

# Three Long Poems in Athens



# Three Long Poems in Athens:

*Erēmē Gē-Perama-Kleftiko*

Translations and Essays by

Konstantina Georganta

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*Refugee block of flats (built from the 1920s onwards) in Kaisarianē, Athens*

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To my dear friend Kanelia

Τι θέλουν όλοι αυτοί που λένε  
πως βρίσκονται στην Αθήνα ή στον Πειραιά;  
Ο ένας έρχεται από τη Σαλαμίνα και ρωτάει τον άλλο  
μήπως «έρχεται εξ Ομονοίας»  
«Όχι έρχομαι εκ Συντάγματος» απαντά κι είν'  
ευχαριστημένος  
«βρήκα το Γιάννη και με κέρασε ένα παγωτό».  
Στο μεταξύ η Ελλάδα ταξιδεύει  
δεν ξέρουμε τίποτε δεν ξέρουμε πως είμαστε ξέμπαρκοι  
όλοι εμείς  
δεν ξέρουμε την πίκρα του λιμανιού σαν ταξιδεύουν όλα  
τα καράβια·  
περιγελάμε εκείνους που τη νιώθουν.

Γιώργος Σεφέρης, «Με τον τρόπο του Γ.Σ.» (1936)

What do they want, all those who believe  
they're in Athens or Piraeus?  
Someone comes from Salamis and asks someone else  
whether he comes 'from Omonia Square?'  
'No, from Syntagma,' replies the other, pleased;  
'I met Yianni and he treated me to an ice cream.'  
In the meantime Greece is traveling  
and we don't know anything, we don't know we're all  
sailors out of work,  
we don't know how bitter the port becomes when all the  
ships have gone;  
we mock those who do know.

George Seferis, 'In the Manner of G.S.' (1936)  
Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard.

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## INTRODUCTION

### META-POLITICS IN ATHENS

Athens is an emblematic city, a place of significance. It is memory embodied in a multi-layered topos, a place of ruins with the Parthenon as its headpiece. The routes one may follow in the city are numerous and the story one may narrate changes with each turn one takes. The book you now hold in your hands acknowledges this and offers something different. Here is the option of the poetic word creating narratives that travel through the city of today but also cut into the city's past touching on various of its corners and opening up to the readers the city's microcosm yesterday and today. Through this itinerary, the city becomes emblematic of the macrocosm surrounding this city and others like it.

The three long poems included in this book reveal the world of Athens to an international audience since the translated texts lead one over to Kaisarianē, the corner Patēsiōn-Stournara, the Unknown's and Papaspyrou's, the second floor of the Physics and Mathematics School, Athēnas street, Concordia Square, a little haunt in Monastēraki (all these in *Erēmē Gē* by Ēlias Lagios, 1984, published 1996), to the old harbor and refugee suburb of Perama 14.7km from the centre of Athens (*Perama* by Andreas Pagoulatos, 2006), to the cobblestone streets of Psyrrē and the queues of the Manpower Employment Organization, to Exarchia, Agioi Anargyroi and Kypselē and into all the bins of Athens (*Kleftiko*, 2013, by George Prevedourakis).

Poems function here as historical meta-texts, city narratives and depictions of the 'meta-hellenic' (*Kleftiko*) relying heavily on meta-writing (*Erēmē Gē*, *Kleftiko*) and presenting the constant struggle between what is and is not written and voiced (*Perama*). Even though Athens is not the sole area of importance, it does hold a special place in the poems as it represents the actual and symbolic centre of the country. It is here that the story should be narrated so that it is heard.

Starting from the 'the deforming of man', foretold in *Erēmē Gē* as a tortured 'repetition', the story moves on to the 'extermination / of the humble / the outcasts / the predetermined', all 'victims / sacrificed / by the voracious / vicious money' in *Perama* and the event that 'has already

happened / before it has' in *Kleftiko*. This return to the inescapability of predetermined lives ever haunting the scene is a common element in all three poems, whether the place is called 'Erēmē Gē', 'Perama' or *Kleftiko*'s 'Fevgada', an element which in turn transforms Athens into the centre of 'meta-politics', which is the realm of literature. As Jacques Rancière notes,

the principle of that "politics" is to leave the common stage of the conflict of wills in order to investigate in the underground of society and read the symptoms of history. It takes social situations and characters away from their everyday, earth-bound reality and displays what they truly are, a phantasmagoric fabric of poetic signs, which are historical symptoms as well. For their nature as poetic signs is the same as their nature as historical results and political symptoms.<sup>1</sup>

The poems address one's ability to judge events and so form an opinion (in Greek, 'krisis') as based on one's comprehension of these events and access to them. This most significant to society ability of 'krisis' is part and parcel of the origin and goal of the poetic text, itself part of the complex cultural object that is public speech. The poetic text sorts out events so as to amplify one's ability to express an opinion. Irrespective of 'crises', then, the main goal of the poetic text is 'krisis'. Indeed, *Kleftiko* attests to this with its epigraph, which addresses the conundrum of the formation of an opinion as dependent upon the degree of one's comprehension of events: 'No matter how we were told they will hear us otherwise / No matter how we were written they will read us otherwise' (Vyron Leontarēs).

The three long poems found in the pages that follow present then a challenge. This consists of the willingness of the reader to view the texts as active political texts, in the form described above, as insights into today no matter from how many years afar. This is why all three poems dwell on the pseudo opposition between the 'here and now' as opposed to 'there and then' dragging the past into the present and making the news of the past relevant again to the world of today in what poet and critic Gerasimos Lykiardopoulos named as the true dynamic of the 'resistance of poetry'.<sup>2</sup>

## Note

Each translated poem is preceded by an introductory text and the book's epilogue combines a few final words with a discussion of the third poem's final section. All translations, unless otherwise stated, are mine.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Rancière, ‘The Politics of Literature’, *SubStance* 103, Vol. 33, no. 1, 2004: 19.

<sup>2</sup> Gerasimos Lykiardopoulos, ‘...and the poetry as resistance’, ‘Auschwitz and Palestine’ («... και η ποίηση ως αντίσταση», «Αουσβιτς και Παλαιστίνη»), *Kant and the Balkans: Exercises in Logic* (Ο Κάντιος και τα Βαλκάνια: Ασκήσεις λογικής), Athens: Ypsilon, 2002: 50-52.



