μέτωπο.

Στα καστανά του μάτια κρατάει τις αχτίδες του ήλιου μισοκλείνοντας τα σκιερά βλέφαρα,
φιλοπαίζοντας τις βλεφαρίδες αχτιδωτές.
Ηλιοψημένο στυλώνει το λαμπρό κορμί,
αμέριμνα χαμογελά και άσκοπα.
Φαντάζουν κατάσπρα τα δόντια του,
μοιάζουν τ' άσπρα χαλίκια καθαροπλυμένα,
στ' ακρογιάλι του γαλάζιου και κρυστάλλινου νερού.

(Ε) «Βλέπεις; μας ήρθε κι άλλος μουσαφίρης, που δεν περιμέναμε!»
είπε ο πατέρας, σαν έφυγε ο λήσταρχος. «Σ' άρεσε η βράκα του; Είδες πόσα κύματα γύρω τριγύρω;»

Πολύ απορήσανε όλοι στο σπίτι. Και τρομάζανε. «Παναγία μου Δέσποινά μου», είπε η θεία Διαλεχτή, που νόμιζε πως έρχεται να μας σφάζει! Η Σοφιδώ όμως την κατάλαβε την καρδιά του την καλή. Της πρόσφερεν από το χέρι του το διοσμαρί, κι εμοσκοβόλησεν ο κόρφος της, βλέπεις από βουνό κατεβασμένο. Του πρόσφερεν εκείνη κάθισμα, κι εκοντοστάθηκεν εκείνος πριν το λάβει, εμισοχαμογέλασε, κι είτε τα χρόνια είναι πολλά, κι εξέμαθεν το κάθισμα.

«Ανάψετε τα φώτα». Ήρθε το βράδυ. Κατά την ώρα που ξεφτιλίζουνε τα λυχνάρια. Τα σουβλερά του γουρνοτσάρουχα πηγαίνανε μπροστά, κι επιάνανε τον κόσμο, και στον τοίχο ο ίσκιος του ετύλιγεν τον τοίχο, σα θεριό. Απάνω στο ραβδί του αποραβδίζει, τα χέρια ανοιχτά, και ξεκουράζεται, κι όλοι αψηλώνομε για να του φτάσομε τα μάτια. Ήρθε το βράδυ που ξεφτιλίζουνε τα λυχνάρια, όπου εσκιαχτήκαμε και τη νύχτα πολύ, και γιατί είναι φονιάς.

«Επεινάσα», είπε, «και ήρθα». Ξεραϊλα ετούτον το χρόνο. Μια ανυδρίες, μια αγέρηδες».

«Παναγία μου Δέσποινά μου, και μ' ίντα να τονε χορτάσεις, όπου θα θέλει βούιδι! Εμείς δε συνηθούμε το βράδυ το κρέας...»

«Κλείσετε τις πόρτες», είπε ο πατέρας, «ας μη γίνει απόψε τίποτα ιδιαίτερο. Το δικό μας δείπνο. Ας μη γίνονται και πολλοί θόρυβοι... —λίγη ησυχία— κλείσετε τις πόρτες».

Σταυροκοπιέται, κι ανοίξαν τα νεφρά της, η θεια Διαλεχτή. «Γρου-
σούζικια χρονιά εφέτος... Ό,τι σου μέλλει η μοίρα σου για να περάσεις,
θα το περάσεις. Να κλειδομπάρωθεις με το ληστή!... Ετούτο πάλι; πώς
σας εφάνηκε; Της πικροδάφνης το ζουμί το κατακάθι, τέτοια μοίρα
εφέτος!...».

(F1) ΑΠΟ ΤΗ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗ Το λίγο του κόσμου (1971). Εκείνο που ιδι-
αίτερα πρέπει να προσέξετε στο ποίημα είναι ότι η ποιήτρια α) δεν
περιορίζεται σε μια στατική και αντικειμενική περιγραφή του εξωτερι-
κού κόσμου, αλλά τον δίνει με εικόνες, που κύριο χαρακτηριστικό τους
είναι η κινητικότητα (λ.χ. ξυπνάει ένα λευκό κουπί- φτεροκοπάει μια
στέγη) και β) οι εικόνες εκφράζουν ή συμφύρονται με τις διαθέσεις της
(λ.χ. με λήθη μοιάζει η θάλασσα: μας ξέχασαν).

(F2) Άωρα και παράωρα [1]

Ανάμεσα νύχτας κι αυγής
σφηνωμένη βρήκα την άωρη ώρα.

Ασεβής ευθυμία πουλιών με ξύπνησε τόσο νωρίς και βγήκα στων
σκοταδιών την άμπωτη [2].

Το μπαλκόνι μου ήσυχα λάμνει
στ' αβαθή χρώματα [3].

Ονειρεύονται ακόμα οι κήποι
ερχομό αγνώστου ανθέων.

Αργά ξεδιπλώνεται ο περιβόητος ορίζοντας
σα φθηνή κορδέλα του μέτρου.

Με λήθη μοιάζει η θάλασσα: μας ξέχασαν.

Με λήθη μοιάζει το άπειρο. Άπειρος λήθη.

Ένα καϊκι ξεκουρδίζεται στο βάθος,
το παίρν' η απόσταση και παίζει.

Μουρμουριστά των χρωμάτων η στάθμη ανεβαίνει [4]. Με βήμα
περιπάτου πλησιάζουνε τα σχήματα [5]. Ξυπνάει ένα λευκό κουπί,

φτεροκοπάει μια στέγη,
ένα παραθυρόφυλλο σπαρτάρισε.

Έντρομο αφυπνίζεται κάποιο καμπαναριό,
ένοχο: η πίστη πρέπει να ξυπνάει πρώτη.

Πρώτη απ' όλα.

(F3) 1. Άωρα και παράωρα: για να συλλάβετε το πραγματικό νόημα των στίχων, πρέπει να λάβετε υπόψη σας ότι άωρος είναι ο πρόωρος, αυτός που δεν ωρίμασε, και παράωρος ο παράκαιρος.

2. Βγήκα... άμπωτη: βγήκα την ώρα που αποτραβιούνται τα σκοτάδια (μεταφορά από την άμπωτη της θάλασσας).

3. Αβαθή χρώματα: τα χρώματα που είναι ακόμη αχνά.

4. Μουρμουριστά... ανεβαίνει: τα χρώματα σιγά σιγά γίνονται πιο καθαρά και ζωντανά.

5. Με βήμα... σχήματα: τα σχήματα των πραγμάτων παρουσιάζονται σαν να προχωρούν, επειδή σιγά σιγά ξεκαθαρίζουν, όπως τα χρώματα.

(F4) ΕΡΓΑΣΙΕΣ

Δύο είναι οι ενότητες του ποιήματος. Στην πρώτη δίνονται οι εικόνες των πραγμάτων την ώρα που ακόμη υπάρχει ασάφεια (λόγω της ώρας) ως προς τα χρώματα, τα σχήματά τους κτλ., ενώ στη δεύτερη οι εικόνες των πραγμάτων έχουν ξεκαθαρίσει. Με βάση αυτή την παρατήρηση και τα σχόλια ν' απαντήσετε στα παρακάτω ερωτήματα:

1. Πώς δίνονται οι εικόνες των πραγμάτων στην πρώτη ενότητα; (να εντοπίσετε τις σχετικές λέξεις και φράσεις· πριν απαντήσετε, να λάβετε υπόψη σας το εισαγωγικό σημείωμα).

2. Ποια ψυχική κατάσταση εκφράζει η πρώτη ενότητα;