Roidis and the Borrowed Muse

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British Historiography, Fiction and Satire in *Pope Joan*

By

Foteini Lika

Cambridge Scholars Publishing



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Των δικών μου, για όλα όσα μου έχουν απλόχερα προσφέρει.

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

Since there is no common framework for the transliteration of Greek words and names in the Latin alphabet, where a Greek name has a well-established form in English this takes precedence, e.g. Aristotle and not Aristotelis, Symeon the Metaphrastes and not Symeon the Metafrastis. Otherwise, transliteration is based on the principle of simplification and is not strictly tied to pronunciation or orthography. As such, Εξομολο-ρητάριον becomes Εχοποlogitarion rather than Εκοποlogetarion. The same applies to Γιαννόπουλος, which becomes Giannopoulos rather than Yiannopoulos. However, in other cases I have followed the way the authors write their own name, as in the case of Βαγενάς, which became Vayenas instead of Vagenas, and Kitromilides instead of Kitromilidis. In addition, I have respected the traditional practice of rendering certain Greek consonants in English, such as Angelou instead of Aggelou.

All original texts have been translated in English and the source texts are only quoted—either partially or in whole—so as to facilitate the readers to follow an argument or in order to make rare source material more accessible to them. All translations of Greek, French, Italian or Latin texts not taken from an English edition are mine, unless otherwise stated. Also, I have anglicized the names of all the characters, both main and secondary ones, thus $\Pi \dot{\alpha}\pi \iota \sigma \sigma a$ Iwava becomes Pope Joan and not Papissa Johanna, Φρουμέντιος becomes Frumentius and not Froumentios.

Overall, I have tried to make this study read as easily as possible for the non-Greek speaker without, at the same time, distancing myself from long-established conventions.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Unless otherwise indicated, references to editions and translations of Emmanouil Roidis' *Pope Joan* are cited parenthetically in the text, using the following abbreviation list:

- PJ Η Πάπισσα Ιωάννα: Μεσαιωνική Μελέτη (Athens: Typois Io. Kassandreos, 1866). For reasons of convenience, I will make references both to the first edition of PJ and to the most recent, and thus most easily accessible to the readers, 2005 facsimile edition by Dimitris Dimiroulis [Η Πάπισσα Ιωάννα: Το αυθεντικό κείμενο του 1866, ed. Dimitris Dimiroulis (Athens: Metaichmio, 2005)]. The references to the first edition will be given first while the relevant pages in the latest edition will be denoted by numbers in brackets, for instance: PJ 122 [140].
- *PJC Pope Joan (The Female Pope): A Historical Study*, trans. Charles Hastings Colette (London: George Redway, 1886).
- PJF Pope Joan: An Historical Romance, trans. J. H. Freese (London: H. J. Cook, 1900).
- *PJD Pope Joan: A Romantic Biography*, trans. Lawrence Durrell (London: Andre Deutsch, 1954).

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A work like this necessarily involves extensive and exhausting research in archives and libraries in Greece and abroad. For this reason, I feel a special debt to Eirini Tsouri, the chief librarian in the Academy of Athens, who willingly helped me explore Roidis' archive. Without her help and hospitality this study would be much poorer and less informed, and me a friend less. I would also like to record my gratitude to Antonis Saragiotis, chief librarian at the Central Library of the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, for his unconditional help. Furthermore, I am also thankful to Prof. Thanassis Fokas, former president of the National Library in Athens, for granting me access to the Library's valuable archives and primary sources.

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Athens, July 2018

INTRODUCTION

THE CRITICAL RECEPTION OF POPE JOAN

Pope Joan by Emmanouil Roidis (1836-1904) is one of the most unorthodox books ever written in Modern Greek literature and a unique case within Roidis' literary production. What is more, as Roderick Beaton has noted, "it is the only Greek novel of the nineteenth century to have found a place, albeit a modest one, in the European canon". In the past decades it came into the limelight again during the celebration of the centenary of Roidis' death, and many critics have revisited the text with a new-found interest.

Nevertheless, criticism has not always been so kind to *Pope Joan*, as the work's fortunes in the nineteenth and early twentieth century can testify. The publication of the novel (1866) created a rift in public opinion, and *Pope Joan* provoked many fierce opponents but also avid proponents.² Fundamental aspects of Roidis' writing, such as its anticlerical satire, its disputed sources and generic ambiguity, paved the way for a wide range of reactions.