## CHAPTER ONE

### A GREEK WASTE LAND AND THE META-WRITING OF HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

In 1931, the Greek poet George Seferis discovered T.S. Eliot's 1922 poem *The Waste Land* in London. His translation of this long poem appeared five years later (three years after Takis Papatsonis' translation had appeared in the periodical *Ο Κύκλος/Ο Kyklos*) and several editions followed, in 1949, 1965 and 1967, while it has since been translated again by Sarantēs Giorgos (1958, 1964) and Kleitos Kyrou (1990).<sup>2</sup> The 1970s were crucial in this itinerary because it was in 1976 when Greek poet and critic Nasos Vayenas wrote a fictional piece on published and unfinished versions of *The Waste Land* called 'Patroclus Yiatras or The Greek translations of *The Waste Land*' («Πάτροκλος Γιατράς ή Οι ελληνικές μεταφράσεις της *Ερημης Χώρας*»). This was an examination of various versions of the translated poem focused around the efforts of an imaginary figure, the poet's alter-ego, to contribute his own translation and a turning point in the reception of Eliot's work in Greece as in 1984 another poet, Elias Lagios, produced his own long poem, *Η Ερημη Γη* (*Erēmē Gē*, literally translated as *Desolate Land*), which linked Eliot's *The Waste Land* – and its translation by Seferis – with Vayenas' 1976 piece.<sup>3</sup> Going even further, Lagios' poem connected Dionysios Solomos' poetry (from a verse from which Lagios borrowed his title) with *Το Δεύτερο Αντάρτικο* (*The Second Rebel Movement*) by Foivos Gregoriades, a four-volume book on the Greek Civil War (1945-1949) that ensued the Second World War in Greece. The 'Notes to *Erēmē Gē*' that accompany Lagios' poem – following here too the notes at the end of Eliot's poem – reveal a mosaic of literary and political references from Homer to modern Greek poets Kostas Palamas, C.P. Cavafy and Angelos Sikelianos and from folk and rebel songs to the man with the carnation (dedicated to the memory of Nikos Beloyiannis) from a poem by Yiannis Ritsos.

Lagios, Vayenas notes, rewrites Eliot's poem from the perspective of a leftist Greek poet 'reproducing the transcendental quest of *The Waste Land* with the coordinates of a politicized neohellenic vision' and parodying

both *The Waste Land* and its translation by Seferis, phrases from which he transfers whole into his own poem.<sup>4</sup> Already, the combination of Solomos' verse, the poet who composed the Greek National anthem, with the work of Gregoriades, shows the poet's intention to connect the fight for the creation of the modern Greek state and the subsequent creation of a national identity, supported by the narrative of the 1821 Greek revolution, with the fight for the creation of the modern Greek nation in the post-war years and the narratives that dominated then. As Aristos Doxiadis and Manos Matsaganis note, 'after the 1946-1949 Civil War, the mantle of nationalism was monopolised by the victorious Right [...] portraying the defeated communists as enemies of the nation' while 'the nationalist rhetoric ('Fatherland-Religion-Family') reached an apogee with the Colonels' coup d'état of 1967, and came crashing down together with the military regime in 1974'.<sup>5</sup> Lagios' *Erēmē Gē* used the form and language of Eliot's poem and of Seferis' translation of it to construct a version of history telling through a medium that combined the workings of historical memory and the art of fictionality.

### *Transition*

For Greece, the mid 1970s and the early years of the 1980s was a transition; from the colonel's military regime to the first years of the *Metapolitefsi* era, from a chain of wars – Balkan wars, First and Second World War, Civil War – to a time of sustained peace when new anniversaries entered the calendar, such as the annually commemorated student uprising of 17 November 1973.<sup>6</sup>

The Civil War that followed the Second World War in Greece in 1946 – after a meeting in the Kremlin on the evening of 9 October 1944 between Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin had settled their affairs in the Balkans with mathematical precision<sup>7</sup> – left the country severely scarred. In 1947, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and all its 'branches' were declared illegal while the islands Makronēsos and Yaros hosted concentration camps for the re-education and rehabilitation of Communists.<sup>8</sup> A provisional democratic government was formed (the Government of the Mountain) by the KKE. Two years later, the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE) was defeated at Grammos and Vitsi and this signalled the end of the Civil War. Many members of the DSE fled to Communist countries in the north (mainly Romania, Czechoslovakia, the USSR, and Poland). In 1951, major trials of Leftists and Communists were held and a year later Nikos Ploumbides, a leading figure of the KKE, was accused by the party of being a double agent. The

Greek police arrested him and he was tried in 1953. Other KKE members, amongst them Nikos Beloyiannis, were executed for treason on 30 March 1952.<sup>9</sup> Ploumbides was executed in 1954. He was posthumously reinstated to the Party in 1958. In 1956 the Sixth Plenum of the Central Committee of the KKE removed Nikos Zachariades as secretary general and a year later he was expelled from the Party. In 1962, most political prisoners were released. Five years later, on 21 April, a military dictatorship in Greece was installed by the troika of George Papadopoulos, Stylianos Pattakos, and Nikolas Makarezos. The concentration camp on Yáros was reopened. Thousands of Leftists, Communists, and Centrists were arrested, imprisoned, and exiled. In 1967 Dean Rusk, Lyndon B. Johnson's Secretary of State, told his television audience that 'Greece was not yet ready for democracy', 'a remark,' John Lucas remembers, 'so ineffable as to be beyond comment'.<sup>10</sup>

On 17 November 1974 the Karamanlis administration won the first elections after the fall of the junta (1967-1974) and his party, New Democracy, stayed in power until 18 October 1981 when, in the first elections after Greece's entry to the European Union, Andreas Papandreou's socialist Pasok party came to power with the slogan 'Change'. In 1982, Civil War refugees were allowed to return to Greece from the countries of Eastern Europe. At the same time, the country was on the spotlight since 1979 as the rest of Europe awaited the country's entry to the EU on 1 January 1981.

