

**THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN
PAPADIAMANTIS' FICTION**

by

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at exploring the social position of women and their role in the community, as they are represented in Papadiamantis' oeuvre. In the first chapter I discuss women's position in Greek society between 1830-1910, giving a brief overview of the position of women in Greece's historical development. I also present the general pattern of the era that most affected Papadiamantis' writings. In the second chapter I examine women's position in family and society, as it appears in Papadiamantis' novels and short stories, emphasizing the two biggest cycles, which most preoccupy a woman's life, those of marriage and maternity. In the following chapter I discuss the physical representation of women in Papadiamantis and refer to their characterisation and social behaviour. In the fourth chapter I focus on religion, examining women's religious activities and their relation to the supernatural and magic powers. In the fifth and last chapter the discussion centres on eroticism, and I comment on the elements which contribute to the creation of the erotic atmosphere some of the stories display. This exploration leads us to the conclusion that although Papadiamantis writes at a time when women were playing a very secondary role in society with their lives downtrodden, by using them as his major characters in his stories he attributes to them the importance they should have in society.

40, 000 words approximately.

*To my bekwedparents
find to the memory of my friend
Louisiana M.
with whom we shared dreams for the future.*

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INTRODUCTION

I first became aware of the role of women in Papadiamantis' fiction during my third year at the University of Athens, where I wrote an essay, as part of my folklore course, on women in Papadiamantis' island stories. That brief essay triggered my curiosity to further explore Papadiamantis' writings and I therefore decided to go deeper into this question. Moreover, it gave me the opportunity to see that the sources related solely to Papadiamantis and women were very scarce. Thus, the basic difficulty I had to face at the very beginning of my research was to find adequate studies relating to the social position of women in Greece during the second half of the nineteenth century. For that reason I had to use folklore studies mainly to find this kind of information.

Voula Lambropoulou's book entitled Οι γυναίκες στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη (Athens, 1992) is the first study to deal with this subject. The writer presents separate chapters, each on different topics related to women as they appear in Papadiamantis' fiction. The whole book is based on the citing of facts followed by long quotations, accompanied by very brief analysis, something that makes the study heavily descriptive and rather monotonous.¹ The fact, too, that each quotation is followed by the title of the story only without any indication of page number and volume, makes the quotation incomplete and the study rather unscholarly.

On the other hand, Maria Gasouka's study under the title Η κοινωνική θέση των γυναικών στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη (Athens, 1998) provides us with a more analytical study of women when discussing their social position in Papadiamantis' fiction. The writer divides the book into four chapters, since she chooses to examine the novels in the first one, the island short stories in the second, «Η Φόνισσα» in the third, and the Athenian short stories in the fourth. M. Gasouka's book constitutes the first study to deal with the social position of women in detail, but yet only states conclusions derived from the short stories without examining their further relation to their plots.

¹ Voula Lambropoulou declares in her introduction that she chose to follow this method of writing since her book was designed for teaching Papadiamantis to Greek University students, adding that a detailed analysis would have made the edition of the book impossible.

The above two studies are the only ones which deal solely with women and their presence in Papadiamantis' stories. Other scholars, whilst discussing some aspect of Papadiamantis, might have made a brief reference to women, but nothing more than that.

My intention in this thesis is to explore the matter further. The overall aim is to elucidate the importance women had in a society that regarded them as inferior beings. Although Papadiamantis writes at a time when women were playing a very secondary role in society, by using them as his major characters in his stories attributes them the importance they should have in society. Additionally the aim of this study is not only to arrive at social conclusions derived from the presentation of women in Papadiamantis' stories, but also to examine the purpose of presenting in his stories societal information through the actions and behaviour of his characters. I will also discuss Papadiamantis' depiction of society in his writings as a reflection of what the society of that time was. In this way it will enable us to judge whether his views are consistent with the representations of society as they are presented and analysed in anthropological studies. It will also enable us to see whether he remains consistent in his own views on a number of matters related to women as his writings mature. Therefore, I believe that the present approach to the subject is quite different from the above two studies, since it examines it in a more comparative and literary fashion, contributing as a result to a more complete account of women throughout Papadiamantis' oeuvre.

To be more specific, what I shall attempt to do here is to study the way women are presented in Papadiamantis' novels and short stories and examine to what extent this presentation contributes to a better understanding of their role in nineteenth-century Greek society. I will do this by dividing this study into five chapters. Every chapter, although descriptive to a certain extent, besides presenting data deriving from Papadiamantis' stories, analyses those which have a special function with reference to their plots, contributing in this way to the general conclusions. Each chapter is a separate study of Papadiamantis' position as regards women's everyday lives. In each chapter I will cite certain quotations taken from the short stories and determine whether they contribute to the development of the plot of the story or are merely reporting current social conditions. A comparison between the island and the Athenian short stories will

also be made, as well as reference to the development within the novels and the short stories of the presentation of women as regards each individual subject dealt with.

The aim in writing the first chapter of this thesis is to give a brief overview of the position of women in the historical development of modern Greece and also to present the general pattern of the era, part of which Papadiamantis' lived through and most affected his writings. In the second chapter I shall examine in detail women's position in family and society during the second half of the nineteenth century, emphasising their daily tasks and the two biggest cycles which preoccupy most of a woman's life, those of marriage and maternity. In the first part of the third chapter I shall comment on women's physical appearance, giving emphasis to the facial and bodily characteristics, commenting on how the external appearance of a woman may affect the behaviour of the characters in the story. In the second part of this chapter I shall discuss the positive and negative characteristics Papadiamantis' attributes to his female protagonists and in what way the external appearance of a woman may be connected with her social behaviour. In the fourth chapter I shall highlight an area of particular interest to women: that of religion along with the supernatural and magical powers. In this chapter the reader becomes familiar with Papadiamantis' perceptions concerning certain religious matters, as well as female religious duties and the extent to which magical powers affected people's lives. In the fifth and last chapter I shall focus on the erotic atmosphere some of the novels and short stories display. I shall also suggest the factors which contribute to the creation of an erotic atmosphere in the story.

Each of the above chapters is based on different aspects of the representation of women in Papadiamantis' stories. Papadiamantis presents his characters as acting within the framework of different cycles of everyday life according to the needs of the narration and the form he wants the plot to develop. These different cycles encompass the birth of a child, everyday tasks, marriage, love, and finally, death. The writer was a member of a family of modest means in Skiathos, having a brother who was mentally ill and four unmarried sisters, only the eldest of which managed to get married and whom he never actually helped financially. He used to follow his mother in her rural occupations and accompany his father, who was a priest, in the ecclesiastical liturgies. Thus, he met devout women since the church domain was, as we shall see, dominated by women. This

background provided him with the opportunity to observe women closely and present them in much detail. Therefore, all his stories are close to reality, a reality he experienced either on his island or during his stay in the capital.

Nevertheless, I am not implying that what is going to follow will be an exhaustive study since I do not comment on the relation of women to supernatural beings and such phenomena, the various female names which appear within the stories, and female clothing. It will, however, highlight some aspects, which have not been mentioned by the two studies which have appeared so far on the female characters in Papadiamantis' fiction. My belief is that the particular topic may be amenable to various approaches and interpretations, according to the background of each scholar attempting to deal with it.

CHAPTER ONE

WOMEN IN GREEK SOCIETY BETWEEN 1830-1910

The aim of this chapter is to present the social position of women in Greece between 1830-1910. The reason for choosing to examine this particular period is to provide the social and historical framework in which the analysis of the role of women in Papadiamantis' fiction will be carried out. In the process of doing so, we shall try to illuminate their presence in the social system during the period specified and, moreover, we shall examine the oncoming changes which appeared in it and were mainly due to the westernization of post-revolutionary Greek society after Independence.

The so-called westernization had serious repercussions on the formation of the social classes in the newly established state, as well as on Greek morals, since it transmitted western European models of life to Greek society. Such models would not only move the country away from all vestiges of the oriental influences of the Tourkokratia, but would also bring it closer to its classical roots, by emulating a West whose civilization was based on ancient Greek philosophy and culture.²

Greece, after four hundred years of occupation and almost continuous hard struggle for freedom against the Ottoman Empire, succeeded in regaining its independence in 1828. The contribution of women to overcome this struggle, even though of great magnitude,³ brought about no significant change in regard to their social position. Neither men, nor women valued their contribution to the national struggle. Thus, they continued to be seen, always in comparison to men, as an inferior category and even worse, as objects of possession, constrained to fulfil their responsibilities within the house, as well as outside.⁴

² See M. Anastasopoulou, 'Feminist awareness and Greek women writers' in Philip Carabott, (ed.). Greek Society in the making 1863 - 1913. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997, pp. 161-162.

³ The names of Laskarina Bou Boulina and Manto Mavrogenous are very well known as they distinguished themselves in the national struggle as well as the women of Souli, Mani and Naousa.

⁴ K. Xeradake, Το φεμινιστικό Κίνημα στην Ελλάδα: Προπορόρες Ελληνίδες 1830-1936. Athens: Glaros, 1988, p. 23.

It seems that the ideology of the Enlightenment, which declared, among other things, freedom, the right to be educated, and equality between the sexes,⁵ had no actual effect on the upgrading of the current social position of women. For a woman, the ordinary course of things through the centuries was known in advance. By the time she was born, she was under guardianship and always treated as an inferior being dependent on the powerful sex.⁶ This statement is confirmed by E. Martinegou's autobiography although this was written one century earlier and is related to how women were treated in the Ionian Islands.⁷ That was no different from what prevailed for a long period during the nineteenth century in the rest of rural and urban Greece. E. Martinegou was one of the first to struggle to become educated in an environment which was against women's education. Her strong will allowed her to realize her ambitions, and thus what she considered to be the purpose of her existence. Her aim was to become useful to human society through her writings.⁸ She can therefore be considered retrospectively as the vehicle of Greek feminist thought. The same occurred with Eugenia Kairi, as we can conclude from a letter sent to her by Adamantios Korais.⁹

The marked stagnation in relation to women's social position was even more intense in nineteenth-century Greek society for the reason which I previously mentioned: the introduction of the western lifestyle. This invasion, instead of upgrading women's position, worked the other way round for several years. In a newly established state where everything was under reconstruction and constant change in regard to the political, economic and social sectors, the role of women in the latter strike us as a residue of a past time,¹⁰ as if Independence referred only to half the population of Greece, that is men. As a result of this, women continued with their traditional tasks, which confined them to the narrow, unimaginative domestic sphere. Their confinement in a wider sense was some

⁵ M. Kitromilides, 'The Enlightenment and Womanhood: Cultural Change and the Politics of Exclusion', in *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, John Hopkins Univ. Press, vol. 1, 1983, pp. 44-45.

⁶ K. Xeradake op.cit, p. 23. Only in primitive societies were women dominant and respectable persons due to motherhood.

⁷ E. Moutzan-Martinegou, *Αυτοβιογραφία*. Athens: Keimena, 1983, p. 37.

⁸ Ibid, p. 44.

⁹ For A. Korais the education of women was highly desirable, since it would be helpful for the Neohellenic revival, as well as for the appropriate adjustment of the female character to the new moral climate. See P.M. Kitromilides, op.cit., pp. 45-46.

¹⁰ E. Varika, *Η εξέγερση των κυριών: Η γένεση μιας φεμινιστικής συνείδησης στην Ελλάδα 1833-1907*.

Athens: Institute of education and research of the Commercial Bank of Greece, 1987, p. 58.

kind of antidote¹¹ to the invasion of western mores. Greek people believed that by keeping women well away from the foreign models of life was tantamount to protecting traditional Greek values and morals, which suffered blows after Greek Independence.

When Prince Otto of Bavaria undertook his duties as King of Greece¹² the influence of the western way of life became more intense. Furthermore, it brought about the formation of an elite class, which consisted of people belonging to the diplomatic corps and of those attached to the foreign monarchy. The wives of men who constituted the above categories used to participate in festivities organized by the palace, or attended theatre performances.¹³ Women, of course, were not allowed to attend these social events on their own. They were always escorted and under the watchful eye of their families. Apart from their small participation in the public sphere they spent most of their time in their domestic realm. Anything apart from that led to the conclusion that their husbands or families did not have adequate means to offer them enough comforts and luxuries. In a few words, because women preoccupied themselves with the house (whatever that work might have been) it enhanced the husband's and family's status. Moreover, the main traits women had to have were conscientiousness (*philotimo*) and modesty (*semnotis*)¹⁴ The first encompasses submissiveness to all the male members of the family, as well as loyalty to husbands. Women should always support their husbands' views and actions and be responsible for the house and the children. The second, in addition, implies absence of personal desires and a sense of shyness. The emulation by socially elite women of western manners defined their position in the social system. Thus, showing off

¹¹ Ibid, p. 39.

¹² King Otto's arrival at Nafplion, the provisional capital of Greece, in early February 1833, was hailed and greeted by his new subjects as he was regarded as the true personification of their freedom. As he was not yet of age to rule his kingdom, a council of Bavarian officials was set up for that purpose. This arrangement excluded the Greeks from government and, moreover, it symbolized the influence of the western way of life that the new state would be under. When the capital moved from Nafplion to Athens, Otto, who meanwhile had undertaken his duties as King of Greece, governed the country as an absolute monarch until September 1843, when a bloodless revolution took place which forced Otto to grant a constitution and the dismissal of the Bavarian faction. From then until 1862, when he abdicated, he governed the country as a semi-constitutional monarch, incapable of creating the basis for a stable government.

¹³ The first theatre was established in 1835. For more details about theatres and actors see G. Kairophylas, Η Αθήνα και οι Αθηναίοι 1834-1934: Η ζωή στην πρωτεύουσα τα πρώτα εκατό χρόνια με, Athens, 1978, vol. 1, pp. 31-44.

¹⁴ Definitions of the terms 'Philotimo' and 'Semnotis' are given by A. Pollis, 'Gender and Social Change in Greece' in Kariotis, C. Theodore, (ed.). The Greek Social Experiment: Papandreou's Greece 1981-1989. N.York: Pella 1992, p. 281.

and the degree of their idleness describe the ideal woman of that period; two features that in former times were thought to be the very worst.

From the 1860s to the end of the 1880s the kingdom made real economic progress,¹⁵ which had an immediate reflection in the development of the capital, as well as on the formation of the social classes. Many famous buildings were constructed during this period, which dominate the city of Athens up to the present day. Squares and roads were under construction as well. Means of transport like trams, buses and just a few cars made transportation from one place to another easier.

The growth of the urban middle class came about as a result of the relative economic prosperity Greece was experiencing. The middle class, which subsequently became part of the elite class, consisted of artisans and small merchants, with a significant number of professionals, such as doctors, teachers and lawyers. In this way the bourgeoisie became an important class in Greek society.

During the same period cultural and educational associations, along with the 'Philologika Kafeneia'¹⁶ and 'Philologika Salonia'¹⁷ made their appearance. The members of those associations used to organize lectures and discussions about scientific, literary and social matters. In the framework of social gatherings, the wives who were the hostesses of the particular houses were entitled to mix with their male guests, though this cannot be generalized for every woman belonging to the middle class. As a result also of the invasion of European music, conservatories were established.¹⁸

The presence of women in the vortex of social changes depended on which class they belonged to. Explicitly elite and middle class women had the opportunity to enter the public realm much more frequently, participating in various social events - as long as they had the requisite social status and consequently the economical discretion to do that- whereas women belonging to the lower class did not have that opportunity. The daily

¹⁵ In 1863 George I ascended the throne and his reign lasted for half a century. The form of government set up, after the constitution of 1864, has been well described as a Monarchical Democracy. Before the disastrous war of 1897 the Greek political system was to undergo an important transformation due to one of the most remarkable politicians, Charilaos Trikoupis. When he took over as Prime Minister, he introduced the principle of the 'dedilomeni', that is, the government could stay in power as long as it was supported by the majority of the deputies in the parliament.

¹⁶ See A. Papakostas for more information on 'Philologika Kafeneia' in «Φιλολογικά Καφενεία και Στέκια της Αθήνας» (1880-1930), Athens: Estia, 1988, pp. 22-41.

¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 45-90.

¹⁸ G. Kairophylas, op.cit., pp. 113-124.

struggle to live, in addition to their responsibilities in the house, made that impossible. Women experienced the injustice that housekeeping was not considered to be a proper job, although they catered for such essential human concerns such as children, elderly people and cooking around the clock. On the contrary, men, who worked outside the house, had the advantage of having proper working hours. In a society where unsalaried work was equivalent to idleness, women were thought to be idle, thus in a beneficial position. Additionally, since they performed manual work a rise in their social standing was impossible. Nineteenth-century Greek society underestimated this kind of work, because it was a reminder for most of the people of their rural origins.¹⁹

In the wake of Independence many peasants emigrated to the 'urban' centres to find a better life. The majority of women coming from the rural areas of Greece were employed by elite or middle class women as servants taking over all the household chores, whilst, at the same time, as governesses, they had the responsibility for the upbringing of the children. Consequently, this allotted more free time for upper-class women to keep themselves busy with reading and embroidery and, inevitably, the preparation of their trousseaus. Being a maid or a servant in a well-off family was recognized to be the very best occupation for a young girl coming to Athens from the rural, or island regions of Greece. Parents believed that in this way their daughters had a secure occupation, on top of which they were under the watchful eye of another family. Usually, families for whom the maids worked undertook the responsibility of finding husbands for them, and what is more, providing them with a dowry.

The relative development of industry that occurred in Greece in the second half of the nineteenth century in the framework of the Industrial Revolution had as a result the growth of factories and the production of manufactured goods.²⁰ Male workers were not enough to fill the vacancies, so that women from the lower strata had also to be employed. People began to realize that women had to earn money outside the house in case something happened to the head of the family and they would have to support their

¹⁹ E. Varika, op.cit, p. 43.

²⁰ G. Dertilis, *Ελληνική Οικονομία (1830-1910) και Βιομηχανική Επανάσταση*. Athens: Ekdoseis A.N. Sakkoula, 1984, p. 39.

families.²¹ However, women of the upper class did not have the right to work since it was thought to be an insult to their families. Educated women had the opportunity to work as governesses and teachers, but those were few, since women's education was neglected and thought to be unimportant for almost the whole of the nineteenth century.

During Otto's reign, very little progress had been made in women's education although a royal decree established primary education for both sexes. Parents did not pay any attention to their daughters' education, since it was viewed as of no value or as insignificant at best regarding their upbringing. Education was thought to have a decorative purpose or to be a dowry supplement,²² whereas for men it indicated better working conditions, since educated men could gain access to the civil service. On the other hand, a significant percentage of young women coming from wealthy families attended private schools along with other women coming from lower classes. This kind of social mixing really irritated pedagogues.²³ Obviously, education was the privilege of the well-off family. The fact that mixed education was forbidden in itself excluded young women from education, since in several parts of Greece the maintenance of two separate schools was impossible. Yet at the same time there were some women who tried to surpass the decorative purpose of education by using their knowledge to improve both their position and their sex's position in the social system. To that end, some educated ones started publishing articles in journals or periodicals supporting the belief in equality between the sexes, as well as the necessity of being educated. Many of them, as schoolteachers, proved that their contribution to education was of great magnitude, especially among the unredeemed²⁴ Greeks and in the process of identity-building. For a woman to be called as a teacher among the unredeemed, although a very dangerous thing to do considering the difficulties she had to deal with,²⁵ proved not only to herself but to the opposite sex as well that she was not the inferior being the majority of that sex believed she was. Furthermore, she indicated the demand for higher education for

²¹ Ibid, pp. 110-111.

²² See S. Ziogou-Karastergiou, Η νέση εκπαίδευση των κοριτσιών στην Ελλάδα (1830-1883), Thessalonike, 1983, p. 267. The word 'unredeemed' refers to the Greeks living outside independence Greece.

²³ E. Varika, op.cit., pp. 64-65.

²⁴ M. Anastasopoulou, 'Feminist awareness and Greek women writers' in Philip Carabott, (ed.). Greek Society in the making 1863-1913, op.cit.· p. 163.

²⁵ For the difficulties of female teachers in the unredeemed provinces see E.Varika, op.cit, pp. 183-190.

women. At this point it is worth saying that the monthly wages of a female schoolteacher were less compared to the monthly salary of a simple bank employee.²⁶

In the 1880s a number of women applied for places of study at university, but most faculties rejected them. At the same time, women from well-off families, who had already graduated from foreign universities, arrived in Athens looking for a job.²⁷ This propensity to exceed the limits of the domestic sphere reserved for women provoked mocking criticism by some men,²⁸ whilst others dared defend the equality of the sexes.²⁹ In the framework of such a hostile environment women were always under the threat of marginalization for penetrating the 'men's world'.

Even though, as we move towards the last decades of the century, conditions for women concerning work and education changed relatively for the better, certain features such as marriage and the dowry remained unchanged. The choice of the 'proper' husband had always been a parental issue. Marriage for love was non-existent. Love was reckoned to be foolish and dangerous. A 'good marriage' was based almost solely on economic criteria leading to social ascension.

Dowry-hunting dominated the bourgeoisie. A woman without a dowry was condemned to stay unmarried, or, if she was 'lucky' enough, she might find an old rich man to marry in order to avoid social condemnation. Besides, marriage was the only means of obtaining a certain social status and becoming 'someone'. On the other hand, divorced women, deprived of the custody of their children, were forced to return to the parental home, where they were always pointed at for immorality, since divorce was not actually acceptable to nineteenth-century Greek society.

Women, entrapped as they were in their foreordained lives, gradually developed an awareness that they were in fact treated like objects of possession, since everything was decided for them. Furthermore, that they were nothing more than imprisoned slaves, who had lost their own voice and identity in compliance with the model their husbands imposed on them.³⁰

²⁶ Ibid, p. 179.

²⁷ S. Ziogou-Karastergiou, op.cit., pp. 264-265.

²⁸ K. Xeradake, op.cit., pp. 61-64.

²⁹ Ibid, pp. 67-75.

³⁰ M. Anastasopoulou, 'Building, Awakening and Self-Redefinition in Contemporary Greek Women Novelists', in *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*, University of Minnesota, vol.7, 1991, p. 259.

The only change that was made in the framework of the family was the new role the woman was given as a mother, and, moreover, as the ‘guardian angel of the house’.³¹ That came about as a result of the current threatening political developments,³² which aroused the demand for a strong identity-building among the unredeemed, as well as among the new generation of Greeks. This would be achieved not only by women as school teachers, but also by women as mothers who were responsible for passing on to their children the Greek language³³ and culture and also Greek moral values. This new role of women as bearers of national ideals was reflected in late nineteenth-century literature.³⁴

The same situation befell women in rural Greece with a few variations due to the different environment and therefore different responsibilities. Women in rural Greece, although associated with the house - the location of many of their basic tasks - also had important duties outside the house as producers of economic goods or as providers of household needs. On seafaring islands, where men were absent for extended periods of time, women had to take over their husbands’ duties in addition to domestic chores. They were allowed to enter the public sphere only when social events were taking place, such as saints’ days celebrations, christenings, weddings and funerals.

In rural areas women were together at all times, from childbirth to death and mourning. They sang whilst working, combining labour with entertainment, telling stories, and above all gossiping. After all, that was their only means of escaping social seclusion and loneliness.

All the preceding traditional social relations were altered in the urban environment. The walls of the inner courtyards between the houses symbolized the alienation of women and the beginning of a new form of socialization derived from western European models of life. As a natural consequence, women who migrated from

³¹ E. Varika, op.cit., p. 81.

³² Such as the question of the unredeemed Greeks, and the annexation of the region of Eastern Rumelia to Bulgaria (1885), and by extension the attempted ‘bulgarization’ of the Christian inhabitants of Ottoman (at that time) Macedonia and Thrace by Bulgaria, aroused the demand for a strong identity-building.

³³ Psicharis strongly believed that mothers were the only capable persons of passing on to their children the Greek demotic language. E. Varika, op.cit., p. 100.

³⁴ M. Anastasopoulou refers to K. Palamas’ short story «Τα νιάτα της γιαγιάς», A. Karkavitsas’ novel *Ο αρχαιολόγος* Y. Psicharis’ *Ζωή και αγάπη στη μοναξιά* concluding with one of Palamas’ poems called *Με τη μητέρα γλώσσα μας*. See ‘Feminist awareness and Greek women writers’ in Philip Carabott, (ed.). *Greek Society in the making 1863 - 1913*, op.cit., pp. 163-164.

rural areas with the purpose of finding a better life did not have the opportunity to become educated, neither had they the small privileges already mentioned of women belonging to the upper classes. Due to their financial status they were deprived even of those small amenities they were entitled to as females.

Women from either rural or urban areas of Greece came to realize that in substance their function as productive members of society was set aside, since most of their tasks were confined to the domestic sphere. They perceived that they had to struggle towards emancipation, if they wanted to change their distressing situation.

The first movement towards emancipation, although not as systematic as in America or the rest of Europe, was made at the end of the 1880s, mainly after the publication of the weekly feminist periodical 'Ephimeris ton Kyrion',³⁵ under the auspices of Calliroe Parren.³⁶ This periodical through its articles, co-ordinated women's struggle towards emancipation, since most of the women protested about their downtrodden lives. They complained about the necessity of the dowry as an essential means of getting married, at a time when marriage was much like a 'profiteering business'. Additionally, they claimed that a woman needed to have a job outside the house, so that if something happened to her husband she would be able to support her children. She was also to be educated to provide the proper moral and educational fashioning of her offspring. Another shared issue was sexual abuse, as well as family violence.³⁷ They did not of course claim the right to sexual pleasure, satisfaction or love, due to the acceptance of virginity before marriage and the asexuality of woman's nature. This self-definition shows the degree to which feminism was still trapped in the Victorian Puritanism.³⁸

In some of the articles of 'Ephimeris ton Kyrion,' women denoted as the cause of their exploitation the deprivation of their civil rights. Although the Greek constitution declared equality of rights for all Greeks, women did not even have the right to participate in any arbitration or be present as witnesses in any legal procedures. Such denials were anticonstitutional, but yet nobody had any intention of changing the system.

³⁵ For details on 'Ephimeris ton Kyrion' see E. Varika, op.cit., pp. 205-208.

³⁶ For Calliroe's Parren biography see K. Xeradake, op.cit., pp. 56-61.

³⁷ K. Xeradake, *Η Αθήνα πριν 100 χρόνια. Φιλολογικός Περίπατος*, Athens: Kedros, 1982, pp. 57-58.

³⁸ See E. Varika, op.cit., pp. 232-238.

Obviously, since women had no right to vote, politicians had no reason to be concerned about them nor did they care about changing the legislation for their sake. Women obtained this essential right for the municipal elections of 1930, and later, in 1952, universal suffrage was granted to them.³⁹

In the framework of their struggle towards emancipation and social elevation, women all over the country set up numerous associations called ‘Syllogoi Kyrion’ which assembled women from different social strata⁴⁰ and whose activities ranged from the founding of orphanages and remedial learning centres for illiterate male and female workers to mobile hospitals at the war-front during the Greco-Turkish war of 1897.⁴¹

Furthermore, they began contributing to literary life. The first poems written by women were clearly an intense imitation of those of male poets. Afraid of adverse criticism, they made vast use of ‘katharevousa,’ and what is more, filled their poems with rhetorical figures.⁴² Some women wrote novels, short stories, theatrical plays, or schoolbooks.⁴³ Not a few managed to become eminent for their contribution to sculpture, music, folk art, as well as the theatre.⁴⁴ C. Parren’s living room was very well known for literary gatherings, where men of letters participated, men who actually supported the women’s movement.⁴⁵

Obviously, such women did not keep to their ‘proper sphere’, that is, the home, thus they provoked male criticism. The most severe was that of E. Roides⁴⁶ who believed that women should not try to surpass their confines by trying to enter into ‘territories’ dominated by men. He agrees that women should take part in cultural events, but not at the expense of their natural gifts, for these are sensitivity, charm, kindness, and even craftiness. Furthermore, he characterised their claim to education as sacrilege. To this severe criticism women responded accordingly, in the same ironical spirit. They

³⁹ K. Papadopoulou, *Αγώνες και νίκες της Ελληνίδας*. Athens: Pyli, 1978, pp. 13-16.

⁴⁰ E. Varika, op.cit., pp. 102-103.

⁴¹ M. Anastasopoulou, ‘Feminist awareness and Greek women writers’ in Philip Carabott, (ed.). *Greek Society in the making 1863-1913*, op.cit., p. 164.

⁴² E. Varika, op.cit., p. 160.

⁴³ Women distinguishing themselves in all these sectors were C. Parren, A. Papadopoulou, A. Vartholomaiou-Palli in prose, and S. Lambisi, S. Leontias, An. Oikonomou and E. Samartzidou in poetry. See. S. Ziogou-Karastergiou, op.cit., pp. 257-258.

⁴⁴ K. Xeradake, *Το φεμινιστικό Κίνημα στην Ελλάδα*, op.cit., pp. 91-93.

⁴⁵ K. Xeradake, *Η Αθήνα πριν 100 χρόνια. Φιλολογικός Περίπατος*, op.cit., p. 60.

⁴⁶ See E. Roides, *Άπαντα*, Filologike epimeleia Alkis Angelou. Athens: Ermes, 1978, vol. 5, pp. 121-131.

expressed the view that they had the ability to combine their roles as mothers and wives with education,⁴⁷ highlighting also the fact that even their writings, which deserved merit, were rejected because of their sex. A fierce response as well, was that of C. Parren's⁴⁸ who actually insulted men's literary production, and that of S. Kalisperis',⁴⁹ who attributed Roides' insulting behaviour towards women to the absence of a woman in his life. Consequently, what women attempted to accomplish was not that easy, since they always had the fear of society's disapproval. This venture created a conflict between the qualities attributed to them and their traditional ones which of course rendered them as inferior beings subordinate to men.

In conclusion, the feminist movement arose in Greece towards the end of the nineteenth century and helped women to gradually transcend their downtrodden lives. Through this they gained their natural right to work outside the domestic realm, as well as their right to education. The progress made in regard to upgrading women's position during the period examined in this chapter refers to individuals rather than women in general, due to the different factors prevailing in each case which could be either urban or rural, or financial ones, thus according women the opportunity or not of taking part in this change. It was a slow process, with few males supporting it, and was abruptly broken off because of the Metaxas dictatorship of August 1936,⁵⁰ but yet very important because it was like the cutting of a path through a tropical forest.

It is in the framework of the preceding developments that Papadiamantis produced his fiction, several parts of which reveal his views on specific matters related to women and will be discussed in the following chapters. However, neither his correspondence nor his articles, which constitute a reliable source for his views, reveal whether the writer was in favour of the gradual improvement of women's position in Greek society. Only in his text that takes the form of a dialogue between a husband and wife, under the title «Πόσις και Δάμαρ»,⁵¹ does the writer refer to equality between the sexes, his view being that

⁴⁷ K. Xeradake, Το φεμινιστικό κίνημα στην Ελλάδα, op.cit., p. 63.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 62.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 63.

⁵⁰ As a natural consequence of Metaxas' dictatorship all ideas of equality and social justice were not welcomed. Thus the vehicles of such progressive ideas were violently forced to fall silent. Ibid, p. 159.

⁵¹ 5,277-281.

even though the man constitutes the head of the family he should love his wife, and his wife in turn should respect him.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN'S POSITION IN THE SOCIETY AND FAMILY

After the brief, rather general, overview of women's position in Greek society during the second half of the nineteenth century, the first part of this chapter examines the role of women in the rural areas of Greece and in Athens, as it appears in Papadiamantis' novels, and short stories (island and Athenian). This chapter focuses on their everyday jobs within or outside the domestic realm, as well as on their educational level, which partly defined their role in society. Additionally, in the second part of this chapter we shall discuss an issue of primary importance in women's lives that of marriage and maternity.

Our concentration on everyday life emanates mainly from the fact that Papadiamantis' heroes are humble people, part and parcel of everyday life, and through their day-to-day actions their characters come to the forefront, illuminated by the author's presentation.⁵² In this way, even minor details can be of importance, so failure to observe them may result in an incomplete picture of the portrait of the heroes and the development of the plot of the story. The majority of Papadiamantis' stories depict the daily life of his contemporaries, as can be verified by the social studies of the period. Each one of his stories comprises a link in a chain of events in the social life deserving of our attention.

⁵² J. Hawthorn advocates the view that we learn many things about the character of a hero through his/her actions. These actions, which in this case are related to the performance of daily tasks, may be reported by another character of the story or the narrator. See 'Analysing Fiction' in Studying the Novel. London: Arnold, 1985, p. 50.

a. Women in the Social System

The general idea, as it derives from the short stories, is that a woman was forced to spend her life within the narrow borders of the domestic sphere. Usually from the age of eight or nine she would start contributing to the well-being of her family. As a child her mother or grandmother would teach her the duties of the proper housewife that she was going to be. Education for her had nothing to do with learning, that is, how to read and write, since this kind of education was not thought to be useful for her future life.⁵³ The most important thing was for her to learn how to cook, clean, embroider, knit, cultivate the fields and everything else related to these matters.⁵⁴ The following quotation from the short story «Η Στοιχειωμένη καμάρα» demonstrates the attempt of older women to teach the younger how to acquire all the necessary knowledge in relation to their duties inside and outside the domestic realm.

