

ments of Greece, its politics, culture and people. This book is a must for any collection on Greek-Turkish relations and a necessary starting point for any serious research effort on Greek-Turkish relations. Paul Chidioglou must therefore be commended for this work and one can only hope that he will continue to contribute to the study of Greek-Turkish relations.

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Yannis Ritsos, *Scripture of the Blind*, Translated from the Greek, With an Introduction, by Kimon Friar and Kostas Myrsiades. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1979. 252 pages.

Takis Sinopoulos, *Landscape of Death: The Selected Poems of Takis Sinopoulos*, Translated from the Greek, With an Introduction, By Kimon Friar. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1979. 288 pages.

With these two handsome bilingual volumes Kimon Friar scored two new firsts in English Neohellenica. The poetry of Dr. Sinopoulos appears for the first time in book form in English; and a whole Ritsos collection, not yet published in his country, appears bilingually in the United States. This rare phenomenon had occurred longer than half a century ago when Kostas Palamas had his *Dhili kai Skliri Stihi* published for the first time by the Neohellenic Mercury in Chicago.

Scripture of the Blind consists of one-hundred and twenty two short poems written in an intense two month period from 28 September to 28 November 1972, when the Junta miasma has started to have a corrosive effect on creative intellectuals who, like Greeks from all walks of life, could foresee no end to it. The completion of the final draft by 1 January 1973 in Athens, long after the poet's release from detention, due to international protests, occurred before the tragic events at the Athens Polytechnic in November of that year. This is important because it helps us understand and appreciate the grave, if not pessimistic, tone and depressed, almost hopeless, atmosphere that pervade these lyrics and distinguish them from pre-April 1967 or post-July 1974 compositions that express substantially different attitudes of Ritsos *vis-à-vis* the condition of his beloved Romiosyne.

Friar and Myrsiades have written a fifteen-page Introduction, one page of Notes, and a two-page biographical sketch through 1978. The student and the reader of Ritsos thus have the details and facts that are necessary for their appreciation of this book as an integral part of his enormous literary output to this day.

The introductory essay is, at the same time, comprehensive and specific in its discussion of scope, themes, technique, recurrent images and motifs. Almost surrealistic at a first reading, these pieces are actually records and photographs, or rather negatives, of nightmares caused by traumatic experiences, and of observations of objects in casual or strange relations to real, but vaguely described, persons. The narrative, mostly descriptive, sounds superficially incoherent with juxtapositions of opposites and associations of the seemingly unrelated in an incremental enumeration of images that provoke a powerful emotional response in the reader and, no doubt, a cathartic release in the poet. "Full of strange imminence", write the translators, "*Scripture of the Blind* is a world of the monstrous and the strange, a world filled with a vague expectation of the arrival of someone or something" (p. xxiv).

Material objects (pots, knives, boxes, mirrors, tables, chairs, walls, rooms etc.) interact with living and dead people (more than four score in all) to conceptualize the passive and pathetic drama that in Ritsos's panoramic memory created specific scenes of extraordinary intensity and evocative power. Several poems are analyzed in detail (e.g., "Poetry", "At the Harbor's End", and "Outline of a Nightmare") thus enabling the reader to understand *how* and perhaps *why* the mute sing and communicate, the blind see and foresee, the dead act and suffer. The surrealistic aspect of the poems is then toned down, and their imagistic quality is properly understood as a quite different device to what he have experienced in the work of, say Amy Lowell and other world poets, who drew pictures in words to substitute them as stimuli for desired emotional reactions. In Ritsos's verse words are the images, the metaphors, the agents of a dramatic instance under scrutiny, or as the translators put it: "They are individual and isolated dots of a Braille system that must be read by the groping fingers of all the senses to make out the holy scripture of the blind" (p. xxii).

"Liturgical" (p. 63), a poem brilliantly discussed by the translators, is a good example of Ritsos's technique as well as of the multiplicity of possible meanings despite its brevity:

He placed the paper box on the table quietly
as though it were a closed, uninhabited monastery. For a while
he was gone in the other room. We could hear the faucet running—
perhaps he was washing his hands with soap. On returning,
he opened the box with great care and placed
his left hand within it. Then with his right hand
he grasped his left by the wrist, took it out,
raised it up high, and showed it to us.