The year 1979 was the beginning of a renewed interest in modern Greek poetry and language all now mixed with the language of enterprise and technocracy. In 1981 Constantine Trypanis published his large volume *Greek Poetry: From Homer to Seferis*<sup>11</sup> and two years later *The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Greek* (ed. by J.T. Pring and originally published in 1965) was re-issued. Roderick Beaton would write then that Greek is not only 'the oldest language in Europe' but, as of January 1981, 'an official language of the EEC, solemnly inscribed, in our local supermarkets, on packets of cocktail biscuits and disposable nappies, and in demand in the translation and interpreting sections of European institutions'.<sup>12</sup> In December 1979, *The Times* dedicated several pages to Greece and it is here that we find a foreshadowing of this new angle: an article on Greece's foreign policy is coupled by a National Tourist Organisation of Greece campaign while images of the scaffolding surrounding the Erechtheion on the Acropolis appear side by side with ads by Halyvourgiki Inc., Greek Tobacco and the Hellenic Railways Organisation.<sup>13</sup> As this new image of Greece is being constructed, it is no surprise that an article on the 1979 Nobel laureate Odysseus Elytis, under the title 'A dark side to the light', is

presented next to another article on the restoration of historic Greek buildings, an ad by Astir hotels ('the quality hotels of Greece') and a half-page dedicated to the new Olympic Airways A300 Airbus.<sup>14</sup>

VIII  
GREECE


THE TIMES SUNDAY FEBRUARY 21, 1979

Geoffrey Weston explains how tourism is helping to stem the tide of rural depopulation and Edmond Keeler assesses the work of the post-Odysseus Ellis winner of this year's Nobel Prize for Literature

### Leasing scheme restores historic buildings



### A dark side to the light



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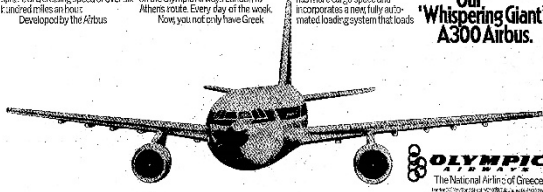
hospitality, our own terminal in Athens for faster connections and a National Airline that cares, but a quieter, more comfortable way to go.

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freight in minutes instead of hours. And that means a faster turn round.

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**Our 'Whispering Giant' A300 Airbus.**



**OLYMPIC**  
The National Airline of Greece

Progress seemed to be coming fast yet, as a powerful narrative was constructed to support this, other strings of narrative remained on the margin. In light of this, *Erēmē Gē* was an attempt to tell a different story that attested to the inheritance of the Civil War for modern Greece in the guise of a medium (a famous interwar poem) which embedded itself in the message and became integral to it. In post-Civil War Greek society, the 1980s was a period of conflict as urbanization was going hand in hand with the middle-class-ification of the agricultural and working class



populations.<sup>15</sup> The decade finished with a wave of immigrants coming to Greece for the first time after the 1920s following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.<sup>16</sup>

### *The scene: an unreal land*

Like *The Waste Land*, *Η Έρημη Γη* (*Erēmē Gē*) has five parts: «Η Ταφή των Νεκρών» ('The Burial of the Dead') promises the experience of something different («θα ζήσουμε κάτι διαφορετικό», 'we will live something different'), «Ένα Παιχνίδι Πρέφα» ('A Game of Cards') presents wasted lives but also brings the message of resurrection, «Οι Καιροί της Φωτιάς» ('The Fire Days') begins with Vitsi's bloody mountains (just one of the elements that make the poem travel through time, here positioning it in 1949 at the battle that ended the Civil War) and ends at dry islands (places of exile), «Ο Θάνατος και η Θάλασσα» ('Death and Sea') unites winners and losers, while «Σαν Πέσει ο Κεραυνός» ('When Thunder Strikes') unsettles the world's order and does not finish the poem in 433 verses, as was the case with *The Waste Land*, but adds one more word violently interrupted by the thunder.

Eliot's 'Unreal City' is set in the City, London's financial centre where Eliot was working at the time, in order to show how the homes of the living inhabitants were 'consumed by a voraciously expanding commercial life' to which much of the inhuman desolation suffusing the poem owes its source.<sup>17</sup> Lagios' 'Unreal Land' («Ανύπαρκτη Χώρα»), a 'glorified land' («η χώρα μες στο κλέος», 1.371), includes the Parthenon and the central monument dedicated to those fallen in battle (the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier located at the foot of the Greek Parliament) but also the space marking more recent troubles, such as Kaisariani, where resistance fighters and rebels were shot by the Nazis in 1944; the corner Patēssion and Stournara (a reminder of the rise of the students against the military junta at the Polytechnic School of Athens in 1973); and Soviet tombstones (remnants of the Cold War and the Greek Civil War).

Το θέρος μας αιφνιδίασε καθώς ξεχύθηκε από τη μάντρα της  
Καισαριανής  
Αντάμα με τον ήλιο· πυργώσαμε συννεφοτογιασμένες ακροπόλεις,  
Κι η μπόρα σύρθηκε ως τη γωνιά Πατησίων και Στουρνάρα  
Εκεί που γιόρταζαν τη λευτεριά και τους χτυπήσαμε...  
Ich bin keine Russin, stamm aus Komajini, echt...  
Και σαν ήμασταν παιδιά ανεβήκαμε στον ελασίτη  
Τον μπάρμπα μας, να γίνουμε ελευθερωτές· τον στήσαν στα έξι  
μέτρα,

Και δειλίασα. Και φώναξε, Αλέξη,  
Αλέξη, πού πας; Μα κλειδαμπάρωσα την πόρτα του σπιτιού μου.

Harvest surprised us, coming over Kaisariani  
Together with the sun; we barricaded cloud acropolises,  
And the sudden rain crawled to the corner Patēsiōn-Stournara  
As they celebrated freedom and we hit them...  
Ich bin keine Russin, stamm aus Komajini, echt...  
And when we were children we went to our uncle, an ELAS<sup>18</sup> man,  
To become liberators; they executed him,  
And I cowed. And he yelled, Alexē,  
Alexē, where are you going? But I bolted the door of my house.

(*Erēmē Gē*, ll.8-16)

As Anna-Maria Sixani and Nadia Fragouli suggest, Lagios does not deny the vision of Communism but constructs a ‘metaphysics of revolution’ through his use of social and literary history.<sup>19</sup> The poem questions the people’s involvement with social concerns («Με την άρνηση του άλλου, βεβαιώνοντας τη φυλακή σου / Με τη μοναξιά του άλλου, σακατεύοντας τη φυλακή σου», ‘Denying the other, you confirm your prison / Feeling the other’s loneliness, you destroy your prison’, ll.413-414) and attacks a ‘middle-class vision’ («μικροαστικό οραματισμό», l.227) for it has become synonymous with a ‘servile protest’ («μια δουλοπρεπέστατη διαμαρτυρία», l.214). Mimicking a modernist narrative temporality which annihilated space through time,<sup>20</sup> Lagios set his narration during one January day, alluding to the beginning of something new, and created a needed reference point for future generations as, by the end, readers are urged to read the poem as a document where fragments of their historical past are conflated adding to the story narrated their own interpretation of events. The first four parts describe the dream of a historical reality and, according to what the poet tells us himself, the fifth part is a ‘dream’s dream’, a mystical reality appearing as a vision at night-time.