Αι συγγενείς της μητρός της, πτωχαί όπως αυτή, θέλουσai μή
θέλουσai, την εκράτησαν πλησίον των, την έμαθαν καθ' όσον
εμεγάλωνε, να πλύνη, να σφουγγαρίζη ν' ασβεστώνη εις ξένα σπίτια,
προσέτι να βοτανίζη, να θερίζη να συλλέγη ελαίας, κατ' εποχάς, και
να τρέφη «καματερό», δηλ. μεταξοσκώληκας, το θέρος. (3, 638).⁵⁵

In the above quotation the writer presents some of the chores a woman had to learn from a young age, although it seems that their relevance to the particular story is minimal.⁵⁶ To be more specific, Aretoula, who was under the guardianship of her dead mother's

⁵³ G. Lixouriotis. Κοινωνικές και νομικές αντιλήψεις για το παιδί τον πρώτο αιώνα του νεοελληνικού κράτους. Athens: Dodoni, 1986, pp. 65-66.

⁵⁴ Even C. Parren who fervently supported women's education believed that women should not stop being taught how to become proper housewives, as long as this was not being done at the expense of their education. Bakalaki-Elegmitou, Η εκπαίδευση «εις τα του οίκου» και τα γυναικεία καθήκοντα. Athens: Genike Grammateia tis Neas Genias, 1987, pp. 38-39.

⁵⁵ Throughout the thesis all references to Papadiamantis' stories appear in brackets and refer to title, volume and page number respectively. They are made to the edition of Άπαντα by N.D. Triantaphyllopoulos, Athens: Domos, 1997-1998.

⁵⁶ It is what R. Barthes names as catalysers the functionality of which is 'attenuated, unilateral, parasitic' or in other words 'weak but not nil'. R. Barthes, 'Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives' in Image-Music-Text, trans. S. Heath. London: Fontana Press, 1990, pp. 94-95.

relatives, had to learn how to mop and whitewash the houses, not only to use her knowledge as a future wife within her own house but outside the domestic realm as well in order to earn her living. In other words, these chores were regarded as qualifications for an ordinary woman.

A woman's primary purpose in life, as is apparent in the framework of the sociological studies of the period and in Papadiamantis' stories, is to serve the male in whatever capacity he needs her, either as lover, mother or housekeeper. Her duties would start from childhood. They would continue after getting married, and would be extended after her children had their own children.

Εἰς τοὺς λογισμοὺς τῆς, συγκεφαλαιούσα ὅλην τὴν ζωὴν τῆς, ἐβλεπεν ὅτι ποτὲ δὲν εἶχε κάμει ἄλλο τίποτε εἰμὴ νὰ **υπηρέτῃ** τοὺς ἄλλους. Ὅταν ἦτο παιδίσκη, **υπηρέτει** τοὺς γονεῖς τῆς. Ὅταν υπανδρεύθῃ, ἐγίνε **σκλάβα** τοῦ συζύγου τῆς... ὅταν ἀπέκτησε τέκνα, ἐγίνε **δούλα** τῶν τέκνων τῆς, ὅταν τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀπέκτησαν τέκνα, ἐγίνε **πάλιν δουλεύτρια** τῶν ἐγγόνων τῆς. («Ἡ Φόνισσα» 3, 417).

(emphasis added)

In the above quotation, considering the verbs and nouns the writer uses to present Frangoyiannou's thoughts on reviewing her life, the general concept of society is revealed, which regarded women as servants. Frangoyiannou is one of the female characters who realized that during her life she did nothing but serve others. The fact that she became aware of her downtrodden position constituted the reasoning behind all the murders she committed; thus this realization, which constitutes one of the 'hinge-points'⁵⁷ of the narrative, is of paramount importance in the development of the plot. Instead of letting other women suffer the same fate as hers, rather than allowing them such an unpleasant experience, she killed them.

Undoubtedly, women had many responsibilities to fulfil throughout their lives. Furthermore, women on the island of Skiathos had the double burden of fulfilling their husbands' responsibilities as well, due to their long absences from the island or their

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 93.

inability to stand up for their families. Frangoyiannou, since her old man ‘Logariasmos’, «δεν διέπρεπεν επί δράστη ριότητι» (3, 444) she had, on top of her well-defined responsibilities as a woman, to take over her husband’s as well. Thus, she had also to be a father to her daughters. Hence:

Οφείλει η ιδία και να υπανδρεύση και να προικίση και προξενήτρια
και πανδρολόγισσα να γίνη. («Η Φόνισσα» 3, 444).

Quite often when the husband is useless and his wife is unable to take over due to illness or death, the mother of the wife takes over everything, as can be seen in another story entitled «Η Θητεία της πενθεράς».

Η Χαρμολίνα εκατοίκει πλησίον της κόρης της, εις εν χαμόγειον της
μεγάλης οικίας. Είχε «γραφή σκλάβα» εις τον γαμβρόν της. Όπως
ισοβίως έφερε της χηρείας τα δεσμά, ισοβίως είχεν αναλάβει και τον
ζυγόν της θητείας πλησίον της κόρης της και του γαμβρού της.
(3, 407).

Even though Charmolina was very well aware that all her life was to serve others she did not react in the same way as Frangoyiannou did. It seems that Frangoyiannou who follows Charmolina chronologically,⁵⁸ is a reaction towards this inequality between men and women, which the writer seems not to approve. However, Frangoyiannou, by committing the murders, murders which no sensible person could commit, went too far because she had chosen the wrong way to protest her endless sufferings.

In the same position as widow-Charmolina, and even worse, was Aunt-Ahtitsa in «Η Σταχομαζώχτρα», who not only had an incompetent son-in-law but had also seen her dead daughter’s dowry being sold at an auction. Therefore, in order to cope with the apparent difficulties she had to perform various tasks.

⁵⁸ The short story «Η Θητεία της πενθεράς» was written a year before «Η Φόνισσα».

... η θεια-Αχτίτσα είχεν ιδεί την προίκα της κόρης της πωλουμένην επί δημοπρασίας προς πληρωμήν των χρεών αναξίου γαμβρού, διότι ήτο έρημος και χήρα και διότι ανέτρεφε τα δύο ορφανά έγγονα της μετερχομένη ποικίλα επαγγέλματα. (2, 115).

Consequently, she had to work in the fields for the daily bread and go to the island of Evia every summer to gather the leftover ears of corn.

...ησχολείτο συλλέγουσα τους αστάχους, τους πίπτοντας από των δραγμάτων των θεριστών, από των φορτωμάτων και κάρρων. (2, 116).

We respect the female characters because they appear to be the ones to take over all the responsibilities within the home either due to the fecklessness of the husband or the indifference of the son-in-law.⁵⁹ Moreover, it shows that the writer was aware of the fact that in these circumstances a woman was acting at the same time as both the man and woman of the house. Thus the writer is not only sympathetic, but praises in his own way the role of such women and approves their initiatives.

Whilst the island short stories do not display any division of tasks between men and women, outside the home certainly only women carried out the household tasks. The writer in the short story «Η θητεία της πενθεράς» gives in detail a typical daily woman's schedule.

Είχε καθημερινόν πρόγραμμα εργασίας... ν'αντλή νερόν, να γεμίζει την στέρναν, να το διανέμη στ' αυλάκια, να ποτίζει... να ταΐζει τις κόττες... να τρέφη τα δύο γουρουνόπουλα... να εξάγη προς βοσκήν... την κατσίκαν, να οδηγή την γαϊδουρίτσαν με το πουλαράκι της εις τα χωράφια... (3, 409-410).

⁵⁹ M. Gasouka has pointed out that in case the husband or the son-in-law is incapable or absent from the house for any reason then the wife or the mother-in-law respectively are the ones to undertake all the male responsibilities. See M. Gasouka, Η κοινωνική θέση των γυναικών στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη. Athens: Philippotis, 1998, pp. 119, 125.

Before all else, of course, she had to wake up the children, wash them, dress them, feed them and prepare the boys for school. Usually, the children would go out in the fields with her. At the night she had to put them in bed, persuading them against their will to go to sleep. Finally, around midnight: ήρχετο και δι' αυτήν η ώρα της ποθεινής αναπαύσεως (3, 411). The details mentioned in regard to Charmolina's 'habitual actions' have a 'cardinal function'⁶⁰ as they tend to reveal the character's unchanging or static aspect.⁶¹ Her daily schedule also clarifies the meaning of the word «Θητεία» in the title. She was truly sacrificing herself for others.

Women also had to undertake seasonal work in the fields, either with their husbands or alone. An example to this is Kratera, a forty-year-old woman who remained unmarried. The fact that she had to cope alone all these years made her develop a masculine character and take over duties she might not, under different circumstances, have done. Therefore, she did not mind staying alone in the countryside. Additionally she was the one to provide her younger sister with a dowry since they were orphans.⁶² Thus Kratera, in her own way, undertakes the role of mother and father for her younger sister, something that contributes greatly to the emergence of her personality as the main character in the story.

Consequently, the defined borders of what was to be done by men and what by women were very flexible, since women's contribution could be observed in many areas outside the house and very much depended on the family structure. Thus, there was no differentiation in relation to strength and stamina between men and women. We would say that women's numerous tasks as they appear in the short stories require even more expenditure of energy and skill than those of men and contribute to making the females the dominating figures of the stories.

Other tasks were ascribed solely to them, such as washing and baking. Thus, they used to wash their clothes in groups:

⁶⁰ R. Barthes, op.cit., pp. 93-94.

⁶¹ As S. Rimmon-Kenan argues, saying that they can belong to the category named as 'act of commission'. See Narrative Fiction. Contemporary Poetics. London: Methuen, 1983, p. 61.

⁶² «Η Φωνή του δράκου» 3, 607-608.

Τα μάρμαρα ή αι πλάκες αύται εχρησίμευον δια τας πτωχάς γυναίκας να λευκαίνωσι τά ακέραια υφαντά πανιά, να πλύνωσι τά σπάργανα, τα σινδόνια, και τα ράκη των εις το κύμα, και να τά ξεγλυκαίνωσιν είτα εις το γλυφόν νερόν, το ρέον από τίνος ρωγμής αναμέσον του κρημνού... («Βαρδιάνος στα Σπόρκα» 2, 541-542).

or individually by the sea.

... κατέβαινε το βράδυ-βράδυ η γριά-Λούκαινα, μια χαροκαμένη πτωχή γραία, κρατούσα υπό την μασχάλην μίαν αβασταγήν, δια να πλύνη τα μάλλινα σινδόνια της εις το κύμα το αλμυρόν, είτα να τα ξεγλυκάνη εις την μικράν βρύσιν, το Γλυφονέρι... («Το μοιρολόγι της φώκιας» 4, 297-298).⁶³

They used to take their bread to the bakery and while waiting for it to be baked were chatted to each other. When the writer presents women in conversation with each other washing their clothes by the sea or baking their bread in the bakery it gives him the opportunity, in the context of the conversation, to reveal the evolution of the plot. Therefore, incidents such as these, which seem to have no importance in the narration, become functional.⁶⁴

Various other women are presented sitting in the house or outside their porches,⁶⁵ preoccupying themselves with the loom or the distaff, or in general with mending, embroidery or knitting. When Captain Stelios visits Kratera Papadiamantis presents the following picture.

... έφθασεν εμπρός εις την πόρταν του ισογείου του σπιτιού του, όπου ήτον η αποθήκη, και αντικρύ εις την πόρταν του

⁶³ In the novel Η Γυφτοπούλα we also get the picture of the tasks gypsy women had to perform, which are much like those in the short stories, both Athenian and island ones. For example «Η Αϊμά, χωρίς ν' αναγγείλη εις την γύφτισσαν, είχε φορτωθή πρό δύο ωρών κάνεον πλήρες φορεμάτων και απήλθεν εις τον αιγιαλόν, σκοπούσα νά πλύνη αυτά εις το αλμυρόν ύδωρ και ακολούθως να τα ξεγλυκάνη». Η Γυφτοπούλα 1,436.

⁶⁴ For more examples see «Ο Αβασκαμός του Αγά» 3, 142-143 where the women while waiting to bake their bread chat with each other, providing information in regard to Aghas' personality and appearance as well as about his harem.

⁶⁵ «Η Αποσώστρα» 4,51.

κατωγείου της Κρατήρας, οπόθεν ηκούετο εύθυμος και ζωηρός ο διπλούς κρότος της κερκίδος και του κτενιού της χήρας, όπου καθημένη όλην την ημέραν, ως άλλη Πηνελόπη ύφαινε. («Ο Πανδρολόγος» 3, 376).

Women would usually judge each other by their handiwork. This is a female habit that the writer used in order to promote the plot of the story «Χρήστος Μηλιόνης».⁶⁶ In this story if women had not been curious about each other's handiwork, Aunt-Kyparissou would not have been in a position to lie to Vaso telling her that her mother needed the new sheet she had made in order to wash it. In which case she would have had no excuse to get her out of the house for Chalil-Aghas to kidnap her.

All the tasks performed outside the house or in a much broader area, connected the house in a way to public life. Hence, women had the opportunity for social mixing. They could talk over their problems, exchange opinions on different matters, or even help each other in difficult circumstances.

Women divided their labour in order to get jobs done quicker and more easily. Krinio, for example, would bring the split peas and the bread prepared by Amersa, who was responsible for the tasks inside the house but not outside.⁶⁷ Frangoyiannou also used to go out in the fields and pick herbs for her remedies.⁶⁸ The latter preoccupation is mentioned by the writer not only as an additional task, but as a task which presupposes a versatile person who had the ability to entangle herself in many activities and convince the others that she was actually capable of being a midwife, or, as the writer says, of being a «ψευδογιάτρισσα». The fact that the writer attributes so many abilities to Frangoyiannou justifies her «ανδρικόν ήθος» (3, 417) and, therefore, that she was the dominating figure of the house instead of her husband.

Another thing that women used to do frequently was to go together and pray for their fathers, brothers and husbands to come back safely from the sea.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ 2, 15.

⁶⁷ «Η Φόνισσα» 3, 470.

⁶⁸ 3, 432.

⁶⁹ I will comment in more detail on women's relation to religion in Chapter Four.

Τον άλλον καιρόν ήρχοντο, συνήθως τήν άνοιξιν, γυναίκες ναυτικών και θυγατέρες, κάτω από την χώραν, με σκοπόν ν' ανάψουν τα κανδήλια, και παρακαλέσουν την Παναγίαν την Κατευοδώτραν να οδηγήση και κατευοδώση τους θαλασσοδαρμένους συζύγους και τους πατέρας των. («Τ' Αγνάντεμα» 3, 200).

Going to pray was part of their religious duties. Through the latter they could make their public appearances, since church itself is a public place where males and females have the chance to get together. Women were more regular church-goers than men, since they had, on top of their attendance at the liturgies, important public ritual duties. The maintenance of the church was their responsibility. They would go and sweep its yard, whitewash the walls, light the small hanging oil-lamps and take over the preparations for the big celebrations.

... και ήρχισαν γοργά και στρωτά να σκουπίζωσιν άλλαι το έδαφος του ναού, άλλαι το προαύλιον. («Λαμπριάτικος Ψάλτης» 2, 518).

As for Malamo in «Το Χριστός ανέστη του Γιάννη»

... ήτο απαράμιλλος εις την θρησκευτικήν ευλάβειαν. Άλλη δεν ήτον ως αυτή να τρέχη διαρκώς σ' όλα τα ξωκλήσια, να τ' ασβεστώνη, να τα καλλωπίζη, ν' ανάφτη τα κανδήλια... (4, 531).

The responsibility of the spiritual well-being of the family rests therefore with the woman, who 'holds the house together'.⁷⁰ She is the one who is going to urge the children to go to church, thus the person who is going to transmit to them Christian religious values.

⁷⁰ Juliet du Boulay depicts the women in Ambeli (Evia-Greece) as those who hold the house together. See Juliet du Boulay, Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974, p. 131.

Η Αφέντρα εξύπνισε τα παιδιά, τα ένιψε, τα ενέδυσσε, τα εκτένισεν, εστολίσθη και αυτή με ό,τι πρόχειρον είχεν εις τον μύλον, και λαβόντες το φανάριον εξεκίνησαν και οι πέντε διά την Παναγίαν. («Οι Ελαφροΐσκιωτοι» 2, 498).

She is also responsible for the religious fasts and the performance of all the religious customs.

... την Μεγάλην Πέμπτη πρωί, αφού εγύρισαν από την εκκλησίαν, όπου είχαν μεταλάβει όλοι, η καλή και προκομμένη μήτηρ, καίτοι άγουσα ήδη τον έβδομον μήνα της εγκυμοσύνης της, ανεσφουγγώθη και ήρχισε να βάπτει εν τη χύτρα τα αυγά... Και την Μεγάλην Παρασκευήν, περί την δύσιν του ηλίου, η μήτηρ ωδήγησε τα δύο παιδιά εις την εκκλησίαν... («Παιδική Πασχαλιά» 2, 171-172).

Morpho's mother, although close to giving birth, as a «προκομμένη» woman still preoccupied herself with the Easter preparations. Therefore, in the framework of explaining the adjective 'prokommeni', the writer cites some of the tasks every woman should perform during the Holy Week.

On saints' days celebrations women would make different kinds of food and treat everybody to sweets if someone from their house had his name day.

Η ημέρα του Αγίου Βασιλείου εωρτάσθη καλώς εις τας οικίας της μιας και της άλλης συμπεθέρας. Η Μυρσούδα δεν επρόφθανε να φτιάνη φουσκάκια (ή λοκμάδες) από πρωίας μέχρι μεσημβρίας. Η κυρά-Γαλάτσαινα δεν επρόφθανε να φιλεύη όλον τον κόσμον φουσκάκια, χαμαλιά, στραγάλια, γλυκό και μεγάλες σταφίδες από ραζακί σταφύλι. («Τα Συχαρίκια» 3, 37).

An overall view of women's tasks, as they appear in the short stories, shows that women young and old dealt mostly with tasks within the domestic realm, since that was a domain which provided them with most of their duties. They had, however, to accomplish tasks outside the house, such as working in the fields, washing clothes by the sea and baking bread in the bakery. Additionally, whenever needed, women, the majority of them elderly, engaged in religious pursuits connected either with the house or the church. It seems that regardless of age, women had almost the same duties to fulfil. Being old, however, encompasses additional responsibilities since the woman moves from being wife to becoming mother-in-law and grandmother.

On the island of Skiathos women worked either individually or in groups in order to fulfil their duties. Explicitly, when their tasks had to be accomplished outside the house they inevitably met other women with whom friendships, evolved. Friendship had for most of them a psychological meaning, since this kind of relationship made them feel recognized, valued and supported. In a friendly environment women had the feeling of being understood and of being able to express themselves freely. This friendship was comforting and empowering, adding to their self-esteem. Such a friendship was Frangoyiannou's and Marousa's, which developed when the former helped Marousa to have an abortion in complete secrecy.

Αυτή ήταν η παλαιά εκδούλευσις, και αυτή η ευγνωμοσύνη την
οποίαν είχαν υπαινιχθή σήμερα οι δύο. Αυτά ήταν της
Φραγκογιαννούς «τα παλιά τα πάθια της», κι αυτά ήταν της
Μαρούσας «τα βάσανά της». («Η Φόνισσα» 3, 483).

This kind of relationship was lost, among lots of other things, in the urban environment, or better it was non-existent. People emigrating from the rural parts of Greece to the capital looking for better living conditions were obviously in a bad way financially.⁷¹ The anxiety of looking for a job, along with the damp apartments they had

⁷¹ The bad financial status of people emigrating from the rural parts of Greece to the capital is confirmed by the following studies: A. Papadiamantis, *Αλληλογραφία*, Introduction, Athens: Odysseas, 1981, p. κθ'. See M. Doumanis, *Mothering in Greece. From Collectivism to Individualism*. London: Academic Press, 1983, p. 131.

to live in made them, as would be expected, more aggressive and inconsiderate. Group activities, which on the island could fill them with joy, in the capital provoked quarrels. An example of this is the following quotation from the Athenian short story «Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά», which realistically describes a typical washing-day at the wash house situated in the inner courtyards of the buildings, which was much different from a typical washing-day on the island of Skiathos by the sea. The lack of space was the main cause for the quarrels frequently taking place in the Athenian stories. After such quarrels there was no place for the development of any intimate relationships. Instead, there was a place for malicious gossip. This picture of the Athenian women probably serves an inner drive of Papadiamantis who regarded the island life as more attractive. He thus thought of presenting the imperfections of life in the capital he was able to observe in a lively way.

Τας δέ καθημερινός, άλλοτε αι δύο, άλλοτε και αι τρεις, είχαν
μπουγάδα, και όλον το πλυσταριόν, και όλος ο χώρος της αυλής, δέν
τας ήρκει διά ν' απλώσωσι τά μοσχοπλυμένα των.... Εμάλωναν δια
κάθε πράγμα... («Αποκριάτικη Νυχτιά» 2, 301-302).

Women's domestic tasks in the Athenian short stories were similar to those of the island women. Women of the Athenian stories ought to fulfil all the duties ascribed to them as females as well. Poverty added to their household work, since most of them had to find jobs in small industries, regardless of the fact that their job was underestimated and less well paid than men's. An example of this is seventeen-year-old Vaso, who had to work in a shoe shop in order to endow her sister, since her family was poor and they had no brother to do that instead. Therefore, Vaso,

...με όλον αυτό το ρόδιον κάλλος της, αύτη ειργάζετο καθημερινώς
εις το εργαστήριον υποδηματοποιού της πολυτελείας, παρά την οδόν
Σταδίου. Ήτο βιοπαλαίστρια εξ' απαλών ονύχων, η πτωχή κόρη.
(«Ποία εκ των δύο» 4, 107).

As it is apparent from the stories women were not engaged in professions related to science or commerce since they were not thought to have the appropriate mental ability. Their usual preoccupation was to work in their houses on their sewing machines and, by extension, with whatever had to do with sewing.⁷² It took them a long time and constant struggle before they were able to enter into the area which was forbidden to them. The writer seems to share the general concept since he presents women preoccupied with underpaid jobs that did not presuppose any educational knowledge.

The differences observed between women who lived on the island and those who lived in the capital should be seen in relation to the prevailing living conditions. This means that women in the capital did not have any seasonal work, neither had they to work out in the fields, nor to accomplish their household or religious tasks by working as a group and as a result became more self-centred.

All the above chores apply mostly to the women of the lower class and less of the middle class.⁷³ As we get to know from the social studies of the period, there was no way for the women of the elite class to preoccupy themselves with any kind of work, as such a thing did not fit their status. Those women felt more under pressure in not going out of the house at all, and even when they did they were always under the watchful eye of someone from their family or one of their servants. For the reasons I have already mentioned, Papadiamantis refers rarely to women of the upper class mostly in his Athenian short stories - probably he was not in a position to get to know them and their way of life deeply - and thus we, too, are not in a position to come up with general conclusions about them. He does, however, refer to some well-off women who had the financial comfort to enjoy themselves in some ways. In this circle, shopping in Ermou was a must, for some well-off women and entertaining as well, like Melpo and Kyriakoula in «Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά».

⁷² «Οι Παραπονεμένες» 3, 193, «Τα τελευταία του γέρου» 4, 579.

⁷³ The division of classes came about as a result of the economic progress made from the 1860s to the end of the 1880s, details of which are already given in the first chapter, on page 8.

Δυστυχώς at δύο νεαράι κόραι έλειπαν. Είχον εξέλθει συνοδευόμεναι
υπό δύο ανεψιαδών της μητρός των διά να κάμωσιν οψώνια εις την
οδόν Ερμού. (2, 304).

Papadiamantis makes clear this class division when he refers to women who were employed as servants or maids by rich people taking over many of the household responsibilities. It seems that women or young girls coming from the rural areas were employed in this kind of work. This of course does not mean that local women were excluded from this form of work.⁷⁴

Their tender age was not surprising at all since childhood was very short in those times. Adverse circumstances forced young girls to undertake responsibilities, which could correspond neither to their age, nor to their physical condition.⁷⁵ The writer portrays this division between upper-middle class and lower-class women when he describes an Easter service in the short story «Χωρίς στεφάνι». The so-called second Easter liturgy was for the servants, whereas the first one was for the ladies. The above example provides us with an indication of the division of the social classes during the period we are examining. This information, however, constitutes an opportunity for the narrator to tell us that Christina the teacher, being of humble origin, saw herself as having more in common with the servants and therefore attended the second Easter liturgy. The nurses were responsible for the children of their mistresses while the spruce-looking servants (οι δούλες) were chatting with each other and looking around.

Οι δούλες με τας κορδέλας των και με τας λευκάς ποδιάς των
εφλυάρουν πρόσ αλλήλας... οι παραμάννες ωδήγουν από την χείρα
τριετή και πενταετή παιδιά και κοράσια... (3, 133).

⁷⁴ The institutions on the island of Skiathos prevented young girls from going to work in the urban centres as servants or maids as it was thought to be embarrassing for them to leave their families and work for strangers somewhere else. See M. Gasouka, op.cit., p. 80.

⁷⁵ «Η γραία... επέβαλλεν εις την Μόρφω, την μικράν εγγονήν της, εργασίας ανωτέρας της ηλικίας του πτωχού κορασιού» in «Παιδική Πασχαλιά» 2, 169. Mr Periandros had two female servants (θεραπαινίδας) of the age of 13. See «Ο Χορός εις του κ. Περιάνδρου» 4, 14. Flora had to work as a maid at the age of eight: «Οκταέτης, χάσασα τον πατέρα της, εδόθη, χάρις εις την σκληρότητα του αδελφού της, ως θεραπαινίς εις ξένον οίκον». See «Η Βλαχοπούλα» 2, 372.

On the island of Skiathos, some women had domestic assistants. In a way, this distinguishes them as being better off than others who had to work hard to earn their living. Aunt-Sophoula had one of her godchildren as her assistants.⁷⁶ Kyra-Lymberaina had Old-Photeini as her assistant, since she always felt ill and tired, but despite this the appreciation she had for her maidservant was not more than the appreciation for a sheep although she was getting invaluable assistance from her.

Και αυτό ήτο μεγάλη καλοσύνη εκ μέρους της, ανελογίζετο η Φωτεινή, διότι η προβατίνα ήξιζε πράγματι περισσότερον από όσον ενομίζετο. («Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 203).

This is the only case in an island short story where the house assistant takes over all the household tasks, and on top of that she functions as a nurse for the children, something that allows her to become intimate with them, thus advising them in a way their mother could not.⁷⁷ Therefore Old-Photeini has the leading part in the story.

No doubt, there was always a possibility for jealousy to evolve between a mistress and a servant, especially when both of them were young. Archontoula brought her maidservant from Egypt. Archontoula's relatives suggested that she should not have brought her along since there were many poor girls on the island who would feel obliged to be her servants without threatening to steal her husband.⁷⁸ In this case, although she does not speak, her presence has the effect of subverting the peace between the couple.

More frequently in his novels than in the island and the Athenian short stories the writer presents women working as maidservants. More specifically, the novels⁷⁹ refer to high-class women of former eras, who had attendants and servants as well, and had basically no work to keep them busy. Marina's attendant Anthousa in Η Μετανάστις followed her when she had to emigrate to Smyrna after the loss of her parents. The love

⁷⁶ «Η τελευταία βαπτιστική» 2, 92.

⁷⁷ «Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 186.

⁷⁸ «-Δε σε συφέρνει, πλιό, παιδάκι μ', η δούλα να είναι ομορφότερη απ' την κυρά» in «Ερμη στα ξένα» 4, 79.

⁷⁹ Here we refer to the novels Η Μετανάστις and Οί Εαποροι των Εθνών.

and devotion towards her mistress did not allow her to abandon her at such a difficult moment.⁸⁰ Anthousa was her advisor,⁸¹ since she was in a position to know the conspiracies which were going on behind Marina's back.⁸² In the novel Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών Augousta's anxiety is overt while talking to Sanoutos, whom she was meeting for the first time. The fact that her maid was about to come and would see her talking to a stranger made her feel nervous. Hence what we infer from Augousta's reaction is that maids have the power to provoke rumours about their mistresses,⁸³ thus it was important for them to earn their maid's loyalty and sympathy.⁸⁴

Throughout his stories the writer gives female assistants servants and maids a certain function within the plot, since according to their sympathies they are in a position to influence situations positively or negatively. The maids are the persons who are going either to complicate or simplify various situations within the plot. Furthermore, they may constitute the main characters of the story, as well as the cause of an incident that takes place. They can also act as wise advisors and protectors of their mistresses.

In the framework of women's everyday duties Papdiamantis mentions that some women were engaged in teaching. It could be argued, however, judging from the following quotation that women were not the appropriate persons to teach, nor were their brains designed for such a purpose. Therefore they should rather stick to their traditional tasks.

Ας πάρη επί τέλους ένα δίπλωμα κι αυτή. Θα πήτε δεν έμαθε αρκετά
γράμματα. Αλλά μήπως ο γυναικείος εγκέφαλος είναι
κατασκευασμένος δια γράμματα; Εργόχειρα κάλλιον να ηξεύρη.
(«Η Θεοδικία της δασκάλας» 4, 112).

Education for women was regarded as of no value. The great majority of them did not even know how to write their names, let alone read.

⁸⁰ 1 25.

⁸¹ 1;37.

⁸² 1,94.

⁸³ Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών 1, 155.

⁸⁴ 1, 150. For the purposes of a character in the novel see J. Hawthorn, op.cit., pp. 48-49.

Η Αϊμά προσεπάθει εἰς μάτην νά συλλαβίση τὰ γράμματα...
 Ενθυμήτο ὅτι εἶχε διδαχθῇ ἀνάγνωσιν, ἐν βρεφικῇ σχεδόν ἡλικίᾳ.
 Ἀλλ' ἐπὶ μακρὰ ἔτη οὐδέν βιβλίον εἶχεν ἀναγνώσει, καὶ ἐλησμόνησε
 τὰ στοιχειώδη ἐκεῖνα μαθήματα. (*Ἡ Γυφτοπούλα* 1, 564).

Since Aunt-Ahtitsa could not read her son's letter, the priest read the letter instead.

Ο ἱερεὺς ἔβαλε τὰ γυαλιά του καὶ ἐδοκίμασε ν' ἀναγνώσῃ.
 («*Ἡ Σταχομαζώχτρα*» 2, 120).

The older generation of women is presented as completely illiterate. This was due to the diminished importance people placed on women's education and to the fact that the maintenance of two separate schools - something indispensable for those years - was impossible for financial reasons, especially in the rural areas. The gradual change of attitude in regard to women's education, which took place towards the end of the century, is illustrated in Papdiamantis' works, particularly those which were written at the beginning of the twentieth century. Parents seemed to becoming more concerned about the education of their daughters in the capital,⁸⁵ as well as on the island of Skiathos, and for these reasons schools for girls were established, in connection with which the writer mentions, in the island short story «*Τῆς δασκάλας τὰ μάγια*», that in one school there were sufficient pupils for two teachers:

ἢ Εὐανθία, ἡ νεαρά δασκάλισσα...
 ἢ Εὐθαλία, ἡ δευτέρα δασκάλισσα. (4, 326-327).

meaning that the number of students attending, demanded the presence of two teachers. At this stage education for women who lived in the capital was a privilege for women of the middle and upper classes. Usually, education among the elite class had a decorative

⁸⁵ «Κατὰ τὰς πρώτας ἡμέρας τοῦ φθινοπώρου... ἤρχοντο καθ' ἐκάστην κοράσια με τοὺς κηδεμόνας τῶν διὰ νὰ ἐγγραφώσι». See «*Ἡ Θεοδικία τῆς δασκάλας*» 4, 113.

rather than functional purpose.⁸⁶ As is apparent in the short story «Μεγαλείων οψώνια» the knowledge of French and music was essential if such women wanted to find a husband from a well-off family, and of course it was one of the ways of demonstrating the level of their westernization.⁸⁷ This was not the case with women of the middle class, who used their degrees for practising the teaching profession. We can get an idea of how common teaching was from the number of graduate teachers given by the writer in «Η θεοδικία της δασκάλας».⁸⁸

Αφού έδωκεν εξετάσεις κι επήρεν άριστα κι αυτή, μαζί με τόσας άλλας 214, νομίζω, είχαν εξετασθή την χρονιάν εκείνην... διωρίσθη κι αυτή δασκάλα. (4, 111).

Women teachers did not limit themselves to teaching knowledge but also urged women's emancipation, a development which was at least as important as learning and had a radical, although at the beginning, timid impact on social life.

Η κυρά δασκάλα πολλά γράμματα δεν τα εδίδασκεν, ακόμη ολιγώτερα χειροτεχνήματα, αλλά μόνον τα εμάνθανε «να λάβουν θάρρος» και να μην κάνουν «σαν σκιασμένα» και σαν «βουνίσια», και εκήρυττεν ότι ήτο καιρός πλέον να «χειραφετηθώσιν». (3, 470).

The presence of the verb «να χειραφετηθώσιν» implies that Papadiamantis was aware of the existence of the movement towards emancipation by the end of the nineteenth century. The wording the writer uses in the above quotation shows that he is rather bewildered in face of this social movement. Consequently, education is regarded as the means of changing women's position in society, as well as the means of making them realize the unfairness taking place at their expense.