On 4 April 1866, the Greek Orthodox Church made a vehement response to the book, banning it on the grounds of its profane juxtapositions, blasphemy and immorality:

A certain Novel entitled *Pope Joan*, recently published here [in Athens] by E. D. Roidis, is unfortunately packed with every kind of irreverence, misbelief and indecency; while its writer, acting in an anti-Christian fashion and emulating the glory of some occasional foes of our Orthodox faith, not only disrespectfully jeers at its dogmas, mysteries, holy ceremonies, morals, customs and traditions –by mocking, ridiculing, constantly and ironically juxtaposing the sacred with the profane– but also insults the proper mores by giving indecent descriptions and accounts. As a result, the Holy Synod denounced the said novel and anathematized it.³

¹ Beaton 1994, 57-58.

² Tziovas 2005, 161.

³ Giannopoulos 1901, 446-47.

Individual readers also gave their opinion on the work's flaws. Gerasimos Mavrogiannis, in his review for the journal *Chrysallis* (1866), criticized Roidis' overwhelming use of figurative language and thematized the issue of its sources. In particular, he listed among the work's imperfections the use of "inappropriate and forced similes" which encapsulate Roidis' entire satirical artistry, since he is always "trying to compare two totally different objects, thus producing a comic and funny effect. Spurred by his love of similes, he sometimes gathers a few flowers from foreign flower gardens [...] like the phrases included in Byron's *Don Juan*".

Michail Damalas was much more critical in his own review, in which he touched upon the question of the work's generic identity. In fact, he was adamant that Roidis should not have resorted to generic hybridity, but should have opted for clear-cut forms instead:

if he wished to write a historical monograph, he was totally inexcusable in his style of writing, whereas if he meant to author a romance, he should not have presented it as an ecclesiastical historical study.⁵

As expected, Roidis did not leave these accusations unanswered. Under the pen name of Dionysios Sourlis, he wrote four letters to the newspaper *Avgi* in defence of his *Pope Joan*. In them he attempted to present a historical retrospective of satire, examined the relationship between satire and ethics, and demonstrated his intellectual superiority over his adversaries. This was not, however, the only time that Roidis had to defend his work. The religious controversy was followed by acrimonious accusations of plagiarism, not only in Greece but in France as well. In particular, Charles Buet (1846-1897), a French novelist and journalist, argued that the story of Pope Joan was a mere fabrication, and Roidis' book was anti-Catholic and unreliable. At the request of Maurice Dreyfous, the French publisher of his work, Roidis answered the accusations in the newspaper *Tilegrafos*, but did not attempt a thorough refutation, as he had done twelve years earlier.⁶

Another attack came in 1880, this time in the person of Charilaos Meletopoulos, Roidis' rival for the post of Chief librarian in the National Library. Meletopoulos launched a ferocious personal attack on Roidis by contrasting extracts of *Pope Joan* with passages taken from Byron's *Don*

⁴ Mayrogiannis 1866, 189.

⁵ Damalas 1866, 978.

⁶ Stavropoulou 1989, 1365.

Juan and Casti's La Papessa.⁷ Roidis, assuming yet another role –that of Michail Karatzas, a student and ex-office boy of the Library– overturned each accusation point by point. More specifically, he was quick-witted enough to observe that Meletopoulos, who was so sensitive to other writers' copyrights, based his attack on a pirated edition of Pope Joan, which did not have all the supporting material of the original editions.

Although Roidis had disproved the accusations of plagiarism quite successfully, this issue would trouble the reception of his work for years to come. In 1890, Souris, in the satirical journal *Romios*, referred to *Pope Joan* as "dubious", while accusing Roidis, the critic, of having "pinched most of his writings from others". Even the well-disposed Palamas echoed these allegations on plagiarism, when he described Roidis as an "excellent yet most innovative compiler".

