

The translator's brief introductions to each story provide useful information, particularly about Greek and Turkish lexicon and pronunciation. It would also have been helpful if he had given explanations of such puzzling historical and cultural references as "Kleantheian toils" (p. 114) and students "bawling about Phalanx" (p. 116), where even the educated reader would not know that this last refers to the student militia. Readers will appreciate Roderick Beaton's preface, which discusses the author in the context of the Greek short story.

Vizyenos has been well served by this first English edition of his works.

Queens College of the City University of New York

ELIZABETH CONSTANTINIDES

Stratis Myrivilis, *Life in the Tomb*, translated from Modern Greek original by Peter Bien—with a new Introduction by Peter Levi. Published for Dartmouth College by University Press of New England, Hanover and London, 1987, pp. 325+3pl.

Stratis Myrivilis (1892-1969) came from Mytilena, an island in the Aegean sea belonging since the ancient period to Greek Asia Minor; so he too has been considered one of the Asia Minor writers of the generation of the '30s. He entered Greek Literature with *Life in the Tomb*, regarded as the most important work of this generation. The historians of Neohellenic Literature believe that Myrivilis' work referred to above is neither a novel nor a collection of stories. The title *Life in the Tomb* derives from the Lamentations sung in Greek Orthodox Church on Good Friday.

Ἡ ζωὴ ἐν τάφῳ κατετέθης
Χριστέ, καὶ ἀγγέλων στρατιαί,
ἐξεπλήττοντο, συγκατάβασιν
δοξάζουσιν τὴν σὴν.

[Thou o Christ, the Life, in tomb was laid/and arms of angels were amazed, and they/glorified thy humiliation]

Life in the Tomb is a war novel written as a journal by a young intellectual Greek sergeant, Antonis Kostoulas, soldier at the Macedonian frontier during the First World War (1917). Kostoulas related his experiences of this terrible war in the trenches in a series of 57 units. On the one hand the narrator describes the horror of the war and on the other he remembers his past happiness in Lesbos, before the war; both constitute a Kind of diary, where Kostoulas, an educated and sensitive man, gives his impressions of the appalling slaughter and who, surrounded by barbed wire, minefields and sandbags, is rooted in a trench fighting an invisible enemy.

In *Life in the Tomb* each story can be read independently of the others. Kostoulas' letters are written to be read later, after the war, when the soldier, if indeed he survives, would return to his island. Myrivilis wrote the first sketches in trenches in Monastir, on the Macedonian frontier in 1917, and one chapter of his work was published in the newspaper *Néa Ἑλλάδα* (Thessakoniki) in the same year. After his return from the campaign in Asia Minor, that was so tragic for Hellenism, he published the novel in sequences in the newspaper

of Mytilena, *Καμπάνα*; both those publications constituted the first edition (1924). The second edition (1930) had no chance because it was forbidden by the Metaxas' dictatorship (1936-1940) and then by the Nazis (1941-1944). The edition of 1955 had been revised and enjoyed successive reprintings. The work was translated into several languages. Bien's translation is based on the 1955 edition, which in turn was based on that of 1930.

Peter Bien's edition contains *Introduction*, *Historical Notes*, *Translator's Preface* and *Terms and References* (listed in alphabetical order for non-Greek readers). Two observations: the translator in his *Preface* thanks a colleague "for information on Macedonian dialect". Surely, Mr. Peter Bien must mean the slavic idiom of Southern Yugoslavia. The explanations in *Terms and References* are very important—see, for example, the expression Great Idea: "The driving force of Greek nationalism from the end of the nineteenth century until the (*temporary*?) destruction of the Idea in 1922, when the Greeks were forced out of Anatolia".

Briefly, Peter Bien's translation, with his *Preface* and notes makes *Life in the Tomb* accessible to English-speaking people and, at the same time, has turned this Greek masterpiece into something not much less than an English one, as C. Woodhouse wrote in the *Times Literary Supplement*.

University of Thessaloniki

ATHANASSIS E. KARATHANASSIS

Ἰωάννης Δ. Ψαράς, *Ὁ θεσμός τῆς πολιτοφυλακῆς στὶς βενετικὲς κτήσεις τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ χώρου (16ος-18ος αἰ.)* [L'institution de la garde civique dans les colonies de Venise situées sur le territoire hellénique (durant les XVI et XVIIe siècles)], éditions Vaniás, Thessaloniki 1988, pp. 166.

La République Sérénissime de Venise, dont la puissance prédominait dans l'espace méditerranéen et en Orient durant des siècles, n'avait jamais formé une armée systématiquement organisée; la principale raison en était que les autorités vénitiennes craignaient un éventuel accroissement de la puissance militaire qui pourrait bouleverser l'ordre des choses. D'autre part, c'était sa puissance navale qui fondait son empire. Cependant, elle avait besoin d'avoir à sa disposition une armée à la Terra ferma; celle-là était formée de mercenaires et pouvait l'aider à l'impact de sa réputation. Une branche de cette armée de terre, une sorte de garde civique, était constituée d'hommes indigènes portant différents noms, tels que *ordinanze*, *cernide*, *miliziane* ou autres. L'historique de cette institution militaire de la Sérénissime et ses activités durant trois siècles (du XVe au XVIIIe s.) sur les territoires helléniques, occupés alors par les Vénitiens, fait l'objet du livre de Dr. Joannis Psaras. L'auteur comble ici une lacune importante dans l'histoire militaire vénitienne—l'institution étant inconnue même des spécialistes de l'histoire de Venise. Ses principales sources sont puisées dans l'*Archivio di Stato di Venezia* et divers autres fonds.

Dans son premier chapitre l'auteur étudie les différentes appellations attribuées habituellement à ces mercenaires de Venise (*militia*, *guardia*, *cernide*, *cerne*, etc.). Mr. Psaras suggère que cette institution de garde civique fonctionnait officiellement déjà depuis 1519