⁸⁶ S. Ziogou-Karastergiou confirms that education was a privilege for women of well-off families and had a decorative purpose rather than a functional one. See S. Ziogou-Karastergiou, op.cit., p. 267.

⁸⁷ «Με τον καιρόν, όταν εμεγάλωνεν η κόρη...ανάγκη πάσα να την εμβάσουν εις τον κόσμον δια της μεγάλης θύρας. Της επήραν δασκάλαν στο πιάνο, στα γαλλικά». See «Μεγαλείων οψώνια» 4, 426.

⁸⁸ To be a teacher was the means for women not only to support themselves and their families financially but also to escape from their 'proper sphere' and gain social elevation.

From what we have seen in this chapter, Papadiamantis vividly presents all of women's duties and occupations, and daily routine, which was much alike whether they lived on the island or in the capital. By presenting images of everyday life, the writer places his writings in the sphere of realism. The performance of the domestic chores serves the function of revealing character features. Papadiamantis uses the presentation of women's tasks as an important opportunity to develop the plots of the stories, as well as simply an embellishment to the fabric of the narrative.

An overview of women's contribution to the family and society leads us to the conclusion that women are attributed qualities that conflict sharply with those attributed to them as inferior beings.⁸⁹ Therefore, there is an apparent contradiction between the things women can achieve and to the way they were regarded by society. Although they were thought of by men to be incapable of achieving many things, they constantly prove through their actions exactly the opposite. Their contribution within the house, as well as outside it, was of great magnitude. Men, however, as they appear in the stories did not seem to have appreciated that, since their behaviour, as referred to in the following part of this chapter, shows that they felt it was quite normal for women to be preoccupied with innumerable tasks from early morning till midnight.⁹⁰

The fact that Papadiamantis presents women's duties in such detail proves that he is aware of the amount of tasks women had to fulfil. He seems also to be aware of women's type of employment which depended on their educational level. Thus women from the lower classes did not have the luxury of becoming educated before being employed only as maidservants, seamstresses or work at a shoemaker's. In cases where they were educated then, most commonly they would be to be employed as teachers. The writer seems to be aware of the lack of literacy, which was extremely intense before the end of the nineteenth century, yet he does not make clear, either in his literary output or in his correspondence, whether or not he deplored women's illiteracy.

⁸⁹ J. Du Boulay came up with the same ascertainment in her study on Ambeli. See J. Du Boulay, 'Images of women's nature and destiny' in J. Dubisch (ed.), Gender and Power in Rural Greece, Princeton Univ. Press, 1986, p. 144.

⁹⁰ The writer in an expression of his is likely to be aware that a house without a woman is like a desert without an oasis. «Χωρική δε οικία χωρίς γυναίκα θα ήτο ως ερημία χωρίς όασιν». See «Η Βλαχοπούλα» 2, 363.

b. Marriage and Maternity

In Papadiamantis' work, one can become acquainted with most of the problems facing the Greek society of his time. Some of those problems were related to women who had to face the harsh realities of life, with no gleam of light anywhere on the dark horizon of their fate. Such problems faced by the female population were mainly marriage and maternity, two topics that were of primary importance in women's preoccupations and consequently frequently mentioned in Papadiamantis' writings, which are full of female characters. Concerning women, the writer presents the marriage process and the consequent social problems that arise from this without, however, any direct criticism apart from a few cases.

Being a wife and mother occupies the greater part of a woman's life. During the period we examine marriage and maternity were the two important events in her life, if she wanted to gain respect, enter the public realm, and of course fulfil the purpose of her existence. The establishment of a family in Greece was of great significance since the family constituted in itself a kind of small society, which each human being enters at the time he/she is born. It is in this small 'group' that each person will learn his predetermined role in the extended society.

Women's role in the late nineteenth, and the beginning of the twentieth century, is described in all its aspects within Papadiamantis' stories. By the time females reached the age of eight or nine they would start undertaking duties allotted to them by their parents, although most of those duties were not appropriate to their age. In the nineteenth century childhood did not exceed the age of fourteen, since by that time girls were thought to be mature enough to have entered into womanhood, and thus ready to get married and have families of their own.⁹¹

⁹¹ To get married from a very young age was very usual in all parts of Greece. The written testimonies we have in regard to this refer to the end of the seventeenth century onwards. See G. Thanatsis, Αρραβόνες και Υάσιοι ακρόης ηλικίας. Λαογραφική εξέταση. Διδακτορική διατριβή, Athens, 1983, p. 16. Reference to Skiathos in particular, *ibid.* p. 24. The so-called 'pnpadia' married when she was fourteen and became a widow when she was eighteen in «Η Χήρα παπαδιά» 2, 85. Ouranitsa was sixteen when she got engaged in «Το νησί της Ουρανίτσας» 3, 383. Frangoyiannou married when she was seventeen in «Η Φόνισσα» 3, 420.

During the period we examine, woman had no part in the choice of husbands. The parents, and the fathers in particular, were responsible for finding the proper husband on her behalf, always according to their own wishes and not hers, since she did not have the right to express any opinion. In this way, she had always to obey whatever her father's wishes were. In a few words, she was subject to alien decisions, which not only affected her personal life, but dictated her marital status as well.

The reputation of a daughter,⁹² her dowry and beauty defined her value as a future bride. It was of vital importance for a woman to have dignity and chastity not only for her own sake but also for her family's. All her actions had to be confined within that framework and she did not have the right to behave carelessly, because that would ascribe to her a bad name and her family would be insulted, as well. It was through women chiefly that the family's good name was sustained, and through them that honour might be lost.⁹³

Consequently, women from a young age were confined to the domestic sphere, in order not to have many chances of lapsing from virtue.⁹⁴ Even for engaged women it was embarrassing to leave the house alone, without their fiancé.⁹⁵ As is obvious from the following quotation, engaged women knew that it was not right to go out without being escorted by their fiancé, even if it was in order to fulfil a request by a close relative. So, when Aunt-Kyparissou attempted to persuade Vaso to go from the house to the place where her mother was doing the washing, so that it would be easy for Chalil-Aghas to kidnap her, this request seemed to Vaso irrational. However, her obedience to something she found absurd, resulted in the first and vital spark for the creation of the story. In the following example we observe in what way a social prohibition may constitute the 'hinge-point'⁹⁶ of the narrative.

⁹² The virginity of a woman was a prerequisite for the wedding. See M. Miligou-Markantoni, «Η θέση της γυναίκας ως συζύγου και κόρης στην ελληνική παραδοσιακή οικογένεια μέχρι το 1940», in I. Markanotnis-V. Rega, Οικογένεια, Μητρότητα, Αναδοχή, Athens: D.D Mavromati, 1991, pp. 297-298.

⁹³ J. Du Boulay, 'The meaning of Dowry: Changing Values in Rural Greece' in *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, issue 1, May 1983, p. 254.

⁹⁴ The writer presents women's confinement in the house as part of the local customs and not as something unusual in «Άγια και πεθαμένα» 3, 121.

⁹⁵ The custom of hiding young women faded with time. See G. Regas, Σκιάθου Λαϊκός πολιτισμός, vol. 4, Thessalonike, 1970, p. 231.

⁹⁶ See R. Barthes, op.cit., p. 93.

Κόρη νεαρά, δειλή, μεμνηστευμένη, να πορευθή μόνη εις το μέρος
 τού ποταμού όπου λευκαίνουνσι; ... Αλλ' αφού την εμνήστευσαν, διατί
 απαιτούσι παρ' αυτής τοιαύτην ανήκουστον εκδρομήν; Πώς νά τό
 μάθη ο μνηστήρ της; («Χρήστος Μηλιόνης» 2, 14).

The fact that the reputation of a woman was of great significance to her meant that the best weapon for someone who wanted to act malevolently towards her was to ruin it, regardless whether what was said was a lie or not.⁹⁷ People in general did not want to be connected in any way with reproachable women, and it was embarrassing, as well as insulting to remain passive towards their actions. That was the reason why Kyra-Yiannaina in «Ο γείτονας με το λαγούτο» could not accept Vangelis and his supposed cousin Stavroula living together, because that would tarnish the apartment which he rented and no one would be willing to rent it in the future. Demure women in «Το ιδιόκτητο» were afraid that the prostitutes who lived in the neighbourhood were very bad examples for their daughters and that they offended common decency. However, this attitude of the women who appear in the story was a pretence as they were ready to close their eyes to immorality if there was an opportunity for any personal profit. Therefore the writer presents their priggishness with a sense of irony.

Αί καλαί οικοκυράδες της γειτονιάς εταλάνιζον την κατάστασιν
 αυτήν. Τι καλά παραδείγματα που θα ιδούν τα κορίτσια μας! Τι σεμνά
 ήθη που θα μάθουν τα παιδιά μας! Αλλ' αι καλαί οικοκυράδες είχαν
 δωμάτια δι' ενοίκιον μέσα εις τας αυλάς των, και τα ενοικίαζον με
 αδρόν ενοίκιον εις όλες τις Λουΐζες και τις Γιοζεφίνες και τις Μαρίκες
 ... (4, 570).

Parents felt that they had to protect their daughters and keep them away from any indecent morals, thus they confined them in the house, which in their opinion was the only virtuous environment. Within the domestic borders, with their mothers and grandmothers as teachers, they were getting ready to take over the responsibilities as

⁹⁷ «Η Βλαχοπούλα» 2, 366.

future married women, and consequently undertake all the predefined duties attributed to them as females. If women fulfilled the qualifications demanded, then they were much coveted. Thus, there were several prospective grooms and the father had to decide who was the most suitable for his daughter. In the following example Seiraino, a virtuous young woman, was preparing her trousseaus day and night. As a result there were quite a few men willing to marry her.

Ποιον από τους τόσους γαμβρούς να εκλέξει ο πατήρ της; Εν τη αμνηχανία του ανέβαλλε. Τέλος υπεσχέθη ότι θ' απεφάσιζε να εκλέξει ένα, άμα θα εγύριζε, συν θεώ, από το ταξίδι.
(«Άγια και πεθαμένα» 3, 118).

In the above situation, there was a degree of competition between the grooms, and the father would promote whoever proved that he was worthy of his daughter.

Αλλ' υπήρχον αγώνες καί άθλοι βιοτικοί, και ο πλέον προκομμένος, όστις θα ενίκα τούς άλλους είς τό στάδιον του βίου, εκείνος θά ήτο ο εκλεκτός γαμβρός. (3, 119).

After the husband had been selected, marriage negotiations would start no matter if the bride, who might not have even known in advance whom she would marry, was absent. The fact that her parents and relatives knew was considered enough. This is vividly presented in the following example. Myrsouda, the future bride, was at home while her parents and relatives were negotiating her marriage at her fiancé's house.

Η Μυρσούδα δεν είχεν ύπνον... οι λογισμοί της... επετούσαν προς την οικίαν εκείνην του αρραβωνιαστικού της, όπου ευρίσκοντο τώρα ή μήτηρ της και οι θείοι και αί θείαι της. («Τα Συχαρίκια» 3, 35).

It was thought to be a great insult for the relatives not to be asked for their opinion on the future marriage, whether they were on the groom's or the bride's side. The

following example describes this custom, which used to take place in the case of a future marriage, and justifies the reason why Stamo's aunts had an argument over whom he should marry.

Γίνονται ποτέ αυτές οι δουλειές χωρίς να ερωτηθούν οι συγγενείς μεταξύ τους; Μερικοί συγγενείς μάλιστα είναι πολύ αυστηροί εις το κεφάλαιον τούτο, ώστε εάν δεν ερωτηθούν να δώσουν γνώμην περί του υποψηφίου προσώπου και της οικογένειάς του, και δεν κληθούν εις τούς αρραβώνας, εις τα μπασιδία, εις τον γάμον, ούτε θέλουν να αναγνωρίσουν τον νέον εξ' αγχιστείας συγγενή, είτε νύμφη είτε γαμβρός είναι.⁹⁸ (4, 58 «Ο Πεντάρφανος»).

The relatives also had the right to become the guardians of young women in case the parents were absent or dead. In the latter case, the relatives themselves made the selection of the husband.

Η Ελένη είχεν αρραβωνιασθή τον Παναγή τον Νικούτσικον... τον οποίον της είχαν εκλέξει αι εξαδέλφαι της μητρός της, ως καλόν νέον και προκομμένον. («Η Τύχη απ' την Αμέρικα» 3,336).

Despite the fact that the future groom was a fine man, he did not hesitate to express his preference for Eleni's sister when the so-called «μπασιδία» took place." In the context of the plot, the selection of the particular man subverts the natural course of events, since he changed his mind, thus the plot develops accordingly.

In exceptional cases in Papadiamantis' writings, if the father was not that strict about selecting his daughter's husband himself, he could be more condescending to his daughter, and thus agree to listen to her wishes and let her marry the man she wanted.

⁹⁸ This particular quotation contains 'informants' thus pure data in regard to a future marriage approval. See R. Barthes, op.cit., p. 96.

⁹⁹ «Μπασιδία» was the official entry of the groom into the bride's house. From that day on he had the permission to visit and go out with her. See G. Regas, op.cit., p. 233.

However, because of their rarity, there are few examples in Papadiamantis of this type of situation. One such example, though, is the following:

Ο καπετάν Λιμπέρης έμαθε το συμβεβηκός κ' επειδή η Ματούλα
ωμολόγησε ότι, άνευ της βοήθειάς του Κωστή, θα εγίνετο θύμα του
αγροίκου βιαστού, την ηρώτησε αν τον ήθελε δια σύζυγον. Η κόρη
αφελώς απήντησεν ότι, αφού εξάπαντος έμελλε να υπανδρευθή,
«καλύτερ' αυτός, παρά άλλος». («Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 209).¹⁰⁰

In the case where the father was dead, the mother would take over the responsibility of finding a husband for her daughter, being as strict and as inflexible on that as her husband would have been.

Αλλ' η γριά-Μαρουδίτσα, ή μήτηρ της Αρχόντως, φαίνεται ότι
εβιάζετο να κουβαλήση την κόρην της πέραν, καθώς είχε βιασθή και
να την «κουκουλώση» μίαν ώραν αρχύτερα. («Έρος-Ηρώς» 3, 171).

Kyra-Zafeiraina is an example of a mother who forced her daughter to marry Yianginis, despite the fact that he was worthless:

Τον περασμένον χρόνον η Ζαφείραινα είχεν υπανδρεύσει την κόρη
της μ' ένα νέον, σχεδόν διά της βίας. («Οι Κουκλοπαντρείες» 3, 565).

This wedding constituted an event for the neighbourhood to gossip about and was the cause of many quarrels between Zafeiraina and the women of the courtyard, who believed that the wedding had never taken place and therefore insulted her daughter.

A custom which prevailed in nineteenth-century Greek society was the attempt at matchmaking, the so-called *Proxenia*. In this affair, third parties were involved in order

¹⁰⁰ For a similar example see: «Ο γέρον ήθελε να την ανεβάση πολύ υψηλότερα. Εκείνη επέμενε. Ο κ. Περίανδρος ενέδωκε, και ο γάμος ετελέσθη». «Ο Χορός εις του κ. Περίανδρου 4, 14.

to get the man and the woman acquainted with each other. How the third party presented either the future bride or groom was of great magnitude.

In fact, as the following example shows, the recommendations could either lead to a wedding or prevent it from taking place. Old-Sideri in «Η Βλαχοπούλα» went herself on behalf of her daughter to take the *Proxenia* to Old-Sarantis' sons. The matchmaking, though, was not successful, because of the bad rumours about her daughter Flora's life. The rumours were caused by another would-be matchmaker, Giorgoula, who went to Old-Sarantis' house with the sole aim of discrediting Flora, and furthermore attempting to promote her widowed sister's marriage to old Sarantis himself.

Η Γιωργούλλα ευλόγως εσκέπτετο, ότι έν όσω έμενον άγαμοι οι δύο νέοι, ευκολώτερον θα ήτο να καταφέρη τον γέροντα να νυμφευθή αυτός. Και διά τούτο αντέπραττεν εις πάσαν πρότασιν γινομένην, δια τον Στάμον, κ' έτρεχε να «βάλη μαναφούκια», οσάκις προξενιά τις δια τον νέον επαρουσιάζετο. (2, 367).¹⁰¹

In the above account we see that matchmaking constitutes the starting point for the plot, as it is placed at the very beginning of the narration.

For customary reasons, instead of the man going to propose marriage directly to a woman, he sent the so-called *Proxenies* to her by a third person. Captain Savas in «Ο Πανδρολόγος» sent the *Proxenies* to Kratera using his friend, Captain Stelios. He told him exactly what to tell her, including the fact that with him she would be like a queen. Captain Stelios was the third matchmaker («πανδρολόγος») to be sent to her by him and the last one, since after her refusal Captain Stelios himself proposed to her and they subsequently married. This example shows again that a matchmaking process may carry a 'cardinal function'¹⁰² within the narrative, as it constitutes the main issue with which the characters are kept preoccupied.

¹⁰¹ «...η γριά Περμαχού...ήρχισε να τρέχη δεξιά και αριστερά, προς αναζήτησιν συζύγου δια τον Γιάννην της Παντελούς. «Και αν εφοβέριζαν να βγάλουν τα υποστατικά του στη δημοπρασία, τάχα τί; Αυτός είχε πολύ βιό, ήτον και προκομένος...» See «Η Χτυπημένη» 2, 141-142.

¹⁰² R. Barthes, op.cit., p. 93.

The frequency of the *Proxenia* depended mainly on the diligence and the dowry of the woman. The *Dowry* in general is a prevailing subject in Papadiamantis' short stories. The writer was very well aware of how important the dowry was for women if they wanted to get married, due primarily to the fact that he himself had sisters. Each family who had daughters was obliged to provide them with a dowry if they wanted to see them get married. Lack of a dowry deprived the woman of the right to get married. In those years, it was very difficult for the families to endow their daughters, since most of them did not have the adequate financial means to do that. Thus, they were forced to give everything away and remain basically with nothing for the sake of their daughters.

The male members of the family, particularly the brothers, contributed to the endowment of the daughter.¹⁰³ In «Η Τύχη απο 'την Αμέρিকা», the *Proxenies* came one after another for Afentra as soon as her brother came back from America, bringing his savings with him, something that meant a big dowry for his sister. Thus, the prospective grooms began increasing in number.¹⁰⁴

Άμα ηκούσθη εις το χωρίον ότι έρχεται με το βαπόρι ο Θανάσης,
φέρων και λίρες μαζί του, πέντε προξενιές έστειλαν δια μιας εις την
μητέρα του δια την κόρην της, την Αφέντραν. (3, 341).

Papadiamantis confronts the dowry issue, which constituted an indispensable institution for nineteenth-century Greek society, as a substantial problem, as it bothered all families fundamentally who had daughters to marry. The dowry figured prominently in marriage negotiations between any two families who actually met each other face to face before the wedding, as discussions would take place in order to determine the size and the quality of the dowry. Thus, they made out the marriage contract usually in the presence of a third party who might be the relatives of the bride or the groom. If the groom's side remained satisfied with the dowry provided, then the wedding was secured. If there was a difference of opinion on the content of the marriage contract, then the

¹⁰³ See N. Skouteri-Didaskalou, *Ανθρωπολογικά για το γυναικείο ζήτημα (4 μελετήματα)*. Athens: O Politis, 1984, pp. 183-184.

¹⁰⁴ See also «...διότι είχαν ίσως τόσους λατρευτός, όσας χιλιάδας προίκα» in «Οιονός» 5,251.

marriage was either called off or postponed until the two sides could reach an agreement on the dowry.¹⁰⁵

The marriage contract made the girl's family responsible for providing her with a furnished house with all the household articles. If the groom's side was not pleased with the dowry, it could easily ask for a supplement, «πανωπροίκι»¹⁰⁶ something which made things really hard for the bride's family since most of the times this additional demand included cash.¹⁰⁷ The following quotation conveys, in part, Frangoyiannou's thoughts on observing that the dowry custom had become even more demanding, since apart from the immovable property, cash should be added to the marriage contract.¹⁰⁸ If not... *ας είχε τας κόρας του να τας καμαρώνη. Ας τας έβαζε στο ράφι. Ας τας έκλειε στο δουλάπι. Ας τας έστελνε στο Μουσείον.* (3, 434).

If family could not afford to provide her with a house, then the girl was obliged to leave her village and follow her husband to wherever his house was.

Το να μη λάβη σπίτι ως προίκα ή νύφη εσήμαινεν ότι δεν θα έμενεν εγκάτοικος εις την πατρίδα της. (3, 175).

The above quotation examined alone tells us what used to happen if the family did not have the wherewithal to endow their daughter with a house. Thus, the information provided by the above quotation bears a 'cardinal function',¹⁰⁹ which in this case has as its consequence Giorgis' emotional conflicts while transporting the couple to their new home.

¹⁰⁵ G. Regas, op.cit., pp. 231-232, refers to the so-called «Μπουλετί», which was the preliminary stage before sealing the official marriage contract (Ibid, p. 235) and was indispensable to the marriage negotiations. For examples see «Ποία εκ των δύο» 4, 107 «Ετελέσθη μνηστεία, αλλ' ο γάμος έμελλε ν' αργήση, όπως λάβη καιρόν η φιλόπονος μέλισσα, η νύφη, να εργασθή και δυνηθή να συμπλήρώσῃ την προίκα της». «Τα Ρόδιν' ακρογιάλια» 4, 264 ...ο Πατσοστάθης δεν είχε συμφωνήσει ακόμη με την πενθεράν ως προς το κεφάλαιον της προικός, και δια τούτο τάχα ανεβάλλετο επί τόσα έτη ο γάμος.

¹⁰⁶ «Η τύχη από την Αμέρिका» 3, 352.

¹⁰⁷ 3, 343-344.

¹⁰⁸ See also «Ο Πανταρώτας» 2, 143 «Και είχαν οίκοι δύο «αδύνατα μέρη», εν ώρα γάμου, και οι γαμβροί, κατάλαβες, το-σήμερο, γυρεύουν πολλά. Σπίτι, αμπέλι, ελαιώνα, παλιοχώραφα, τα χρειαζούμενα του σπιτιού όλα, και το μέτρημα χωριστά».

¹⁰⁹ The term is provided by R. Barthes, op.cit., p. 93.

There was also the possibility of the bride staying temporarily at her husband's parental house, until her father was able to build or renovate a house for her.¹¹⁰

Συνήνεσε και η γραία η μήτηρ να κατοική η νύμφη πλησίον τής, βέβαια προσωρινώς εωσότου ευκολυνθή ο συμπέθερος να εκκενώση την προικώαν οικίαν, και διότι δεν ήρμοζε να κατοικήση αλλού ο μοναχογυιός της, ως ξένος, πληρώνων ενοίκιον.
(«Θάνατος κόρης» 4, 183).

What we infer from Papadiamantis' stories, and the folklore and anthropological studies, on Greek rural society is that it was virtually impossible for anyone to ignore the concept of marriage as a financial transaction, since the idea of money predominated. The size of the dowry defined not only the wealth of the bride's family, but also the potentiality and capability and tidiness of the future bride, since many of the things which constituted the dowry were made by her own hands.¹¹¹ The institution of the dowry and its significance resulted in the girls preoccupying themselves day and night with the preparation of their trousseaus from a very young age.¹¹² The bride herself was expected to have prepared in advance all the table and bed linen and all the embroidery needed for the house, as well as different sets of clothes. Moreover, preparation of the trousseaus was an area where a lot of competition was apparent, since the future brides were trying to prove through their achievements how capable they were.¹¹³

The significance people placed on a sizeable dowry was the reason why all the families did whatever they could, no matter how poor they were, to endow their daughters with everything they needed to set up a new home. Brothers often sought work in foreign countries in order to help their sisters with the dowry.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ The house was the first component demanded in a marriage contract. G. Regas, op.cit., p. 232.

¹¹¹ N. Skouteri-Didaskalou, op.cit., p. 197.

¹¹² The neighbours felt sorry for Akrivoula who had prepared her trousseaus, but there was no one willing to marry her, although at the very end of the story her life changes and the marriage she wished for takes place «Η Πιτροπισσα» 4, 311.

¹¹³ There is competition between Malamo and Seiraino on the trousseaus preparations in «Άγια και Πεθαμένα» 3, 120.

¹¹⁴ Sisters would pray for the safe return of their brothers. See «Τ' Αγγάντεμα» 3, 200.

Ο Αποστόλης έδωκεν εις την αδελφήν του, όχι μόνον τον μικρόν οικίσκον αλλά και πεντακοσίας δραχμάς, τας οποίας είχεν από τις πλάτες του κυριολεκτικώς. («Ο Κακόμης» 3, 562).

Sisters also endowed their sisters in order to help them get married, especially when the parents were dead.

Η Κρατήρα... ως καλή μήτηρ, υπάνδρευσε κ' επροίκισε την αδελφήν της. («Η φωνή του δράκου» 3, 608).

We see from both the above examples that other members of the immediate family had the responsibility of endowing their sisters when the parents could not or were dead. The fact that both Apostolis and Kratera took over the responsibility of endowing their sisters enhances their character.

It is apparent from the stories that the bigger a dowry a woman had, the more prospective grooms would knock her at door, and the easier it would be for her to marry a desirable husband. An example of this is Seraino in «Άγια και Πεθαμένα», who was greatly sought after because of her good reputation and large dowry.

Γαμβροί υποψήφιοι υπήρχον όχι δύο ή τρεις, αλλά δωδεκάς ολόκληρος. Η κόρη είχε καλόν όνομα, ήτον μεγαλοπροικούσα. (3, 118).

In contrast, a woman without a dowry could hope for any notable young man to marry her. The fact that someone might be willing to marry her, even if he was considerably older than her was enough. Hence she should not ask for anything better than that.¹¹⁵

If a husband could be found asking for a small dowry or no dowry at all, then no matter who the man was, parents would soon take the opportunity and marry off their daughter to him. That was the only thing Chadoula's parents took into account when they were about to marry her off. The would-be suitor's contentment with a small dowry was

¹¹⁵ This was Lalio's opinion in «Η Νοσταλγός» 3, 59.

the only criterion for his selection and not his character. This however, had a detrimental effect on their married life, since the wife felt contempt regarding his ever achieving anything.

Όταν τον είδεν ο γέρων τόσον απλοϊκόν, ολιγαρκή και μετριόφρονα,
τον εξετίμησε, και απεφάσισε να τον κάμη γαμβρόν.
(«Η Φόνισσα» 3, 421).

In such cases the man might be much older than the bride,¹¹⁶ since his selection was based on his non-dowry demands. Most of the time parents married their daughters without thinking of any possible problems that could arise from having a husband who was the same age as his father-in-law. That was quite usual in Greece and particularly on the island of Skiathos, where the majority of young men were away in order to find a better life. Thus, only old men were left on the island and because of this women had no alternative but to marry the so-called «γεροντοπαλλήκαρο».¹¹⁷ The big age difference was not surprising at all.¹¹⁸ It was rather an established norm, having its roots deep in the past and based on the belief that women get old earlier than men.¹¹⁹

A strange form of dowry, as can be seen in Papadiamantis' stories, was the so-called "*Koritsiatiko*". This was offered not by the bride's family but by a man much older than the girl he was seeking to marry. The would-be groom offered this sort of dowry to the prospective bride's family, especially if he was wealthy and much older than her, and her family was too poor to provide her with a dowry.

Και τώρα, την είχε ζητήσει εις γάμον άλλος βοσκός, ο Κώστας της
Γαρουφαλίνας, χηρευμένος, με δύο παιδιά. Είχε δηλώσει ότι ήθελε να

¹¹⁶ An indication of a big age difference is the following example: «Η νεαρά γυνή ήτο επί του εξώστου της οικίας, την οποίαν είχαν ενοικιάσει όπως δεχθή αυτήν ο σύζυγός της, πρεσβύτης πενήκοντα και τριών ετών...» See «Η Νοσταλγός» 3, 45.

¹¹⁷ «Η Θητεία της πενθεράς» 3, 405.

¹¹⁸ This view is also supported by M. Gasouka. See her article «Πριν τη Χαδούλα ήταν η Χαρμολίνα» in *Διαβάζω*, no. 373, 1997, p. 58.

¹¹⁹ For this see V. Lambropoulou, *Οι γυναίκες στο έργο του Παπαδιαμαντίου. Το γένος και το φύλο, μια φεμινιστική προσέγγιση και ερμηνεία*. University of Athens, 1992, p. 74.

την πάρη χωρίς προίκα, της έδιδε μάλιστα και είκοσι γίδια ως κοριτσιάτικο. («Το Καμίνι» 4, 208).

The above situation was an exception to the rule since it happened very rarely, and, what is more, it was unusual for a woman to reject such a good opportunity. However, for a strong and independent character such as Tsoula was, the lack of a demand for a dowry did not mean that she should marry a widower with two children, as she was already in love with someone else.

All the foregoing examples related to the dowry issue, lead us to comprehend the anxiety felt by families who had daughters, since each female was a byword for expense, something which did not make families happy as it concerned their financial status.

In Frangoyiannou's thoughts the dowry issue prevailed, as well as the treatment she received as a young girl from her parents. Although she was the only daughter in the family, the financial status of which was good, she was given a humiliating dowry, and on top of that an incompetent husband. Thus, she had to take over his responsibilities, and act like a man, along with her own womanly ones, which were already many. Consequently, as a child she served her parents, when she married she became her husband's slave, and when her children had children of their own she became her grandchildren's slave.¹²⁰

An overview of her tormenting life, while sitting next to her sick newborn female grandchild and her daughter who was in confinement, was enough to convince her that females could not expect joy in their lives, and caused too much trouble to their families as well because of the dowry. Obviously, Frangoyiannou strongly believed that she herself was a major trouble to her own parents. The humiliating dowry she was given was an obsession of hers. It was so strongly rooted in her mind that in the last minutes of her life, before being totally covered by water, she looked back at the dowry given to her saying: «Ω! να το προικιό μου!» stressing once more the major problem of the dowry, which was not only hers but other women's as well.

¹²⁰ «Η Φόνισσα» 3, 417.

Justifiably, Frangoyiannou had the conviction that by killing young girls she would liberate their parents from the trouble caused by them. In other words, the primary idea behind the killing of the innocent girls was the dowry.

Τι λευθεριά θα της έκαναν της φτώχειάς, της Περιβολούς, ανίσως
έπεφταν μες στη στέρνα κι' εκολυμπούσαν! (3, 462).
«Όλο κοριτσούδια, το έρμο, όλο κοριτσούδια!» Και τι ξαλάφρωμα θα
ήτον τώρα γι' αυτόν, για την άμοιρη τη γυναίκα του, να του το
παίρνε τώρα, ο Μεγαλοδύναμος! (3, 498).

Having these thoughts in mind, she did not oppose her daughter Amersa's decision to remain unmarried. Amersa's choice was due to her wish to avoid the commitments a marriage encompassed. What other women experienced was enough for her to hold marriage in disregard.

Έμεινεν η καημένη, η ανδροκόρη η Αμέρσα, ανύπανδρη (ας έχη την
ευχήν της). Είδε την γλύκα. Τω όντι, φρόνιμη νέα. Τι θ' απήλανεν
από τα βάσανα του κόσμου και ουτ' εξήλευε κύν! Τι να ζηλέψη;
Έβλεπε την μεγάλην αδερφήν της και την ελυπείτο-την εκαίετο.
(3, 445).

The fact that Amersa is presented as an «ανδροκόρη» implies that she was an independent personality and that she could very well live alone without any man controlling her life. Her decision not to get married is thus linked to her strong personality.

Amersa and other women, who ended up being spinsters,¹²¹ were looked upon by society with contempt, as if they were doing something wrong. Moreover people felt sorry for them for being spinsters.¹²² The decision of some women to remain unmarried

¹²¹ To end up being a spinster is not that common in Papadiamantis' works.

¹²² Akrivoula's wedding was a miracle, since everyone believed that she would never get married: «Η Πιτρόπισσα» 4, 311.

was against the general conception, which is revealed through the words of Vaso's father in «Χρήστος Μηλιόνης»: who wanted the girls out of the parental house as soon as possible.

Όσον γρηγορώτερα τόσον καλύτερα. Τι το θέλεις το βάρος αυτό εις την οικίαν; Δεν είναι καλύτερον να το ξεφορτωθής; Όποιος ευρίσκει πρόθυμον αναδέκτην του φορτίου, και δεν το μεταβιβάζει ευθύς, άκραν εμπιστοσύνην έχει εις τους ιδίους ώμους, αν δεν είναι ανόητος. (2, 12).

The above quotation refers to the burdensome presence of the females in the parental home. This burden should be transferred to the future husband.¹²³ Thus, parents' priority, or, better obligation, was to marry off their daughters to whoever was willing.¹²⁴

In the following example, the writer presents men as waiting for their sisters to find a husband first, and only then could they start thinking of finding a wife for themselves. This is what Alexis and Gogos were planning to do after their sister Seiraino had married.

Τα δύο αδέλφια της, ο Αλέξης κι' ο Γώγος... «το έρριξαν έξω» επ' ευκαιρία τού γάμου εκείνου... Ησθάνοντο ότι είχαν ξεφορτωθή εν βάρος από την ράχιν των, και ότι τού λοιπού θα εξήρχοντο κι' αυτοί εις τον κόσμον προς Θήραν νύμφης. («Τα δύο κούτσουρα» 3, 627).