Its simple, descriptive opening makes it clear that the hands, not the person, are the protagonists of this particular scene. By the middle of the poem we begin to suspect a symbolic meaning which is suggested by the title that implies some kind of a ritual, and by the simile likening the box to a "closed, uninhabited monastery". The editors do not insist on a specific interpretation, since the poet preferred to leave it "open" and rich in suggestive innuendoes. To the insightful reading of the translators, which is based on cultural and folkloric observations, one who knows Ritsos's Marxist ideology may offer a political exegesis based on the opposite adjectives *right* and *left* which qualify the two "actors", the man's hands. The man placed his washed left hand into the strange "sanctum" of that symbolic box. But immediately his right hand (with all its connotations as correct, proper, legitimate, agile etc.) seized it firmly and demonstrated it to the vaguely-defined spectators, "us". These ritualistic gestures may be taken as a metaphor of how the Right and the Left function within the Greek body politic (the man). One could even venture to say that the Right "forces" the Left to be shown when and how it so desires.

The fact that the Greek and the English texts are printed *en face*, on opposite pages, also helps the reader realize how the translators worked. We are told that Dr. Myrsiades did the first, literal, translation, and added suggested synonyms and alternates. Mr. Friar then assumed the difficult task of turning that "working text" into a literary one, good poetry in English. In the process some words, idioms, grammatical tenses or numbers, and syntactical structures or order, underwent creative alterations to become a true poem in the target language. Then Mr. Friar discussed these changes with the poet, who knows English, accepted the suggested changes, or further worked with Mr. Friar until a happy and final compromise was reached. When in a few instances a critical reader may feel that a particular rendition is a bit too free, or even inaccurate, or unwarranted by the context—as I felt on some occasions—he should bear in mind that this poetic English text has Yannis Ritsos's approval.

Scripture of the Blind is a beautiful and valuable book, indeed. Kimon Friar and Professor Myrsiades have offered a new dimension to our awareness of Ritsos's ambience. The Publisher, however, must be censured for his inexcusable refusal to send page proofs to the editors for corrections—despite Mr. Friar's urgent and repeated requests—because a number of silly errors that unavoidably were made during the three transcriptions of the translation, would have been undoubtedly seen and corrected, and this fine volume would have been totally unblemished and perfect.

Takis Sinopoulos is a man of many talents, like Yannis Ritsos. A medical doctor who served with the Greek Army in 1940-41, and during the Civil War, Sinopoulos is a known poet, a successful painter, an astute critic, and an active supporter of democratic developments in often turbulent and tragic Greece. There is no doubt that Mr. Friar's fine translation of a generous and excellent selection of his verse will properly introduce English-speaking poetry lovers to his most original and powerful work.

Landscape of Death is prefaced by a long and brilliant Introduction in several chapters (some thirty-six pages). The Greek and English texts, always *en face*, are followed by a sixteen-page Appendix analyzing and explaining leitmotifs. A brief biography, a bibliography of Greek editions, and nine pages of Notes complete this attractive and scholarly book. The material in the *apparatus criticus* has also appeared in Greek, under the same telling title, as a critical monograph of over one-hundred pages, published by Kédhros.

More than sixty short, medium, and long poems from the collections *Midpoint* (1951), *Cantos I-XI* (1953), *Acquaintance with Max* (1956), *Midpoint II* (1957), *Helen* (1957), *Night and Counterpoint* (1959), *The Song of Ioanna and Konstandinos* (1961), *The Poetry of Poetry* (1964), *Stones* (1972), *Deathfeast* (1972), and *The Chronicle* (1975) represent here the impressive poetic corpus of Dr. Sinopoulos.

Like Ritsos, Sinopoulos is also a product of his times, of our criminal and absurd age of brutality and spiritual desolation. The horrors of the Second World War, the Occupation, the fratricidal conflict that followed them, and the inner, personal and social, traumas they caused made Sinopoulos see the setting of his adventurous existence as a "landscape of death"—a phrase he so aptly coined in his, by now classic, lyric "Elpenor". With the exception of *Acquaintance with Max*—where Max's persona as Mr. Friar observes "is, in short, one aspect of Sinopoulos during an interval in his life when he was himself brimming in ecstatic concord with the world" (p. xvii)—the poet returned faithfully to his world view as a hopeless and depressing waste land, peopled by ghosts of slain and dead companions, lost and forgotten loves, and associated with recurrent images and instances of horror.