To make the reader responsive to this dream, *Erēmē Gē*, much like *The Waste Land*, counts on repetition. This gives an agonistic tempo to the text and helps the reader focus on blocks of meaning that the poem constructs like ‘[t]he deforming of man, so methodically broken’ («Η παραμόρφωση του ανθρώπου, του χαλασμένου τόσο μεθοδικά», ll.99, 205).

Lagios	Eliot
Unreal Land («Ανύπαρκτη Χώρα», ll.60, 207)	Unreal City
ARATE PYLAS («ΑΠΑΤΕ ΠΥΛΑΣ», ll. 141, 152, 164, 168, 169)	HURRY UP PLEASE IT'S TIME
The heroes are betrayed («Προδόθηκαν οι ήρωες», l.173, 179)	The nymphs are departed
Sweet Vitsi, blaze, to sing my song («Βίτσι μου, στράψε να σε δω, τραγούδι για ν' αρχίσω», ll.176, 183, 184)	Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song
But as I undress / But as I dress («Αλλά σα γδύνομαι», «Αλλά σαν ντύνομαι» ll.185, 187)	But behind my back
In the History's tree («Στο δεντρί της Ιστορίας», ll.215, 220)	In the violet hour
Singing («Τραγουδώντας», ll.308, 311) O Comrades we were dying («Ω Σύντροφοι ξεψυχούσαμε», ll. 309, 310) Comrades onwards («Σύντροφοι εμπρός σύντροφοι εμπρός εμπρός εμπρός», l.357)	Burning O lord Thou pluckest me  Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop

The towers, falling and becoming unreal are transformed into heroes who remain awake and are resurrected in a requiem where all the names of the dead are remembered: 'Luxemburg Gramsci Bukharin / Zachariades Pouliopoulos / Resurrected' («Λούξεμπουργκ Γκράμσι Μπουχάριν / Ζαχαριάδης Πουλιόπουλος / Αναστημένοι», ll.374-376).<sup>21</sup> Eliot's 'Da', sounding three times in the poem to transfer the message of *damyata, datta, dayadhvam* ('Give, sympathise, control'), appears in Lagios' poem as a triple Epsilon, 'Ε', to denote the Greek words for revolution, love, and liberation («Επανάσταση, Έρω, Ελευθερία») and to push the poem to its final juxtaposition between these words and three more: «Θάνατος Θάνατος Αθάνατος» ('Death Death Immortal'). *Erēmē Gē's* final word, «Σύντροφοι» ('Comrades'), stands both apart from the previous triptychs and in immediate relationship to them, as it turns to the readers asking them to participate to the dream the poem presents.

‘Precious freedom’ («για τη χιλιάκριβη τη λευτεριά») fought for in 1942 (the date when the song ‘To arms, to arms’ was written, see note for line 103 in ‘Notes to *Erēmē Gē*’) was betrayed with the coming of the Civil War and the deaths thereafter (see the one with the red carnation always walking beside us in line 359 – «Ποιός είν’ αυτός με τ’ ἄλικο γαρύφαλο που οδοιπορεί στο πλάι μας;», ‘Who is the one with the red carnation always walking beside us?’ – which is a direct reference to Beloyiannis) yet the poem dreams that the trace of the dead bodies will create new revolutions in the years to come (ll. 400-409) and will bring the people themselves in charge of their own freedom (ll. 417-422).

Those resurrected are unreal when forgotten, but the combination of various sources, sounds and cries in the poem secures their survival as lasting impressions in the collective memory of the people. In *Erēmē Gē*’s second part with the title ‘A Game of Cards’ – functioning here too like the Tarot cards in Eliot’s poem, since the poet here too states that he does not refer to a specific game (this is «πρέφα» in the Greek original, a game popular in cafés around the country) yet he urges us to consider that three are needed for this game, a number alluding to the third always walking beside us in *The Waste Land*, ‘Who is the third who walks always beside you?’, l.359 – we find the first song that changes the tone of ‘rancid life’ («μια ταγκισμένη ζωή») of the first part (*Erēmē Gē*, ll.99-106):

Η παραμόρφωση του ανθρώπου, του χαλασμένου τόσο μεθοδικά  
 Απ’τα εκλεγμένα, τα σκατένια αφεντικά του·  
     κι όμως ένα μαγνητόφωνο  
 Τόνιζε τη σκηνή με το σιγόφωνο μέλος του  
 Κι ακόμη έψελνε, κι ακόμη γύρευε τον κόσμο,  
 «Στ’άρματα, στ’άρματα...» σ’αυτιά χτισμέ-  
     να.  
 Κι άλλες εικόνες ύστερα, διαφορετικές, γέννημα  
     θρέμμα της φθοράς  
 Πρόβαλαν όμοιες κι απαράλλακτες στην οθόνη,  
 Ερχόνταν κι έφευγαν δηλώνοντας την αποχώ-  
     ρηση ζωών σπαταλημένων.

The deforming of man, so methodically broken  
 By his elected, foul bosses; yet a recorder  
 Stressed the scene with its muted melody  
 And still it chanted, and still it pursued the world,  
 ‘To arms, to arms...’ to walled-in ears.  
 And then other images, different, corruption-bred,  
 Appeared recycled on the screen,  
 Came and went declaring the departure of wasted lives.

The muted recorder makes us juxtapose its voice with the images recycling themselves in the screen as if playing in a loop. The images are not projected, they project other images, always the same images, and look like wasted lives recycled and tragically unchanged (here we find an echo with l. 136 and Cavafy's poem 'Monotony', one of the sources that Lagios cites; 'One monotonous day follows another / equally monotonous', «Την μια μονότονη ημέρα άλλη / μονότονη, απαράλλακτη ακολουθεί»). The rebel song «Στ'άρματα, στ'άρματα εμπρός στον αγώνα, για τη χιλιάκριβη τη λευτεριά» ('To arms, to arms, to the fight for precious freedom'), a sound document recorded and ready for reproduction, was written in 1942 by the poet and journalist Nikos Karvounis (1880-1947), who was exiled in Gavdos in 1936 and, after the occupation, when imprisoned in Larissa, he was in charge of the news office of the People's Liberation Army (EAM). This is then a piece of history saved in the recorder whose voice is quiet, a 'muted melody' («Τόνιζε τη σκηνή με το σιγώφωνο μέλος του», l. 101), because it does not reach the ears of the listeners, or the 'muted melody' alludes to the strip of the recorder that needs to be charged so as to be operative and so entails human presence and involvement, or the part remains quiet as the medium for a revolution currently been prepared. This rebel song is followed by the repetitive «ARATE PYLAS» (Chant κγ) – instead of Eliot's 'HURRY UP PLEASE IT'S TIME' – which is chanted three times after the resurrection of Christ at Easter in the Greek Orthodox tradition. The poem's second part ends with a wish for resurrection («Χρόνια πολλά, χρόνια πολλά, καλήν ανάσταση», 'Happy Easter, Happy Easter, Happy Resurrection Day', as someone returns from a place of exile and torture) only to be met in the beginning of the third part with the reality of the Civil War («Του βουνού τα χιόνια κόκκινα βαφτήκανε· τα παρατημένα κουφάρια», 'The mountain snow turned red; abandoned corpses', l. 173).