Thus each one in the family, for different reasons, was eager to see the females get married. Because of this they did not care much about the quality of the man who would marry their daughter or sister. This attitude, as can be seen from the stories, was the reason why most women were married to incompetent men who most of the time

¹²³ In «Ο Πανταρώτας» 2, 143 Barba-Alexis' daughters are named by the narrator as «αδύνατα μέρη», εν ώρα γάμου.

¹²⁴ The burdensome presence of the woman in the family is marked in Frangoyiannou's thoughts: «Η Φόνισσα» 3,433. See also M. Miligou-Markantoni, op.cit., pp. 293-294.

maltreated them and had no respect for them. The power allotted to them as males, and the fact that none would condemn their actions, gave them the right to behave brutally. As a natural consequence of a marriage decided arbitrarily by a third party, the couple did not actually have the chance to get to know each other before marriage, and thus they were not in a position to know if they were suited to each other or not. Hence, many problems arose after the marriage.

The conflicts between the couples were frequently due to the bad behaviour of the husbands towards their wives. Papadiamantis' world is full of the maltreatment of women. Most men are presented by Papadiamantis as drunkards and gamblers, passing their time in the coffee-houses,¹²⁵ having their wives waiting for them at home. Thus, women had even more responsibilities, as the incompetence of the husband demanded them to be mother and father at the same time. Apart from their tasks as housewives, they had to work for the sake of their children if the father did not have a job, or spent all the money he earned on drinking and gambling,¹²⁶ being indifferent to the problems of his family.

Τού ήρεσκε να κυλιέται εις τα σφαγεία, ως αληθινόν
«χασαπόσκυλο», να τρώγη καθημερινά γιουβέτσια, και χορταίνη τον
οίνον και τον ύπνον, αφήνων ως επί το πλείστον νηστικήν κατ' οίκον
την συμβίαν ομού με τα πέντε παιδιά της. Η Αρετή, χρηστή και
φρόνιμη, υπέφερε με μαρτυρικήν υπομονήν, κ' εξούσεν, όπως τόσαι
άλλαι, οικονομούσα και ξενοδολεύουσα.

(«Η Στοιχειωμένη καμάρα» 3, 634).

In the above quotation, the writer praises Areti's patience in tolerating her useless husband who was nothing but a burden to the family, as well as her efforts in supporting

¹²⁵ The coffee-house is an area strictly for men. See N. Dimitriadou, «Τα Σκιαθίτικα καφενεία» in *Παπαδιαμαντικά Τετράδια*, no. 4, Autumn, 1998.

¹²⁶ The problem of gambling and gambling scandals was much intense by the end of the nineteenth century. See G. Kairophylas, *Η Αθήνα της Μπέλ Επόκ*. Athens: Philippotis, 1985, pp. 83-84. Papadiamantis' attitude towards gambling is clearly given in his correspondence in a letter to his brother «... δεν είναι καλόν να παίζης χαρτιά, ότι ο δρόμος ούτος είναι ολισθηρός, ότι βλάπτεις τον εαυτόν σου, ότι το πάθος τούτο είναι φθοροποιόν, ολέθριον. See A. Παπαδιαμάντης, *Αλληλογραφία*. Athens: Domos, 1992, p. 61.



her family financially. Areti's character is thus highlighted by sharply contrasting it with that of her husband's.

Papdiamantis describes a similar situation in the short story «Πατέρα στο σπίτι!» more vividly, by using short sentences, a method that presents the measure of the problem realistically. Manolis, a gambler and a drunkard who totally neglected his family, had such disrespect for his wife that he told her on several occasions that he used to have a girlfriend whom he had started seeing again, something that explained his absence from home night after night.¹²⁷

Ο Μανώλης δεν έπαυσε να μεθύη τακτικά από το Σαββατόβραδον έως το εξημέρωμα της Δευτέρας. Η Γιαννούλα δεν είχε πλέον δεύτερον φόρεμα. Τα παιδιά δεν είχαν πάντοτε ψωμί. Η εστία σπανίως ήτο αναμμένη. Η γυνή εγόγγυζε. Ο Μανώλης, όταν ήρχετο, την έτρωγε από την γρίνια. Τα παιδιά έκλαιαν. Η αχυροστρωμένη ήτο τρύπια. Η κουβέρτα δεν ήρκει να σκεπάση τα τρία μεγαλύτερα παιδιά... (3,91).

Such types of men, apart from being insensible towards their wives, used force against them, becoming really violent and injuring them. The following is an example from the short story «Οι Δύο δράκοι», which describes the way Mastro-Achilleas maltreated his wife regardless of the fact that she was pregnant.

Α, θεέ μου, τι θυμός ήτο εκείνος τ' ανδρός της!... Την έδερνε, την εστουμπούσε, καθώς ήτο γερμένη στο κρεβάτι, άρρωστη, ύστερα την έρριχνε κάτω στο πάτωμα, και την χτυπούσε με τα χέρια, την κλωτσούσε με τα πόδια, την αφάνιζε, την έλυωνε. Και θαρρώ πώς ήτο και γαστρωμένη, δυό-τρίω μηνών. (4, 104).

¹²⁷ 3, 93. Papdiamantis seems to be aware of, and not keen on, the people's laxity in regard to the marriage institution whether they were of the upper, middle or lower class. See «Γλώσσα και κοινωνία» 5, 290.

The expressions the writer uses in the above examples to describe incidents of ill-treatment shows that he did not approve of the bad treatment women had to face from their husbands.

Men not only maltreated their wives, but also neglected them completely as if they did not exist. They were absent at many difficult moments of their wives' lives, such as when they were pregnant or had a serious illness.

...η Χατζίνα ανήγγειλε μυστηριωδώς εις τον σύζυγόν της ότι είχεν αισθανθή μέσα της «ένα πράμα να πηδά». Ο Χατζής οπωσούν εχάρη, και είπε: - Καλά. Να μπαρκάρω μίαν ώρα αρχύτερα. Να τελειώσω το ταξίδι - κεί πάνω, και να' ρθώ το γληγορότερο. (4, 411).

Men might also disappear for no reason, even when engaged, having a good time with other women away from the island while at the same time their fiancées were waiting for them, hoping that one day they might return. The strict morals of the time deprived them of any right to look for another man. They could wait for their fiancé for a very long time without having any news from them or without even being sure that they would return to them. To wait faithfully for an absent fiancé was their duty, even though their youth was fading as the years went by. A faithful fiancée was Melachro, who although she was much sought after could think of no one else but her fiancé, regardless of the fact that she had not heard from him for a long time.

Ο ξενιτευμένος γαμβρός, ο από εικοσαετίας απών, ο από δεκαετίας μη επιστείλας, ο από δεκαετίας μη αφήσας που ίχνη... είχε γυρίσει πολλά μέρη εις τον Νέον Κόσμον... κ' επανήλθε με χιλιάδας τινάς ταλλήρων εις τον τόπον της γεννήσεώς του, όπου επανεύρεν ηλικιωθείσαν, αλλ' ακμαίαν ακόμη, την πιστήν του μνηστήν.
(«Ο Αμερικάνος» 2, 272-273).

Women in situations like that were, in fact, the victims. Things, however, became worse when men deceived their wives overtly. A tragic figure who suffered in silence was

Christina, the teacher who lived for several years together with someone without being married, but expecting that some day he would take her in matrimony. After a long time she realized that he had no intention of doing so, since he was not only sleeping with other women but having children by them as well.¹²⁸

Women in Papdiamantis' stories whose husbands had to go to sea soon after the wedding, usually with no knowledge or certainty when they would return, had also no right to say anything, but suffered in silence. It was as if the sea was their second wife, the justification for their absences for extended periods of time.¹²⁹ During such absences, their wives kept waiting for as long as necessary, regardless of the fact that most of the time they had no clue as to whether were alive or dead.

When men left the island, they forgot that they had a family to care for. They used to be absent during their wife's pregnancy or even when she was giving birth. The fact that their wives were going through a difficult period did not bother them. Their wives were expecting to hear from them day by day, but to no avail. Despite this, they were hoping to see them again and praying for their safe return. Few men would remember at the beginning of the absence that they had families, thus they would send them a small amount of money, but then they would forget them completely.¹³⁰ The writer, by presenting men maltreating and being indifferent towards their wives and families, not only sets off the female characters who endure such circumstances but additionally overtly shows his sympathy towards them.

The dimension of the problem is vividly given by the written complaint of Captain Johnny's mother-in-law, who regretted the fact that her daughter was married to him. According to her, he did not have the generosity to even bring her a trifle of a present from his travels. The fact that she, along with the rest of her daughters, had to live with his wife was entirely his own fault, because whether he was back from his travels or not it was all the same since he was never at home; thus she and her daughters had to

¹²⁸ Surprisingly, Papdiamantis, although being an adherent Christian Orthodox, suggests for such cases the adoption of the civil wedding.

¹²⁹ I. Beopoulou claims that the sea is an element defining the role of a woman and a man in the community. Consequently, since the man is the one to leave the island the woman will be the one to stay at home and take over all the responsibilities. See «Όταν οι άνδρες ταξιδεύουν» in E. Papataxiarhis-Th. Paradellis (ed.) *Ταυτότητες και φύλο στη σύγχρονη Ελλάδα*, Athens: Panepistimio Aigaiou, 1992, p. 194.

¹³⁰ Yiannios' sister, although married, was still financed by her brother since her husband forgot that she even existed. «Η Μαυρομαντηλού» 2, 157.

keep his wife company. The only solution, if he wanted them to move out of the house, was to hire a servant for his wife so that she could have a second helping hand as she could not cope with loneliness and the household responsibilities.¹³¹ One must not forget that women had to take over additional responsibilities like the cultivation of fields, the handling of money, and attention to the elderly when their husbands were away. In the island short stories it is not very clear if women were responsible for any financial transactions during men's absence. It is more likely that the older members of the family, or the closest relatives available, accomplished the latter.¹³²

For women who had husbands working at sea, life was full of anxiety as they were always expectantly awaiting their return, staring constantly at the sea along with other women who might have their brothers and sons out there as well.¹³³ Men had to go abroad in order to provide their families with money, since they could find jobs more easily. On Skiathos they would have never have had the opportunity to obtain a proper job. Some of them would return for short periods of time, while others would remain abroad, forgetting their families for good. Because they were male, such behaviour was not condemned, as if the moral rules applied not to them but to the wives faithfully awaiting them.

Mothers tried desperately to obtain the slightest information about their 'lost' sons. Usually such an attempt was hopeless since it was very difficult at that time, in the prevailing unfavourable circumstances, to obtain such information.¹³⁴ The pain for women who might lose their men in this way was great, since most of the time emigration was looked upon as being similar to death. It was, however, very usual for women to literally lose their husbands or sons in accidents at sea, which were very frequent.¹³⁵

The loss of a husband or son left women in emotional distress and filled them with anxiety. For married women this led to widowhood and all the possible difficulties the status of widowhood might bring. Such a turn of events was especially tragic for young girls newly married. The status of widowhood resulted in certain restrictions,

¹³¹ «Κοκκώνα Θάλασσα» 3, 288.

¹³² M. Gasouka, *Η κοινωνική θέση των γυναικών στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη*, op.cit., p. 125.

¹³³ «Τ' Αγνάντεμα» 3, 200.

¹³⁴ The narrator wrote a letter after his aunt's request to her son who had not given any sign of life for almost six years in «Το γράμμα στην Αμερική» 4, 358.

¹³⁵ M. Gasouka, «Πριν τη Χαδούλα ήταν η Χαρμολίνα», op.cit., p. 57.

which although not as strict as in the case of unmarried women, were still strict enough to cause social isolation.¹³⁶ A widow was supposed to be dressed in black, symbolizing her grief and her alienation from the social events in which, because of her mourning, she was unable to participate. For young women who were married to much older men the possibility of widowhood was great, because of the husband's age. In such cases the widow inherited her husband's fortune, and so was the only person entitled to handle it.¹³⁷ Additionally, she gained full custody of her children.

For some women, becoming a widow did not always mean that their lives were over. Remarriage could be a natural consequence, although not warmly approved of by society.¹³⁸ When a woman did thus remarry had to forsake all signs of her former mourning and begin a new life with her new husband.

Chrisi in «Η Χήρα του Νεομάρτυρος» did not hesitate to get married three times. Her first two husbands and the children she had with them died, so she moved on to a third marriage, as she was only thirty. Rather strange in this particular story is the fact that her relatives were the ones who convinced her she should get married for a third time.¹³⁹ For a remarriage the contribution of the matchmakers was significant, since they encouraged remarriage for widows and especially for widowers.¹⁴⁰

Women who lost their husbands, having experienced only hardship and suffering with them, instead of remarrying - and according to them continuing to live a life full of torment - preferred to remain widows. One such woman is Widow-Charmolina in «Η θητεία της πενθεράς», who describes her married life as a foolish mistake, which she could not avoid because of her parents who, like every parent, wanted her to marry. And so, now that she had the opportunity to decide for herself, she would never repeat such a mistake. She even believed her daughter's marriage was a mistake as well, but unfortunately an unavoidable one. According to her the only solution to the problem was the following: ...το να μην έχη γεννηθή κανείς ποτέ ή να έχη αποθάνει με την ώρα

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 57.

¹³⁷ When Sophia's husband died she inherited his fortune, provoking a protest on the part of his relatives, who took action, unsuccessfully, in order to change things: «Τα Συμβάντα στο μύλο» 4, 520.

¹³⁸ M. Gasouka, «Πριν τη Χαδούλα ήταν η Χαρμολίνα», op.cit., p. 58.

¹³⁹ «Η Χήρα του Νεομάρτυρος» 4, 44.

¹⁴⁰ Widow-Papadia married Chatzi-Yiannis after the mediation of the old matchmakers. «Η χήρα παπαδιά» 2, 87. See also «Ο Πεντάρφανος» 4, 58.

τού,¹⁴¹ a view that does not differ essentially in its first half from what Frangoyiannou believed.

The aforementioned examples relating to widowhood provide the writer with the opportunity to present information of a sociological nature in attempting to explain the reasons of widowhood, how a woman's life changed when she became a widow, and why some women did not wish to remarry.

Respect and love could rarely be observed between the couple, but if it existed, it could provoke the jealousy of other people. For example Yiannakis provided everything he could for his wife Archontoula, so that when she came back to the island everyone admired her wealth and the treatment she had from her husband.¹⁴²

A diplomatic course is followed by Barba-Monachakis in order to bring his wife back. Instead of being angry, at her escape, he follows her and suggests it would be better if he went with her so that nothing bad could happen to her.¹⁴³ Consequently, he put his theory into practice, maintaining that the purpose of a Christian Orthodox wedding is for the husband and wife to be together at all times.¹⁴⁴

Apart from these exceptions, the reality was harsh. Many women bore their cross in silence, accepting all the blows of fate without protest, since they knew they would not find justice in a society where men were in charge. Only a few of Papadiamantis' heroes disregarded the unwritten rule and stood up for themselves. Sinioritsa in «Μικρά ψυχολογία» was very angry with her husband who could think of nothing but drinking all day long. Because of this she waited for him to return home from the daily drinking bout with his friends and proceeded to shower him with abuse.¹⁴⁵ Obviously such protests were very uncommon, since women, as weaker beings, were afraid to cross words with their husbands, even when they had every right to do so.

What we conclude from the facts adduced so far is that apart from very exceptional cases of women who protested against certain things they could not accept, the rest slavishly followed the traditional moral and social unwritten code. In view of the

¹⁴¹ 3,409.

¹⁴² «Ερμη στα ξένα» 4, 78.

¹⁴³ «Η Νοσταλγός» 3, 69.

¹⁴⁴ 3,55.

¹⁴⁵ 3, 605.

fact that the majority of the customs which I have already mentioned, follow the traditional conceptions that prevailed, we may say that this in itself shows that the writer is very aware of what was demanded of a woman in order to get married, and how her life would be transformed after getting married. The writer does not, however, seem to directly approve or disapprove of what was happening, even when it comes to matters such as abandonment or violent behaviour. He would rather present certain situations instead of criticizing them, although there are instances where one can discern by the expressions he uses, albeit very subtly, his sympathy towards those suffering.

A general comment to be made in comparing the Athenian with the island short stories is that moral values and customs do dominate in the island ones. To be more specific, apart from female chastity and the husbands' negligence which appear in both island and Athenian short stories, all the other concerns, connected with parents choosing the right husband for their daughter, matchmaking, the dowry problem, the husband working at sea, are mostly mentioned in the island short stories.¹⁴⁶ Maybe that was because, as is usually the case, the customs in a rural area were more conservative than in the capital where morals began to be slightly more flexible due to the invasion of foreign cultures.

After the selection of the husband and the marriage negotiations and the possibility of having an insensible husband, the future bride had an additional worry, her mother-in-law. Naturally, a mother-in-law was an old woman who had great experience of life and she felt she had the right to be in charge of the couple's relationship, having an opinion on every single thing relating to them.¹⁴⁷ This was usually the attitude of the mother of the groom, because of the power gained from the fact that she had given up her son. From that day on she sought to have all her daughter-in-law's actions under censorship. She was able to exercise her influence over her son by accusing her daughter-in-law in the worst possible way.

An example of such behaviour is Old-Kantakaina in «Το Χριστόψωμο», a short story that has as its central character a bad mother-in-law who is actually trying to break

¹⁴⁶ The novels do refer to some of the subjects mentioned, but not to the same extent as the short stories.

¹⁴⁷ M. Miligou-Markantoni points out the conflict in the relationship between the bride and the mother-in-law. See M. Miligou-Markantoni, *op.cit.*, pp. 291-292.

up her son's marriage by accusing her daughter-in-law of untidiness and inability to have children. We see how a social demand, which in this case is related to female fertility, affects the mother-in-law's behaviour towards her son's wife. When she realized that she could not achieve what she had in mind, she decided to poison her daughter-in-law by offering some poisoned bread, «χριστόψωμο», at Christmas. By mistake, though, her son ate the bread which the old hag had prepared for her daughter-in-law (2, 81).

The old mothers-in-law belong to the category of the 'old women', whom Papadiamantis sees differently from the way he sees young women. The writer usually ascribes behaviour that includes maliciousness and constant complaints to old women.

Some exceptions to the rule do take place, for example in «Θάνατος κόρης» where Kyra-Sophoula took her daughter-in-law's side when she had a dispute with her own daughter, Seiraino, cursing the latter so she could not speak.¹⁴⁸ Moreover in «Το νησί της Ουρανίτσας» mother and daughter-in-law were very close to each other until Ouranitsa claimed that she had been exploited by her fiancé and made pregnant. For Bernitsa, that was outrageous, as according to her calculations her son could not be the father. Their relationship was consequently ruined, and what is more Ouranitsa committed suicide following the confrontation she had with her mother-in-law.¹⁴⁹

We can conclude from the above that the majority of mothers-in-law in Papadiamantis' short stories behave badly towards their daughters-in-law. Even if at the beginning things seem to work properly for them, something happens in the end and the mother-in-law becomes a typical hag, a stubborn old woman, making herself unbearable. On the other hand, however, when it comes to sons-in-law things change, since their position did not permit mothers-in-law to make any complaints towards them. This was because the majority of mothers-in-law lived under the same roof as their children and thus felt a kind of obligation, although it should not have been so, as they helped a lot with the household and their contribution was of great value. Most of the time they took over tasks their daughters were responsible for, if the latter were ill or had recently given birth. Charmolina is a very good example of a mother-in-law who played the role of father, mother and grandmother at the same time. She was actually a slave in the service

¹⁴⁸ 4, 187-188.

¹⁴⁹ 3, 385-386.

of her incapable son-in-law, and took over all her daughter's responsibilities, since «Η νεαρά νύμφη είχε γεννήσει ήδη εννέα τέκνα, κι' εξηκολούθει νά γεννά ακόμη.»¹⁵⁰

Obviously, old women due to the experience ascribed to them, became the censors of younger women, criticizing all their actions. Their age permitted them to feel powerful and free since certain restrictions were no longer applied to them. The increase in the amount of power wielded by them on account of their age involved additional responsibilities, since from the status of being a mother they would move on to that of a mother-in-law and, consequently, to that of a grandmother. The partial authority they seemed to have over the younger women did not mean fewer responsibilities for them or an upgrading of their current social position.

To become a mother as soon as possible was the primary objective after the wedding.¹⁵¹ Motherhood was and is one of the most important states for women since it transferred them from being a worthless 'object' to being a respected person,¹⁵² especially if they gave birth to male offspring, so that the family name could carry on. The care of the children would be exclusively her responsibility, naturally constituting the most demanding one.

A great deal of information is given throughout Papadiamantis' short stories in relation to childbirth, with reference to methods,¹⁵³ calculations regarding time of delivery,¹⁵⁴ as well as to the nursing of women in confinement and newly-born children.¹⁵⁵ The difficulties related to labour were many and were hazardous, concerning the lack of doctors as well as the absence of a sterile environment.

Women who were thought to be experts on childbirth helped other in delivery. They used methods such as prepared remedies with herbs,¹⁵⁶ which they believed were appropriate for pain relief. They even turned to religious rituals for the quick recovery of

¹⁵⁰ «Η Θητεία της πενθεράς» 3, 407.

¹⁵¹ This is the prevailing expectation regarding a wedding. See M. Miligou-Markantoni, op.cit., p. 284.

¹⁵² M. Doumanis, op.cit., p. 35.

¹⁵³ «Κάθομαι στα σκαμνιά» is the method of delivery used mostly at that time on the island of Skiathos. See G. Regas, op.cit., p. 57.

¹⁵⁴ «Η Φωνή του δράκου» 3, 608, «Το Χατζόπουλο» 4, 413.

¹⁵⁵ «Φώτα Ολόφωτα» 3, 42-43.

¹⁵⁶ D. Loukatos, Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Λαογραφία. Athens: Morfotiko Idrima Ethnikis Trapezis, 1977, p. 135.

the woman in labour.¹⁵⁷ We may determine from Papadiamantis' short stories, especially the island ones, that women would take over the healing of the sick, as the presence of a doctor on the island was most unusual or very rare. People seemed to trust the so-called «γιάτρισσες» and, by extension, the old traditional methods of treatment which these women practised.¹⁵⁸

The fact that women would be the ones regarded as natural authorities was attributed to them as nurturers of children to mediate with the divine figures or as 'yiatriesses' responsible for the healing of those who suffered, gave them the opportunity of reinforcing their position within society. Their supremacy in the area of healing is not observed in the Athenian short stories, as doctors and their scientifically approved methods replaced them.¹⁵⁹

As can be seen in Papadiamantis' stories, it was common for women to die in childbirth, due to complications during labour which could not be cured by a simple midwife or by the blessings of a priest.¹⁶⁰ Consequently, many children became orphans from the very beginning of their lives, if they were lucky enough not to die during delivery or in infancy. In spite of the difficulties a pregnancy involved, which were well known by the future mothers, women in Papadiamantis' stories sought to become pregnant and have as many offspring as possible.

¹⁵⁷ For examples see «...ακόμη η γυνή εκοιλοπόνει...και ο καλογερόπαπας...είχε λάβει εντολήν να ψάλλη μικράν και μεγάλην Παράκλησιν προς βοήθειαν της ωδινούσης» in «Φώτα Ολόφωτα» 3, 39. «Ο παπάς εφορούσε τότε το επιτραχήλι, άνοιγε το Ευχολόγιον, κ' εδιάβαζεν επάνω εις την φιάλην του νερού τας «Ευχάς εις γυναίκα λεχώ» in «Η Συντέκνισσα» 3, 584.

¹⁵⁸ See for example «Όλοι αι γιάτρισσαι της πόλεως, με τα φάρμακα και τα μαντζούνια, ετέθησαν εις ενέργειαν» in order to prevent Glezo from dying. See «Τα μαύρα κούτσουρα» 4, 466. See also «...η Φραγκογιαννού, ουδέν εκώλυε να κάμνη συγχρόνως και την μαμμήν ή την ψευδογιάτρισσαν... έδιδε βότανα, έκαμνε κηραλοιφάς, εξετέλει εντριβάς, θεράπευε την βασκανίαν, παρεσκεύαζε φάρμακα δια τας πασχούσας... δια τας εγκύους και τας λεχούς...» See «Η Φόνισσα» 3, 432. «...η Χαδούλα ήξευρεν άλλα βότανα, χρήσιμα ως φάρμακα...» 3, 458.

¹⁵⁹ In the Athenian short story, Ιατρεία της Βαβυλώνος the writer refers to the new discoveries of medicine related to methods of contraception, as well as to the sexually transmitted diseases. His views on health matters are clearly given in one of his texts under the title «Κατά το πρόπον ζήν» with the subtitle «Η αληθής υγεία». As for his opinion on doctors, he seems to appreciate them in very rare cases, since his general belief is that besides their immorality doctors are not to be trusted, since they do not know how to do their jobs well «Υπηρέτρα» 2, 98, «Θάνατος Κόρης» 4, 189. This, of course, does not mean that he trusted the so-called yiatriesses more, who sometimes feature as pseudoyiatriesses: «Παιδική Πασχαλιά» 2, 170.

¹⁶⁰ For cases of women who died soon after labour the following passages are characteristic: «Είχε και μίαν κόρην, την Αλεξανδρώ... Χθές έγινε νύμφη την άλλην ημέραν μήτηρ, λεχώ, νεκρά» in «Η Γλυκοφιλούσα» 3, 78. «Εσχάτως η αδερφή του, νεαρά ακόμη, είχε αποθάνει λεχώ, αφήσασα δύο ορφανά. Ο Αποστόλης δεν ηδυνήθη να κλαύση» in «Ο Κακόμης» 3, 562. «Τ' Μπούφ' του π'λί» 3, 650. «Η Αποσώστρα» 4, 52.

The birth of children gave stability to the relationship of the couple, since the main purpose of the wedding was fulfilled and the bride could not be accused of being barren, either by her mother-in-law or by society in general. Inability to bear children rendered women useless, since they were thought to be solely responsible for any problems related to child bearing. Moreover, it gave the husband the right to divorce her or marry another woman with whom he could have children.¹⁶¹

The strong wish of women to bear children is very well projected by Papadiamantis, mainly in his island short stories. It was a demand for a couple to have children, not only one or two, but as many as possible.¹⁶² As at that time methods of contraception were non-existent, it was easy enough for any fertile couple to achieve this goal. Consequently, it would appear that the majority of women fell pregnant almost the moment they got married. The writer refers to husbands who went abroad soon after their wedding; by the time they came back their wife already had a baby in her arms.¹⁶³

For some couples it was easy enough to have children. Thus, many families consisted of as many as five or more children. Papa-Kyriakos' wife gave birth every year without any difficulty.¹⁶⁴ Charmolina's daughter in «Η θητεία της πενθεράς», who was married for fifteen years, had had nine children, as we have already said, and she kept on giving birth.¹⁶⁵

To support so many children was not an easy task in the late nineteenth century, due to the low financial status of each family. Money was earned mainly by the husband but it was not enough to satisfy the needs of a large family, members of which were also often parents-in-law. Needless to say, the wife did not have the opportunity to have a job and earn money, especially on the island of Skiathos. Besides, her household tasks, along

¹⁶¹ The demand a woman to be fertile and have many offspring constitutes the general concept, not only of the period examined, but further back. If a woman was unable to have children then the husband had the right to marry another woman who could bear children (see Ο γάμος του Καραχμέτη. Karahmetis married for a second time in order to have children, since his wife was unable to do so) or divorce her. D. Petropoulos, «Η σκληρία εις τα έθιμα του ελληνικού λαού» in *Epetiris tou Laographikou Arheiou*, Athens, vol. 7, 1953, pp. 42-43.

¹⁶² For examples see «Εξοχική Λαμπρή» 2, 131, «Στο Χριστό στο Κάστρο» 2, 278. «Ανάγκη πάσα να καρπογονήση η Χατζίνα, να κάμη ένα μικρό Χατζόπουλο, δια να κληρονομήση το βίο του Χατζησταμάτη» See «Το Χατζόπουλο» 4, 413. «Η Νταντώ... θα ήτο τότε σαρανταπεντάρα. Αλλά ποτέ δεν έπαυσε να θάλπη την ελπίδα ότι θα απέκτα τέκνον» in «Η Ασπροφουστανούσα» 4, 563.

¹⁶³ «Η Φωνή του δράκου» 3, 608, «Φώτα Ολόφωτα» 3, 42.

¹⁶⁴ «Εξοχική Λαμπρή» 2, 131.

¹⁶⁵ 3, 407.

with the great number of her children, did not allow her time to occupy herself with any additional work. Frangoyiannou's words present the difficulties clearly regarding the supporting of a big family: «Όσον ηύξανεν η οικογένεια, τόσον ηύξανον και τα φαρμάκια». (3, 429).

In spite of the fact that having children involved numerous responsibilities, and their rearing was difficult due to the prevailing living conditions, women always sought that goal. Their anxiety to have children can easily be surmised from their efforts to succeed in this. Thus, women who were incapable of having children participated in magic rituals or tried different kinds of herbal remedies made by women who were thought to be specialists in such a field.¹⁶⁶ These rituals, of course, were not effective at all, since women's inability to have children had nothing to do with superstition. Naturally, the way of thinking during that period and the lack of scientific knowledge did not allow them to see things objectively and spot the cause of the problem. Under these circumstances, they saw everything from an unrealistic point of view, hoping that an abstract power would solve their problem, which was always thought to be an exclusively female one.

The unlucky young woman, Dialehti, as the writer characterises her, in «Το Χριστόψωμο», although married for seven years had no children. Consequently, she tried everything possible that could help her become pregnant, but without result. She tried many herbal remedies, she went to the hot springs of Aidipsos, and she wore talismans given by some gypsies. She even tried the religious path, but unfortunately everything turned out to be hopeless. Hence, when her despair had subsided, she accepted the idea that there was no chance whatsoever of having children. The situation made her mother-in-law really unhappy because the absence of an heir would lead to the loss of the family name (2, 77-78).¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ See M. Miligou-Markantoni, op.cit., pp. 285-286. See also D. Petropoulos, op.cit., p. 33.

¹⁶⁷ The only remaining solution in regard to problems of infertility was the adoption of children. See «Το Χατζόπουλο» 4, 417.

Families not only wanted to have offspring, but the demand was to have male ones;¹⁶⁸ if not all, at least the first child had to be male. The birth of a baby girl was seen not as a blessing but a punishment. Besides, male offspring did not have the problems of the females due to their sex, thus they could only benefit the family. As a natural sequence, this social perception related to child bearing defined Papdiamantis' heroes' actions and behaviour and formed the plot of the story accordingly.

It was thought to be a curse when during the engagement someone, usually an enemy of the couple, «έριχνε τα κορίτσια»,¹⁶⁹ as it was taken for granted that when they got married they would only have girls, and thus endless worries. The fear of having been cursed by someone so that she would only give birth to females made one of the so-called witches in «Οι Μάγισσες» practise witchcraft in order to break the spell. Hence, the fear of such a curse defines the character's actions within the story. The parents and the relatives of the couple were in the position «να της ρίξουν τα παληκάρια» so that she would give birth, as they believed, only to male offspring.¹⁷⁰ Papdiamantis mentions in «Λαμπριάτικος Ψάλτης» that on his island the majority of families had girls instead of the wished-for sons.

Θυγατέρας, το άφθονον τούτο προϊόν του τόπου -και της ιερατικής
εγγάμου τάξεως μάλιστα- τού είχεν αφήσει πλησμονήν η μακαρίτισσα
η πρεσβυτέρα, πέντε τον αριθμό, ας είχαν ζωήν, οπού δεν έπαυαν
αενάως να μεγαλώνουν, να μην αβασκαθούν. (2, 517).

What can be derived from the whole chapter is that the writer, throughout his novels and short stories, presents the whole life-cycle of women from the day they are born until the day they die. Consequently, we can easily form a picture of what their lives used to be like. The writer describes their social position very clearly, as well as their position in the family. A comparative reading of his oeuvre, with studies referring to nineteenth-century Greek society, proves that Papdiamantis presents, in his writings, the

¹⁶⁸ Women would try different kinds of rituals in order to give birth to male offspring. See G. Regas, op.cit., p. 49.

¹⁶⁹ 3, 234.

¹⁷⁰ G. Regas, op.cit., p. 241.

prevailing attitude towards particular matters concerning the female population; parents greeted the birth of daughters with laments and mourning because they could foresee what sort of lives the little infants would have by the time they undertake duties. They could also anticipate how this would affect their own lives and the lives of the rest of the family.

As their childhood did not exceed the fourteenth year of age, parents had to start worrying about the marriage of their daughters from a very early stage. Certainly their endowment, for which they had basically to give away their property and remain without anything almost, began causing headaches soon after their birth.

From the moment they got married, sometimes with an incompetent or very old husband, women had to tolerate their husbands' imperfections, and if it were the case, their mothers-in-law's censorship as well. The duties of women inside marriage were very much like those they used to have before getting married. The only difference was that they had the responsibility of not only looking after their parents, but also their own families, usually consisting of many children. There was no mercy for them, since it was thought to be their obligation to be on the alert twenty-four hours a day.