Apart from plagiarism, however, critics were still concerned about the work's generic identity. Xenopoulos, in the seminal article he wrote in *Poikili Stoa* (1891), admitted that he had read *Pope Joan* during his high school years, and that its ingenuity and its laboured erudition were mostly what attracted him to the book. Nevertheless, when he attempted to categorize it, he wavered irresolutely between the generic labels of romance ("μυθιστορία") and historical study ("μεσαιωνικὴ μελέτη"). Therefore, although he thought that it belonged in the same taxonomy as Byron's *Don Juan*, Voltaire's *Zadig* and About's *Roi des Montagnes*, he also saw some genuine historical merit in it, thus characterizing it as a "profound medieval study". ¹⁰

In the early twentieth century, following Roidis' death in 1904, critics paid homage to the writer for his attack on the pseudo-romanticism and grandiloquence of the 1860s, and seemed to adopt a more lenient attitude towards his work while acknowledging its mixed generic identity. In the obituary he wrote in *Akropolis*, Palamas claimed that *Pope Joan* was an *œuvre de jeunesse* written under the influence and in the manner of great foreign writers such as Heine, Swift and Byron. It was "a kind of historical

⁷ Meletopoulos 1881. Anna Zimbone also considered Casti's novella in her article on *Pope Joan*'s Italian model, in which she concluded that Roidis had appropriated from Casti's novella something rather inconsequential (*res nullius*), since *Pope Joan*, even though it was presented as a historical study, "is the reflection of the personality of its author, the externalization of Roidis' restless spirit" (Zimbone 1992, 335-36); for the Greek version of this article, see also Zimbone 1995, 567-87 and especially p. 586.

⁸ Souris 1890, 4.

⁹ Palamas [1960] (2), 109.

¹⁰ Xenopoulos 1891, 31-32.

novel, a narrative that was at the same time a satire, a raillery and an epigram". 11

By the 1930s, Xenopoulos had again changed his mind regarding *Pope* Joan's generic character, calling it "a perfect medieval ethography which required great historical study and [...] also great imagination". ¹² For the members of the Generation of the Thirties, though, this was not the case. As Dimitris Tziovas observed, "in spite of Roidis' cosmopolitanism and the sophistication of his text, both were absent from Seferis' Dokimes, Elytis' Anoichta Chartia, [and] Lorentzatos' Meletes". 13 However, those that did take the trouble to read and evaluate Pope Joan thought that it had lost its freshness and originality, was devoid of imagination and considered its style to be pompous and tedious. Such formulations became touchstones for Roidian criticism during the 1930s and 1940s and indicated that his literary credibility was at a low ebb at the time. Giorgos Theotokas, in his liberal manifesto Free Spirit (1929), affirmed Roidis' value as a critic, whilst depreciating him as a literary man. ¹⁴ Alkis Thrylos went further, heaping scorn on Roidis' work and stating that it was lacking in "imagination and sheer ingenuity". 15 Furthermore, she regarded *Pope* Joan as "insufferably cerebral, cold, dry, soulless and weighty" and attributed its ephemeral success (in her eyes at least) to the ironic style in which it was written 16

These evaluations found their official sanction in the *History of Modern Greek Literature* by K. Th. Dimaras (1949), whose comments – rather more restrained but still with a touch of concealed disdain– echoed the previous opinions as well as those of Simos Menardos, who considered Roidis a professional stylist, and likened the density and conciseness of his style to "condensed Swiss milk".¹⁷ In a similar manner, Dimaras underlined Roidis' uniqueness and the ground-breaking aspect of his style, claiming that the latter introduced to Modern Greek literature "the importance of style, the professional authorial consciousness". Therefore, according to Dimaras, what remained from Roidis' brilliant narrative was "a flamboyant style rendered clearer by the simplicity of his means as well

¹¹ Palamas [1960] (2), 108.

¹² Xenopoulos 1932, 180.

¹³ Tziovas 2005, 166.

¹⁴ Theotokas 1973, 38: "Our greatest prose writers [...] are not pure novelists but critics: Psycharis, Roidis".

¹⁵ Thrylos 1935a, 657.

¹⁶ Thrylos 1935b, 722.

