

shadow of a doubt. The polarization is perfect. Those who are observed by this miracle can feel in themselves the releasing of a delicate mechanism, that makes all lived sensations, during a life, even the most fleeting, to be registered here, in the Palace of the Eyes. These omnivorous eyes, capable to assimilate the most unnoticeable things in their calmness and complexity, this retina of the world, the first reflection of the interior world.

* Eliphas Levi, *The Key of the Great Mysteries*

AT THE THRESHOLD OF KNOWLEDGE

A pale blue light that transmits the astral moon and its two nordic quarters reveals the Palace of Knowledge, bathed in the millennial calmness and silence. It is the vision of a secret city, where the apparition coincides with the beginning and the end of the cycle of history. The ten-thousand years, a period of accumulation of wisdom and preparation for the knowledge, is reflected by the central eye, surrounded by a labyrinth without entrance nor exit. The two auxiliary eyes on the sides receive in their urns the residue of thoughts scattered in the world. This place without guardian, it will manifest itself, only at the beginning of the esoteric age, when the secret tradition will be revealed to the people, liberated hopefully from their enslavement to Princes of Power, to their avid power.

(Translated from French by Panayiotis Bosnakis)

Six Poems by Yannis Ritsos

GEORGE PILITSIS

Νύχτωσε

Κι ή αποψινή γιορτή αναβλήθηκε.
Κι ούτε πού ξέραμε καθόλου
τί θά πενθοῦσαν, τί θά γιόρταζαν.
Μεμιας ανάχαμε τά φωτα κι έσβησαν.
Άπ' τό παράθυρο είδαμε τούς μουσικούς
πέρασαν άφωνοι τή λεωφόρο
έχοντας στους ώμους τους
τεράστια χάλκινα όργανα.
Μείνε, λοιπόν, έδω,
κάπνισε τό τσιγάρο σου
μέσα σ' αυτή τή μεγάλη ήσυχία,
μέσα σ' αυτό θαῦμα-τίποτα.
Κωφάλαλα τ' άγάλματα.
Κωφάλαλα καί τά ποιήματα. Νύχτωσε.

Αθήνα, 1.1.1988

NIGHTFALL

Tonight's festivities have also been postponed,
without our even knowing
the reason for their mourning, the reason
for their celebrating.

* These poems from *Late, Very Late Into the Night*, were written in Athens and in Kalamos between January 1 and May 4, 1988. they were revised and rewritten in Krlovasi, Samos, between July 14 and 29, 1988. Fourteen poems were excluded. (Y. R.)

The lights went out as soon as they came on.
 From the window we saw the musicians
 making their silent way down the boulevard
 carrying huge brass instruments
 on their shoulders.
 So, stay here,
 smoke your cigarette
 in this great silence,
 in this miracle of nothing.
 Deaf-mute are the statues.
 Deaf-mute are the poems too. Nightfall.

Athens, January 1, 1988

Ἀμετάδοτο

Δέν ἤξερε ποιόν καί γιατί ζητοῦσε ν' ἀνταμείψει
 ψάχνοντας μέσα του καί γύρω του γιά κάτι ὥραϊο.

Ν' ἀνταμείψει κάποιον
 πού τοῦ ἔκανε κάποιο καλό. Κι οὔτε θυμόταν
 ποιός ἦταν, πότε, πού καί ποιό τό καλό. Κι ὡστόσο
 διατηροῦσε ὁλοκάθαρη τήν αἴσθησι
 μιᾶς σιωπηλῆς, βαθιάς εὐεργεσίας πού τοῦ χαριστηκε.
 Ἄξαφνα εἶδε τή γαλανή σκιά ἑνός γλάρου στ' ἄσπρα
 βότσαλα κι ἄπλωσε τό δεξί του χέρι νά τήν δείξει. Ὅμως
 κανεῖς δέν ἴταν γύρω του γιά νά τήν δεῖ.

Ἀθήνα, 16.1.1988

INCOMMUNICABLE

He wanted to reciprocate but did not
 know why or to whom
 as he searched for something beautiful inside himself
 and around himself. He wanted to reciprocate
 for the kindness someone showed him. Yet, he couldn't
 remember who, when, where or what the kindness was.
 Nevertheless, he kept intact the feeling
 of a quiet and deep gratitude grating to him.

Suddenly,
 he saw the blue shadow of a gull on the white pebbles

and stretched his right hand to point to it. No one, however,
 was around to see.

Athens, January 16, 1988

Μετά

Μάρτυρες γιά τά λάθη σου δέν εἶχες. Μόνος μάρτυρας
 ὁ ἴδιος ἐσύ. Τά τακτοποίησες, τά μονόγραφες, τά
 σφράγισες
 σέ λευκοῦς πάντοτε φακέλους σά νά ἐτοίμαζες
 τή δίκαιη διαθήκη σου. Ὑστερα
 τά τοποθέτητες προσεχτικά στά ράφια. Τώρα, γαλήνιος,
 (ἴσως καί κάπως φοβισμένος) οὔτε βιάζεσαι
 οὔτε καθυστερεῖς, γνωρίζοντας ὅτι, μετά τό θάνατόσου,
 θ' ἀνακαλύψουμε πόσον ὥραϊος ἦσουν,
 πόσο πολύ πιό ὥραϊος πέρα ἀπ' τίς ἀρετές σου.

Ἀθήνα, 16.1.1988

AFTERWARDS

You had no witnesses to your mistakes, You were
 your only witness. You filled them, signed them,
 and sealed them
 in special white envelopes, as if probating
 your will. Afterwards
 you set them carefully on the shelves, Now calm,
 (maybe even a little frightened) you neither hurry
 nor dally, knowing that after you die,
 we'll discover how beautiful you were,
 far more beautiful than your virtues.