Papadiamantis seems to acknowledge women's contribution to and importance in the family. It is for this reason that he dedicates a considerable part of his work to presenting in such detail, and to such an extent, the duties and obligations women had towards their families and, by extension, to society. The writer, however, avoids a critical examination of the topics to which he refers and therefore his views can be seen only indirectly through the expressions he uses to present each topic related to marriage and maternity. The details mentioned emerge mainly from the short stories; the novels, being part of the writer's early literary output, contain scant information in regard to the topics examined in this chapter. However, the short stories help us to reconstruct the role and the position of women in nineteenth-century Greek society. Undoubtedly, Papadiamantis' oeuvre constitutes an additional source, providing folkloric and sociological information in regard to women's moral obligations and responsibilities within the framework of marriage and maternity, and therefore it may be considered as reflective of the society of his time. Nevertheless, direct critical examination of customs and morals was not his main

concern, since they were used only as the background to his heroes' lives, which were always subject to the restrictions this background dictated.

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN'S DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION

Having examined the morals and customs, which formed the background defining and influencing the behaviour and actions of Papadiamantis' characters, as well as the position of women in the family and society, we shall proceed in the first part of this chapter with the examination of the female characters in respect of their physical appearance, and in the second part with their behavioural characteristics. The importance of examining the aforementioned topics derives from the fact that the physical appearance or the character traits of a hero bear direct influence on the rest of the characters, therefore on the plot and its development. He/she acts according to his or her personality, which either conforms, or transgresses the rules and norms society imposes. The examination we put forward is also important for the reason that no one before has systematically examined either the female external descriptions or the female behavioural characteristics of Papadiamantis' female characters.

a. Physical Description of Women

In Papadiamantis' fiction the female figure is seen from every side. Woman's external appearance and the complexity of her character was for Papadiamantis an appealing stimulus, since, as I have already mentioned, his family as well as his island background consisted mostly of women, thus he was provided with plenty of females for observation. The men on the island of Skiathos were quite few due to the fact that most of them were engaged at sea and consequently absent for long periods of time.

Papadiamantis had the opportunity to observe women from different points of view and represent them in his short stories by emphasizing, according to his purposes, either their external or character traits. G. Ioannou holds the view that Papadiamantis' ability to describe the female figure was, amongst other reasons, due to his curiosity

about the opposite sex.¹⁷¹ G. Ioannou continues by saying that, along with his ‘crafty’ friends, he observed women, when they were preoccupied with their washing by the sea, when he was a youngster in Skiathos. While performing this task, the women’s posture was quite revealing, exciting the boys’ curiosity about the female body, which they examined closely. They could listen to the women conversing with each other on many different matters. They could also watch the young shepherd girls wandering around. What the above statement suggests is that the writer experienced in his own way the women he portrayed. My opinion, however, in regard to G. Ioannou’s suggestion, is that Papdiamantis did not necessarily observe in real life the women he described since the descriptions provided in the novels and short stories might very well constitute imaginary projections.

In our effort to comment on the physical appearance of women we shall take into consideration N. Dimitriadou’s classification in regard to the female descriptions occurring in Papdiamantis’ stories. For the purposes of this chapter we shall comment only on the first type of the classification made, where the external characteristics dominate.¹⁷²

Starting with the first type, which refers solely to external characteristics, we shall comment on the facial as well as corporal descriptions of young and old women. This analysis with regard to women’s external appearance, will reveal how elements of nature help to formulate a description, how the age factor defines the variety of descriptions, the function of description in the plot, the language used and how a description is constructed.

¹⁷¹ See G. Ioannou, «Επιζωγραφισμένης εικόνας αποκατάσταση» in Φώτα Ολόφωτα: Ένα αφιέρωμα στον Παπαδιαμάντη και τον κόσμο του, Epimelia: N.D. Triantaphyllopoulos, Elliniko Ke Istoriko Archeio. Athens, 1981, p. 82.

¹⁷²The second type refers only to internal characteristics, hence it structures the ‘ethos’ of the story’s protagonist; and the third combines external and internal characteristics. The last two categories deal mainly with the inner features of the characters. My view is that we cannot name as inner features behavioural characteristics which are formed each time according to the social context in which the heroes act. Therefore our examination in regard to the characterisation of women in the second part of this chapter will not be based on N. Dimitriadou’s second and third category mentioned above. N. Dimitriadou, «Παπαδιαμαντικές Προσωπογραφίες» in Φώτα Ολόφωτα, op.cit., Athens, 1981, p. 67.

The writer presents women dressed, half-dressed or even naked according to the needs of the plot. In the following example he chooses to present clothing details as they are of interest concerning the progression of the story.

.. της δε Κατίνας, της νοστιμούλας, έτυχε να λείπη το απάνω κομβίον του λευκού περιστηθίου της, το δε υποκάμισόν της ήτο άνευ περιλαίμιου, και εντεύθεν εφαινετο γυμνός ο τράχηλός της και μέρος του στήθους της. («Ο Καλόγερος» 2, 334).

In the above example the given details in reference to the missing button and the absence of the ruff from Katina's shirt justify the old lady's concerns for Father Samuel. It could be observed of her that

... είχεν εξερεθισθή εκ της εγγύς επαφής και ομιλίας μετά των δύο νεανίδων... (2, 334).

The area of the neck, the scapula, the bosom and the waist, and by extension the whole body, is 'praised' in Papadiamantis' descriptions. The quotation to follow emphasizes these particular parts of the body:

Έβλεπα την αμαυράν και όμως χρυσίζουσαν αμυδρώς κόμην της, τον τράχηλόν της τον εύγραμμον, τας λεύκας ως γάλα ωμοπλάτας, τους βραχίονας τους τορνευτούς, όλα συγχεόμενα, μελιχρά και ονειρώδη εις το **φέγγος της σελήνης**. Διέβλεπα την οσφύν της την ευλύγιστον, τα ισχία της, τας κνήμας, τους πόδας της, **μεταξύ σκιάς και φωτός**, βαπτιζόμενα εις το κύμα. Εμάντενα το στέρνον της, τους κόλπους της, γλαφυρούς, προέχοντας, δεχομένους όλας της αύρας τάς ριπάς και της θαλάσσης το θείον άρωμα... («Όνειρο στο κύμα» 3, 269).

(emphasis added)

In the above description, which in my opinion is one of the best, it is necessary to comment on how elements of nature are involved with the cited descriptions, as well as the function of shadow and light. The involvement of nature, and particularly the sea, in regard to Papadiamantis' portraits, and by extension his characters' psychological state is a feature of the romanticism which was dominant in Greek literature from 1830 to 1880.¹⁷³

The details mentioned in reference to Moschoula's nude body¹⁷⁴ not only enhance the title of the short story, which refers to Moschoula featuring her as a dream among the waves, but also explain the feelings aroused by it in the shepherd's soul which determined his behaviour and therefore his actions. Moschoula's nude body under the pale light of the moon is definitely a temptation for the young shepherd, who felt some kind of fear when looking at Moschoula's body. A temptation that was not to be indulged in, only admired from a distance. In this case the main character of the story, who in this case is the same person as the narrator, is directly observing the female person described and it is through his own words that the description is provided.¹⁷⁵

Nature combined with light and colours creates very beautiful and vivid images, reinforcing the description provided. The following picture is an example of how moonlight colours the waves by night, making Moschoula's silky body bewitch any male.

Την ανεγνώρισα πάραυτα εις το φως της σελήνης το μελιχρόν, το περιαργυρούν όλην την άπειρον οθόνην του γαληνιώντος πελάγους, και κάμνον να χορεύουν φωσφορίζοντα τα κύματα. Είχε βυθισθή άπαξ καθώς ερρίφθη εις την θάλασσαν, είχε βρέξει την κόμην της, από τους βοστρύχους της οποίας ως ποταμός από μαργαρίτας έρρεε το νερόν, και είχεν αναδύσει. (3, 268).

¹⁷³ E. Costantinides, «Η παράδοση του ευρωπαϊκού ρομαντισμού» in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου για τον Αλέξανδρο Παπαδιαμάντη, Skiathos 20-24 September 1991. Athens; Domos, 1996, p. 399.

¹⁷⁴ «Όνειρο στο κύμα» 3, 268.

¹⁷⁵ G. Farinou-Malamatari, in the framework of studying the different forms under which a description might appear, pointed out that the main character or the narrator of the story provides us with the majority of the descriptions of human beings. She also pointed out that a description of a human figure could be given in rare cases through a sequence of a dialogue as well. For that see «Ο Αβασκαμός του Αγά» 3, 142-143, where Aghas' description derives from a dialogue (gossiping) among women. See G. Farinou-Malamatari, Αφηγηματικές Τεχνικές στον Παπαδιαμάντη 1887-1910. Athens: Kedros, 1987, pp. 111-112.

In addition, the use of similes deriving from nature aim chiefly at enhancing the whole female image. In the following example, the image of Lalio is enhanced by the moonlight, which sets off her facial characteristics, in the sight of which made Mathios feel shy.

Εκείνη, εις την πρύμνην καθημένη, εδέχετο κατ' όψιν το ωχρόν φώς
της σελήνης, το οποίον επέχριεν ως με αργυρόν κόνιν τους αβρούς
χαρακτήρας του ωραίου προσώπου της. («Η Νοσταλγός» 3, 48).

Young good-looking women like Lalio in the above example tend to have blond hair, which shines. Furthermore, their skin is white, smooth and silky. Their faces blush, their cheeks redden, as well as their lips, along with their sweet smiles. Men get truly discomposed when looking into their big eyes, which have either dark or light colours. Lalio's dazzling beauty was enough to arouse Mathios' feelings of love towards her.

Η λάμψις των βαθέων και μαύρων οφθαλμών της έκαιεν αμαυρά, υπό
τας καμαρωτάς οφρύς, και τα πορφυρά χείλη της ερρόδιζον επί της
ωχράς και διαυγούς χροιάς των παρειών της, αίτινες εβάπτοντο μ'
ελαφρόν ερύθημα εις τον παραμικρόν κόπον ή εις την ελαχίστην
συγκίνησιν. Αλλά το λεπτόν και ήρεμον πυρ των οφθαλμών της έκαιε
την καρδίαν του νέου. («Η Νοσταλγός» 3, 56).

At this point I would like to comment on Papadiamantis' way of presenting young women's hair. The majority of his descriptions illustrate his preference for the way young women arrange their hair. An example of this is the description of Mati's hair in «Θέρος-Έρος», her beautiful hair adding beauty to her whole external appearance.

Η Ματή... είχε ξενικά διευθετημένην την κόμην της... η πλούσια
ξανθή κόμη της εφαινετο σχεδόν όλη, μέχρι της οσφύος κατερχομένη
εις δύο παχείας πλεξίδας, ως σταλακτίτας χρυσούς. (2, 184).

What one deduces from the above descriptions is that Papadiamantis' spontaneous lyricism seems to well up in the face of youthful female beauty.¹⁷⁶ All of the aforementioned descriptions do serve a certain purpose within the stories, as they influence accordingly the behaviour and actions of the characters who see the females described. Moreover, we observe that the descriptions are given either by the narrator of the story or by the protagonist himself, who may be the same person as the narrator. As for the natural elements, when they are present in the description they contribute to the creation of a sensuous atmosphere and enhance the description itself.

As we observe from the descriptions already cited, Papadiamantis proved to be well cognizant of the female body. It was said that his descriptions, especially the longer ones, give to the so-called «ψυχρή» katharevousa a more poetic style, which in a sense breaks the strict borders of katharevousa, providing a feeling of rhythm and harmony. According to K. Liapis «Ο πρωτομάστορας του ελληνικού πεζογραφήματος πήρε στην άκρη της πέννας του μια άνοστη γλώσσα και της έδωσε συγκινησιακή πνοή...»¹⁷⁷

Sometimes consecutive words give a very brief description of a female character as is shown in the following example:

η Μελπομένη καστανή, κοντούλα, ευτραφής, χλωμή, αισθηματική,
ρωμαντική, η Κυριακούλα, στακερόξανθος, υψηλή, λιγνή, ισχνή με
ζωηροτάτους ηδυπαθείς οφθαλμούς ...
(«Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά» 2, 307).

Albeit the description of the two women is very brief and accomplished by the sequencing of adjectives, the writer gives only the characteristics which are thought to be indispensable and helpful to the narration. In the above example the characteristics of the two women are linked to their attitudes, which appear later in the story. Melpomeni being short and plump with a degree of sensitivity did not reject any man's invitation to dance;

¹⁷⁶ See G.N. Kalamatianos, «Ο Λυρισμός του Παπαδιαμάντη» in *Ελληνική Δημιουργία*, Αλέξανδρος Παπαδιαμάντης, Αφιέρωμα vol. 10, no. 117, Dec. 1952, p. 708.

¹⁷⁷ See K. Liapis, «Η μοναδικότητα του Παπαδιαμάντη» in *Σκιάθος*, Αφιέρωμα στον Αλέξανδρο Παπαδιαμάντη, vol. 5, April-June, 1977, p. 54.

whereas Kyriakoula with the powerful eyesight had the ability to make whoever she wanted ask her for a dance.

Non-analytical descriptions such as the previous and the following ones are not tiring and, what is more, in one or two sentences all the main points are given in such a way that the attention of the reader is focused on the features which are thought worthy of note. This is exemplified in the description of Splenoyiannis' wife, for whom few, but essential, features are given in the framework of the narrative.

...η σύζυγος του, ωραία, τριακοντούτις, υψηλή, ροδόχρους,
γλυκύτατη, με μεθυστικόν το βλέμμα και το μειδίαμα...
(«Οι Χαλασοχώρηδες» 2, 417).

All the above cited adjectives not only form a very beautiful image of the described woman but, furthermore, justify the phrase «κρίμα στη γυναίκα!» which comes at the end of the above paragraph, because she was married to Splenoyiannis, who was on the contrary «ισχνός, κίτρινος, μ' εσβεσμένα όμματα, προξενών οίκτον» (2, 416).

G. Farinou-Malamatari claims that the above is a parallelism of two antithetical portraits, which suggest the way they should be read.¹⁷⁸ Consequently, the reader makes an impulsive comparison between these two antithetical portraits of Splenoyiannis and Splenoyiannaina in his mind, since the writer presents them consecutively. Hence, the phrase «κρίμα στη γυναίκα!» acquires an intense meaning with a sense of irony, and the function of the adjectives is neither decorative nor explanatory.

The use of verbs is also significant; take for example Polymnia's description in «Ολόγυρα στη λίμνη», where each verb makes the description even more vivid and complete, adding to it details which provide the reader with the opportunity to form her picture in his mind in all its magnificence. However, the description itself justifies the fact that the two males of the short story «Ολόγυρα στη λίμνη» could not remain indifferent when seeing such a beautiful woman as Polymnia, and thus were unable to

¹⁷⁸ See G. Farinou-Malamatari, op.cit., p. 151.

refuse whatever she asked them to do. Polymnia's imposing presence is given by the following quotation:

Οποῖον λεπτοφυές σώμα **εσκέπαζεν** ἡ λινομέταξος ορφνή εσθής!
 Πῶς **διεγράφετο** ἀρμονικῶς ἡ μορφή της με χνοῶδη πάλλευκον
 χρώτα καὶ τὰ ἐρυθρά μήλα τῶν παρειῶν, με τὸν μελίχρυσον λαιμόν
 καὶ με τὸ ελαφρῶς κολπούμενον στήθος της! Πόσον ἀβραὶ ἦσαν αἱ
 χεῖρες, καὶ πόσον μελωδική **ἐπαλλεν** εἰς τὸ οὖς σου ἡ θεσπεσία φωνή
 της! **Ἡ** ξανθοπλόκαμος κόμη ἀτημέλητος ὀλίγον, ὥς νὰ **εβιάσθη** νὰ
καλλωπισθῇ διὰ νὰ **εξέλθῃ** καὶ **απολαύσῃ** τὴν θαλασσίαν αὐραν καὶ
 τὸν τερπνόν της ἀμμουδιάς περίπατον, **αερίζετο** ἀπὸ τὴν πνοήν του
 Βορρά, καὶ τὸ ὄμμα της, με τὰ μαύρα ματόκλαδα ὡς πτεροφόρος
 οιστός, σ' **εσαΐτευε** γλυκὰ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν. (2, 389-390).

(emphasis added)

Often, we get the feeling from certain descriptions that the woman is a delicate creature, who cannot be captured by anyone. She remains something that can only be admired, forbidden to be touched. A vision that appears for a few seconds and soon disappears, leaving behind a sweet remembrance:

Ἡ πρώτη διαβάσα μορφή ἦτο περικαλλής. Ἦτο τὸ πρόσωπον της
 Αἴμας, λάμπον ὡς ἀστήρ, καὶ τὸ σῶμα αὐτῆς ευωδιάζον ὡς κρίνον.
 Τοιαύτην τὴν ἐβλεπεν ὁ Μάχτος εἰς τοὺς ονείρους του.
(Ἡ Γυφτοπούλα 1,421).

Aima could not be more than a vision for Mahtos, due to the fact that he could not find the courage to express his feelings towards her. The fact that he had not become acquainted with her is made even more intense by the similes describing her face; a face shining like a star and smelling like a lily.

Papadiamantis' portraits do not only include young women of exquisite beauty; old women are portrayed as well. They are usually fat and short, or very tall and bony. Since they are old they have wrinkles on their face; a face that has lost its freshness very early, usually because of hardships. The metaphors and similes tend to emphasize such descriptions in such a way that the reader easily accepts the writer's comment, usually ironical, which follows them. For example, when Papadiamantis presents mother superior Pia, he writes:

Η μήτηρ Πία ωμοίαζεν ουχί απροσφυώς με άγριόν τι άνθος... άνθος λευκόν, άοσμον και άμορφον. Το όλον του σώματός της είχε σχήμα κώδωνος. Δεν είχε λαιμόν, δεν είχεν οσφύν, δεν είχε πύελον. Τα κάτω μόνον του σώματός της ήσαν πλατύτερα των άνω, αλλ' αγνοείται αν τούτο ήτο του σώματος ή του ενδύματος ίδιον...
(Η Γυφτοπούλα 1,538).

The writer in the above quotation, by the use of adjectives, the similes and sense of irony emphasizes how fat mother Pia was, not only with a simple word, but by describing, various parts of her body, and, on top of that, by pointing out that it was impossible to make out her figure.

Δια να την περιλάβη τις με το βλέμμα, ηναγκάζετο να χαράξη εις το κενόν καμπύλα γεωμετρικά σχήματα, και πάλιν θα ευρίσκετο εις αμηχανίαν αν ακριβώς επετύγγανε της αντιλήψεως. (1, 538).

We could say that her appearance as a whole, along with her strict looks, constitute a signalling board, which is suggestive of her occupation as mother superior having authority over the rest of the nuns. At the same time, the fact that further on the writer refers to her strong dislike of men does not surprise the reader.

Another female character, who comes under the category of 'old women', is the mother of the two gypsies in the historical novel Η Γυφτοπούλα, who is a wrinkled sixty-year-old woman...

με δύο μεγάλους κυνόδοντας κρεμαμένους εκ της άνω σιαγόνος. Είτε ήνοιγε το στόμα, είτε κλειστόν είχεν αυτό, οι δύο κυνόδοντες ουδέποτε ηδύναντο να κρυβώσιν. Ότε εμειδία (μειδιάμα δ' εννοούμεν τον συνήθη αυτή μορφασμόν του προσώπου), επροξένει τρόπον εις την μικράν προστατευομένην της. (1, 372-373).

It is obvious that neither mother Pia nor the gypsies' mother had red lips or delightful smiles. Their role in the story, however, would not require such looks, especially for the gypsy woman who was exhausted by the hardships of life.

Aunt-Kyparissou in «Χρήστος Μηλιόνης» is also a seventy-year-old woman...

ρικνή, κεκυφία και απαίσιος. Το μειδιάμά της, δι' ου εξήτει να θωπεύση την κόρην, ενεποίει φρικίασιν. (2, 14).

Her looks are linked to her malicious untrustworthy character.¹⁷⁹ Hence, there is an apparent connection between her appearance and her character. Her smile, with which she tries to cajole Vaso in order to lend credibility to her story so that she can get her out of the house, might, in a way have been convincing for Vaso, but gives one the shivers.

Papadiamantis also presents antithetical portraits of young and old women in alteration. An example of such presentation is the description of Augousta, while waiting for her husband to come back, along with her maid Sentina, who kept her company. Although Augousta looked like a lily and all the similes used enhance her beauty, Sentina, on the other hand, was «υψηλή και οστεώδης κόρη τριάκοντα και οκτώ ετών, πελιδνή και αντιαισθητική».¹⁸⁰ In spite of her less beautiful presence, she was devoted to her mistress and was even ready to become a spy for her sake, since she was not fond of her master, Mouchras. She is described in such a way and attributed such positive characteristics that the sympathy of the reader towards her is aroused.

¹⁷⁹ 2, 13.

¹⁸⁰ Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών 1, 150.

What we can derive from the above examples is that the age factor is taken into consideration when formulating the description. Therefore, young and old women are described accordingly. Papadiamantis' preference for young women is obvious, since they are attributed the nicest features as compared to the old women. Young women usually tend to have white skin, long light-coloured hair, very delicate facial as well as bodily characteristics.¹⁸¹ The younger a woman is the nicer the appearance she has. As she gets older she is attributed with adjectives such as portly or skinny, short, and pale. When she is old enough she is attributed unflattering comments related either to her facial or bodily characteristics. This is due to the author's admiration for and attraction to the young body full of life. When this body starts losing its freshness and youthfulness a corresponding description is required. A number of descriptions, short or long, possess essential features which may constitute a unity with the aspects of character of the protagonists described.¹⁸² Therefore the external appearance may suggest character traits of the person described.

In any case, the description of a woman, young or old, has a certain function in the narrative. A description, besides justifying the comments which follow the consecutive descriptive words,¹⁸³ is also related to the plot as a whole. Here it is of great importance if the described character is a minor or a major one. The description of a minor character is usually brief,¹⁸⁴ or sometimes deliberately longer if the narrative requires it.¹⁸⁵ In regard to a major character, the whole narrative evolves with her as reference point; therefore it is natural to have a longer description devoted to her.¹⁸⁶ In some cases, however, it is not in itself the length of description that decides the

¹⁸¹ «Ο Σημαδιακός» 2, 109, «Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 184.

¹⁸² I shall make a detailed analysis of this statement in the second part of this chapter.

¹⁸³ 3, 56.

¹⁸⁴ Augousta's maid Sentina in Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών 1, 150. Papa-Kyriakos' wife in «Εξοχική Λαμπρή».

¹⁸⁵ Mother-Filikiti requires a more detailed description because of the intimate relationship she had with the main character in the story, Augousta. See Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών 1, 162. Elpiniki and Katina whose appearance tempted Father Samuel in «Ο Καλόγερος» 2, 334, 337.

¹⁸⁶ Mati in «Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 184. Flora in «Η Βλαχοπούλα» 2, 369. Moschoula in «Όνειρο στο κύμα» 3, 264, 269-270.

importance of a person but also the power conveyed by a few lines, or even a few words, characterising her.¹⁸⁷

As well as descriptions of females, Papadiamantis also presents male characters. Although not described to the extent female characters are, the writer delineates the features required by the narration.¹⁸⁸ The repetition of certain features allows us to form an idea of the external appearance of a man coming from Skiathos. Men are usually described as dark coloured due to their work in the fields as farmers or shepherds.¹⁸⁹ They are tall, strong and muscular,¹⁹⁰ especially if they are connected with the sea.

The writer does not show any preference for young or old men. His admiration is devoted completely to the female sex, thus his descriptions of males are not so impressive. A comparative reading of a male and a female description taken from two different contemporary short stories, «Ο Αμερικάνος»¹⁹¹ and «Η Βλαχοπούλα»,¹⁹² supports the above statement. Although both short stories' titles refer to the protagonists of the narration, Flora's description in «Η Βλαχοπούλα» is more imposing than Ioannis' in «Ο Αμερικάνος». This conclusion does not derive from the description itself, but from the comments which come immediately after it. In the case of Flora, despite the fact that the description of her is not as detailed and rich as, for example, that of Polymnia in «Ολόγυρα στη λίμνη», the expressions of admiration, Α! οποία ποιητική εμφάνις! Α! περικαλλής μορφή! Α! όνειρον! Α! οπτασία! Ω! καλλίμορφος χωριατοπούλα,¹⁹³ which follow imply the sensualism which in Polymnia's case is achieved by the description itself and not the comments which follow it. This difference between the descriptions of males and females is due to Papadiamantis' preference and admiration for the young female.

An overall assessment of Papadiamantis' descriptions would be that all of them serve certain purposes in the narrative and that the majority of female characters whom

¹⁸⁷ Aima in *Η Γυφοπούλα* 1, 421. Aunt-Kyparissou in «Χρήστος Μηλιόνης» 2, 14. «Η Νοσταλγός» 3, 47-48.

¹⁸⁸ «Τρελή Βραδιά» 3, 315, 319, 321.

¹⁸⁹ «Φτωχός Άγιος» 2, 216-217.

¹⁹⁰ «Στο Χριστό στο Κάστρο» 2, 281.

¹⁹¹ «Ο Αμερικάνος» 2, 259.

¹⁹² «Η Βλαχοπούλα» 2, 369.

¹⁹³ 2, 370.

the writer describes in detail appear in his island short stories.¹⁹⁴ The youthful beauty of a woman, or in some cases the ugliness of an older one, has a direct effect on the other characters who take part in the action, especially the males.¹⁹⁵ For example, it is easy for a young or old man to fall in love with a beautiful young woman or get carried away for a few moments¹⁹⁶ by their own fantasies in a way that the story will focus on.

Young good-looking women tend to have blond hair and white silky skin, while old women tend to be either tall and bony or short and fat. In any case, however, the image of a woman is reinforced by similes that derive from nature or from metaphors. In each description, long or short, the narrator presents only the characteristics which are thought to be indispensable and helpful for the narration. Therefore, the reader is focused on the features to which the narrator wants to draw attention: features that may be linked to the attitude of the characters that appear in the story if the narrative requires it.

Each description, whether brief or detailed, along with the behaviour and actions of each character, provides the reader with a complete picture of the characters involved in each narrative. Although the descriptions seem in the first place to interrupt the development of the narrative, they do exactly the opposite, in fact, by highlighting the character whose presence and actions affect the behaviour and actions of the rest of the characters in the narrative. Therefore, the descriptions do not have a decorative purpose, since they contribute to the coherence of the narrative. According to C.P. Cavafy Papadiamantis' descriptions are given with great dexterity.

«Με φαίνεται ότι είναι λαμπρά ασκημένος στις περιγραφές την
τριπλήν ικανότητα το ποια πρέπει να λεχθούν, το ποια πρέπει να
παρλειφθούν, και εις ποια πρέπει να σταματηθή η προσοχή».¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ G. Ioannou suggests that the women whom the writer met during his stay in Athens did not make that impression on him, since they were far removed from his teenage pure visions. What is more, the ease of getting acquainted with them, and thus becoming knowledgeable about their characters, kept him favourably disposed towards the women of his island, as they were actually the first to move him. See G. Ioannou, «Επιζωγραφισμένης εικόνας αποκατάσταση» in *Φώτα Ολόφωτα*, op.cit., p. 82.

¹⁹⁵ «Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 184, «Ολόγυρα στη λίμνη» 2, 389, «Όνειρο στο κύμα».

¹⁹⁶ In the view of the provocative appearance of the two sisters Father Samuel was carried away in his thoughts «Ο Καλόγερος» 2, 334. The schoolboys watching the girls playing could not pay attention to class «Ωχ Βασανάκια» 3, 13-15.

¹⁹⁷ C. P. Cavafy, «Κριτική Ανθολογία» in *Νέα Εστία*, vol. 30, no. 355, 1941, p. 177.

According to G. Farinou-Malamatari the descriptions attest to the writer's 'painting abilities', since a literary description of a person is generally compared to a work of art. Both literary description and traditional representational painting portray external reality and thus, in this aspect literature, can be linked with portraiture. The difference lies in the means used by each one, as well as how someone conceives a written description or understands a painting of a person. The more detailed a painting or a portrait is, the more it conveys, whereas the more detailed a written description of a person is the less easily apprehended it is.¹⁹⁸ In view of all this, we can conclude that if Papdiamantis was devoting longer descriptions to characters, one might have been lost in the details and at the same time the text would have been too cumbersome.

Through the development of his writing Papdiamantis provides us with the most beautiful descriptions. Polymnia in «Ολόγυρα στη λίμνη», Lalio in « Η Νοσταλγός», Moschoula in «Όνειρο στο κύμα», and of course Frangoyiannou in «Η Φόνισσα», are some of the characters of his mature stories who come directly to someone's mind when referring to Papdiamantis.

¹⁹⁸ If the description of a hero is long and detailed then the reader will find a difficulty in conceiving the description as a whole. A brief description is more preferable since the reader himself is able to fill in the missing features unintentionally. G. Farinou-Malamatari, op.cit., pp. 149-150.

b. Female Characterisation and Social Behaviour

Apart from portraying women's external appearance, Papdiamantis presents them in a way that also reveals their characters. Negative features, or in other words shortcomings, such as craftiness, maliciousness, jealousy, mockery, as well as positive ones like prudence, modesty and diligence, are the distinguishing characteristics of women who move through Papdiamantis' novels and short stories. The writer's presentation of women's characteristics is often drawn from his experience and close contact with women of his immediate circle in his capacity as son, brother or neighbour. In other cases the characters he presents are not objects of direct observation, but products of the creative imagination.

Papdiamantis presents women who live and act either on his island or in Athens. The way they behave to each other, or to their husbands, and the way they confront certain difficulties, defines women's social behaviour in the roles they are allotted in the plot. The aim of this chapter is to present the female negative and positive features, as they appear in the novels and the short stories, and to comment on women's behaviour as it accordingly unfolds in the stories. In brief, this chapter will refer in detail to the behavioural characteristics presented in the stories, the formation of which depends on the social context.

My view is that the social behaviour of women as it appears in Papdiamantis' fiction is not far from stereotypical female behaviour. The difference lies in the frequency with which certain female features, constituting the stereotype appear in the narrative, and their significance for the plot. We would suggest that the malevolent comments, gossiping, curiosity and quarrelling,¹⁹⁹ which appear in great frequency, mainly in the short stories and less in the novels, are some of these features, that they have an effect on the characters' relationships and actions in the narrative, and thus on the plot as a whole.

¹⁹⁹ A study was made by M. Mike in regard to gossip, as it appears in the stories of several Greek writers. Papdiamantis is one of them. See «Τα Απίλωτα και δύσφημα στόματα του κόσμου», in Η Λογοτεχνία και οι προϋποθέσεις της. Τιμητικό αφιέρωμα στην Τζίνα Πολίτη. Thessalonike: University Studio Press, 1999, pp. 199-223.

Before examining this point further, I would like to clarify that gossip in the framework of community life is likely to be linked with criticism, accusation, slander and speaking ill of others, most of the time in a crafty way. *Ponirid*, (craftiness), as can be seen in Papdiamantis' stories, along with gossip, were capable of disrupting relationships and causing trouble through actions which were disapproved of.²⁰⁰ Gossip is mainly caused by curiosity and most of the time results in quarrelling. In addition, the nature of gossip is determined by the nature of the value system. The following example shows how malevolent comments can affect people's lives, making simple things a lot more complicated.

Κατόπιν από την πρώτην προξενιάν, μετά πολλά λόγια και «μαναφούκια»²⁰¹ και σκάνδαλα, ύστερον από πολλά ψί-ψί και πολλές αβανιές και κατηγορίες, αφού ραδιούργα γύναια έβαζαν στα λόγια τον γαμβρόν και τες συμπεθέρες και έψαλλαν πολλά ανάποδα εγκώμια εναντίον της πενθεράς και της νύμφης, κατωρθώθη τέλος να ορισθή η εσπέρα του Σαββάτου, της δευτέρας ημέρας των Χριστουγέννων, δια να «δέσουν πανδρειές». («Τα Συχαρίκια» 3, 31).

The above quotation explains the delay in setting a date for Myrsouda's wedding. The secrecy her mother was seeking is perfectly justified by the effort of the intriguers to break down the possible marriage in a sneaky way. Therefore, in this case the malevolent comments defined Myrsouda's mother's decision to proceed with the official engagement late at night, so that the curious neighbours would not see her and her escort,

²⁰⁰ In my view '*ponirid*' can be seen under two aspects. The first one is linked to malevolent gossip and has the ability to subvert normal social relationships. The second aspect of '*ponirid*' is attainable on a more personal level. Women who wield things in a crafty way aim at achieving something for their own benefit without any disruption or causing trouble to anyone. In this case '*ponirid*' has as synonyms the words *dodge* or *wile*, that is *kolpo* in Greek, instead of *craftiness* or *cunning*. Vaso disguised herself as a man in order to escape from the harem of Chalil-Aghas in «Χρήστος Μηλιόνης» 2, 58. Aunt-Skevo pretended also to be a man, because that was the only way for her to get a job as a guard, «βαρδιάνος» on the island of Tsougriá in order to find out if her son was alive or dead, since he suffered from cholera: «Βαρδιάνος στα σπόρκα» 2, 577. Frangoyiannou, when she was still young, used to steal a very small amount of money from her father's savings, so small that he could not suspect his daughter was doing that: «Η Φόνισσα» 3, 430.

