

Varnalis, Lapathiotis, Karyotakis, Skarimbis, Seferis, Themelis, Prevelakis, Ritsos, Engonopoulos, Kavadias, Elytis, Vrettakos, Loundemis, Dimakis, and Anagnostakis.

Not all texts and musical compositions are of the same kind or category, of course. As the scholarly compiler explains (pp. 30-47) many poems were turned to songs in their entirety, others with major or minor modifications by the composers, to suit a particular purpose or mood. Other texts are passages and excerpts from longer poetic texts, like the romance *Erotokritos*, still others are based on variations of texts that differ from those of "standard" editions. Also, there are some prose texts whose lyrical intensity and mood prompted a sensitive composer to re-write as verse, for instance Kazantzakis's novel *Captain Michael (Freedom or Death)*.

The book is completed by a necessary "Index of the First Lines of All the Poems in this Anthology" (pp. 512-521), and an equally important "Index of Persons and Subjects" (pp. 522-533), both bilingual. Needless to say that Dr. Mitsakis's book this way becomes an indispensable tool to the student and the lover of Greek lyricism in both its dimensions: melody and logos. Its bilinguality makes the book accessible to the many anglophone scholars, comparatists, musicologists, sociologists of art, and other readers who would not have been able to benefit from a strictly Greek volume of this kind. After all the number of anglophone students and researchers of Modern Greek culture has been on a steady increase ever since the times of *Zorba the Greek*, novel as well as musical.

As I said earlier, despite the meticulous, scholarly, and thorough efforts of this energetic compiler, this anthology is not a check-list of discs and English versions of their Greek lyrics. Some existing items were deliberately omitted on account of their low quality. Just the same, a person who enjoys what music can do to a good text, and what a good text can make a gifted composer do, will cherish and treasure this book.

Karolos Mitsakis's *Modern Greek Music and Poetry: An Anthology* is now a fact. It may inspire others to try and do a better or more complete work. It may also bring to the forefront fine or competent translations of anthologized texts that would make the present volume perfect and definitive.

The University of Athens

M. BYRON RAIZIS

Angelos Sikelianos, *Selected Poems*, translated and introduced by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. xx/150.

Of the major Greek poets of this century—Cavafy, Sikelianos, Seferis, Elytis and Ritsos—Sikelianos is by far the most neglected outside of Greece, chiefly because he is so difficult to translate. He discourages translators in a way that the others do not, because his persona almost always sounds like an inspired prophet declaiming with ritualistic solemnity, something which in our ears seems rhetorical. As Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard say in their Introduction, "this hierophantic, rhapsodic voice is possibly the one least accessible to a contemporary Western sensibility, not only because that sensibility has been trained in our time to question rhetoric of almost any kind, but because the voice depends for credibility and vitality on the character of the language it offers ...—all of which is lost in translation". In the 1940s, when Sikelianos was nominated by the Society of Greek Writers for the Nobel Prize, a very few poems were translated by Lawrence Durrell. The first representative

selection of poems in English did not appear, however, until 1961, when Keeley and Sherrard included twelve in their *Six Poets of Modern Greece*. In 1973, Kimon Friar published fifteen poems in his *Modern Greek Poetry*. Now we have twenty-five Sikelianos poems in the new volume attractively printed by Princeton University Press—still not a very impressive number for a major poet whose œuvre occupies many substantial volumes. All this testifies to the inhibitions felt by translators when they confront Sikelianos's work. On the other hand, the slimness of the Princeton volume is an asset, because it allows us to approach Sikelianos comfortably, without being discouraged by the other factor which has kept his poetry largely unknown outside of Greece, its bulk.