¹⁷ Menardos 1918, 25.

as a cry of protest against the failures of Athenian Romanticism". Dimaras differed from his contemporaries in another respect as well, while also interested in matters of generic classification, he was not at all hesitant when he claimed that *Pope Joan*, though "an unsuccessful attempt in biography, was undoubtedly a work of fiction, a novel"; since, despite the work's title, its extensive critical introduction and the copious footnotes Roidis provided for reader, the author was always aware that he had written a novel. ¹⁹

In 1953 the journal *Elliniki Dimiourgia* devoted an issue to Roidis, but –quite remarkably– had as its opening article an extremely negative, if not biased, assessment of Roidis' work. In the article, Spyros Melas took the opportunity to castigate Roidis' choice of subject because it seemed to ignore the ethnocentric needs of the newly-found state for ethical or didactic narrations. He presented Roidis to be the forerunner and predecessor "of the modern Franco-Levantines of Greek literature" and for this reason considered him as an example to be avoided. Of course, it is easy to understand that this was a political choice, as *Pope Joan*'s European background was incongruent with Melas' anti-cosmopolitanism.

In the following decades there appeared to be little interest in Roidis or his work. However, in 1963, Agisilaos Tselalis brought the issue of *Pope Joan*'s sources to the fore once again in his book *The History of Pope Joan*. On this occasion, Iezechiel [sic] Spanheim's work *Disquisitio Historica* was under the microscope as the silenced force behind the myth of Pope Joan. A substantial comeback was also made in 1978, when Alkis Angelou edited Roidis' complete works and paved the way for critics in subsequent decades. Around the same time, Mario Vitti, in his *History of Modern Greek Literature* (1978), rekindled the issue of the generic characterization of the work by claiming that: "Roidis, by delving into a historical scandal [...], not only creates a perfect historical novel but also an unmitigated parody of historical novels".

¹⁸ Dimaras 2000, 434.

¹⁹ Ibid., 433.

²⁰ Melas 1953, 581.

²¹ Tselalis 1963. As Tziovas has correctly observed, Tselalis seems to be confusing the diplomat Ezechiel Spanheim (1629-1710) with his younger brother, the church historian Friedrich Spanheim (1632-1701), author of *De Papa Foemina inter Leonem IV and Benedictum II Disquisitio Historica* (Tziovas 2005, 173).

²² Dimiroulis 1995, 45.

²³ Vitti 1989, 268 and see also Vitti 1991, 25: "Roidis' *Pope Joan*, despite its medieval subject, answers to entirely different stimuli and is a historical antinovel".

It was not until the 1980s, however, that the accusations of obscenity and immorality, Western influence and anti-clericalism abated, and *Pope Joan* began to undergo a significant critical reassessment. For the first time, it was analyzed as a multi-layered rhetorical synthesis in terms of politics and ideology, intertextuality and reader-oriented criticism. Two journals *Diavazo* (1984) and *Chartis* (1985) devoted special issues (in the case of *Chartis* a double one) on Roidis' work. Panos Moullas, in the literary journal *Diavazo* (1984), associated Roidis' style with the adoption of a satirical stance in life, claiming that Roidis found his style when he took a certain distance from his subject matter.²⁴ This self-dissociation from his object of study is further conveyed, according to Moullas, by Roidis' extensive use of similes and digressions, which in turn operate as thresholds to other spatiotemporal dimensions.²⁵

On the other hand, the article by Maria Kakavoulia in the literary journal *Chartis*, discerned in the frequent use of similes in *Pope Joan* the tendency of the text to mock and parody many of the so-called diachronic representational conventions (*loci communes*) of the western narrative tradition of theological, literary, historiographical and other texts:

The intertextual use of simile along with the peculiar use of quotations taken from other texts transform *Pope Joan* into an intertext, a locus of multiple significations and interactions of different contexts, thus rendering irony into a structural category of the novel and exposing the self-parodying aspect of language itself through the projection of its own rhetoricity.²⁶

In another article in the journal *Chartis* (1985), Dionysis Kapsalis reached a similar conclusion when he claimed that Roidis' *pharmakon* for the *mal du siècle* (l'idéalisme du romantisme) was the adoption of romantic conventions in order to remedy them homeopathically:

The social homeopathy dictates use of the homeopathical method, in which the philosophy of the ailing century –idealization– is both the remedy and the disease, and in which the cure (*pharmakon*) is of the same nature as the symptom: i.e. the figurative whimsicality of speech.²⁷

²⁴ Moullas 1994, 334 and cf. Dimiroulis' article on Roidis' art of polemics (Dimiroulis 1985, 266-90).

²⁵ Moullas 1994, 336-37 and especially p. 331.

²⁶ Kakavoulia 1985, 307. For a revised version of this article, see Kakavoulia 2003, 31-54

²⁷ Kapsalis 2000, 33-34.