²⁰¹ The word «μαναφούκια» means false accusations, which in ordinary Greek is translated as «συκοφαντίες».

while heading to the groom's house. In the narrow confines of the island, however, nothing could be kept as a secret, in view of the fact that,

Εἰς τοὺς μαχαλάδες, καταλάβετε, εἰς τοὺς μικροὺς τόπους, ἡ μία γειτόνισσα εἶναι κατάσκοπος τῆς ἄλλης γειτόνισσας. Οἱ τοῖχοι ἀκροῶνται, τὰ παράθυρα βλέπουν, αἱ θύραι μυρίζονται, οἱ «πετεινοί» τῶν καπνοδόχων σείουν τὰς λοφιάς με τοιοῦτον τρόπον ὥς νὰ κατανεύουν τάχα ὅτι ἐνόησαν. (3, 31).

Several times the malevolent comment is made openly for all the neighbours to hear; this is especially true of someone like Kyra-Kostaina, whose characteristic habit was disparagement.

Τότε ἀπ' ἀντικρὺ μία τῶν γειτονισσῶν, ἡ κυρα-Κώσταινα, ἀγαπῶσα τὴν κακολογίαν, ὅσον καὶ πᾶσα ἄλλη, ἔλεγε: -Νὰ οἱ παπαδιές! Καὶ ὁ διαβάτης, ὅστις ἦτο ἀπὸ ἄλλην συνοικίαν καὶ τυχαίως συνέβαινε νὰ περνᾷ ἀπ' ἐκεῖ, ἀκούων τὴν λέξιν ταύτην, ἐγύριζε με ἀπορίαν πρὸς τὸ μέρος τῆς μεσήλικος γυναικός... («Ο Καλόγερος» 2, 315).

In the above example we are 'told' that Kyra-Kostaina was keen on making malicious comments about others. Therefore, her characterisation is defined directly by an authoritative narrator and we as readers are called upon to accept it. Her ironical malicious comment «Νὰ οἱ παπαδιές» given at the very beginning predisposes the reader to the type of the relationship the two sisters had with Father Samuel.

Someone would expect that gossip would occur only in a small society like that of Skiathos, where whatever disrupts the silent and peaceful village atmosphere whips up the curiosity of all the women around and signals the beginning of gossip. However, in Athens, although it was the capital and had a population of 250.000,²⁰² gossip could easily take place as well, especially in the inner courtyards of the buildings where it was

²⁰² E. Varika, op.cit., p. 73.

impossible to keep any secrets. Consequently, gossip had the same possibility of spreading, either in the capital or on the island.

In the story «Οι Χαλασοχώρηδες» the neighbours were easily able to hear the quarrel between Splenoyiannis and Splenoyiannaina, which arose from their different political beliefs. Thus, they provided the women of the neighbourhood with the opportunity to start gossiping about the cause of the quarrel. In the following conversation we can see how, indirectly, the women who participated in the conversation were ‘shown’ as having curiosity as one of their traits.²⁰³

- Τ’ ακούς, γειτόνισσα;
 - Τι ν’ ακούσω, γειτόνισσα;
 - Να, που μαλώνουν, τ’ ανδρόγυνο.
 - Γιατί τάχα;
 - Να, από άλλο κόμμα, είναι, λέει, ο άνδρας κι’ από άλλο η γυναίκα.
 - Μη χειρότερα.
 - Είναι και άλλα χειρότερα, γειτόνισσα;
- («Οι Χαλασοχώρηδες» 2, 416).

Quarrels, like the one above, constituted an amusement or an interesting interlude, someone could say, in the daily routine. When women were gathered together to do their washing by the sea, or met outside on their porches, or even at the bakery, due to the fact that their lives had nothing interesting to show, they found everything which deviated from the established norms notable, thus worthwhile enough to keep themselves ‘busy’ with. A picture of the women gathered together exchanging ‘information’ is given in the short story «Βαρδιάνοξ στα Σπόρκα». Justifiably, Aunt-Skeuo thought of the bakery as the proper place to search for the information she wanted.

²⁰³ The writer here presents curiosity by means of conversation. This is what S. Rimmon-Kenan names as an ‘indirect presentation’ of a trait when she talks about the basic types of textual indicators of character. See S. Rimmon-Kenan, *op.cit.*, p. 59-61.

Και εις τον φούρνον, όστις ήναπτε δις και τρις της ημέρας, συνηθορίζοντο όλαι αι γυναίκες της γειτονιάς... και ανεκοίνουν προς αλλήλας τα νέα της ημέρας, και ηρώτων και εμάνθανον και διηγούνται, και «αβγάτιζαν» και «απόσωναν».²⁰⁴ (2, 549).

Naturally, no one could make gossiping an accusation against women since beyond that they had nothing else to do to entertain themselves. ‘Social comment’ was an outlet for them. Although the writer presents women as mostly doing all the gossiping, he does not leave out the fact that men who had nothing better to do preoccupied themselves with gossip as well, when they were gathered at the coffee houses (2, 550).²⁰⁵

Women’s ‘tittle-tattle’ was not always so innocent, having as its sole purpose the satisfaction of curiosity. It could easily be harsh and full of rancour and all too easily provoke hatred and misunderstanding. This kind of gossiping had to do with what J. du Boulay calls ‘slander’ (κατηγορία) and involves the conscious will to harm another human being.²⁰⁶ Therefore, the act of slander was really horrible and capable of making a person truly unhappy and creating serious problems for him or her. Bad rumors could easily spread and the truth was often distorted, as well. In the case of Sophoula in the short story «Η φωνή του Δράκου» the old ladies of the village, «τα γραϊδια της γειτονιάς» (3, 608), after making calculations about Sophoula’s pregnancy, were led to the conclusion that Sophoula became pregnant during her husband’s absence.

Εντεύθεν σκάνδαλον και δυσφημία. Είτα επάνοδος του συζύγου, και διαζύγιον. Είπαν ότι η Σοφούλα είχε φέρει στον κόσμο το παιδίον αυτό με τον μικρόν θείον της, ένα συγγενή όστις επηγγέλλετο εν μέρει τον προστάτην διά τας δύο ορφανάς. (3, 608).

²⁰⁴ The word «αβγάτιζαν» means that they added inaccurate details to several matters. An equivalent phrase in Greek is «έκανε τον ψύλλο κάμηλο». The word «απόσωναν» means to cast aspersions on someone.

²⁰⁵ N. Dimitriadou points out that the coffee house was men’s domain and that it was equivalent to the bakery, which was women’s domain. See N. Dimitriadou, «Τα Σκιαθίτικα καφενεία» in *Παπαδιαμαντικά Τετράδια* no. 3, Athens: Domos, Spring, 1995, pp. 144-145.

²⁰⁶ See J. Du Boulay, ‘Gossip, friendship, and quarrels’ in *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village*, *op.cit.*, p. 203.

The spread of the above rumours cost her child the stigma of illegitimacy which resulted in his being mocked by children of the same age.²⁰⁷ The mocking made Kotsos suspect he was an illegitimate child, and as a result he asks for explanations from his mother and his aunt. He could even hear a voice coming from the dragon's cave calling him by the same nickname his friends used. In this short story we observe how malicious gossip may affect not only the life of one character in the narrative but also the lives of all the others related to him.

The so-called «γραῖδια της γειτονιάς» are also well known in the short stories for becoming involved in other people's lives in a devious way. The above phrase carries an ironical meaning, revealing Papadiamantis' dislike for the old women who have a word for things that have nothing to do with them. They were capable of meddling in affairs like matchmaking (προξενιό), and they had the ability to either make or break a match. It can be said that Kyra-Giorgoula was one of the so-called «γραῖδια της γειτονιάς» overhearing the conversation next door and waiting for the appropriate time to interfere.

Τι σας ειπ' αυτή; Μην ήρθε να σας φορτώση την τσούπα της; Τα
μάτια σου τέσσερα, Στάμο! Την ξέρετε τι παστρικά είναι η κόρη της;
Η πομπιωμένη, που κυλιότανε τόσα χρόνια στα ξένα σπίτια, μες στην
Αθήνα, και ποιος ξέρει τι μπομπές, τι ρεζιλίκια έπαθε... και τώρα
θέλει να μας κάμη την τίμια, να νοικοκυρευτή, κιόλας! Το νου σου,
Στάμο! Κοίταξε, μη σε καταφέρουν και σου τήνε φορτώσουνε.
(«Η Βλαχοπούλα» 2, 366-367).

In the above example, Giorgoula's speech is indicative of her traits. Giorgoula had a very good reason to prevent Old-Sarantis' sons from getting married and thus call off Old-Sideris' matchmaking. She knew that if his sons eventually got married, their father would have no reason to find a wife for himself, hence, her widowed sister would not have the chance to find a husband. When trying to affect matchmakings, the strongest weapon was to cast a slur on the future bride's reputation, as Kyra-Giorgoula attempted

²⁰⁷ An illegitimate child, as well as his mother, were on the fringe of society. See M. Miligou-Markantoni, op.cit., 300-301.

to do.²⁰⁸ In a society where a woman's esteem meant a lot and her virginity was demanded,²⁰⁹ the slightest defamation could ruin her future.

Malicious comments could also be made within the family in order to break an already existing marriage. Old-Kantakaina, due to the unreasonable hatred she felt towards her daughter-in-law used to accuse her behind her back of infidelity, untidiness, inability to have children and much more, whenever her son came back from his sea journeys.

Εκάστοτε οσάκις ο υιός της επέστρεφεν εκ του ταξιδιού του... η γραία Καντάκαινα ήρχετο εις προϋπάντησιν αυτού, τον ωδήγει εις τον οικίσκον της, τον εδιάβαζε, τον εκατήχει, του έβαζε μαναφούκια, και ούτω τον προέπεμπε παρά τη γυναικί αυτού. Και δεν έλεγε μόνα τα ελαττώματά της, αλλά τα αυγάτιζε' δεν ήτο μόνον «μαρμάρα», τουτέστι στείρα... αλλ' ήτο άπαστρη, απασσάλωτη,²¹⁰ ξετσίπωτη, κτλ. Όλα τα είχεν «η ποίσα, η δείξα, η άκληρη».
(«Το Χριστόψωμο» 2, 78).

The above quotation, apart from providing us with traits in regard to the person who makes the malicious comments, makes us also imagine traits, although untrue, of another character in the story, which in this case is Old-Kantakaina's daughter-in-law.²¹¹ In the particular story the writer's dislike of Old-Kantakaina is obvious from the very beginning of the narration, where he defines what the short story is going to be about: *Περί μιας κακής πενθεράς σήμερον ο λόγος* (2, 77). Additionally, with this statement he presents us directly with an adjective revealing protagonist's main trait which in this case is malice.²¹²

²⁰⁸ J. Du Boulay, in her study in regard to the village of Ambeli, points out that in the context of matchmaking 'slander' is most frequently heard. In such case the act of slander consists in going deliberately to a third party and speaking evil of the man or the girl concerned. See J. Du Boulay, 'Gossip, friendship, and quarrels' in *Portrait of a Greek mountain village*, op.cit., p. 203.

²⁰⁹ M. Miligou-Markantoni, op.cit., pp. 297-298.

²¹⁰ «Άπαστρη» means dirty, «απασσάλωτη» means untidy.

²¹¹ In this case we have direct definition of traits which are referred to by adjectives. See S. Rimmon-Kenan, op.cit., p. 59.

²¹² Ibid, p. 59.

What emerges from the above examples is that we understand the malicious comments may be made directly or in an underhand way by the characters, and that they do affect the progress of the story. Moreover they provide us with information as to the character of the particular female character who makes such comments. This is confirmed if we take into consideration the roles of Giorgoula and Old-Kantakaina in the stories they appear in.

Gossip within the novels and short stories, whether it includes malicious comments or not, made directly or indirectly, is social behaviour practised by the majority of women. This is mainly because the spheres of activity and leisure in which women pass much of their time are conducive to gossip. Gossip seen in the framework of the stories provides information in regard to the characters' relationships, albeit most often inaccurate as it usually contains lies and exaggerations about the characters in each story. Often it subverts relationships and defines the unfolding of the narration accordingly. It must also be added that in a society where people do not have much to do to entertain themselves, gossip is regarded as a form of entertainment.

The character of gossip is determined by the nature of the value system. Therefore criticism, accusation and slander, which are part of gossip, aim at attacking women's moral reputation, as this was thought to be their weakest point. In this sense, even though men had the upper hand, women had the ability not only to control their lives, but the lives of others as well. In the rural communities of Greece where the reputation of a family was of great importance, the behaviour of women could not be ignored. Women's good reputation depended upon their behaving appropriately. They did not have the luxury of either breaking the established moral boundaries or transcending the 'areas' defined for them. The breaking of such boundaries resulted in the husband's, as well as the family's, acquiring a bad reputation. This dependence of Greek men upon their women for the maintenance of their reputation gives women a sort of 'latent power' in the relations between the sexes.²¹³ A man granted respect by his wife at home, gains prestige and influence in the public world. That was the reason why most women would base their accusations on moral grounds when they wanted to cause trouble.

²¹³ Jill Dubisch, (ed.). Introduction, *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*, op.cit., p.17.

Women could easily find themselves involved in a quarrel that might arise through gossip and slander and could equally rally in different camps according to their own self-interest. In no time at all they could change their attitude about a matter without any particular reason and it was their belief that whatever they had in their mind was right. The power of majority offered them the flexibility and the potentiality to cause problems for others. In the following example, we observe that through social interaction, in this instance a quarrel, aspects of the characters of the women who take part in the quarrel are revealed:

Αι τέσσαρες γυναίκες, η σπιτονοικοκυρά μαζί με την κόρην της, η Κατερινιώ η ζωντοχήρα, κ' η κυρά-Μήτραινα, η μήτηρ της μισής δουζίνας παιδιών, έκαμαν μέγαν συνασπισμόν και σταυροφορίαν εναντίον της Σταυρούλας. Δεν επίστευον εις την εξαδερφοσύνην της, την εσκυλόβριζαν, την έλεγαν ότι είναι κι' αυτή μιά «από κείνες». Δεν την άφηναν να προκύψη εις την θύραν, χωρίς να ζητήσουν να εύρουν αφορμήν καυγά εναντίον της. Τέλος απαιτούσαν να ξεκουμπισθή, να τους αδειάση την γωνιά, να ξεβρωμήση απ' εκεί αυτή κ' οι κόττες της. («Ο Γείτονας με το λαγούτο» 3, 301).

Papadiamantis makes very telling similes when it comes to women's gossip. Their tongue is usually like a distaff, or it grinds every single thing like a mill.²¹⁴ He presents this with a sense of irony, and we can readily conclude that the writer was opposed to this kind of entertainment the women of his time indulged in.

The beginning of a quarrel arrives as a natural consequence of false accusations, sneering and taunting comments, as well as offensive insults. Women's quarrels are usually made over trifles. On the slightest pretext they would start arguing and creating a disturbance. They would also start wrangling, over an insignificant disagreement:

²¹⁴ «Η Αποσώστρα» 4, 51, «Της δασκάλας τα μάγια» 4, 326.

Ο ιατρός εξήτασε το τραύμα... Ήτο προφανώς από δαγκωματιάν ανθρώπου, και μάλιστα γυναικός αλλά το βάθος και το εύρος των ιχνών απεδείκνυν ότι είχε δοθή σχεδόν μετά θηριώδους ορμής. («Ο Πεντάρφανος» 4, 57).

Papdiamantis begins the story with the above incident, explaining further on in the text the reason that caused the quarrel.

In the small inner courtyards of the Athenian buildings, where people of the lower classes are presented in the stories as living, disputes were very frequent. This was mainly due to lack of space, which created a feeling of inconvenience and discomfort, and thus made people over-sensitive and easily upset. It could also be said that disputes helped to relieve the drabness of the daily routine.

Αι τρεις ενοικάρισσαι του ισογείου, η κυρά-Κατίγκω η Χρίσταινα, μετά της αγάμου αδελφής της Φρόσως, και η γρια-Βαγγελή η Λεμονού... εμάλωναν δια κάθε τι, συχνότατα, σχεδόν τρις της εβδομάδος. («Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά» 2, 301).

Women could distort everything other women would say in order to provoke quarrels.

Άλλοτε πάλιν η Σταματούλα η Γεμενίτσα έπαιρνε λόγια από την μίαν κι έβαζε μαναφούκια εις την άλλην, και είτα εν ανέσει ενετρύφα εις τον καυγάν, ισταμένη παράμερα. (2, 302).

For some women, provoking quarrels was quite an enjoyable thing to do. They would stand back and watch the dispute, full of malice.

Ήρχισε τριήμερος, ατελείωτος καυγάς μεταξύ των δύο γυναικών. Η Πολύτιμη ανέλαβε μέρος πρωταγωνίστριας. Η Ζαφείρινα αμέσως

περιήλθεν εις δευτερεύον πρόσωπον, κ' έχαιρε μέσα της ν' ακούη τας
 άλλας να υβρίζονται με όλον το γυναικείον λεξιλόγιον.
 («Οι Κουκλοπαντρείς» 3, 569).

An offence against good morals was another 'excuse' for a quarrel to begin. If other 'irreproachable' women felt that something was an offence against common decency they would not accept it, and certainly they would not hide their feelings.

Οι άλλες δύο νοικάρισσες ήρχισαν να πνέουν πυρ και μανίαν εναντίον
 της Μαργαρώς' έγιναν «το ένα τους» με την Ζαφείραιναν και απήτουν
 μεγαλοφώνως να φύγη η έκφυλος γυνή από την αυλήν. Αυτό ήτον δα
 κακόν παράδειγμα! Ήτον εναντίον εις τα χρηστά ήθη.
 («Οι Κουκλοπαντρείς» 3, 568).

A general comment would be that this particular story quoted from is structurally based on brief incidents that lead to the provoking of quarrels. As Papadiamantis writes, women were capable of not speaking to one another purely on account of a small misunderstanding. They even had a kind of a war-cry amongst themselves.

Ούτε τα κόκκαλά μας να μη σμίξουν ήτο η πολεμική κραυγή εις τας
 τάξεις των γυναικών. («Οι Ελαφροϊσκιωτοι» 2, 493).

In the above short story Papadiamantis writes that men also had disputes and fought over disagreements.²¹⁵ Thus the writer shows that it was not only women who involved themselves in quarrels.

The invective used by the writer in «Ο γείτονας με το λαγούτο» is a bit unusual. As the narrator says, it cannot be found in a dictionary. The 'shower of abuse' was created by the female neighbours and the 'etymology' of the words revealed the reason Stavroula was abused. The following stream of invectives illustrates the above statement:

²¹⁵ «Τοιούτους πολέμους διεξήγον προς αλλήλους οι άνδρες, και τοιαύτα λάφυρα απεκόμιζον». 2, 493.

Ποτέ αυτή δεν ήκουσε τ' όνομά της. Όλα τα παρεγκώμια, όσα δεν υπήρχον εις κανέν εκδεδομένον λεξικόν, της έρριπτον κατάμουτρα.

- Η κοτταρού, η κοκοτταρού, η κοκουρού! η χαρχαλού, η πετειναρού!, η μουρλουλού, η ζουρλουλού!

(«Ο γείτονας με το λαγούτο» 3, 302).

All these reproachful adjectives show that Stavroula's fowls greatly irritated the neighbours. Some women, because of their quarrelling and continuous abuse towards other people, gained a bad name. They were known as the shrews of the neighbourhood. Old-Kakavaraina and her daughter Melachro would have an insult for every single woman passing in front of them.

Κατεσκεύαζον και λέξεις ιδικάς των, αληθείς γλωσσοπλάστριαι, χωρίς να το ηξεύρουν... όλ' αυτά αμφιβάλλω αν ευρίσκονται εις το Λεξικόν των αθησαύριστων. («Μάννα και κόρη» 4, 512).

The whole neighbourhood was afraid of them. Only a few mettlesome people made fun of them, something which drove them into a frenzy.

The grumbling and the quarrels between women reveal, in a way, the women's view of themselves. As the writer says, women possessed word-making abilities. They made words that constituted an extended invective. This invective revealed how women measured other women. Juliet du Boulay claims that the phrases often heard on the lips of women referred to their known propensity for shouting and arguing and for stirring up trouble in quarrels and gossip.²¹⁶ It is obvious that not only men thought of women as inferior beings, but women as well treated each other as if they were.

We would suggest that the frequency of quarrels in the form of fights is mostly observed in the Athenian short stories and less in the island ones, and shows lack of family and social harmony. Women tend to entangle themselves in quarrels for insignificant reasons. What most infuriates the parties concerned are the insults that

²¹⁶ Juliet du Boulay, 'Images of women's nature and destiny'. In Jill Dubisch, (ed.). Gender and Power in Rural Greece, op.cit., p. 148.

accumulate during the heat of the moment rather than the original causes of the quarrels. We would assume that quarrels are due to the increased aggressiveness people usually have when they live in urban areas, which the writer had possibly noticed. This aggressiveness can easily be anticipated by the reader, considering the vocabulary and expressions - in this case the invective - the writer puts in the mouth of his protagonists when referring to a quarrel. Quarrels may also constitute the sequence of false accusations, sneering and taunting comments which are recognised as harming the people involved. Therefore quarrels may arise through gossip and slander, especially when aspersions of a moral nature take place.

The writer, by presenting women entangled in quarrels/ constitutes a way of indicating several female traits such as aggressiveness, petulance and malice. Thereason why he presents the quarrels and the disputes between the female characters in so much detail is attributable to the fact that since he presents his heroines in action in the humdrum routine existence of daily life, and knowing that quarrels provoked by accusations and insults or even by insignificant things are part of this daily life, we realize that is only very natural that quarrels should take a sizeable part in his stories.

Jealousy is another main female characteristic, which affects women's social behaviour and can bring about only negative consequences. Jealousy can make someone blind and unable to confront things with objectivity. It is one of the basic ingredients of quarrels and disputes. An example²¹⁷ of what jealousy can cause is the case of Archontoula in «Έρμη στα ξένα», who was unreasonably jealous of her maid, Vanthoula. Actually, the comments made by other women, in regard to Vanthoula's beauty, placed at the beginning of the narration, resulted in making Archontoula jealous of her maid.²¹⁸ In this short story the sequence of events is defined by jealousy provoked by gossip, which consequently affects the relations between the characters. Thus, Archontoula, after the comments she heard in regard to her maid, became suspicious of the relationship between her husband and the maid. All she managed to achieve was not

²¹⁷ Other examples of jealousy are observed in the following short stories: Kakia feels jealous of Marina for attracting Zennos' in *Η Μετανάστis* 1, 47. Seiraino and Malamo consider as a competition the dowry preparation and thus feel jealous of each other in «Άγια και πεθαμένα» 3, 120-121. The main cause of the quarrels among women in the courtyard is jealousy: «Οι Κουκλοπαντρείς» 3, 568-569.

²¹⁸ 4, 81.

only to ruin her relationship with her husband and make Vanthoulas' life one long misery, but, the greatest tragedy of all, Vanthoula went to the length of committing suicide in order to get away from the misery she was in.²¹⁹

It was thought to be trendy among women at the end of the nineteenth century to feel dizzy or to have a slight headache.²²⁰ Frailty is something like a must if women want to attract men's attention or get something for their benefit. Their sensitivity can easily be hurt and most of the time they really are touchy. They can display peculiarities, which not only cannot be understood by the opposite sex, but by other women as well. Furthermore, they can be seen acting and reacting very strangely even to normal situations. This 'unexpected', and therefore odd reaction, can easily cause problems for other people and, what is more, can make women unbearable.²²¹

The way Papadiamantis presents these oddities encompasses a sense of humour. A case in point is Diamantireizaina, in the short story «Για τα ονόματα», who would not accept anyone into her house, because she was afraid of dirt. As the writer says, the fact that she accepted the presence of guests on her husband's name-day was a big sacrifice, since she could not pout when people stepped into her extremely clean house. Therefore, her oddity regarding cleaning is apparent from her actions as described by the narrator and not by a direct statement saying that Diamantireizaina was an odd character.²²²

Την ημέραν εκείνην έκαμνε θυσίαν το κάτω πάτωμα της οικίας της.
Είχεν όμως ιδιαιτέραν υπηρεσίαν διωργανωμένην εις την αυλήν,
ένδοθεν της αυλόπορτας, δια τα ξυπόλυτα και τους μάγκες της
αγοράς, τους οποίους εφίλευεν εκεί δια χειρός της μητρός ή της
αδελφής της, χωρίς να τους επιτρέπη να εισέλθωσιν εις την οικίαν.
(3, 400).

²¹⁹ 4, 81-83.

²²⁰ E. Varika, op.cit., p. 57.

²²¹ Examples of women who display odd and troublesome behaviour, which consequently affects others negatively, are those of Eftaloutrou in Η Γυφτοπούλα. Aunt-Kyparissou in «Χρήστός Μηλιόνης», Zogara in «Στρίγλα Μάνα», Old-Bekioina in «Τα Δύο Κούτσουρα».

²²² Therefore in this example we have the so-called indirect presentation of a trait. See S. Rimmon-Kenan, op.cit., p. 57.

Diamantireizaina can be considered rather more as a hypochondriac than just a lady who liked her house clean:

Η κυρα-Διαμαντηρείζαινα τόσο το άσπριζε, το ασβέστωνε, το εσφουγγάριζε, το επαράκαμνε -σχεδόν καθημερινώς- το ανωφερές εκείνο άδυτον του οίκου... ώστε τούτο ήστράπτε κυριολεκτικώς από την λευκότητα και την καθαριότητα. (3, 398).

She was the only person permitted to enter that «άδυτον» room. To do so she had special shoes, which she would change when leaving. Her vagary not only caused extra expense for her husband, but also rendered her conduct beyond all bearing! The narrative evolves around the main character's major oddity, providing us with a humorous story.

As I mentioned previously, it was acceptable for a woman to adduce, for various reasons, health problems.

Η κυρία της, η Λιμπέραινα, γυνή φιλάσθενος και φίλαντος, ως όλαι αι διαρκώς πάσχουσai γυναίκες, σχεδόν υποχονδριακή... («Θέρος-Ερος» 2, 203).

The selfishness attributed by the writer to Kyra-Limberaina is not accidental since it explains the distant relationship she had with her daughter, Mati, which resulted in the affection of Mati for her governess Old-Foteini.

Most of the time the claim to be feeling sick was a kind of quirk on the part of women to either draw attention, or avoid unpleasant situations. Women's eccentricity on health matters gets worse the older they grow, something that the writer seems to be aware of in the following quotation from the short story «Παιδική Πασχαλιά», where Morpho gets really tired of her grandmother's oddities.

Τώρα η κορασίς είχεν αντί της καλής και πονετικής μητρός την μάμμην με την αφόρητον παραξενιά της, ήτις, ενώ εβεβαίου ότι όλα της επόνουν, κεφαλή, λαιμός, χείρες, πόδες, πλάται, κοιλία, μέση και

τα λοιπά, πνιγομένη δε από τον βήχα και γογγύζουσα δυνατά και
βάλλουσα κραυγές αγρίας, εφείδετο να δώση εις ιατρούς και
φάρμακα... (2, 171).

The last sentence of the above quotation shows clearly that the old lady, Komianakaina, was not only a hypochondriac, but stingy as well.

Δεν εβάστα η ψυχή της να δώση κάτι τι εις μίαν πτωχήν γυναίκα διά
να την «κοιτάξη», κ' επέβαλλε βαρείαν αγγαρείαν εις την Μόρφω,
οκταετή παιδίσκην. (2, 170).

It is obvious that Old-Komianakaina felt sick when she had to give money away. Thus, she would rather have died than pay someone to look after her. The fact that the grandmother embodies so many negative features makes Morphos' dead mother even more admirable, thus justifying all the positive features ascribed to her by the writer.²²³

The oddest character is Aunt-Moriso, to whom Papadiamantis dedicated a whole short story, «Η Αποσώστρα»,²²⁴ which relates how strangely a person can react, especially when having a life full of misfortune. Under these circumstances it is very easy to become psychologically affected and consequently whimsical. Aunt-Moriso would argue with the priests, the church-warden, the women who pretended to be good Christians. She was afraid of adopting a child, because she was certain she would call it 'bastard'. The only joy left for her was to sit by the cobbled road commenting on everything and everyone.

Those of Papadiamantis' characters who act in a peculiar and odd way are usually old women, who are in sharp contrast to the freshness of harmless young women. Having

²²³ Examples of more characters presented in the narratives, who have something to display in the shape of oddities and whims are the following: Kyra-Koimtzi, who would not allow her washerwoman to hang the washing up on the same clothes-line as that of her skivvy's in «Μεγαλείων Οψώνια» 4, 425. Kyra-Yiannaina could not bear anything to happen that could disgrace the reputation of the house and the neighbourhood in «Ο γείτονας με το λαγούτο» 3, 295. Melachro entertained utopian dreams, along with her mother, about the man she would marry some day. The two even reached the point of trying to bewitch Trikoupi, the then Prime Minister of Greece, so that he would come and propose to Melachro: «Μάννα και κόρη» 4, 515-516.

²²⁴ 4, 51-55.

in mind the writer's preference for the latter, the negative features attributed to the majority of old women are but a natural outcome. Papdiamantis presented women who were well known as the shrews of the neighbourhood, women, who were quick-tempered, cursed people and quarrelled with everybody. Towards these women, who were full of malice, Papdiamantis shows no sympathy, and we can observe this by the phrases he uses to present such women. For example: *μίαν εκτάκτως παράξενην γερόντισσαν, την γριά-Καντούσαιναν,*²²⁵ *Ήσαν στρίγλες με όνομα, με το νάμι τούς βγαλμένο, επίφοβοι αληθώς γυναίκες τουλάχιστον εις την γειτονιάν επροξένουν φόβον...*²²⁶ His lack of sympathy for these women is also evident in his ironical comments,²²⁷ which are invested with a sense of humour²²⁸ and made by the narrator himself. The aforementioned examples directly define the negative traits of these women through the use of adjectives or abstract nouns.²²⁹

The various characters which parade through Papdiamantis' fiction are not only endowed with negative features but positive ones as well, such as prudence, diligence, modesty and patience. Commenting on women's positive features, as they appear in Papdiamantis' novels and short stories, I shall refer to the combination of external and behavioural characteristics. An example of this is Augousta's description in Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών:

Άλλως δε, ήτο φιλόξενος και ευπροσήγορος προς πάντας. Η σύζυγός του, ωραία και αθώα ως περιστερά, ήτο το σέμνωμα της οικίας. Άρχουσα δωδεκάδας θερααινίδων διεύθυνε φρονίμως τα του οίκου. (1, 137).

In the above quotation, which appears at the beginning of the novel, emphasis is given to Augousta's virtuousness and good manners.²³⁰ Therefore, the reader would not expect the

²²⁵ «Η Ξομπλιαστήρα» 4, 170.

²²⁶ «Μάννα και κόρη» 4, 512.

²²⁷ «Η Αποσώστρα» 4, 51.

²²⁸ «Ο Γείτονας με το λαγούτο» 3, 302.

²²⁹ See S. Rimmon-Kenan, op.cit., p. 59.

²³⁰ In this example we have a 'direct definition'; thus the narrator names the traits of the heroine by means of adjectives and abstract nouns. Ibid, p. 59.

heroine to yield to temptation, especially when this temptation was related to a man other than her husband. In fact, Papadiamantis presents his heroine in this way in order to differentiate her later attitude, which is contrary to the character attributed to her at the beginning of the novel, when she yielded to sin repeatedly, a very human attitude, even for saintly figures when temptation knocks at their door.

Ἦτο ου μόνον προς τους ξένους ευπροσήγορος και ευεργετική προς τους πτωχούς, ἀλλ' ευσεβής περί τα θεία... (1, 138-139).

The only adjective, which describes Augousta's image, is «ωραία» (beautiful). The noticeable absence of more adjectives is due to the fact that Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών was Papadiamantis' second historical novel and his descriptions were in some way unrefined, although, according to P.D. Mastrodimitris,²³¹ towards the end of the novel the writer presents almost all the features that are going to dominate his descriptions in the future. In relation to this, even though Augousta is just a beautiful and devout woman at the beginning of the novel, her inner character acquires more significance towards the end, especially when she confesses her sins (1, 227).²³² A slightly different combination of external and internal characteristics is observed in the following quotation from «Η Φόνισσα»

²³¹ P.D. Mastrodimitris, «Διαγραφή χαρακτήρων στα μυθιστορήματα του Αλέξανδρου Παπαδιαμάντη» in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου για τον Αλέξανδρο Παπαδιαμάντη. Skiathos 20-24 September 1991. Athens. Domos, 1996, p. 222.

²³² With regard to the development of Papadiamantis' descriptive methods as his writing matures, in moving from the novels to the short stories, we cite the following. It can be seen in his first novel Η Μετανάστις that the writer presents only the basic features of his characters, avoiding those that would give his heroes a more permanent characterisation. For example, even though Marina is the main female character of the novel she is nothing more than the decent daughter. A similar thing occurs for Kakia as well as for Anthousa, whose name is a title for a whole chapter.

Moving on to his third novel Η Γυριτοπούλα there are three dominant characters: Aima, Mahtos and Plethon. The descriptions referring to Aima are brief but penetrating, since they relate to her behaviour and reveal her spirituality. The presentation of Eftaloutrou constitutes a model, which encompasses all the features that are going to evolve when creating Frangoyiannou in «Η Φόνισσα».