Unlike Ritsos, however, who faced the personal and social adversities in life armed with his militant and, consequently, optimistic ideology, Sinopoulos did not particularize the burning issues, putting the blame on Right or Left, but faced them as a metaphysical thinker, as manifestations of the general moral dereliction in the contemporary world. Thus, on the contrary, Sinopoulos generalized and even universalized his pessimistic or negative outlook. The men and women in the dramas of his poems—Magda, Ioanna, Helen, Prostras, Lukas, Alafouzou *et al.*—are at the same time intimate relations or haunting memories and echoes, while they also enact a broader drama in which they function almost like the persons one encounters in the "private" narratives of confessional poems—they weave the fabric of a myth, a fable that can tell the story of our times with as many known common denominators as a tortured memory can retain.

Not a political writer, Dr. Sinopoulos is a modern romantic, as Mr. Friar calls him, who

is obsessed with the darkness that dims or colors his vision—a vision he would have liked to have been idyllic and Edenic. He is also pained by the bright light of the sun that, strangely, instead of suggesting a positive and life-giving presence of the glorious “Sovereign Sun” (according to Odysseus Elytis) acts as a negative force burning and torturing with its spear-like rays, casting light on what had better remain in darkness, and illumining a Dantean milieu of hellish grotesqueness.

Extremely useful is Mr. Friar’s discussion of recurrent motifs—memory, night and darkness, the dead, loneliness, silence, shouts, the sun, fire and flame, burning, and light—most of which are interrelated, and interact as elements that energize and control the articulation of Sinopoulos’s tormented vision. Love, in all its dimensions, doesn’t seem to have a redeeming quality, or one that lasts long, in the poet’s consciousness, probably because of the transitoriness of its factors, the human beings, and their idiosyncratic behavior that often turns marriage and companionship into a nightmare of mutual agony, unilateral tyranny, or further sorrow and anguish, as we see in *The Song of Ioanna and Konstantinos* and several shorter pieces.

The best poem to introduce the reader to Dr. Sinopoulos’s achievement is, perhaps, “Elpenor”, whose opening lines set the tone, mood, setting, and feature the leitmotifs that reappear in many subsequent and important pieces (p. 5):

Landscape of death. Sea turned to stone, black cypress trees,
low seashore ravaged by salt and light,
hollow rocks, the implacable sun above them,
and neither the water’s rolling nor a bird’s wing,
only an endless, dense, unwrinkled silence.

Motivated by his painful experiences, inspired by a Greek translation of Ezra Pound’s *Canto I* (which is a liberal transcription of the Homeric *Odyssey* XI), and purposely echoing Seferian mannerisms, especially from “The King of Asine” and his own “Elpenor”, to exploit their cultural implications as allusions of sorts, Sinopoulos concludes his lyrical and suggestive narrative:

The sea, the cypress trees, the seashore petrified
in deadly immobility. And only he, Elpenor,
for whom we had sought with so much patience in old manuscripts,
tormented by the bitterness of his perpetual loneliness,
the sun falling in the empty spaces of his thoughts
as he dug the sand blindly with the stubs of his fingers,
and then dwindled like a vision and slowly vanished
in the empty, wingless, soundless, azure ether (p. 7).

The nature of this poem shouldn’t make the reader assume that in the remaining pieces one finds “more of the same” in terms of technique, thematic concerns, versification, and form. On the contrary, later compositions show drastic changes in form, like in *Acquaintance with Max*; in tone, as in “Spring and Maria”; or in mood, as in “Intoxication”. There are also lyrics written entirely in what may seem in prose—“Magda”—or in very long lines followed by shorter ones, or by prose paragraphs, as we see in the sequences titled “Nights” and “Essay”. The last poem in this selection begins with the sentence, “Greece has been traveling within Greece following the spilt and squandered blood”. This travel metaphor—that somehow reminds us of Seferis’s use of the same image (of “In the Manner of G. S.”)—epigrammatically sums up the source of Sinopoulos’s inspiration. Wherever he wanders

he confronts man-made destruction, victims, and death. Despite the numerous changes in situations, *dramatis personae*, and settings, his overall impressions are those of a Dante-like traveler through a contemporary landscape of death. We must be thankful to Kimon Friar whose scholarly skills and artistic taste help to experience vicariously the honest anguish of Takis Sinopoulos in an exemplary poetic rendition into English.