In the third part, 'The Fire Days', the rebel song 'To arms' and the deforming of man are repeated, as though recorded, and, together with «Μια θάλασσα μικρή», a song by Dionysis Savvopoulos ('A little sea', 1966, 1975), they prepare the ground for the second appearance of the 'Unreal Land'. Savvopoulos' album, where we first find this song here reproduced, has a light part, so that it is trade-friendly, and a more serious message (another song in the album talks about a 'socialist utopia' while another talks about a lost love, a song that Savvopoulos inspired from a poem by Nikos-Alexis Aslanoglou). Likewise, Lagios' poem conflates a political message with a lyrical sensibility and creates a new uncertainty as in itself a new version of political expression, again a crucial part of Savvopoulos' compositions as read by Dimitris Papanikolaou.<sup>22</sup> Line 197,

‘A little sea’, also prepares us for *Erēmē Gē*’s fourth part, titled ‘Death and Sea’, where we find the rebel Arēs Velouchiotēs («Ἀρης ο Ἑλληνας, αιώνες τώρα πεθαμένος», ‘Ares the Greek, for centuries dead’), the contrast in meaning between the adjective ‘little’ and the noun ‘death’ also derailing the audience’s sense of certainty.<sup>23</sup>

### *A meta-writing of history*

Both Lagios and Vayenas were deeply interested in Seferis’ work as well as in the role of translation in disseminating a poet’s work and prompting various international conversations. They worked together on translating into Greek the volume *Black Light: Poems in memory of George Seferis* (1983) by the English poet Richard Burns creating a ‘meta-writing’ (metagraphē), they suggest, of this work into their own language (*Μαύρο Φως: Ποιήματα εις μνήμην Γιώργου Σεφέρη*, 2005).<sup>24</sup> Seferis had used the term ‘meta-writing’ (or ‘transcription’) in a book of intralingual translations which he called *Μεταγραφές* in contrast to another book of translations from other languages into Greek which he called *Αντιγραφές* (*Copies*).<sup>25</sup> Whereas Seferis used this term for intralingual translations, Lagios and Vayenas used it when translating poems from English into Greek with the intention perhaps to show that the poetry of Seferis was somehow refracted through the mind and hand of the English poet and came finally full circle when they returned it to the Greek language. It is this same method of *metagraphē* that G.I. Babasakis attributes to Lagios for the writing of *Erēmē Gē*<sup>26</sup> even though Lagios used both Eliot’s and Seferis’ texts and the end result is not a translated piece of work but an original poem conversing with the previous pieces.

I have here chosen to translate ‘metagraphē’ as ‘meta-writing’ and not ‘transcription’ because what Lagios and Vayenas seem to do when using Seferis’ work (Lagios in *Erēmē Gē* and Vayenas with Patroclus Yiatras) or when transferring the way his work conversed with the work of another poet into Greek, as in the case of Richard Burns, is an exercise in writing about writing. The purpose of this exercise is to think about writing in order to understand the process better. As Babasakis reports in his introduction to *Erēmē Gē*, Lagios considered writing a most significant gesture when it came to reading a piece of work, an act of reading itself which one can use in order to remember (p. 16). A ‘meta-writing’ points to this process of remembrance through the act of reading/writing.

A dictionary definition of the word ‘meta-writing’ points to the transfer of a word or text into a different code or system of writing. A closer look at the various meanings of «μετά» in Greek as both preposition and adverb

leads us to a more detailed description of the possibilities that the term opens up as an act that follows another in the temporal sequence of events, an act that shows the relation of cause and effect between events and an act that opposes what came before. A ‘meta-writing’ is therefore a piece of new writing in terms of it coming after the original text but it also involves a process of conversing with the older creation. The text that emerges through this ‘make it new’<sup>27</sup> process carries the original in it but is new in the sense that the linguistic and stylistic form it acquires includes a mixture of the old and new forms. That is why what we see in *Erēmē Gē* is a dialogue between Lagios and Eliot, Lagios and Vayenas, Seferis and Eliot with Lagios openly acknowledging this conversation when he follows Seferis’ or Eliot’s language but also at times distancing himself from them to create something new. The poem becomes a parody where repetition and allusions to other voices abound so that conventional ideologies are subverted.<sup>28</sup>

To begin with, what we see in practice in *Erēmē Gē* is Lagios following step by step Seferis’ translation of *The Waste Land* until in the fifth and final part of the poem we can hear Seferis’ phrases resounding in the word choice and rhyme schemes of Lagios.

Αν είχε νερό εδώ-πέρα θα  
στεκόμασταν να πιούμε (‘If there were  
water we should stop and drink’)

Μέσα στα βράχια πώς να σταθούμε  
πώς να στοχαστούμε (‘Amongst the  
rock one cannot stop or think’)  
...

Στόμα νεκρό του βουνού με σάπια  
δόντια που δεν μπορεί να φτύσει  
(‘Dead mountain mouth of carious  
teeth that cannot spit’)

Εδώ κανείς δεν μπορεί να σταθεί ούτε  
να πλαγιασεί ούτε να καθίσει (‘Here  
one can neither stand nor lie nor sit’)

(Ε’, ‘What the Thunder Said’, *Erēmē  
Chora*, trans. Seferis)

Αν δεν γκρεμίζαμε τον ύπνο μας μπορεί  
να γέρναμε ν’ αναπαυτούμε (‘If we did  
not destroy our sleep we could lie and  
rest’, 1.335)

Σε τέτοιο όνειρο ονείρου άλλο δεν  
ξέρουμε παρά να προχωρούμε (‘In such  
a dream’s dream we only know to keep  
going’, 1.336)

...  
Τραχύ κρασί της λευτεριάς σαν κόρφος  
κορασιάς να σ’ ευλογεί με το μεθύσι  
(‘Blunt wine of freedom like a girl’s  
bosom offering  
an intoxicated blessing’, 1.339)

Εδώ μπορεί κανείς να στοχαστεί ν’  
αγωνιστεί και να νικήσει (‘Here one can  
think fight and win’, 1.340)

(Ε’, ‘When Thunder Strikes’, *Erēmē Gē*,  
Lagios)

Following Seferis’ linguistic choices when he translated *The Waste Land*, Lagios also describes roots that ‘clutch’ (τις ρίζες να «απλώνουνται

γρυπές», 1.19), the ‘dead’ sound of debt’s final call (το «νεκρό» ήχο στο στερνό κάλεσμα, 1.68), the nail ‘wrought’ with rust (το καρφί «πλουμισμένο» με σκουριά, 1.79), the smells fattening the flames of the matches (τις οσμές να παχαίνουν τις φλόγες των σπίρτων, 1.91), the ‘reverberation’ of iron guns (το «αντιφέγγισμα» των σιδερένιων όπλων, 1.336) and the ‘decayed’ haunt in the forgotten mountains (το «ρημαγμένο» λημέρι στ’απροσκύνητα βουνά, 1.385). Finally, he transfers verse 117 as in Seferis’ text: ‘What is that noise?’ («Τι είναι αυτός ο θόρυβος;»).