N. Dimitriadou's classification, which makes use of examples from his mature writings, proves how a brief, simple description becomes longer and more detailed, and all the more so combined with a psychographical analysis of the hero. The culmination of this progress was Φόνισσα where all the features attributed to Papadiamantis' writing can be observed. P.D. Mastrodimitris. Προοπτικές και προσεγγίσεις. Μελέτες Νεοελληνικής Φιλολογίας. Athens: Nefeli, 1992, pp. 66-75.

Η Χαδούλα, η λεγομένη Φράγκισσα, ή άλλως Φραγκογιαννού, ήτο γυνή σχεδόν εξηκοντούτις, καλοκαμωμένη, με αδρούς χαρακτήρας, με ήθος ανδρικών, και με δύο μικράς άκρας μύστακος άνω των χειλέων της. (3, 417).

Her rough facial characteristics are related to the most important feature of her character, the «ανδρικών ήθος». Her virile attitude, diffused over the whole narration, defines her actions. Thus, she is the one to have control over her incompetent husband and her children and have the audacity to protest in her own way against the social constraints. Therefore, we would suggest that Frangoyiannou's external features are related to her behaviour and actions. In the above quotation, the fact that Frangoyiannou does not display any delicate feminine characteristics, this is not in itself a disadvantage because the purpose of the author is to portray a woman full of stamina, for the reasons we mentioned above. Therefore, the dynamism Frangoyiannou displays can be considered a positive feature.

Another heroine with a similar virile attitude is Aunt-Mario Christaina in «Η Ντελησυφέρω»,²³³ whose stoutness and vigour, as well as her whole presence, is indicative of the fact that although she was a woman she had to be the father and mother at the same time to her two children. Additionally, she had to defend herself and her family from those who wanted to take advantage of her supposedly weak situation. Therefore, she did not hesitate to beat five or six men, who tried to take advantage of her, but she also did the same to women if the need arose.

Another feature which can be regarded as positive is the patience some women displayed in unfavourable circumstances. One such female character is Charmolina in «Η Θητεία της πενθεράς» who patiently suffered in silence, serving her indifferent son-in-law by undertaking all the responsibilities of his family of ten.

Another female character in a similar situation is Aunt-Ahtitsa in «Η Σταχομαζώχτρα», who although she had a life full of hardships and had every reason to be quick-tempered and irritated by other women's taunting comments, acted in exactly

²³³ 3, 642.

the opposite way. She disdained the intense jeering, of other women who seemed to be critical of her because of her actions.

διότι όνειδος ακόμη εθεωρείτο το να πλέη γυνή εις τα πελάγη.
(«Η Σταχομαζώχτρα» 2, 116).

Although Aunt-Ahtitsa's travelling with men at sea is not approved of by the prevailing moral laws, the writer does not hesitate to show through the narration his admiration for her courage in doing that.

Very rarely in Papdiamantis' writings do we see a different attitude towards malevolent comments. This was done by Aunt-Areto, who always advised her daughter Alexandro:

«Ζήσης, χρονίσης, θυγατέρα, της έλεγε, ποτέ σου να μη ζηλέψης το
ξένο στολίδι, να μην πης κακό για την γειτόνισσα, να μην κοιτάξης τι
κάνει η πλαγινή σου, να μη βάλης μαναφούκια, να μη ξευχηθής, να μη
βλαστημήσης.» («Η Γλυκοφιλούσα» 3, 78).

Such advice springs from the wisdom of an old lady who strongly believed that it was for the benefit of all, for each one to mind her own business, so that no disputes or quarrels could be caused.

We would suggest that the variety of positive features is not as great as the variety of negative ones. Papdiamantis' stories, regardless of being island or Athenian ones, present mostly negative features since the majority of them encompass characters whose actions and behaviour turn out to be negative, subsequently provoking a similar reaction by the rest of the characters in the story. We observe that negative behaviour contributes progressively to the creation of the appropriate atmosphere for something bad to happen. As for the novels, they present a number of negative and positive features, which progressively become more detailed within the stories, negative ones sometimes constituting the core around which the story evolves.

The features attributed to women in each story contribute accordingly to the creation of complicated or simple characters without any peculiarities, as well as tragic and demoniacal ones. The general picture emerging from the stories is that some women are presented by the writer as having the tendency to entangle themselves into quarrels, malicious gossip, act in a crafty way, feel jealous or act strangely, whereas other women are presented as having adopted exactly the opposite behaviour, displaying diligence, modesty, patience. Both types of women fulfil certain purposes in the narrative. Each trait of the above-mentioned leads to certain social behaviour, which in turn defines the actions of the characters and forms the plot.

The writer uses 'direct definition' and 'indirect' presentation as indicators of character.²³⁴ He chooses rather to portray several of his characters' traits through their 'action' or 'speech' than 'tell' them. The fact that Papadiamantis associates the majority of the features analysed with women is due mainly to the fact that most of these features are more likely to be part of the female nature and not the male.²³⁵

What makes Papadiamantis a distinguished writer is that he represented characters along with their merits and imperfections. Someone could easily say, considering that the writer presents mostly negative features rather than positive, ones, that Papadiamantis paints a bleak picture of Greek society. This 'bleak' picture, however, constitutes part of real life and if the writer presented ideal characters then we would be in no position to say that his writings move in the sphere of realism.

²³⁴ The terms are analysed in detail by S. Rimmon-Kenan, op.cit., pp. 59-67.

²³⁵ The characterisation of the male heroes follows the same methods as the female characterisation does. Therefore we have traits given through a 'direct definition' or 'indirect presentation'. What emerges from the male characterisations is that the majority of external and character features is given through 'direct definition' by the narrator. For examples see «Ο Αλιβάνιστος» 3, 523, «Δημαρχίνα νύφη» 4, 381, «Θάνατος κόρης» 4, 183, «Ο γάμος του Καραχμέτη» 4, 495.

CHAPTER FOUR

WOMEN, RELIGION AND RITUALS

It is apparent from Papadiamantis' stories that one cannot make a distinction between everyday life and religion since the latter impregnated the former in such a way that they cannot be seen separately. Therefore, it is firstly necessary to examine in this chapter the female characters' relation to religion and comment in detail on women's religious activities. We shall also discuss their relation to the supernatural as well as to the rituals, the performance of which sometimes remind us of the ancient Greek pagan practices. The latter will be examined in a separate section of this chapter for more detailed consideration in order to see how easily magic can take place in the framework of the performance of a religious ritual.

Before, however, examining this point further, it is necessary to comment on the religious stimuli which formed Papadiamantis' conceptions of religious matters, and in what way these appear in the novels and short stories. As it has already been mentioned, Papadiamantis' family upbringing and his social context provided him with many religious stimuli. His childhood was filled with religious experiences, since his father was a priest²³⁶ influenced by the preachings of the so-called Kollivades,²³⁷ and he would naturally follow him to the rituals. Being a priest's child made him feel embarrassed among his friends whose fathers were struggling at sea to earn a living²³⁸. Papadiamantis' short stay on Mount Athos was also significant and certainly influenced his religious attitude. The months he spent there introduced him to the demands of the ascetic life and the experience he gained made him realize that to become a monk was not actually what he wanted from life.²³⁹

²³⁶ A. Keselopoulos, *Η Λειτουργική παράδοση στον Αλέξανδρο Παπαδιαμάντη*. Thessalonike: Ekdoseis P. Pournara, 1994, p. 16.

²³⁷ G. Valetas, *Τα Άπαντα του Αλέξανδρου Παπαδιαμάντη*. Introduction, Athens: Dimitrakos, 1960, vol.I, p. κβ'. Details on Kollivades' movement are given in V. Skouvaras, *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης: όπως τον τραγούδησε ο Σικελιανός*. Athens: Asteros, 1981, pp. 70-71.

²³⁸ K. Papagiorgis, *Αλέξανδρος Αδαμάντιού Εμμανουήλ*. Athens: Kastaniotis, 1998, pp. 88-89.

²³⁹ Ibid, p. 95.

The part that the extended social environment played in the formation of his religious character was also significant. Skiathos, which has been featured by A. Karantonis as the cradle of monastic life,²⁴⁰ had one monastery called 'Evangelistria' and many churches. Most of them were small, situated in the country, with bigger ones in the town and icon-stands in various scattered spots.²⁴¹ It seems to me that the number of the existent sacred spots contributed to the creation of a sacred environment; an environment, which imposed respect and devoutness on the people living in it. Moreover, the name Skiathos itself, examined from an etymological point of view, defines the location of the island, which actually is 'in the shadow of Athos' (Mount Athos), intensifying in this way the sanctity of the place.²⁴² It seems that the stimuli provided by his family and by the environment of his island constituted an inspiration for Papadiamantis and consequently affected his writings.

Within Papadiamantis' novels and short stories certain questions arise related to the Christian Orthodox doctrine. The prominent ones that can be seen as links in a chain are the question of evil, the question of what was considered to be a sin or not, the question of punishment, and the question of repentance. These four religious concepts are related to one another in the sense that an evil action constitutes a sin, which in turn may result in punishment, though not always in repentance. The way the writer perceived the above concepts is illustrated, as we shall shortly see, in the stories.

a. Women and Religion

Commencing with the question of evil, we observe that his characters perform evil actions and consequently commit sins with a different reason each time. Therefore, the writer does not present ideal relationships among humans or between humans and God. Possible difficulties and problems, which his heroes encounter, result in reactions featuring as evil and presented so in the novels and short stories. As A. Kotzias observed,

²⁴⁰ A. Karantonis, «Ο Παπαδιαμάντης και η Ορθοδοξία» in Από το Σολωμό ως τον Μυτιληνή. Athens: Estia, 1965, p. 155.

²⁴¹ G. Regas gives the exact number of churches and monasteries on the island of Skiathos. Op.cit., pp. 377-388.

²⁴² K. Bastias, Ο Παπαδιαμάντης, Δοκίμιο. Athens: Ekdotike Athinon, 1962, p. 35.

Athenian and island short stories carry almost equal incidences related to evil acts. All the actions performed by the characters, which encompass attempted murder, exploitation, avarice, deceit and insensibility and which can naturally be featured as evil constitute a sin.²⁴³

Scholars have widely discussed the meaning Papadiamantis attributes to the idea of evil and by extension to the idea of sin. In his short story «Αμαρτίας Φάντασμα» the writer posed the question «Πόθεν το κράτος της αμαρτίας»,²⁴⁴ wondering about the existence of sin, since God created everything in perfection. Nowhere does the writer give a direct answer to this.²⁴⁵ His novels and short stories only indirectly reveal through the characters' actions, what the writer considers being a sin or not.

It would appear that in the novels and short stories, the reason female characters, end up committing evil actions²⁴⁶ is mostly due to adverse circumstances, such as poverty, and oppression, that are a feature of their lives.²⁴⁷ Within Papadiamantis' stories, there are two categories of evil acts. The first consists of those acts which are committed for a 'benevolent' purpose, while an outsider may consider this evil. The second category consists of evil acts that are purely malevolent and are motivated by feelings of jealousy or hatred.

In order to clarify the above statement, we shall examine Frangoyiannou's character who commits an evil action, having the conviction that the outcome of it will have a beneficial effect on others. Frangoyiannou is one of those characters who resort to any means possible in order to make her life better regardless of the fact that in this way she jeopardises the possibility of eternal life.²⁴⁸ Her actions constitute a protest against the social establishment, which reckoned females to be a thorn in the flesh causing constant trouble to their families from the day they were born. The idea that the presence of females is not necessary to the family convinced Frangoyiannou that by killing young

²⁴³ See A. Kotzias, Τα Αθηναϊκά διηγήματα και δύο δοκίμια για το γρόνο, Athens: Nefeli, 1992, p. 57. In pages 57-59 examples of evil acts are given.

²⁴⁴ 3,230.

²⁴⁵ D. Mavropoulos, «Αμαρτία και μετάνοια», in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, op.cit., pp. 588-589.

²⁴⁶ In this chapter I will only examine the actions which refer to attempted murder and not other aspects of evil behaviour.

²⁴⁷ I am only referring to Frangoyiannou and Old-Kantakaina since they are the only female characters who attempted murder.

²⁴⁸ S. Ramphos, Η Παλινωδία του Παπαδιαμάντη, Athens: Kedros, 1976, pp. 78-79.

girls she was lifting a heavy burden from their families. Her actions could easily be characterised as evil since their outcome was the loss of innocent lives. Despite this, the differentiating factor in her case is that the perpetration of evil had as an original purpose the perpetration of good.²⁴⁹ Frangoyiannou commits the murders out of compassion.²⁵⁰ Because of this she is not seen as a cruel criminal who kills for no reason. On the contrary, when she asked for Saint John's approval she was basically asking for a sign, which for her would indicate the continuation of the murders. Thus, she interpreted the presence of Yiannis Perivolas' little girls as the divine sign she was looking for; a sign which in her mind made God an accessory to her crimes.²⁵¹

In Frangoyiannou's case the freedom of will allotted originally by God to human beings gave her the right to do what she felt right. Frangoyiannou's death was actually due to the entrapment of herself in her attempt to dispense justice in the way she felt to be right, taking the law into her own hands, and she avoided repenting, for the murders she committed.²⁵² The way she died reveals that her sins in the first place, and above all her not repenting, were not left unpunished. Her death was similar to the one she inflicted on her victims.²⁵³ She was drowned while heading to Ai-Sostis.

Καιρός ήτο, αν εγλύτωνε, να εξαγορευθή τα κρίματά της εις τον
γέροντα, τον ασκητή. («Η Φόνισσα» 3, 519).²⁵⁴

While Frangoyiannou committed evil in order to change things for the better for some families, Old-Kantakaina, in «Το Χριστόψωμο», committed evil for the sake of evil, so retribution could have been the subsequent repayment for her actions, as the committing of sin should accept proportionate punishment. Although Old-Kantakaina fulfilled her religious duties as a proper Christian, she did not hesitate to premeditate the

²⁴⁹ V. Athanasopoulos, «Ο Παπαδιαμάντης και το κακό», in *διαβάζω*, April 1987, no. 165, p. 74. See also L. Kousoulas, *Ανθρώπους και κτήνη*, Athens: Nefeli, 1993, p. 20.

²⁵⁰ Z. Οικονομου, *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης και το νησί του. Μικρογραφία της ανθρωπότητας*, Athens: Kedros, 1979, p. 63.

²⁵¹ V. Athanasopoulos, op.cit., p. 74. See also I.K. Kolivas, *Λογική της αφήγησης και ηθική του λόγου*, Athens: Nefeli, 1991, p. 76-77.

²⁵² «Η Φόνισσα» 3, 506, 515, 516.

²⁵³ I.K. Kolivas, op.cit., pp. 77-78.

²⁵⁴ Papadiamantis is not denying the possibility of Frangoyiannou to repent and be forgiven for her sins.

poisoning of her daughter-in-law. Her plan, however, proved to be unsuccessful since her son, instead of her daughter-in-law, ate the poisonous bread by accident and died. In this case, the death of her son was the worst punishment she could receive as a result of her evil action. The way both short stories end shows indirectly that the writer feels that an evil action should not be left unpunished.²⁵⁵ Both Old-Kantakaina's and Frangoyiannou's actions²⁵⁶ prove that neither of them perceived the meaning of forgiveness and love, which is the essence of the Christian Orthodox Church.

Female characters in Papadiamantis' fiction are presented as sinning, not only as a result of an evil action but also as a result of transgressing the unwritten moral laws. Two such characters are Christina in «Χωρίς Στεφάνι», who cohabited with a man without being married, and Augousta in Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών, who was actually a victim of her weakness to surpass her carnal passion. Both of them do seem to move in the sphere of sin, but despite this the writer does not condemn them as someone would have expected, considering the conservative background in which he was brought up and the importance placed on the morality of women during the period the texts were written. On the contrary, the writer implies that repentance will save their souls.

An overview of the novels and short stories shows that committing sin, possibly followed by repentance, or punishment, is present in the majority of them. Evil is an instrumental element in the evolvment of the plot, especially if the central character, for example Frangoyiannou, is related to evil and sin from the beginning to the end of the narration. The fact that evil, sin and punishment are part of the characters' lives, constitutes an opportunity for us to see the writer's viewpoint and definition of the above four terms. As for the explanation regarding the frequency with which evil appears, this can only be given on a hypothesis.²⁵⁷

Apart from the female characters who commit evil actions in order to overcome situations they dislike, Papadiamantis presents another type of character who, despite the fact that she has to deal with unpleasant circumstances, does not react accordingly. As an

²⁵⁵ In the Christian Orthodox religion God punishes not because of hatred for human beings, but out of love in order to put us on the right track.

²⁵⁶ In both examples we subordinate character to action since the latter constitutes in this chapter the focus of our study. See S. Rimmon-Kenan, *op.cit.*, p. 36.

²⁵⁷ V. Athanasopoulos, *op.cit.*, p. 75.

example of this type of female character we have Widow-Charmolina in «Η θητεία της πενθεράς», who although realizing that she was actually in service first to her husband and then to her son-in-law, did not protest against the social establishment the way Frangoyiannou did, and who was in the same situation as her. Charmolina chose instead to accept her fate and deal patiently with all the difficulties.

What emerges from Papadiamantis' stories is, as A. Keselopoulos says, that the framework in which his characters lived and acted was defined by the liturgical occasion.²⁵⁸ The weddings, the death rituals and the christenings, as well as all the religious manifestations, constituted the main opportunity for people to get together, and in some cases the main opportunity for women to make a legitimate appearance in public along with men.²⁵⁹ Women, as more regular and avid church-goers than men, dominated the domain of church with their presence. The greater frequency of women's church-going probably flowed from a number of factors related to village life.

First of all, church attendance constituted one public activity in which women could be engaged without fear of communal or familial criticism.²⁶⁰ In the framework of the island short stories, women in groups attend the liturgies or communal prayers held in a country church, usually in order to pray for their loved ones who were working at sea. Such a picture is given in «Τ' Αγνάντεμα»:

Τον άλλον καιρόν ήρχοντο, συνήθως την άνοιξιν, γυναίκες ναυτικών και θυγατέρες, κάτω από την χώραν, με σκοπόν ν'ανάψουν τα κανδήλια, και παρακαλέσουν την Παναγίαν την Κατευοδώτραν να οδηγήση και κατευοδώση τους θαλασσοδαρμένους συζύγους και πατέρας των. (3, 200).

It seems that by providing us with the above picture, the writer finds the opportunity not only to present women performing one of their religious engagements but to raise for the

²⁵⁸ A. Keselopoulos, «Λειτουργικό ήθος και εκκλησιαστικός προσανατολισμός», in Η Αδιάπτωτη μαγεία. Παπαδιαμάντης. Ένα αφιέρωμα. Athens: Goulondri-Horn Foundation, 1992, p. 125. See also I.K. Kolivas, *op.cit.*, p. 56.

²⁵⁹ «Εξοχική Λαμπρή» 2, 132-133, «Υπό την Βασιλικήν δρύν» 3, 328, «Η Ντελησυφέρω» 3, 646-647.

²⁶⁰ R. Blum & E. Blum, Dangerous hour. The Lore of Crisis and Mystery in Rural Greece. London: Chatto and Windus, 1970, p. 217.

umpteenth time the problem of the dowry, since the purpose of men working at sea was not just to support their families financially but also to provide the female members with a dowry.²⁶¹

Women would undertake responsibilities when they attended the liturgies in the country, which took place especially during Easter time. Such responsibilities were the sweeping of the church yard, the inside of the church, putting oil in and lighting the small hanging oil-lamps, and many others.²⁶² Apart from this they would sometimes chant for liturgical purposes.²⁶³ By the time they were engaged in religious pursuits, they were allowed to escape temporarily from the domestic realm, since they had no fear that their husbands would start complaining.²⁶⁴

Within the framework of the short stories we conclude that women's religious involvement was even more intense during saints' days celebrations, Christmas and Easter. Their religious duties could be seen as an extension of their household duties, since women had to help the priest²⁶⁵ make the appropriate preparations for the above festivities. Thus, a close and friendly relationship could evolve between him and the women, since there was no discrimination of any sort between them. They did not hesitate to confess to him their hidden thoughts and inner wishes or even speak of the actions they disapproved of, as he was the only male that was so close to them, and on top of that always at their disposal for advice. Even for Frangoyiannou, for whom repentance was a kind of ordeal, the fact that she would go to Father-Akakios, whose reputation among the female population was such that

...πολλάκις εξωμολόγει τον μετανοούντα πολύ περισσότερο ή όσον αυτός ήθελε να εξομολογηθή. («Η Φόνισσα» 3, 515).

²⁶¹ Through the performance of the described female religious activity the writer indicates the place that is associated with the particular activity. For Papadiamantis' attempt to conceptualise and verbalize certain familiar places by transcribing them as texts, see P. Mackridge 'The Textualization of Place in Greek Fiction, 1883-1903', in *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1992, pp. 148-168.

²⁶² «Λαμπριάτικος Ψάλτης» 2, 518, 521, «Το Χριστός Ανέστη του Γιάννη» 4, 531.

²⁶³ «Λαμπριάτικος Ψάλτης» 2, 525-526.

²⁶⁴ J. Dubisch comes to a similar conclusion in her study 'Sacred or Profane' on Greek women. See 'Sacred or Profane', in *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, May, 1983, pp. 192-193.

²⁶⁵ «Στο Χριστό στο κάστρο» 2, 275, «Λαμπριάτικος Ψάλτης» 2, 524, «Η Γλυκοφιλούσα» 3, 79, «Τα Χριστούγεννα του τεμπέλη» 3, 157.

she was encouraged to proceed with the confession of her sins. Therefore, her decision signalled the beginning of the end of the story.

Women, apart from helping the priest, also had the responsibility for the spiritual well-being of their families, since they would be the ones to observe the religious fasts, the frequent attendance at the church of their husbands and children, as well as for making the appropriate preparations for celebrating the religious festivities.²⁶⁶ Christina, the teacher in «Χωρίς Στεφάνι»

Είχε δε μεγάλην καθαριότητα εις το σπίτι της... Και όταν έμβαινε η Μεγάλη Εβδομάς, εδιπλασίαζε τ' ασπρίσματα και τα πλυσίματα, τόσον οπού έκαμνε το πάτωμα ν' αστράφτη... Έρχετο η Μεγάλη Πέμπτη και αυτή άναφτε την φωτιάν της, έστηνε την χύτραν της, κ' έβαπτε κατακόκκινα τα πασχαλινά αυγά... (3, 131).

In the above example Papadiamantis projects the character of Christina the teacher by praising her merits from the beginning of the story, merits that were equal to if not better than those of the rest of the women who kept criticizing her for her 'immorality'.²⁶⁷ The writer is praising her for the quality of her character and her ethics, and this is the reason why he mentions so many details in regard to her religious activities.²⁶⁸

Old women felt even more responsible for the observance of the religious values; thus they would urge younger women, who would usually be their daughters, to do what was thought of as appropriate.²⁶⁹ An example of this is Charmolina in «Η Θητεία της πενθεράς». It was part of Charmolina's daily duties, among many other things, to urge the children say their prayers.²⁷⁰ On women's shoulders rested also the responsibility for the observance of memorial services for which they had to prepare the remembrance food on the appropriate days. Women were also the ones who were supposed to perform the

²⁶⁶ «Παιδική Πασχαλιά» 2, 172-173, 175, «Τα Συχαρίκια» 3, 30, «Η Γλυκοφιλούσα» 3, 73, «Χωρίς Στεφάνι» 3, 131. See J. Du Boulay, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village*, op.cit., p. 131.

²⁶⁷ «Χωρίς Στεφάνι» 3, 133.

²⁶⁸ Therefore Christina's 'habitual actions', related to the performance of her religious tasks, indicate her character traits. See S. Rimmon-Kenan, op.cit., p. 61.

²⁶⁹ «Οι Ελαφροΐσκιωτοι» 2, 485.

²⁷⁰ «Η Θητεία της πενθεράς» 3, 410.

laments, as lamenting was a realm allotted exclusively to women because women were perceived as more soft-hearted and as having a natural authority over the rituals of death.²⁷¹

In case of personal or family problems women would turn to the church as the only place where they could find consolation. Women often looked to a female supernatural being²⁷² for aid and that was the Virgin Mary-Panayia, the Mother of God. There were also female saints, as well as males, who were thought to be healers of specific health problems and to whom women or men might appeal. For example, Saint Eleutherios was the one to appeal to for pregnancies; Saint Marina was thought to protect women from labour pains, and appeals were made to Saint Charalambos for protection from the plague.²⁷³ Women would also call on the priest to offer up prayers, blessings and exhortations.²⁷⁴ Panayia, however, constituted the dominating devotional figure, as she is synonymous with virginity and motherhood, thus women felt more attached to her than any other divine figure. They sought, through their church-going, devotion to the saints and appeals to the Panayia, for a legitimate relationship with the divine.

Women would sometimes be involved with religion as an extension of their household and familial role, as we said before. In such cases they seemed to be less

²⁷¹ For women's engagements connected with the death rituals see G. Regas, op.cit., p. 250. Papadiamantis perceived death as the beginning of the true life, as well as the only means of returning to the «Αρχαίον πρωτόκτιστον κάλλος.» See A. Keselopoulos «Λειτουργικό ήθος και εκκλησιαστικός προσανατολισμός» in Η Αδιάπτωτη ηγεία Παπαδιαμάντης 1991-Ένα Αφιέρωμα, op.cit., p. 130.

²⁷² The term supernatural may refer as well to entities beyond existence, such as fairies, water nymphs, demoniacal figures and elves, which constitute part of the popular beliefs and popular fairy tales. Supernatural beings such as fairies, demoniacal figures, ghosts and goblins are spread throughout in the texts. All of them were believed to have certain abilities. Their presence frightened people who were superstitious about them, as they were believed to cause nothing but trouble.

Papadiamantis, as a person who lived in a society whose people were frightened of those weird supernatural creatures, although nothing could be scientifically proven, could not exclude them from his writings. Because of this he presents all the demonic creatures, along with the supernatural powers attributed to them and the haunted places, as part of a tradition which was transmitted orally. This was a tradition that he knew very well as a member of his island's society. We cannot say for sure if he actually believed in the existence of the supernatural creatures he presented. However, we can be sure that he knew everything about them.

²⁷³ For a list of the Saints and their healing powers see G. Regas, op.cit., pp. 415-416.

²⁷⁴ G. Regas, op.cit., p. 412. See also G. Regatos, «Τα ιατρικά του Παπαδιαμάντη» in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς συνεδρίου op.cit., p. 520.

concerned with theology than with the regular performance of rituals,²⁷⁵ which in the end constituted part of their duties as wives and mothers and nothing deeper than that.

In other words, what derives from Papadiamantis' stories is that women were the basic keepers of certain important kinds of rituals which they mostly performed mechanically. Their religious roles, either as part of their domestic duties or extensions of these duties into the non-domestic sphere, meant that women were involved in arranging and carrying out the traditional customs, thereby maintaining the household's appropriate relationship with the spiritual world and its institutional manifestations. Hence, the numerous religious responsibilities Papadiamantis' female characters undertake come as an addition to their daily duties within the house, something which means extra work for them. Placing this in the framework of the stories, the writer's effort is to underline the merits of the female characters he presents performing so many duties.

Men's participation in the religious sphere was not as intense as the women's. Their responsibilities outside the domestic realm, which for men on the island of Skiathos meant long absences at sea, did not allow them much time for preoccupying themselves with religious pursuits. It was something outside their nature, too. They would, of course, attend to the church and take part in certain preparations which actually fit with their male nature.²⁷⁶ The tasks apportioned to them were mostly related to their physique, in that they would undertake responsibilities such as lighting a fire, skinning the slaughtered animals, roasting the meat on the spit, and so on.

When men faced difficulties they would also seek consolation in the bosom of the church. Old Fragoulas, for example, in «Ρεμβασμός του Δεκαπενταυγούστου», for all his sufferings still represents the man who derives strength through his prayers, the man who sins but repents in tears for his sins.²⁷⁷ On the other hand, we have men who never repent although they commit sins, due to the fact that they either preoccupy themselves with shady profit, gamble, or abandon or maltreat their families.

²⁷⁵ M. Herzfeld suggested that the word 'Christian' in Greek idiom is defined by participation rather than by innate religiosity, M. Herzfeld 'Exploring a Metaphor of Exposure' in *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 92, 1979, p. 299. See also J. Du Boulay *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village*, op.cit., pp. 62-63.

²⁷⁶ «Εξοχική Λαμπρή» 2, 131, «Λαμπριάτικος Ψάλλτης» 2, 521-522.

²⁷⁷ 4, 89.

Although women had more responsibilities concerning the performance of the religious activities, both of men and women had the same needs regarding church-going, participating in the religious manifestations, deriving hope from prayers. The difference can be confined to the preparations of the rituals and the religious duties within the house, which after all women were the most suitable to undertake, in connection with their feminine nature.²⁷⁸

Where a difference actually does exist, is between the Athenian and the island short stories in regard to the relation of people to religious matters. People in the capital do attend the liturgies and participate in the religious festivities. The difference is confined to the performance of the traditional customs and to the fact that they were conventionally carried out. Hence, they had lost their deeper meaning.²⁷⁹ Women's relations towards the priest loosen and become more distant. The duties women had to undertake in order, for example, to help the priest with a liturgy held out in the country would eventually establish a warm relationship. However, there was no such opportunity of a warm relationship to be established between women and the priest in the capital, not only because there were no similar duties to be undertaken, but because the male church-wardens were responsible for fulfilling the needs of the church.²⁸⁰

Another difference can be observed in the way the religious festivities were celebrated. In the island short stories the whole village would contribute to the preparations for the religious celebrations, which for the women constituted the main opportunity for mixing with the men, whereas in the Athenian ones only the immediate family or some close relatives would take part. Easter and Christmas or saints' days celebrations were not seen as the only opportunity for escaping from the daily routine. Balls and parties brought in from the West could serve this purpose as well.

Papadiamantis is opposed to this new spirit and the new attitudes to life which modernization fostered. He felt nostalgic for the observance of the traditional customs,

²⁷⁸ Anne Parsons, discussing Italy, suggests that religion and adult male sexuality are seen as incompatible, a view which may be true of much of southern European society. See Anne Parsons 'Is the Oedipus Complex Universal? A Southern Italian Nuclear Complex' in R. Hunt, (ed.), Personalities and Cultures: Readings in Psychological Anthropology, Garden City, N.York: Natural History Press, 1967.

²⁷⁹ «Χωρίς στεφάνι» 3, 133-134.

²⁸⁰ Papadiamantis makes his aversion obvious towards this new system in «Ο Καλόγερος» 2, 328.

which have lost their real meaning. He also felt sorry for all the more scarce attendance of people at the church, which in some cases started to be nothing but a formality.²⁸¹

Papadiamantis' disapproval of the new trends and his disappointment over the fact that «Η Αθήνα δεχόταν αναφομοίωτα -απρόσληπτα, θα λέγαμε σε μια άλλη γλώσσα- όσα κουβαλούσαν οι ευρωπαϊκοί άνεμοι»²⁸² reveals his nostalgic mood and by extension his strong desire to find himself back on his island, where the new trends had not yet invaded to such an extent. The real reason, though, for his turning back to the past is because he felt nostalgic not only for the traditional customs and morals as he experienced them during his youth, but also for his past carefree youth itself.

b. Women and Magical Powers

In Papadiamantis' stories the issue of magic appears several times. It seems that it preoccupied many people's minds, since the results of the magic rituals would have a direct negative or positive effect on their lives. Although the church regarded any preoccupation with magic a sin,²⁸³ superstition drew people to magic.

A complete picture of the magic rituals and everything related to magic is given more in the island short stories than in the Athenian ones, since people in the capital were more open-minded and thus not very preoccupied with magic. The novels on the other hand, especially Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών and Η Γυφτοπούλα, being set in an era when witchcraft prevailed, do contain elements related to magic. Magic rituals have their roots in the past, being adjusted each time to the current needs. One has to bear in mind that paganism was never entirely dead in the Greek world since it was so much part of the pre-Christian Greek religion. The church has tried in the course of time to include as many pagan elements as possible and adapt them into the Christian traditions as much as possible. In this way, many pagan festivities changed names and were adopted by the church. The following example mentioned by Papadiamantis is one of the numerous

²⁸¹ «Η Μεγάλη Εβδομάς εν Αθήναις. Κυριακή του Πάσχα» 5, 185.

²⁸² N.D. Triantaphyllopoulos, Αλεξανδριανέ μ' άέρα. Athens: Domos, 1991, p. 44. See also «Γλώσσα και κοινωνία» 5, 290.

²⁸³ «Τα Ρόδιν' ακρογιάλια» 4, 282. See also I.K. Kolivas, op.cit., p. 70.

survivals of paganism in the Christian religion.²⁸⁴ Hecate is no longer the appropriate figure to appeal to in anticipation of the fulfilment of a wish. This particular figure had its roots in the heathen world and was eventually adjusted to the demands of the Orthodox Church, being renamed as Ayia-Anastasia the Farmakolytria.

