

about 250% in 1946-1947. The table is in current prices for a period during which the annual rate of inflation on occasion exceeded 2000%.

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CONSTANTINE MICHALOPOULOS

Introduction to Modern Greek Literature. An Anthology of Fiction, Drama, and Poetry. Edited and translated by Mary P. Gianos. New York Twayne Publishers Inc., 1969. Pp. XVII+548.

This impressive and much needed volume, introductory to the Greek series of the Twayne's books on world literature, is the admirable product of three outstanding contributors: P. Kanellopoulos, M. P. Gianos and K. Friar. The idea, the initiative and an enormous amount of work come, of course, from M.P.Gianos, who has to be fully credited for this.

From Kanellopoulos, philosopher, writer of very important books, member of the Academy of Athens, and former premier of Greece, comes the introduction. The Greek reader is already familiar with this text, because it was first published in Greek in *Νέα Έστία* 65 (1959) 257-271. This long and very interesting essay, thoroughly revised in its present English form, is essentially based on a paper which Kanellopoulos read on 10 January 1959 opening the "Greek Week" Professor I. Rosenthal-Kamarinea organized from 10-25 January of that year at the University of Marburg (see the report by Rosenthal-Kamarinea in *Νέα Έστία* 65, 1959, 274-5). It informs the English speaking reader in a very concise and precise way about the background of modern Greek literature which has determined all the literary developments from early XIXth century to the present day very decisively. At the same time, it outlines the various intellectual forces operating to produce all those works which, in first place, belong to Greek literature, because they mirror the hard efforts of the modern Greeks to establish an identity for themselves and to balance their existence between a glorious past and the modern world; but they also belong to world literature, because they are centered round "condition humaine," that is they express the struggles, the aspirations and the frustrations of modern man for a better inner and outer life. This is mainly the reason why modern Greek literature has roused such a great interest in our own days taking also its place next to the other important literatures of Europe (English, French, German, Spanish, Italian etc.).

From Gianos, Professor of English, writer and translator of Greek

literature into English, comes the selection and the translation of the prose texts and the plays. The present volume is of somewhat limited chronological range; it includes mainly writers active in the second half of the past and the first half of this century, because another volume, now in preparation, will cover contemporary Greek literature. Other anthologies usually present only a selection of short stories, because this genre offers itself conveniently for books of such general character. Gianos has made an effort to enlarge this scope and include extensive works of fiction, as for instance the novelette "Humble Life" by I.M. Panayotopoulos, as well as three complete plays, one comedy, the charming "Game of Folly vs. Wisdom" by G. Theotokas, and two tragedies, of which "The Last Tournament" by P. Prevelakis is one of the most remarkable achievements of modern Greek theater.

The criterion of including or excluding certain texts from an anthology is undoubtedly subjective and the compilation always reveals a personal taste. Gianos has managed to prepare a volume really representative of the Greek literature of the period 1850-1950 by including such important writers as Roidis, Papadiamantis, Karkavitsas, Theotokis Hadzopoulos, Myrivilis, Venezis, Politis, Manglis etc. I am fully aware of the difficulties and the traps a translator faces almost in every word of a foreign text which he attempts to render adequately into his language preserving as much as possible of the literary merits of the original. The final product of a translation is always a synthesis of minor or major compromises. Therefore, within the boundaries of legitimate liberties a translator may take to revive the foreign work in his language, a translation is considered successful if it reads well and if it has not betrayed the spirit of the writer. From this point of view Gianos' translations are very successful. One is prepared, of course, to accept that the poetic touch of Papadiamantis' *Katharevousa* or the brilliant craftsmanship of Myrivilis in using the Greek language cannot be retained in a translation. Thus if the above writers have lost something essential in Gianos' translation, this is not Gianos' fault but it is due to the risks and the disadvantages of translation in general.

From Friar, the poet, the lecturer and translator, comes the last part of this book which includes modern Greek poetry. Friar's impeccable taste and thorough knowledge of the subject have produced so far some of the best translations of modern Greek poetry into English. The present selection includes the most significant figures in Greek poetry of this century, such as Cavafy, Sikelianos, Kazantzakis, Seferis, Elytis,

Sarandaris, Engonopoulos, Embiricos, Matsas, Gatsos, Karelli, Vafopoulos, Themelis etc., and is only a specimen and a foretaste of Friar's work on modern Greek poetry, which, when published, will be at least equally, if not more, important to his monumental translation of Kazantzakis' "Odyssey."

The work of each prose writer, playwright or poet is accompanied by a brief note with biographical data and other useful information and criticism. I have noticed some inaccuracies as well as some misprints in the notes and in the texts themselves which I hope that the editor will correct in a second edition of the book. The "Introduction" as a whole, anyway, is of high quality and will serve very successfully its goal, that is to help the English speaking readers to make their acquaintance with modern Greek literature. The best compliment I can make to this "Introduction," which reflects its true merits, is the very fact that I have put it in the list of the prescribed books for my courses on modern Greek literature to non-Greek speaking audiences.

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The Festal Menaion. Translated from the Original Greek by Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware. Faber and Faber. London, 1969 Pp. 564.

This excellent translation is an English rendering, long overdue, of the texts for the nine fixed feasts that belong to the cycle of the Menaia. Obviously Easter and the movable feasts of the Easter cycle must await treatment in another volume. Here is plenty to arouse the interest of those who seek to understand the liturgical and mystical theology of the Greek Christian East.

The authors justly claim that their version can be read for its dignity and accuracy. One may wonder, of course, whether they are not over-optimistic when they suggest that many thousands—and before long millions—will need such a "prayer book" in their homes. In Greece itself the Menaion is not normally in domestic use: it is reserved for the priest and the choir. What is the *desideratum* of the Orthodox layman is the Synopsis, which is virtually the equivalent of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. All the same, if the English language were to come into use a-