On the other hand, of particular interest are three instances where Lagios departs from Seferis’ *Erēmē Chora*.

«Δεν ξέρεις τίποτε; Δε βλέπεις τίποτε; Δε θυμάσαι τίποτε;» (‘Do You Know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember Nothing?’, l. 121)

«Είσαι ή δεν είσαι ζωντανός; Δεν έχεις τίποτε μες στο κεφάλι σου;» (‘Are you alive, or not? Is there nothing in your head?’, l.126)

Κι εγώ περίμενα τον αναμενόμενο ξένο. (‘I too awaited the expected guest’, l.230)

«Δεν έχεις τίποτε άλλο να μου πεις; Δεν ξέρεις τίποτε άλλο να μου πεις; Δεν ονειρεύεσαι τίποτε;» (‘Have you got nothing else to tell me? Do you know anything else to tell me? Do you dream Nothing?’)

‘Are you alive or not? Is there nothing in our head?’

Και κάτεχα πως ο αναμενόμενος, ξένος μου’χει γίνει. (And I thought that the expected, stranger had become.)

(*Erēmē Chora*, *Waste Land*)

(*Erēmē Gē*)

In the centre of all the questions posed in *Erēmē Gē* we do not find ‘Don’t you remember Nothing?’, as in *The Waste Land*, but ‘Don’t you dream Nothing?’ («Δεν ονειρεύεσαι τίποτε;»), since what we think we know is re-evaluated during the poem and only the ones who will try to find, express and record an alternative history and story will be the heroes born out of *Erēmē Gē*. Line 126, the only one appearing in English in the Greek original, copies Eliot’s phrasing and not Seferis’, and appears in the poem’s second part (‘A Game of Cards’) where a ‘tortured repetition’ («βασανισμένη επανάληψη») prevails over substantial communication (‘Tried to talk to him, then would fall into a tortured repetition’, «Δοκίμαζε να του μιλήσει κι έπεφτε σε μια βασανισμένη επανάληψη», 1.110):



Ονειρεύομαι  
 Τούτα τα ψυχοκέρια ήταν τα μάτια του.  
 ‘Are you alive or not? Is there nothing in  
 your head?’

I dream  
 These all souls candles were his eyes.  
 “Are you alive or not? Is there nothing in your head?”  
 (*Erēmē Gē*, ll.124-126)

The nightingale has become a recorder (l.100), the ‘Shakespeareian’ rag a rebel song (l.128) and the poet himself is transformed into a recorder presenting various noises and memories, Eliot’s words (l.126) or Eliot’s words translated by Seferis (l.117), creating in this way a network of a dialogue with both poets. Line 126 is the only one containing the word ‘alive’ in Eliot’s poem and the fact that it is transferred in *Erēmē Gē* is emblematic of the feeling of uncertainty Lagios creates as a scene other than the one expected is constructed. In Eliot’s poem, the ‘expected guest’ arrives in a scene where caresses are ‘unreproved, if undesired’ (ll.235-42). With just one comma, Lagios transforms the expected to something strange (‘And I thought that the expected, stranger had become’, «Και κάτεχα πως ο αναμενόμενος, ξένος μου’ χει γίνει», l.230), placing emphasis on the word ‘stranger’ in order to prepare us for an unfamiliar scene where the lunacy of love is lived in dream (exemplified by the presence of water and the hands feeding into a ‘familiar nudity’ like rivers):

Τώρα οι ώρες τους ξανοίγονται στον έρωτα, το  
 αισθάνονται,  
 Απόφαγαν, κι η νύχτα είναι δική τους,  
 Δίνονται στον κορμιών τους το φιλή  
 Μεταλαβαίνοντας τη σπασμική ψυχή τους.  
 Φίδια νερά και σμίγουν εν εκσκάσει.  
 Τα χέρια τους εκβάλλουν σε μια γύμνια που τό-  
 σο καλά ξέρουν.  
 Τρις οργασμού τους οδηγεί στην οδύνη, στη γα-  
 λήνη,  
 Και νιώθουν την παραπροσύνη της αγάπης τους  
 σ’όλο το ένα που υποφέρουν.

Their hours open up now to love making, they can sense it,  
 Their meal is ended, the night is theirs,  
 They give themselves to bodily kisses  
 Receiving their frail souls as communion.

Waters hiss and they meet in ecstasy;  
 Their hands feed into a familiar nudity;  
 The orgasm comes and brings affliction and serenity,  
 They feel the lunacy of their love as they suffer.

(*Erēmē Gē* , ll.235-242)

The varied ways in which different languages return to a text at different moments in their history makes them ventures into the meaning of the text itself; it is in this sense, George Varsos suggests, that translation is a type of writing that can be considered as a form of memory.<sup>29</sup> The meaning of a text is not exhausted upon its first publication and so an original piece holds only a part of the potential meaning the text can have. The interpretation of a text involves a process of remembrance and translation is one form of writing with which to expand a text's meaning through time. In addition, Titika Dimitroulia notes that not only translation but literature in general are complex recursive circuits which negate the concept of linearity and predictability since they are caught in several recursive loops. A translated piece of work is given to the target audience coloured by the translator's personal memories and culture, which are in turn shaped by the culture itself and collective memory; the target culture receives a piece stamped by the culture of the author at the time of its creation but also by the time in between the moment of its creation and the moment of its translation as well as by the translator's personal choices and perspective on the work; the piece has an impact on the target culture and literature and returns as memory back to the culture that bred it.<sup>30</sup>