Athens, January 16, 1988

Ἀδίκως

Κουρασμένα πρόσωπα, κουρασμένα χέρια.
 Ἡ κουρασμένη μνήμη. Κι αὐτή
 ἡ ἐρημική βαρηκοΐα. Βράδιασε.
 Τά παιδιά μεγάλωσαν. Ἐφυγαν.

Ἀπάντηση πιά δέν περιμένεις. Κι ἄλλωστε
δέν ἔχεις νά ρωτήσεις τίποτε. Ἀδίκως
τόσα καί τόσα χρόνια παιδεύουσιν νά κολλήσεις
σ' αὐτή τή χαρτονένια προσωπίδα
ἓνα ἐπιδοκιμαστικό χαμόγελο. Κλείσε τὰ μάτια.

Ἀθήνα, 16.1.1988

IN VAIN

Weary faces, weary hands.
Weary memory. And this
desert-like hardness of hearing.

Night was fallen.

The children have grown up, and left.
You no longer expect an answer. And besides,
you have nothing to ask. In vain
you've struggled all these years
trying to glue a smile of approval
in this cardboard mask. Close your eyes.

Athens, January 16, 1988

Στό Τέλος

Πρίν ἀπ' ὦρα οἱ μουσικοὶ εἶχαν φύγει. Λίγες νότες
τρεμοσαλεύαν ἀκόμη στὸν μεγάλο καθρέφτη. Δυὸ
ὑπηρέτες
ἔσβησαν τοὺς πολυελαίους. Ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης
συκώθηκε ἀπ' τὴν πολυθρόνα ἀμίλητος, μετανιωμένος,
μέτρησε τ' ἀναλόγια ἓνα ἓνα ἐγγίζοντάς τα
μέ τὸ ἴνα δάχτυλο σά νά ἴταν νά βεβαιωθεί
ὅτι δέ λείπει κανένα. Στάθηκε λίγο μπρὸς στήν πόρτα
τῆς κλειδωμένης κάμαρας τοῦ αὐτόχειρα. Ὑστερα
"Τζάκ, Τζάκ", φώναξε τὸ σκυλί του. Ὁ Τζάκ
μπῆκε μακρὺτριχος, πελώριος σά λιοντάρι.
Τοῦ ἔβαλε τὸ λουρί του καί τὸν ἔβγαλε στὸν χῆπο ν'
ἀφοδεύσει.

Πέρασαν τὰ μεσάνυχτα κι ἀκόμη νά γυρίσουν.

Ἡ δέσποινα βγήκε στό μπαλκόνι. Ἐχει φεγγάρι.

Ἀθήνα, 17.1.1988

IN THE END

The musicians had left a while ago. A few notes
still resounded in the large mirror. Two
servants

extinguished the chandeliers. The master of the house
got up from his armchair silent and remorseful,
counted the music stands one by one touching them
with his finger as if to make sure that
none were missin. He paused before the
locked bedroom where a man had killed himself. Then,
he called his dog "Jack, Jack." Shaggy
Jack came in, huge as a lion. He leashed the dog
and took it out to the yeard to relieve itself.
Past midnight and they still haven't come back.
The mistress of the house went out on the balcony.

The moon was out.

Athens, January 17, 1988

Στιγμές

Τὸ λυπημένο μυωπικὸ παιδί κάθεται μπρὸς πόρτα
κοιτάζοντας ἀπὸ μακριά τ' ἄλλα παιδιά πού παίζουν. Τὰ
γυαλιά του
εἶναι δυὸ στρογγυλά μικρά παράθυρα
ἀνοιχτά πρὸς τὴ θάλασσα. Ἐνα λευκὸ ἱστιοφόρο
περνάει ἀδιόρατο μέσ στήν ὁμίχλη. Κοίτα, στήν
προκυμαία,
ὁ μικρὸς κλόουν μ' ἓνα μπαλάκι πλαστελίνη στή μύτη
του
καί δυὸ ζωγραφισμένα δάκρυα στὰ μάγουλά του.
Τὸν βλέπεις;
Μά γιατί κλαῖς; Ἐγὼ σοῦ τὸ ἴπα γιὰ νά γελάσεις.

Ἀθήνα, 17.1.1988

MOMENTS

the sad near-sighted child sits at the door
watching the other children playing at a distance.

His glasses
 are like two fine round windows
 opening in the sea. A white sail boat
 passes by, unseen in the fog. Look,
 on the mole
 a small clown with a tiny rubber ball
 on his nose
 and two tear drops painted on his cheeks.
 Do you see him?
 Why are you crying? I told you this to make you laugh.
Athens, January 26, 1988

Between Modernism and the Avant-garde: Alternative Greek Literature in the 1960s

ELIZABETH ARSENIU

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the debates on modernism in Greek literary criticism of the 1960s. It concentrates mainly upon the impact of these debates on the editorial policy of the journal *Πάλι*, a small press journal of the Greek avant-garde, published in Athens in 1964. The discussion of the implications of these debates in the Greek 1960s takes into consideration the particular features of that era in Greece, in terms of its significance to the development (either continuation, culmination or decline) of Greek and Western modernism. In the light of the international developments of modernism, I examine certain texts of Greek criticism, most indicative of the concerns of this era, in relation to modernism. My intention is to highlight first the implications in the promotion and dispute of modernist writing, and second, the particular relations between the debates for and against modernism. I intend to prove that the challenges of the Greek modernism of the 1960s bear the seeds of a new, post-1960s, cultural epoch, mainly epitomized in the discourses of the new avant-garde and/or postmodernism.