Dimitris Tziovas was the first to theoretically address issues of readerresponse criticism, and his article in *Chartis* underlined the importance of a comparative and reader-oriented examination of *Pope Joan* with other British texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²⁸ He was also correct when he noted in 2005 that "in the last twenty years the old issues [concerning *Pope Joan*'s reception] have been revisited under different guises". 29 More specifically, Athina Georganta broached the question of plagiarism more positively, and aimed to show the wide net of Roidis' European influences, placing the emphasis on Byron's work.³⁰ On the other hand, Ruth Macrides in her article "The Fabrication of the Middle Ages" in the journal Kambos (1996) was mostly concerned with the textual construction of authenticity and the ludic imitation of historical knowledge in *Pope Joan*.³¹ In particular, she briefly analyzed *synaxaria* and lives of saints as well as fabricated newspaper articles in order to make the falsification of his evidence palpable. In a subsequent article she expanded her research into medieval accounts (Martinus Polonus, Liutprand) and found out that "Roidis not only plays havoc with time in his reconstruction of the past; he also shows disregard for the integrity of his sources, misinterpreting their content". 32 Persa Apostoli, took another angle, re-examining the generic categorization of *Pope Joan* and its affinities with the tradition of the Spanish picaresque novel in particular.³³ In a similar vein, Mairi Mike reinterpreted the issue of the work's generic guises through the prism of gender criticism and transvestism,³⁴ while Dimitris Dimiroulis and Maria Kakavoulia, within a couple of years of each other, approached Roidis' novel as an example of a game across genres.35

The eve of the twenty-first century was also characterized by a revival of interest in Roidis' work. In 2004, the centenary of Roidis' death, *Nea Estia* published a special issue on his work. Among the approaches that are worth mentioning are those of P. D. Mastrodimitris and Giannis Papatheodorou. Mastrodimitris examined the aesthetics of history in *Pope*

²⁸ Tziovas 1985, 427-42.

²⁹ Tziovas 2005, 167.

³⁰ Georganta 1984, 21-31 and cf. Georganta 1993, in which she comprehensively discussed the ideological and aesthetic influences and choices that led to the formation of *Pope Joan*'s theoretical background.

³¹ Macrides 1996, 29-40.

³² Macrides 1998, 84.

³³ Apostoli 2000, 75-94 and Apostoli 2002.

³⁴ Mike 2001, 132-56.

³⁵ Dimiroulis 2002, 81-109 and Kakavoulia 2004, 114-23.

Joan, and was right to observe that a calm and just evaluation of the book "from a fictional and an aesthetic standpoint has not been yet attempted". ³⁶ Papatheodorou, on the other hand, was more all-embracing in his quest to expose the scandalous aspects in *Pope Joan*, and incorporated his approach in a wider tropological/figurative perspective which co-examined the historical, literary and ideological conditions behind Roidis' stylistic choices. In particular, he noted that:

[t]he appearance of a work like *Pope Joan* acquires dimensions and meanings that concern not only the containment of Enlightenment ideas but also the nature of writing itself, which in turn participates in the formation of a protesting and critical cultural conscience that is manifested through specific linguistic and stylistic figures, narrative strategies and generic choices.³⁷

Furthermore, in 2005, Dimitris Dimiroulis offered a facsimile edition of the 1866 edition of *Pope Joan* along with an instructive introduction on the work's diachronic charm.³⁸ Last but not least, three more monographs on Roidis' work appeared relatively recently. The first by Nikos Mayrelos in 2008, and the other two by Sokratis Titouris and Stavros Kritiotis respectively, in 2009. Mayrelos' meticulous and well-documented approach was largely philosophical in its scope. It aimed to secure Roidis' place within the canon of Modernity whilst also shedding light on Aristotle's and Plato's impact on Roidis' work, and elucidating the latter's affinities with the philosophical tradition of Hegel, Taine and Baudelaire.³⁹ Both Titouris and Kritiotis, on the other hand, revisited the issue of *Pope* Joan's sources in an almost identical fashion and offered a (rather too close) intertextual reading of Roidis' plagiarism techniques. 40 Titouris mostly concentrated on the biblical, Ancient Greek, Latin and medieval quotations in *Pope Joan*, while Kritiotis focused on the work's fudged footnotes, as well as the influence of Pascal and Gibbon. 41 For this reason,

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³⁶ Mastrodimitris 2004a, 591. Consonant with Mastrodimitris' views is Mavrelos' recent evaluation of *Pope Joan* in the newspaper *Avgi*, in which he addresses the discomfiture of modern criticism and the conspicuous absence of a theoretical monograph devoted solely to *Pope Joan* (Mavrelos 2016).