Lagios did not translate *The Waste Land* in the traditional sense of the word but used the long history of the poem's translation into Greek as a meaningful act in itself (*Erēmē Gē* itself echoes Seferis' rendering of Eliot's *The Waste Land* as *Erēmē Chora*). Eliot's work represented a new method with which to record history via a medium which allowed the interplay of factual and fictional elements. Seferis was another poetic ancestor who had used a similar method in his long poem *Mythistorema* (1935) – where he had combined a certain mythology with an 'istoria', that is, in Greek, both 'history' and 'story' to express circumstances as independent from himself as the characters in a novel<sup>31</sup>– and so it was an obvious choice for Lagios to consider himself a descendant of them both when he chose to write a poem which would mimic their treatment of history and fictionality. Vayenas' treatment of a fictitious translator who supposedly died before completing a version of *The Waste Land* was the appropriate springboard for this venture. As Seferis had noted,

every work of art that comes to be added to the series affirms and at the same time modifies the meaning of the older masterpieces. Dante, for example, does not have the same meaning before and after Baudelaire, nor Racine before and after Valéry, nor the Elizabethans before and after T.S. Eliot. Thus we may establish a kind of correspondence between Homer and Vergil, Homer and Aeschylus, Aeschylus and Euripides, or, in our modern poetry, between Calvos and Cavafy.<sup>32</sup>

Circe Kephalea notes that the story of Patroclus Yiatras – which inspired Lagios – has analogies with foundational moments of the history of Christianity but religion for Fokas-Athanasios-Lagios is History: ‘*Erēmē Gē* poses a profound moral question, an underlying religious quest which gives History a religious flair’.<sup>33</sup> History acquires metaphysical connotations in Lagios’ long poem in that it is accompanied by a strong belief in its power to transform people when perceived as a lived experience, is revisited and retold. Like Tiresias who, alone among the shades in Hades, could see and know the dead, or like Odysseus who had to make a blood offering to speak to the dead, *Erēmē Gē* offers us death for resurrection and ‘human ruins’ instead of marble-threshing floors: ‘The roots clutch, the branches grow / Out of these human ruins’, «Οι ρίζες απλώνονται γρυπές, θερμύουν τα κλωνάρια / Μέσα σ’αυτά τ’ανθρώπινα ερείπια» (ll.19-20). And so the story goes until the closing of the poem with the final word: ‘Comrades’.

This added word that brings the poem to 434 lines, leaves *Erēmē Gē* open ended in the sense that this final word can be read as an invitation to restart the telling of the poem and transmit it to someone new, becoming yourself the poem’s recorder. This would make you, in turn, a living refractor of human history. This final word (an extension of *The Waste Land*’s 433 lines), which except from its political connotations is also an inclusive word, was put in a prominent position to be noticed as it unites Lagios’ poem to the work of his predecessor Eliot while also departing from it. K. Narayana Chandran has suggested that *The Waste Land*’s ending is deeply ironic; by leaving the word ‘Om’ out of the text, Eliot matched, according to Chandran, ‘shantih’ with the fragments of the rest of his text wishing for peace where there is none.<sup>34</sup> In the same sense, the use of the word ‘comrades’ is here ironic as it attests to a spirit of comradeship where there is none; at the same time, however, the choice of this word in the context of *Erēmē Gē*, when considering the particular goal the poem had to be presented as the culmination of the significant act of reading, leads one to conclude that the word here used is truer to the spirit of comradeship than when used for any strictly political party purposes.

Like other Modernists, Eliot emphasized ‘the current moment as one of crisis, either preparing for or recovering from a radical break in history’<sup>35</sup> and treated history in *The Waste Land* as Tiresias’ ‘seeing blindness’, which derived from the very Modernist logic that the ‘act of fictionality’ is an essential ‘act of imagining’.<sup>36</sup> This way of thinking and writing about history, with its emphasis on crisis and the co-existence of factual and fictional elements, was appealing to Greek poets who kept revisiting *The Waste Land*. *Erēmē Gē*’s return to the poem is emblematic of this constant return. In a sense, Eliot’s poem and Seferis’ translation of it have become in themselves a set of objects that evoke particular emotions, since, like Eliot’s ‘objective correlatives’, they have come to represent what Seferis found when translating Eliot’s 1922 interwar poem, namely, that history is not what is dead and gone but what is still alive («Ζωντανό, παρόν, σύγχρονο», ‘alive, present, contemporary’).

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> This article first appeared in *Comparative Critical Studies* 12.1 (February, 2015): 7-25. Minor changes have been made in the current version.

<sup>2</sup> See Θ.Σ. Έλιωτ, *Η Έρημη Χώρα* (T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*), 5th edition, translated by George Seferis, Athens: Ikaros, 1973. Subsequent references to this work will be given in parentheses in the main body of the article. T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, translated by Sarantēs Giorgos (*Η Έρημη Χώρα, E Erēmē Chora*), Athens, 1958, 1964 and by Kleitos Kyrou (*Η Πημαγμένη Γη, E Rēmagmenē Gē*), Athens: Ypsilon, 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Elias Lagios, *Η Έρημη Γη (Erēmē Gē)*, Athens: Erato, 1996. Vayenas’ Yiatras story is reprinted in the 1996 edition of *Erēmē Gē*: 55-72. Unless otherwise stated, all translations of *Erēmē Gē* are my own.

<sup>4</sup> Nasos Vayenas, «Ένα Σχόλιο για την Έρημη Γη» (‘A Comment on Erēmē Gē’), *Anti*, 874-875 (28 July 2006): 39.

<sup>5</sup> Aristos Doxiadis and Manos Matsaganis, ‘National Populism and Xenophobia in Greece’, *opendemocracy.net* (27 November 2012). Available at: <[www.opendemocracy.net/aristos-doxiadis-manos-matsaganis/national-populism-and-xenophobia-in-greece](http://www.opendemocracy.net/aristos-doxiadis-manos-matsaganis/national-populism-and-xenophobia-in-greece)> [accessed 01 September 2013].

<sup>6</sup> ‘Students began to occupy the universities in the early 1970s, culminating in the occupation of the National Technical University of Athens (Polytechnion) in November 1973. This is known in modern Greek history as the “Polytechnion Uprising.” On November 17, 1973, the military dictatorship in Greece put a violent end to this pro-democratic demonstration with tanks and soldiers. More than twenty people were said to have been killed on the campus and hundreds more injured; no official number of victims was ever given. This student uprising is considered the climax of the resistance against the military government, having triggered the fall of the Regime of the Colonels in the summer of 1974.’ See Petros

Markaris, 'Greece: The Other Side of 1968', in *1968: Memories and Legacies of a Global Revolt*, Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 2009: 211.