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George G. Murnu, *Rumänische Lehnwörter im Neugriechischen mit historischen Vorbemerkungen*. Mit einem Nachtrag herausgegeben von H. Mihăescu, Bukarest 1977 (105 S.).

Es handelt sich um eine neue unveränderte Auflage der Inauguraldissertation von G. Murnu, die 1902 in München zum ersten Mal erschienen ist. Nach einem Geleitwort von H. Mihăescu folgt die Arbeit von Murnu (S. 9-57), zu der ein Nachtrag (S. 61-98) von Mihăescu hinzugefügt ist. Auf S. 99-105 findet sich ein arumänisches und ein griechisches Wortregister.

Da das Rumänische die griechische Sprache auf zweierlei Weisen beeinflusst hat, d.h. a) durch Lehnwörter, die während der Fanariotenzeit in die neugriechische Sprache und Literatur aufgenommen sind, und b) durch Lehnwörter, die meist als Bezeichnungen des Hirtenlebens gebraucht werden und als Folge des unmittelbaren Sprachkontaktes vor allem der Nordgriechen mit den Arumänen angesehen werden, muss von vornherein geklärt werden, dass im Buch von Murnu die Rede von den letzteren Lehnwörtern ist. Eine Klärung in bezug auf den Namen der Arumänen wäre hier am Platze. Das Arumänische oder Mazedorumänische wird von den rumänischen Gelehrten als der vierte Dialekt des Gemeinrumänischen angesehen. Die Träger dieses Dialekts leben heute meistens in kompakten Hirtengemeinden und sind in Südjugoslawien, Albanien und Griechenland (vor allem dem Gebiet von Pindus) verbreitet. Von den verschiedenen Namen (Mazedorumänen, Mazedowlachen, Pinduswachen, Kutsowlachen, Zinzaren u.a.), unter denen dieses Hirtenvolk bekannt ist, hat sich im Laufe der Zeit der Name *Aromunen* (schon aus G. Weigands Zeit) und *Arumänen* (allerdings von rumänischen Gelehrten eingeweiht) durchgesetzt. Die Benennung *Arumänen* beruht auf dem mundartlichen *armâni* (*Romani*), mit dem die Arumänen sich selbst bezeichnen. Interessant ist Mihăescus Ausführung zu dem griechischen Namen der Arumänen Βλάχος, der auf dem slavischen *Vlah* beruht, das wiederum auf althochdeutsch *Walh*, *Walach* zurückgeht. Da germanisches *Walh*, *Walah* den Kelten, den Romanen bezeichnet, ist nach Mihăescu eine Ableitung dieses Namens aus dem keltischen Stammesnamen *Volcae* (belegt als *Volcae Tectosages* und *Volcae Arecomici*) höchstwahrscheinlich. Zum Namen Βλάχος vgl. noch D. Georgakas, 'Αρχαῖον τοῦ θρακικοῦ λαογραφικοῦ καὶ γλωσσικοῦ θησαυροῦ 14, 86ff.

Murnus Verzeichnis von arumänisch-griechischen Wortgleichungen werden historische und sprachliche Vorbemerkungen vorgesetzt. Der historische Teil informiert über die erste urkundliche Erscheinung und Verbreitung der Arumänen in Griechenland während des Mittelalters bis auf die neuere Zeit. Der sprachliche Teil enthält Bemerkungen zu der geographischen Verteilung der arumänischen Lehnwörter auf dem griechischen Gebiet (dabei werden Süd-makedonien, Thessalien und Epirus als die Hauptsiedlungsgebiete der Arumänen betrachtet) sowie deren Einteilung in 7 Kategorien (1. Hirtenleben, 2. Mensch und seine