³⁷ Papatheodorou 2004, 613.

³⁸ Dimiroulis 2005a, xi-lxxx.

³⁹ Mayrelos 2008.

⁴⁰ Titouris 2009 and Kritiotis 2009.

⁴¹ Among the most recent products of modern Roidian source-criticism one can also include Athina Fragkouli's voluminous, yet unpublished, doctoral dissertation (Fragkouli 2013) regarding the representation of antiquity in *Pope Joan*, in which

Kritiotis examined distorted quotations, ambiguous mistakes and anagrams throughout Roidis' work and his findings can be summarized as follows:

Roidis, a reader with diverse interests, was in dialogue with his quotations. He shaped them, combined them, assimilated them, invented them, made witty comments out of them, and made them inseparable from his writing. It was all about the original combination [of his sources]. 42

After this brief introduction to the fortunes of *Pope Joan* from her publication to the present day, we can conclude by saying that its reception was cast in terms of recurring binary preoccupations, such as the interplay between satire and anticlericalism, fiction (romance) and history, plagiarism and intertextuality, authorship and readership. In a sense, this present study will not be an exception; nevertheless, it will aim to situate *Pope Joan* within a broader comparative context than these previous studies. Therefore, the first chapter is mostly concerned with issues of "intertextuality" and "source criticism". It examines texts that have been overlooked by criticism, like *synaxaria* and lives of saints, and provides new material regarding the suppressed sources of *Pope Joan*. Although a product of close reading, it avoids a mere enumeration of influences and illustrates how these texts interact within *Pope Joan*'s text, thus shaping the work's poetics.

The second and the third chapters aim to show how the discourses of history and fiction are intertwined in *Pope Joan*. As we have already seen, the majority of critics have emphasized the importance of history in Roidis' work. Nevertheless, no one has ever attempted an interdiscoursive comparison of *Pope Joan* either with the historiographical paradigm or the historical novel of its time. For this reason, the second chapter examines *Pope Joan*'s indebtedness to Gibbon's seminal work, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and how the latter, directly or indirectly, influenced Roidis' historical reception of the Middle Ages. Furthermore, it discusses Macaulay's *History of England*, a work Roidis himself translated into Greek, mostly because of the similarities between Macaulay's precepts on historiography and Roidis' views on his own writing in *Pope Joan*. The third chapter focuses on the "paratextual" elements (prefatory and introductory material, notes and footnotes) in

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she extensively investigated, minutely recorded and, rather fragmentarily, discussed the ancient sources of *Pope Joan*.

⁴² Kritiotis 2009, 168.

⁴³ For the concept of intertextuality, see Genette 1997a, 1-2.

Scott's Waverley Novels and *Pope Joan*, ⁴⁴ thus offering new insights into the debate surrounding the generic identity of Roidis' work.

The last three chapters take as a starting point Roidis' genealogy of satirical writing as expounded in his "Agriniot Letters" as well as his own distancing from the work of major Greek satirists. In them, *Pope Joan*'s intertextual affinity with the tradition of British satire is unravelled. The fourth chapter is a tropological study of Swift's and Roidis' style, which – as we have seen-concerned many critics, yet none so far have enquired into the connection between Roidis' and Swift's style, given Roidis' own admission that Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* is the model behind the profuse use of similes and metaphors in *Pope Joan*. The fifth chapter is a narratological essay in the direction of "reader-oriented criticism" and "metatextuality". 45 In this way, by comparing digressive storytelling in Roidis and Sterne, it not only makes clear Roidis' implicit connection with the eighteenth-century novel, as Tziovas has suggested needed to be done. but it also explicates how the addressed reader (narratee) becomes a regulating mechanism in the narration. Last but not least, the sixth chapter is a contribution to the debate on Western influences on Pope Joan. Although Byron's influence has been extensively discussed by criticism, it broaches the subject from a different angle. Given that Roidis modelled his work on Byron's, it explores how the assimilation of Don Juan's epic elements leads to the generic contamination of *Pope Joan*, thus completely transcending the issue of Roidis' plagiarism whilst also focusing on the process of generic transformation itself.