<sup>7</sup> Albert Resis, 'The Churchill-Stalin Secret "Percentages" Agreement on the Balkans, Moscow, October 1944', *The American Historical Review*, 83:2 (April 1978): 368-387.

<sup>8</sup> Information on dates and events taken by Neni Panourgia, *Dangerous Citizens: The Greek Left and the Terror of the State*, Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> As a result of the Greek Civil War, Mogens Pelt argues, a substantial portion of the power of the state was transferred from the government to the armed forces. The execution of four Communists in 1952, the "Beloyannis Affair", which inspired Pablo Picasso to immortalize Beloyannis in the drawing "L'homme à la fleur", showed the Army's room for manoeuvre *vis-à-vis* of the elected government. See Mogens Pelt, *Tying Greece to the West: US-West German-Greek Relations 1949-1974*, Denmark: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2006: 36-43.

<sup>10</sup> John Lucas, *92 Acharnon Street: A Year in Athens*, London: Eland, 2007: 118.

<sup>11</sup> David Hunt, 'A Continuity of Genius: Greek Poetry from Homer to Seferis by C.A. Trypanis', *The Times*, 31 December 1981: 13.

<sup>12</sup> Roderick Beaton, 'Educating Casca: *The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Greek*', *The Times*, 2 June 1983: 13.

<sup>13</sup> *The Times*, 11 December 1979: i, vi.

<sup>14</sup> *The Times*, 11 December 1979: viii.

<sup>15</sup> Demetres Ioannou and Giannis Kolovos, 'Introduction', «Είμαστε τρελοί κι ευτυχισμένοι»: *Φωτογραφίζοντας την άγρια πλευρά της δεκαετίας του '80* ('We are crazy and happy': *Photographs from the wild side of the 1980s*) by Giorgos Nikolaides, Athens: Ekdoseis sto Perithōrio, 2017: 8.

<sup>16</sup> Efi Gazē, «Δεκαετία του 80» ('The 1980s'), *To Vima*, 18 July 2010, <[www.tovima.gr/books-ideas/article/?aid=343854](http://www.tovima.gr/books-ideas/article/?aid=343854)> [accessed 30 November 2012].

<sup>17</sup> Lawrence Rainey, *The Annotated Waste Land with Eliot's Contemporary Prose*, 2nd edn, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005: 9-11.

<sup>18</sup> The Greek People's Liberation Army.

<sup>19</sup> Anna-Maria Sixani and Nadia Fragouli, «Από τη *Waste Land* (1922) του T.S. Eliot στην *Ερημη Γη* (1984) του Ηλία Λάγιου: Η λειτουργία της ιστορικής μνήμης στο λογοτεχνικό «χειρισμό» του πρωτοτύπου» ('From T.S. Eliot's *Waste Land* (1922) to Elias Lagios' *Erēmē Gē*: The function of historical memory in the literary "treatment" of the original'), in *Γραφές της Μνήμης (Writings of Memory)*, edited by Zacharias Siaflekēs, Athens: Gutenberg, 2011: 422-434. Sixani and Fragouli also discuss the relation between literature and history in Jorge Luis Borges 1939 short story 'Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote' as a literary ancestor of Patroclus Yiatras.

<sup>20</sup> See the compression of time and space as discussed by David Harvey in *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry Into the Origins of Cultural Change: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1989: 260-283.

<sup>21</sup> Nikos Zachariades (1903-1973) was the General Secretary of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) from 1931 to 1956 when he was expelled from the post. Pandelis Pouloupoulos (1900-1943) was the General Secretary of the KKE in 1924 but was removed from the Central Committee in 1927 because of his Trotskyist beliefs. He was also the first translator into Greek of the first volume of Marx's *Das Kapital*. He was executed by the Nazis in June 1943.

<sup>22</sup> Dimitris Papanikolaou, *Singing Poets: Literature and Popular Music in France and Greece*, London: Legenda, 2007: 112, 118-120. Dionysis Savvopoulos, the singer songwriter sometimes called the 'Balkan beatnik', fused the personal with the political with albums in which performance showed its own 'constructedness': like Bob Dylan's 'My Back Pages', Papanikolaou argues, Savvopoulos's songs dealt no longer with clear-cut confrontations but took flight to a 'diffuse moment of internalized dichotomies centered on repeating, remembering, playfully relocating and staging the embodied schism as a sign of new times' (pp. 113, 127).

<sup>23</sup> Arēs Velouchiotēs (Athanasios Klaras, 1905-1945) was a leader of the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS).

<sup>24</sup> Richard Burns, *Μαύρο Φως: Ποιήματα εις μνήμην Γιώργου Σεφέρη* (*Black Light: Poems in Memory of George Seferis* [1983]), translated by Nasos Vayenas and Elias Lagios, Athens: typothēto, 2005.

<sup>25</sup> George Seferis, *Μεταγραφές*, Athens: Ikaros, 2000, and *Αντιγραφές*, Athens: Ikaros, 1978.

<sup>26</sup> G.I. Babasakis, «H.K.A. Εγγραφές σε έναμαγνητόφωνο (1995)» ('E.K.L. Records on a tape recorder (1995)') in *Erēmē Gē* (1996): 15.

<sup>27</sup> It is telling that even that most famous poetic slogan of the twentieth century, 'make it new', was re-establishing the eighteenth-century change of the meaning of 'originality' from 'going back to origins' to 'being without origins'. What Pound equated with the new, however, was not the 'making of an original work of art *ex nihilo* but the excavating of what had not been apprehended before, by means of translation, from a prior act of creation'. See Kurt Heinzelman, "'Make It New": The Rise of an Idea', in *Make It New: The Rise of Modernism*, edited by Kurt Heinzelman, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003: 131-32. Pound first used the phrase 'make it new' in Canto 53, written probably in the early 1930s but not published in book form until 1940, and the phrase was also used in an eponymous book, *Make It New*, published in 1934. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>28</sup> On the role of repetition in parody, see Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981.

<sup>29</sup> George J. Varsos, «Η μεταφραστική γραφή ως ανάμνηση και το παράδειγμα των Ομηρικών κειμένων» ('Translation as memory and the example of Homeric texts'), *Σύγκριση* (*Comparaison*) 22 (February 2011): 7-27.

<sup>30</sup> Titika Dimitroulia, «Μετάφραση-Χρονικότητα-Μνήμη» ('Translation-Temporality-Memory'), in *Γραφές της Μνήμης* (*Writings of Memory*), edited by Zacharias Sifalekēs (Athens: Gutenberg, 2011): 136-152.

<sup>31</sup> See George Seferis, *Collected Poems 1924-1955*, translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969): 479.