Though the previous translations have failed to make Sikelianos's work generally known in the West, the new ones stand a better chance, since they are the first to render his hierophantic voice in an English that is rigorously non-rhetorical. Fortunately, the original Greek is on facing pages, enabling anglophone readers—those who can manage Sikelianos's difficult idiom when aided by the translations—to experience the voice's full resonance while at the same time benefiting from the translations' clarity. But the new volume is more likely to make Sikelianos accessible for another reason as well: the particular poems that the translators have selected. Disarmingly, they claim to have limited their choice "to those translations that have some life of their own in English". What they have really done, however, is to give us the requisite materials for understanding Sikelianos's major concerns and also his development. The important lines are set out briefly in an excellent Introduction that offers just enough to help us discover by ourselves, step by step as we read the poems, how, for Sikelianos, the natural world was an outward sign of a deeper mystical realm which reveals itself not only in nature but also in myth, folk memory, and ritual; how, furthermore, Sikelianos believed that it is quintessentially the poet who brings this deeper, hidden world up into consciousness; finally, how his faith in the inner world survived first his private failure to ritualize that world in the revived festivals at Delphi, and then the general horror of Greece's subjection by the Axis. Thus it is hardly accidental that Keeley and Sherrard have chosen to include (a) memorable evocations of nature ("Caique", "The First Rain"), of ritual ("Hymn to Artemis Orthia") and of folk custom ("The Village Wedding"); (b) poems evoking the linkage between nature and myth ("On Acrocorinth", "Pan"); (c) poems affirming nature as an entrée to mystical depths ("Because I Deeply Praised", "Prayer"); (d) poems connecting the poet himself with nature ("Return"), with myth ("Daedalus") and with folk custom ("The Village Wedding"); and, lastly, poems affirming the poet's inner vision in the face of cruelty, indifference and divisiveness ("The Sacred Way", "Agraphon"). The essence of Sikelianos's prophecy was the faith that opposites can join into unity, eliminating the inevitable fragmentation of the world of time. This unity occurs in the inner vision of poets and seers; it is a subjective reality. What Keeley and Sherrard have enabled us to do, by virtue of their selection, is to experience in our own right, subjectively, the process of achieving this unified vision as we proceed through the seemingly diverse poems of the collection, receiving from them the same intimations that the poet received from nature, myth or folk custom, until we are initiated into the mystic truth that each poem is but an incomplete, separated sign of something complete and unified: in this case, the overall poetic vision of Angelos Sikelianos. It is a beautiful journey which (to echo what Sikelianos says about the Ionian sea) "freshens us deep down".

Remarkably, this mystical result is achieved, as I noted earlier, by means of a poetic diction that eschews the high style, striving instead for clearness and simplicity, even when

the original Greek is obscure or elevated. Thus, for example, the ambiguous "You who assist... the embrace's struggle" in the 1961 Keeley-Sherrard version has been revised to the totally explicit "You who assist... in the struggle when bodies embrace"; thus the line which Kimon Friar, faithful to the Greek, renders "Is this perhaps chimerical?" becomes the more straightforwardly idiomatic "Can this be an illusion?". In place of Friar's Miltonic

And as from out the inner sanctuary
of heaven upon the night a bright star glides,
or in a mild wind falls an apple blossom,
so from his breast did the calm spirit fly

Keeley and Sherrard, avoiding the inversions and other paraphernalia of "poetic diction", offer

And as a star at night
glides from the sky's inmost sanctuary
or as an apple blossom falls in the gentle breeze,
so his spirit took wing from his breast.

Yet their translation is by no means prosaic. They give metric equivalents (though never rhyme) for Sikelianos's strict stanzaic forms, and they are never so doctrinaire about simple diction that they refuse a chance to echo Sikelianos's vowel music even if fancy language is required, as when their

aerial cataracts
of the flowering oleander
on the escarpments

responds valiantly to the a-sounds in Sikeliano's magnificent

άνάεροι καταρράχτες
τῆς μπουμπουκιασμένης ροδοδάφνης
στά γκρεμνά.

Friar is truer, in a way, to Sikelianos's own highly "poetic" idiom; but Keeley and Sherrard speak more easily to our modern linguistic sensibility, without cooling the poet's prophetic ardor in the least.

Consequently, the new *Selected Poems* offer an ideal vehicle to enable readers with little or no Greek to discover a figure who is undoubtedly one of the major Greek poets of this century. The book is also ideally suited for use in the classroom for intermediate or advanced students of Greek language and culture, or for students of comparative literature. For specialists in modern Greek, however, it will be mildly frustrating because of the failure to date and place each of the poems—a defect that could be easily remedied in a subsequent edition.

Dartmouth College

PETER BIEN

Ἐργεῖον τῆς Π.Σ. Δέλτα.— Α', Π.Σ. Δέλτα, Ἐλευθέριος Κ. Βενιζέλος. Ἡμερολόγιον-Ἀναμνήσεις - Μαρτυρίαι - Ἀλληλογραφία.—Edited by P. A. Zannas, Athens 1978, pp. 391.

All Greek children born in the XXth century have had the opportunity to read the