Consequently, if I had to categorize the present study within a methodological field, I would say that is essentially a study in poetics, ⁴⁶ because its three basic concerns –the different types of discourse (history and fiction), the modes of enunciation (irony, satire) and the literary genres (hagiography, historiography, romance, historical novel, epic)–form what Genette defined as the "architextuality" of a text, or "the literariness of literature":

⁴⁴ For the concept of the paratext, see Genette 1997a, 2.

⁴⁵ For a brief introduction on reader-oriented criticism, see Tompkins 1980, ix-xxvi and for the notion of metatextuality, cf. Genette 1997a, 4: "metatextuality [...] is the relationship most often labelled 'commentary'. It unites a given text to another, of which it speaks without necessarily citing it [...] even without naming it".

⁴⁶ Cf. Mavrelos 2008, 156: "Through the fusion of Poetics and Rhetoric, the author of *Pope Joan* is clearly trying to form a poetics of discourse genres (mostly written ones)".

⁴⁷ Genette 1992, 82: "the whole endlessly forming and re-forming poetics, whose object, let us firmly state, *is not the text, but the architext*".

the subject of poetics, [...] is not the text considered in its singularity (that is more appropriately the task of criticism), but rather the *architext* or, the *architextuality* of the text [...] the entire set of general or transcendent categories—types of discourse, modes of enunciation, literary genres—from which each singular text emerges.⁴⁸

That said, it is essential to bear in mind that this study is inevitably a tentative introduction to further and more extensive studies of Roidian poetics, since it attempts as much to raise questions as to answer them.

⁴⁸ Nevertheless, Genette, as a restless theoretician who never settled for a fixed critical vocabulary, almost immediately subsumed the concept of architextuality within what he later called "transtextuality" (Genette 1997a, 1). Either way, both the former notion of architextuality and the subsequent one of transtextuality are forms of textual transcendence and are the subject of the wider field of poetics.

PART I: ROIDIS' SOURCES

CHAPTER ONE

IN THE "SOURCERER'S" WORKSHOP: ROIDIS AND HIS SOURCES

Pope Joan's reception has been tumultuous: first it was accused of obscenity, anticlericalism and plagiarism, while later it was praised for its unrivalled style and intertextual poetics. Nonetheless, as P. D. Mastrodimitris noted. Pope Joan has not vet been properly evaluated in terms of both fiction and aesthetics, as its content has not been fully cross-checked against reliable historical sources to prove its factuality. Indeed, Dimitris Dimiroulis asserted in the most recent edition of the book that *Pope Joan* is a work of fiction because that is the way it has been read and perceived for ages, thus dodging the issue with an appeal to the reading factor.³ However, his assertion that the only aesthetical evaluation we can ascribe to Pope Joan is our approval or disapproval, and our belief or disbelief towards it, 4 can be refuted by the reader-oriented counterargument that any work which professes its historicity and presents the reader with "means of confrontation",5 such as generic proclamations ("medieval study", "narrative encyclopaedia of the Middle Ages", "veracious story", "true history"), quotations and footnotes, invites him/her to test them.

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¹ As we have already seen in the preceding introduction, Meletopoulos (1881), Giannopoulos (1901) and Tselalis (1963) were among the first to attempt to throw light on Roidis' unorthodox practice regarding the treatment of his sources. More recently, Macrides (1996 and 1998) and Kritiotis (2009) contested Roidis' reliability as an implied author, focusing their articles on *Pope Joan*'s distorted elements, and mostly on cases of misinformation and the blurring of boundaries that occurred through textual transposition (intertextuality) and the incongruous mixing of the factual with the fictitious.

² Mastrodimitris 2004a, 591.

³ Dimiroulis 2005a, lvii.

⁴ Ibid., lviii.

⁵ Hexter 1998, 61-64.

 $^{^6}$ PJ title page, η' , 93, 114 [1,10, 111, 132]. For reasons of convenience, from now on references will be made both to the 1866 edition of *Pope Joan (PJ)* and to the most recent, and thus most easily accessible, 2005 facsimile edition by Dimiroulis.

