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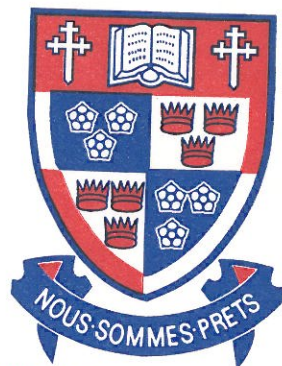
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In memory of

Rev. Dr. Nomikos Michael Vapori (1926-1997)

*Co-founder and Co-editor
of the Journal of Modern Hellenism*

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"The Best Wall To Hide Our Face Behind:" An Introduction to the Poetry of Manolis Anagnostakis*

DAVID RICKS

Let us begin *in medias res* with an initial attempt to peep behind the wall to which Anagnostakis refers in the phrase which forms this paper's title. The poem is a literally cryptic one, but let us try to make it out as best we can on its own terms, and as far as possible without presuppositions.

EKEI . . .

Ἐκεῖ θὰ τὰ βρεῖς.

Κάποιο κλειδί
Ποῦ θὰ πάρεις
Μονάχα ἐσὺ ποῦ θὰ πάρεις
Καὶ θὰ σπρώξεις τὴν πόρτα
Θ' ἀνοίξεις τὸ δωμάτιο
Θ' ἀνοίξεις τὰ παράθυρα στὸ φῶς
Ζαλισμένα τὰ ποντίκια θὰ κρυφτοῦν
Οἱ καθρέφτες θὰ λάμπουν
Οἱ γλόμποι θὰ ξυμνήσουν ἀπ' τὸν
ἄνεμο

Ἐκεῖ θὰ τὰ βρεῖς

THERE . . .

There you will find them.

A certain key
Which you'll take
Only you will take
And you'll push open the door
Open up the room
Open the windows on the light
The dazzled mice will hide
The mirrors will gleam
The light bulbs will be woken by the
wind

There you will find them

*This paper, which was prompted by discussions in supervisions with Ms Elsa Amanatidou, was first given at Columbia University, and I am grateful to the audience, and in particular to Professor G. M. Sifakis and Professor Karen van Dyck, for comments which have improved it. This being an introductory account, I quote in English only all but the first and last poems discussed and refer sparingly to the extensive secondary literature. (All works have Athens as place of publication unless otherwise indicated.)