However, whether or not the reader will opt to fulfil the expectations that Roidis, as an *implied author*, ⁷ set for his *implied reader* through the *Appellstruktur* (response-inviting/ enabling structure) of his work is a question to be solved by each individual actual reader. ⁸

Considering the ground that has already been covered by Roidis' actual critical readers, it is evident that in order to advance research one has to make an arrangement of the material under examination, to see which areas still remain unexplored. For this reason, I will attempt to categorize the sources in question; however, a few clarifications regarding the nature of my approach are necessary first.

a. Source Criticism and Intertextuality

According to Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes, every text is constructed like "a mosaic of citations" and resembles "a chamber of echoes" in which all previous texts are endlessly reflected. The theory of intertextuality therefore insists that a text cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole; it does not function as a closed system. As Judith Still and Michael Worton have demonstrated, this is true for two reasons:

Firstly, the writer is a reader of texts (in the broader sense) before s/he is a creator of texts, and therefore the work of art is inevitably shot through with references, quotations, and influences of every kind. [...] Secondly, a text is available only through some process of reading; what is produced at the moment of reading is due to cross-fertilization of the packaged textual material (say, a book) by all the texts which the reader brings to it. 10

In this sense, one can understand why some scholars glibly mistake the intertext for sources and think that intertextuality is just a catchy name for influence or imitation.¹¹ Nevertheless, as Roland Barthes wrote, "[e]very

The references to the first will be given first while the relevant pages in the later edition will be denoted by numbers in brackets.

⁷ Booth 1961, 73-75 and cf. Tziovas 1985, 427-42.

⁸ Iser 1980, 37. This conclusion is in accordance with modern tendencies in criticism which view literature as a game for two: "The use of cryptic quotations [and sources in general] shows that literature has become a two-sided activity –the author designs the jigsaw puzzle, the reader fits its pieces together. Understanding means re-creating; the production and the enjoyment of art have been made to coincide" (Weisgerber 1970, 44).

⁹ Kristeva 1969, 146 and Barthes 1975a, 78 and cf. also Broich 1989, 119.

¹⁰ Worton 1990, 1.

¹¹ Riffaterre 1984, 142.

text, being itself the intertext of another text belongs to the intertextual, which must not be confused with a text's origins: the search for the 'sources of' and 'influence upon' a work is to satisfy the myth of filiation". Therefore the study of intertextuality, as noted by Jonathan Culler, "casts its net wider to include the anonymous discursive practices, codes whose origins are lost, which are the conditions of possibility of later texts". 13

Although this is a revolutionary way of approaching a text in theory, in practice —as Ulrich Broich remarked— a more limited use of the term is required. He for this reason, he limits the term to those cases where a writer not only uses but also refers to other texts. In this way, he can distinguish between mere influence (which can be unknown to the author), plagiarism and intentional reference to other texts. Of these three, the last is of importance to our study because it can act as a secure point of reference in our discussion of Roidis' intertextuality.

Consequently, if we are to understand intertextuality in this more specific sense, it is natural to expect of the writer the use of certain signals or markers in order to help us recognize his/her references to other texts. A useful typology based on the perceptibility degrees of intertextual signalling has been offered by Jörg Helbig, who accordingly distinguishes four types of intertextuality: a) unmarked intertextuality, in which the intertext is assimilated entirely into the text, hence there is no degree of recognition on the reader's part; b) implicitly marked intertextuality, in which, due to reduced signalling, the reader may overlook the intertext; c) explicitly marked intertextuality, in which there is complete and instant recognition of the intertext by the reader; and d) thematized intertextuality, in which abundant marking is provided to the reader by the use of metanarrative verbs. ¹⁵

Heinrich Plett was also concerned with issues of intertextuality, and his approach is worth mentioning because he clearly delineated the differences between explicitly and implicitly marked intertextuality. Therefore, explicit markers indicate a quotation directly, either by a performative verb "I quote" or even by naming the source directly. Contrary to these intratextual markers, notes, marginal glosses, source indices, prefaces and postscripts are located outside the text proper. Implicit markers are either features inherent in, or added to, the quotation. They may appear on the phonological level as pauses before and after the

¹² Barthes 1979, 77.

¹³ Culler 1976, 1383.

¹⁴ Broich 1989, 120 and see also Pfister 1985, 26.

¹⁵ Helbig 1996, 83-138 and cf. Papargyriou 2008, 162.