Αγία Αναστασιά εκαλείτο. Ίσως το πάλαι να ήτο ναός της Κόρης της
εξ Άδου ή της Εκάτης της φαρμακίδος, και οι Χριστιανοί, οι φυσικοί
κληρονόμοι της θανούσης ειδωλολατρείας, τον εβάπτισαν
μετονομάσαντες ναόν της Φαρμακολυτρίας, κατ' αντίφρασιν, ή της
Ρωμαίας, απλώς κατά σχέσιν ετυμολογικήν. (2, 347).

Ayia Anastasia was regarded as the saint to appeal to, in anticipation of the breaking of spells.²⁸⁵ The procedure for breaking or putting someone under a spell was not that simple and not always done within a religious framework. A comparable reading of the short stories «Οι Μάγισσες» and «Η Φαρμακολύτρια» proves the above statement and additionally shows that the borders between religious and magic rituals were imperceptible.

In the first short story the magic ritual takes place in some ruins around midnight, on a peaceful night with full moon. The presence of the full moon and generally the atmosphere of that particular night lead us to the conclusion that natural elements contribute to the formation of the mystic atmosphere needed for such rituals, in which the demonic powers were liberated.²⁸⁶ In this framework the three women who performed the ritual were naked and they appealed to the moon in order to get their wishes fulfilled. The first woman's intention was to break the spells which someone else had put on her: «της είχαν ρίξει τα κορίτσια». The second woman's intention was to put a spell on another woman, and the third tried to win back the man she loved. The scene constituted an awe-inspiring spectacle. The women would recite incantations in a strange language assuring

²⁸⁴ D. Ricks argues that it is a marked feature of Papadiamantis, indeed, that he does not reject what lies behind Orthodoxy but embraces it. See D. Ricks, 'Papadiamantis, Paganism and the Sanctity of Place' in *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1992, p. 173.

²⁸⁵ G. Regas, op.cit., p. 416.

²⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 447.

Old-Parthenis who saw them that they were witches. For a moment he felt frightened, but yet found the strength to threaten them and make them scared of being seen. This particular short story refers to a magic ritual far beyond the Orthodox doctrine but close to the ancient Greek magic rituals.²⁸⁷

In the second short story «Η Φαρμακολύτριά», the magic ritual has religious dimensions since the figure to which Mahoula appeals to break the spell in favour of her son is Ayia-Anastasia, the Farmakolytria. After the liturgy and the priest's departure she thought it necessary and more effective «να τελέσει αυτή νέαν λειτουργίαν, πλέον μυστηριώδη» (3, 306), which was called «το ζώσιμο του ναού», while at the same time she would appeal to the Ayia. In my opinion, the performance of the above ritual is not far from the Orthodox doctrine, constituting as a whole the very opposite of the previous short story.²⁸⁸ The short stories mentioned reveal how superstitious the women practising a magic ritual were. They had the credulous belief that the magic ritual might result in preventing²⁸⁹ or provoking evil, breaking an already existing spell or fulfilling a wish.²⁹⁰

The practice of a magic ritual constituted women's domain, since they would be the ones to preoccupy themselves with this realm, and by extension the ones who would wield the supernatural powers. Women, for example, would follow recipes related to magic for the prevention of being barren or giving birth to female offspring. They would also take all the precautions needed in order to prevent the so-called «το ρίζιμο των κοριτσιών».²⁹¹ Women would also use magic in order to win over a man they wanted²⁹² who might have already been with someone else²⁹³ or perhaps used to be with her but in the end cheated her. Men believed that women were actually capable of influencing their lives through their actions, and thus in a way men depended on them.²⁹⁴ Women who

²⁸⁷ Z.I. Sifalekis, «Το υπερφυσικό στοιχείο στον Παπαδιαμάντη και σε ομόλογους Γάλλους συγγραφείς του δέκατου ένατου αιώνα», in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, op.cit., p. 415.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 415.

²⁸⁹ Many people would also wear talismans as a shield against evil and magic spells. See V. Lambropoulou, op.cit., p. 337.

²⁹⁰ G. Regas, op.cit., pp. 447-451.

²⁹¹ Ibid, pp. 241-244.

²⁹² Melahro and her mother were trying to cast a spell on the Prime Minister in order to make him propose to «Μάννα και κόρη» 4,516.

²⁹³ «Οι Ελαφροϊσκιωτοι» 2, 494.

²⁹⁴ Patsostathis is convinced that his marriage was due to magic performed by his mother-in-law in «Τα Ρόδιν' ακρογιάλια 4, 254».

were preoccupied with magic could have been common women or witches as such, practising witchcraft and by extension divination as a profession. Therefore, their names were very well known among the inhabitants.

Papdiamantis presents witches in his island short stories, women whose names, faces and abilities complete the picture of a witch. The name would be either Old-Gotsaina (4, 317) or Votsaina (3, 17) or Forkina (1, 219), whose appearances would provoke fear and whose behaviour would be full of malice.²⁹⁵ Witches were also thought to be fortune-tellers, specialising in chiromancy and in the so-called 'avgomanteia', that is, fortune-telling by using an egg.²⁹⁶ It seems that even people who were afraid of them would still go to them, especially if it were to have their fortunes told.²⁹⁷ People seemed to be frightened of witchcraft in general and witches in particular, thus superstition deeply controlled and influenced their lives. This was mostly due to the ignorance, insecurity and lack of education that characterised the society Papdiamantis depicts in his writings. The fact that women would be the ones to practise magic, as well as place a curse²⁹⁸ or cast an evil eye²⁹⁹ on someone, made other women,³⁰⁰ but mostly men, really scared of the supernatural powers some women seemed to possess.³⁰¹ Consequently, this gave a sort of latent power to women, who although subordinated to men, they had at the same time the means of controlling men's lives.³⁰²

²⁹⁵ «Ωχ βασανάκια» 3, 17, ΟΓΕμποροι των Εθνών 1, 219.

²⁹⁶ «Θέρος-Ερος» 2, 197.

²⁹⁷ «Θέρος-Ερος» 2, 195-200. Dreams were thought of as another means of predicting the future as well in «Ο Γαγάτος και τ'άλογο» 3, 249. The importance of dreams is very well shown in «Η Φόνισσα» where they appear in vital parts of the narration, affecting the course of events. For the analysis of the dreams in «Η Φόνισσα» see the related paper of X.A. Kokolis, «Ονειρα και άλλα στη Φόνισσα», in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, op.cit., pp. 249-262.

²⁹⁸ «Η Γλυκοφιλούσα» 3, 78, «Θάνατος κόρης» 4, 188, «Τ' αερικό στο δέντρο» 4, 214-215. For the folklore meaning of the term *curse* see G. Regas, op.cit., vol. 3, 1968, pp. 167-172. Also D. Loukatos, op.cit., p. 106.

²⁹⁹ «Ο Αβασκαμός του Αγά» 3, 141, 143, 148.

³⁰⁰ «Της δασκάλας τα μάγια» 4, 326.

³⁰¹ «Τα Ρόδιν' ακρογιάλια» 4, 254, 273, 282. To lift a curse or an evil eye people would definitely appeal to the church or recite incantations. See G. Regas, op.cit., vol. 4, 1970, p. 412. See also D. Loukatos, op.cit., pp. 101-104. Even for the writer who might not actually believe in magic or fortune-telling, the curses and the evil eye seemed to bother him because the Orthodox church believes in their presence on account of the power of the devil. See V. Lambropoulou, op.cit., p. 357.

³⁰² Both curses and the evil eye are based on the popular belief related to the magic power released by expressions coming from the bottom of one's heart. See D. Loukatos, op.cit., p. 108.

Conclusion

Papadiamantis, being as he was so involved with religion,³⁰³ succeeded in the incorporation of the orthodox liturgical tradition into his stories, which made him one of the most profound religious personalities with literary output. Most of his views on the area of religion as well, as the religious traditions and the supernatural in the wider sense, are given through the actions of his female characters, since they were the ones - due to their female nature and the fact that the religious duties were seen as an extension of their domestic duties - who were the most suitable for whatever was related to religious matters.

The details he includes when writing about the area of the supernatural which appears in much of his work provide us with a lot of information about folklore tradition. Each short story, especially those featuring Christmas or Easter, constitutes an invaluable source of information on customs, legends and magic during the last decades of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.³⁰⁴

The religious spirit diffused in his short stories reveals that besides the social, anthropological and ethnographical aspects his texts contain, the religious aspect should be added as well.³⁰⁵ The latter aspect is featured as the most important for the additional reason that the lives of the characters presented are interwoven with, and by extension defined by, religion. Papadiamantis noticed that Orthodoxy along with folkloric tradition were the basic elements defining the Greek identity at a time when both received onslaughts due to the invasion of western mores. Consequently, the demand for a stronger religious institution was even more intense as Orthodoxy was expected to be the one to keep the Greeks close to the traditional values.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ A. Keselopoulos, «Λειτουργικό ήθος και εκκλησιαστικός προσανατολισμός» in Η Αδιάπτωτη υαγεία. Παπαδιαμάντης 1991-Ένα Αφιέρωμα, op.cit., p. 138.

³⁰⁴ D. Loukatos in his article «Το Λαογραφικό στοιχείο στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη» in *Νέα Εστία*, vol. 30, no. 355, 1941, comments on Papadiamantis' invaluable contribution in providing us with folkloric information.

³⁰⁵ E.Ch. Papademetrakopoulos, Επί πύλων αύρας νυχτερινής. Πέντε κείμενα για τον Παπαδιαμάντη. Athens: Nefeli, 1992, pp. 75-76.

³⁰⁶ G. Mihakis, «Παπαδιαμαντική Θεολογία», in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, op.cit., p. 564.

Papdiamantis was in a position to experience this invasion deeply, living as he was in the capital under the adverse circumstances which he and most people had to live through. It was something that made him feel nothing but alienation, thus he had every reason to look back with nostalgia to the years he had spent on his island, a period which most inspired his literary output;³⁰⁷ a period from which he derived happiness when he was most unhappy.

³⁰⁷ K. Papagiorgis, op.cit., p. 105. A. Kotzias, op.cit., pp. 27-28. P. Glezou, «Ο Παπαδιαμάντης μας», in *Τετράδια Ευθύνης*, op.cit., pp. 28-29.

CHAPTER FIVE

WOMEN, EROTICISM AND SEXUALITY.

Papadiamantis' religiosity did not prevent him from providing us with stories which are either based on the evolvment of a love story or encompass erotic elements in isolation. Eroticism, as it appears in the stories, means the cultivation of certain pleasures and can develop quite independently of the sexual act.³⁰⁸ Several scenes in the novels and short stories are related to eroticism in this sense. In my opinion, eroticism prevails within Papadiamantis' erotic short stories as a result of expressed love or desire for another person although that love might have never been consummated. Sexuality, on the other hand, connotes the sexual act, which is related to the satisfaction of purely carnal desires. It is the aim of this chapter to discuss these ideas in terms of Papadiamantis' novels and short stories.

When dealing with eroticism and sexuality in Papadiamantis' oeuvre, many questions arise. Was Papadiamantis, the irreproachable religious person, avoiding women because they seemed a sinful temptation? Did he share the same feelings towards women as his heroes? How often does sexuality appear related to carnal desires? Is there a relation between Papadiamantis' way of presenting eroticism, and sexuality coloured by the nineteenth-century moral values? Finally, is Papadiamantis an erotic writer or not? These questions are about to be dealt with, since they are of vital importance and have been examined by many scholars studying Papadiamantis.

Before examining these areas any further, it would be better if we clarified the perceptions of society about love, which determined women's attitude towards love. It has already been said that parents, and fathers in particular, were responsible for finding the proper husband for their daughters, always according to their own wishes and not hers.³⁰⁹ Society in the late nineteenth century, therefore, would not consider love as a

³⁰⁸ This is the definition M. Weber gave to eroticism in R. Boyne, 'The art of the body in the discourse of postmodernity', in *The Body. Social Process and Cultural Theory*, (ed.). M. Featherstone, M. Hepworth and S. Turner. London: Sage Publications, 1996, pp. 301-302.

³⁰⁹ See E. Varika, op.cit., pp. 50-51.

prerequisite for a successful wedding, neither would it accept the idea of a woman having a pre-marital love affair. In this way, she did not have the chance to get to know a man and develop feelings towards him, and, what is more, she was in no position to express her feelings, so she had to keep her emotions deep inside her in order not to provoke the slightest bad rumour against her good name.

The writer's upbringing in a setting that gave him the chance to experience the above situation, resulted in him rarely presenting women as having the chance to be guided by their feelings and marry the man they were in love with, and thus breaking away from the established rigid norm.³¹⁰ It was only possible for a man and a woman to be together soon after the engagement. This event allowed a man to visit his fiancée whenever he wanted to or take her out for a walk until marriage.³¹¹

The above moral rules applied mostly to people living on the island. This was because on the island of Skiathos people were more conservative than their fellow Greeks living in the capital, something usual even in our times when comparing life in the rural areas with life in the capital and the big urban centres.

The moral values in Athens as they appear in the stories were somewhat more flexible. Of course, women's desire to have a good name remained in force as well, especially for the women of the elite and upper middle classes.³¹² The writer does not present the new attitudes observed in regard to women of the upper class in detail. Thus, the information we have related to them is scarce. Papadiamantis deals mainly with women of the lower and lower middle classes, whom he had a chance to observe closely, since he, too, belonged to the same strata. Consequently, he presents women who did not hesitate to respond to men's flirting and behave in a coquettish way,³¹³ without, however transgressing the bounds.³¹⁴ They are also presented as having adopted new habits such

³¹⁰ Mati was asked if she wanted to marry Kostis in «Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 209. Nikos, madly in love with Tsoula, kidnapped and married her by her own free will in «Το Καμίνι» 4, 210.

³¹¹ G. Regas, op.cit., vol. 4, 1970, pp. 233-234.

³¹² M. Gasouka, *Η Κοινωνική θέση των γυναικών στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη*, op.cit., p. 184.

³¹³ Melpomeni and Kyriakoula are examples of women who behave in a coquettish way, in «Αποκρίατική νυχτιά» 2, 307.

³¹⁴ «Αποκρίατική νυχτιά» 2, 303.

as smoking³¹⁵ and attending parties,³¹⁶ where they could meet men more easily. This indeed, was the purpose of a party.³¹⁷

As regards the women of the lower class, a laxity of morals is also observed. Papadiamantis often refers to women who have lovers,³¹⁸ or co-habit with a man to whom they are not married,³¹⁹ or even³²⁰ practise prostitution. By presenting some women as having lovers and others practising prostitution,³²¹ the writer raises implicitly the question of sexuality, by connoting sexual pleasure and the satisfaction of carnal desires.

What emerges from the Athenian stories is that the growing liberation, due to the ease with which some women mixed with men or vice-versa, troubled some women who were ostensibly moral and would brook no morally insulting situations within their courtyards. If this happened, whoever provoked them would be asked to leave.³²² In fact, they would treat women who lived with men without being married to them with contempt³²³ and they would feel that prostitution affected common decency, albeit some of them rented rooms to prostitutes.³²⁴

We can infer from the stories that the moral values, which defined men's attitudes towards love, were little different whether they were living on the island or in the capital. Men were free to act as they wished at all times. They³²⁵ could go abroad, stay there

³¹⁵ Ibid, 2, 302.

³¹⁶ G. Kairophylas refers to this new habit of people living in the capital. See Η Αθήνα της μπέλ επόκ. Athens: Philippotis, 1985, pp. 16-17.

³¹⁷ «Ο χορός εις του κ. Περιάνδρου» 4, 14-15.

³¹⁸ Nania, despite her youthful age had already had several lovers in «Απόλυσες στη γειτονιά» 3, 255; and it is the same with Tasoula, who gained a bad reputation for changing partners frequently in «Το «Νάμι» της» 4, 120. Polytimi pretended her lover was her cousin instead in «Οι Κουκλοπαντρείες» 3, 570. Augousta in Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών had a lover, although her position did not permit this. The latter example is going to be analysed in more detail in the following pages.

³¹⁹ Christina the teacher was an unmarried woman who cohabited with a man who was not willing to marry her. «Χωρίς Στεφάνι» 3, 136.

³²⁰ Apart from the short story «Το Ιδιόκτητο» 4, 569-572, the writer refers to prostitution once more in «Ιατρεία της Βαβυλώνας» 4, 606 where a doctor provided false health certificates to prostitutes.

³²¹ This may as well indicate financial hardship.

³²² «Οι άλλες δύο νοικάρισσες, απήτουν μεγαλοφάνως να φύγη η έκφυλος γυνή από την αυλήν. Αυτό ήτον δα κακόν παράδειγμα! Ήτον εναντίον εις τα χρηστά ήθη». «Οι Κουκλοπαντρείες» 3, 568.

³²³ «Η Χριστίνα η δασκάλα εφοβείτο τας νύχτας να υπάγη εις την Εκκλησία, μήπως την κοιτάξουν, και δεν εφοβείτο την ημέραν, να μην την ιδούν». «Χωρίς στεφάνι» 3, 133.

³²⁴ «Το Ιδιόκτητο» 4, 570.

³²⁵ «Οι Κουκλοπαντρείες» 3, 565-566. «Ο Κοσμάς...είχεν αλλάξει έως τώρα τρεις ή τέσσαρας παλλακίδας, με τας οποίας συνέζη κατά καιρούς» in «Το Κουκούλωμα» 4, 593.

permanently and find whoever they wanted.³²⁶ They had no prohibitions, since everything was permitted to them, even the abandonment of their fiancées, despite the fact that it was regarded as immoral. Their attitude towards love was different from women's, because of the freedom the social system allowed them. For men it was much easier to assert their right to love. When they fell in love they could really be passionate, dream, or even admire the loved one from a distance, although she might already be married to an ageing man of wealth and property.³²⁷ Sometimes they found the courage to express their feelings, but there were times when they preferred to suppress whatever they felt and suffer in silence, either because of embarrassment or fear of possible rejection. In such cases men accepted things as they were, reacting with self-respect and dignity. On other occasions they would even arrive at the point where they wished to put an end to their lives because of unfulfilled love.³²⁸ For them the loss of the woman they loved was the worst defeat. Their pride was wounded; they preferred death to life and suffering.³²⁹ No doubt women were a temptation for some men and were easily seduced or confused by them,³³⁰ especially in cases where men were timid and women would take the initiative and talk to them.³³¹

We regard it necessary at this point to analyse in more detail the way Papadiamantis' characters perceived love, as well as how love affected their behaviour, their lives and by extension the whole story in which they are protagonists. Through this analysis the elements which contribute to the creation of an erotic atmosphere, will be clarified.

³²⁶ I am commenting on this issue on pages 53-55 in Chapter Two.

³²⁷ «Η Νοσταλγός» 3, 45, 56.

³²⁸ G. Kairophylos, Η Αθήνα της απέλ' επόκ, op.cit., p. 41. For examples see: «Ο Έρωτας στα χιόνια» 3, 109-110. Mihalakis commits suicide since he cannot have the woman he wants in «Απόλαυσις στη γειτονιά» 3, 255. A youth commits suicide because his beloved one is unattainable in «Το «Νάμυ» της» 4, 121.

³²⁹ «-Και το φώναζε, το είχε μεγάλο μεράκι. Ή θα την πάρω, μητέρα μου, ή θα σκοτωθώ». «Απόλαυσις στη γειτονιά» 3, 255. «Για την περηφάνια» 3, 209.

³³⁰ «...είχε πολλές δωδεκάδας εργολάβων, εις όλους έδιδεν ελπίδας, και όλους τους επερίπαιζε. Τοιαύτη ήτο η χαϊδεμένη Κούλα» in «Αποκριάτικη Νυχτιά» 2, 307. «Το Παιδί έχασε το μυαλό του μ' αυτήν. Ο πατέρας δεν την θέλει. Μα αυτός επιμένει να την στεφανωθή, και χωρίς την άδεια του γέρου» in «Το «Νάμυ» της» 4, 120-121.

³³¹ Monevaso makes the youth really happy when she suddenly turns and talks to him in «Η Ξομπλιαστήρα» 4, 170. The two youths felt really happy when a very beautiful girl gave them a peep look in «Οιωνός» 5, 252.

Papadiamantis' novels do contain erotic elements, but not to a great extent, since only certain parts deal with love. In the novel Η Μετανάστις we have a developing idyll between Zennos and Marine. Jealousy, however, spoils their happiness. It is one of those typical situations where jealousy blinds someone in love, rendering him unable to think clearly (1, 108) and thus unintentionally hurting his loved one. Marina falls ill because of Zennos' unexplained behaviour, a sickness that leads her to death.

In his second novel Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών love is accorded a different value. Carnal love appears, making things more complicated. Augousta, the faithful and decent wife, does not hesitate to follow her carnal desires, leading her into the arms of another man with whom she experiences passionate love. Augousta's behaviour is an example of purely sexual satisfaction without the involvement of any feelings. Her confession (1, 227-228) reveals how passionate her relationship with Sanoutos was. Regardless of feeling guilty for deceiving her husband, she admits in her confession that the Venetian had a great influence on her and in fact she was excited to be his lover and never regretted it (1, 227-228) although she knew that he was a dishonorable man. Even when she tried to find asylum in the monastery, she left it in order to go back to him, driven, literally and metaphorically, by the burning desire of her blind passion (1, 229-300). Consequently, the latter constitutes the core of the novel since passion, on the one hand, and the guilty feelings aroused by Sanoutos' presence on the other, form the plot of the novel. The fact that Papadiamantis presents a character like Augousta as having experienced passion so intensely, led Z. Kaukalides to the conclusion that Papadiamantis ... «είχε μέσα του όχι μόνο την τάση της εξιδανίκευσης της γυναίκας αλλά και της πορνείας της, του πρόστυχου και του χυδαίου.»³³² My opinion is that even if this is it so, it does not make Papadiamantis less or more religious. In fact, he is shown as a man of understanding and full of compassion for carnal sinners who proceed to confession.

Moving on to his third novel, Η Γυφτοπούλα, the main erotic element we have is the efforts of a man trying to express his feelings in the most suitable words, while torturing his mind as to what Aima's reaction will be (1, 427-428). When he was given

³³² Z. Kaukalides, «Διαβάζοντας τη ζωή και το έργο του Αλέξανδρου Παπαδιαμάντη» in Φότα-Ολόφωτα, — op.cit., p. 97.

the opportunity to express himself, in the middle of an earthquake, it was already too late. His beloved one was dead, and his own death followed soon after.

Τη επαύριον ευρέθησαν τα δύο πτώματα κείμενα ομού υπό το ψυχρόν
μάρμαρον και σφιγκτώως ενηγκαλισμένα. (1, 655).

A short analysis of Papadiamantis' three novels, although they constitute the writer's early literary output, reveal on the one hand carnal love and desires, which I have already commented on,³³³ and on the other hand pure unexpressed and unfulfilled love. However, both of them create an erotic atmosphere in the stories they appear in. The pure unexpressed and unfulfilled form of love mostly occurs in connection with the male characters of the majority of the short stories with an erotic themes, such as «Θέρος-Έρος», «Η Νοσταλγός», «Ο Έρωτας στα Χιόνια», «Έρωτς-Ηρώς», «Όνειρο στο Κύμα», «Η Φαρμακολύτριά», which unravel love, as this is their main subject. These short stories mostly reveal the anxiety of a man when trying to express his feelings since males are the ones, as it transpires from the stories, and is the case generally, to take the initiative and express their feelings to the women they love, either directly, no matter what the consequences will be, or through the sweet melody of a cantata in the middle of the night³³⁴ or even through a love letter.³³⁵ In rare cases, they do not hesitate to kidnap their beloved as a desperate last solution.³³⁶ Others, who are not so mettlesome, keep their feelings deep within themselves, choosing to remain silent; a silence which leads to endless thoughts, which are transformed into vivid fantasies, constituting a kind of outlet, something that makes them temporarily forget their misfortunes. Their thoughts only are immune to the prohibitions of the social establishment, thus they can transform reality in the way they wish.³³⁷

³³³ Augousta's confession in Έμποροι των Εθνών is a proof of this assertion since the novel belongs to Papadiamantis' early literary output.

³³⁴ «Ο Πεντάρφανος» 4, 61, «Τρελή βραδιά» 3, 316-320.

³³⁵ Kostis expressed his feelings to Mati through a love letter in «Θέρος-Έρος» 2, 190.

³³⁶ Nikos kidnapped Tsoula as this was the only way to get her father's consent and marry her. «Το Καμίνι» 4,210.

³³⁷ Mahtos tries to figure out the best way to express his feelings to Aima in Η Γυφτόπουλα 1,427-428.

One example of the latter is Giorgis, in «Έρως-Ήρως», whose behaviour and actions create an erotic atmosphere in the story. Giorgis, while taking the newly-married couple to their new home, blotted how to kill everyone in the boat except Archonto whom he loved, and make it look as if it were an accident. The culmination of his passion is transformed into a vivid fantasy, which appears in the form of an illusion.³³⁸ The vision, though, of his mother brings him back to his senses and inevitably to the unpleasant reality.³³⁹ He has no other solution but to stifle his passion after an inner struggle between right and wrong, morality and immorality.

This inner struggle is quite obvious in the short story «Ο Καλόγερος». Temptation reigns in the whole short story, and the struggle between sacred and profane is diffused throughout it. Father Samuel sins in his thoughts while looking at the two sisters.³⁴⁰ Their figures would invade his thoughts even in their absence.

Ο καλόγηρος ετινάζετο φρίσσων επί της κλίνης του, εξύπνα τρέμων,
και πάλιν εβυθίζετο εις νάρκην και κάρωσιν (2, 337).

Father Samuel was profoundly disturbed by his weakness, as such thoughts were strictly forbidden to him. Woman, in this short story, is involuntarily the embodiment of sin, from which Father Samuel had to escape if he wanted to remain in the bosom of the church, therefore:

Επεβιβάσθη εις το πρώτον ατμόπλοιον, το αποπλέον δια την
Θεσσαλονίκην, και με αίσθημα ανακουφίσεως, δια το οποίον ηπόρει
και αυτός, επέστρεψεν εις τον Άθωνα, εις την μετάνοιάν του. (2, 342).

His decision to leave for Mount Athos denotes his desire to repent of his sinful thoughts; it thus saves his soul.

³³⁸ S.I. Siflekis, «Το υπερφυσικό στοιχείο στον Παπαδιαμάντη και σε ομόλογους Γάλλους συγγραφείς του δέκατου ένατου αιώνα», *op.cit.*, p. 410.

³³⁹ *Ibid*, p.413.

³⁴⁰ 2, 333.

As can be seen in several of Papadiamantis' stories, love had literally some kind of magic power, which was thought to be truly irresistible. In the eyes of the ordinary old women love could only be nullified with the assistance of a higher power, which in these instances took the form of:

Η Αγία Αναστασία η Φαρμακολύτριά... Αύτη είχε παρά θεού το χάρισμα να διαλύη τας μαγείας και γοητείας. (3, 307).

Papadiamantis devotes a whole short story to this under the title «Η Φαρμακολύτριά», in which he actually speaks about the attempt of a mother, who in this case is the narrator's cousin, to break the spells she believes have been cast over her son.

Ποιος ηξεύρει τι μαγγανείας του έκαμαν... Κι' αγάπησε μιαν κόρη, ήτις ήτον μεγαλυτέρα απ' αυτόν στα χρόνια, και ήθελε να την λάβη σύζυγον. «Η θα την πάρω, μάννα, ή θα σκοτωθώ». Το είχε πάρει κατάκαρδα. Ήτον «ερωτοχτυπημένος». Τώρα, τι να κάμη η εξαδέλφη μου Μαχούλα;... Λοιπόν έπεσε στα θεοτικά πράγματα. (3, 307).

The short story «Η Φαρμακολύτριά» is one of the so-called autobiographical short stories which has aroused much fervent discussion as to what extent Papadiamantis' own life was involved in what he had written, especially as the narrator, in «Η Φαρμακολύτριά», was in love with his cousin. It was said that this particular short story belongs to those short stories written in the first person singular, which have an autobiographical character.³⁴¹ The writer, at the end of such a short story, concludes with the phrase «Δια την αντιγραφήν», meaning that he has copied another writer's work,³⁴² implying it is not about him.

³⁴¹ P. Moullas, Α. Παπαδιαμάντης Αυτοβιογραφούμενος, Athens: Ermes, 1991, pp. λ'-λη'. G. Ioannou believes that Papadiamantis is more «βιωματικός» than «αυτοβιογραφικός», something with which I am in agreement. Τα «βιωματικά» έργα περιέχουν μεταπλασμένη ζωή, ξαναδοσμένη μέσα από πνευματικές ανάγκες ή άλλες μυστηριώδεις επιθυμίες και καλλιτεχνικές ισορροπίες. Τα «αυτοβιογραφικά» έργα φαίνονται να περιέχουν συμπαγή κομμάτια ζωής του συγγραφέα. For the definitions G. Ioannou gives of the above terms see: Ο της ρύσεως έρωας, Athens: Kedros, 1985, p. 11.

³⁴² K. Stergiopoulos, «Η Φαρμακολύτριά του Παπαδιαμάντη» in *διαβάζω*, no. 165, op.cit., p. 60

G. Saunier, when discussing the above short story, observed that the term «αυτοβιογραφία» is not so apt and would instead represent the short stories which have an autobiographical character as «αυτοδιηγητικές». In short stories of this type the writer's life may have some things in common with the lives of the characters involved in the stories.³⁴³ For G. Saunier, the word 'autobiographical' has a different meaning with regard to Papadiamantis. The term in this case is related to fantasies and obsessions of the writer which he channels into the thoughts and actions of his heroes, rather than their being his own personal experiences in real life.³⁴⁴ As for the particular short story, he stated: «Στη Φαρμακολύτρια τέσσερα πρόσωπα ο Μανωλάκης, ο αφηγητής-ήρωας, ο συγγραφέας και ο άνθρωπος Παπαδιαμάντης, συμπίπτουν εν μέρει, σα διαφάνειες που αφήνουν να φαίνονται αρκετά σημεία ή στο επίπεδο της πραγματικότητας ή στο επίπεδο του συμβόλου και της φαντασίωσης».³⁴⁵

The last sentences in «Η Φαρμακολύτρια» reveal the struggle between desire and sin, with the latter prevailing, since the narrator³⁴⁶ felt an exquisite joy when the saint did not answer his request; thus he remained a slave to his incurable passion (3, 314). My opinion on the whole issue as to whether some of Papadiamantis' stories are autobiographical or not, is that a number of stories are likely to represent, to some extent, Papadiamantis' personal experiences, feelings and thoughts, channelled through his characters.

G. Themelis, when referring to «Η Φαρμακολύτρια» as well as «Όνειρο στο Κύμα», which characterised also as autobiographical, points out that the writer is on the verge of passion and purity.³⁴⁷ In the short story «Όνειρο στο κύμα» Moschoula's nude body (3, 272) bewitches the eighteen-year-old shepherd. The whole female figure, as it is described, lends an erotic mood to the story, as well as the narrator's hesitant thoughts. The young teenager found himself beside Moschoula's nude body, immensely happy at

³⁴³ G. Saunier, «Για τη Φαρμακολύτρια» *Παλίμψηστον*, Dec. 1989/June 1990, vol. 9/10, pp. 144-145.

³⁴⁴ G. Saunier «Μερικές μεθοδολογικές παρατηρήσεις και προτάσεις για τη μελέτη του Παπαδιαμάντη» in *Διαβάζω*, no. 165, op.cit., p. 36.

³⁴⁵ G. Saunier, «Για τη Φαρμακολύτρια» *Παλίμψηστον*, op.cit., p. 145.

³⁴⁶ To speak embodying literary terms, in «Η Φαρμακολύτρια» we have an intradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator who participates in the events he describes in the story. See S. Rimmon-Kenan, op.cit., p. 95.

³⁴⁷ G. Themelis, *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης: και ο κόσμος του*, Epimeleia N.D. Triantaphyllopoulos. Athens: Diatton, 1991, p. 20.

having his dream come true, having plunged to rescue her without thought of any reward or even taking advantage of her while she was unconscious.

... Ἦμην ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὅστις κατόρθωσε νὰ συλλάβῃ με τὰς χεῖρας τοῦ
πρὸς στιγμὴν ἐν ὄνειρον, τὸ ἴδιον ὄνειρόν του... (3, 273).

In this case we have the pure unfulfilled love, which brings Papadiamantis close to the romantic writers. A number of short stories contain incidents related to unfulfilled love, and by extension to the inability of the youth to approach the woman he is in love with, for a different reason each time.³⁴⁸ The aforementioned statement does not exclude love stories with happy endings in which the youth manages to be with the woman he loves.³⁴⁹

A number of Papadiamantis' stories, which encompass either the pure love³⁵⁰ or the passionate love,³⁵¹ divided scholars' opinion on the nature of Papadiamantis' attitude towards love, and by extension, women. Each scholar interpreted the erotic elements of Papadiamantis' short stories in the way he/she felt most suitable. The variety of interpretations led to a divergence of opinion. My intention is to make a brief reference to these views, so that the reader can have a complete picture of what has been said on Papadiamantis, and to what extent those forms of love referred to are revealed in the novels and short stories. The divergence of opinion separated scholars into two categories. In the first category we have G. Valetas', and P. Moullas', whose opinions on Papadiamantis' sexuality are revealed in their comments with regard to a verse in

³⁴⁸ El. Constantinides refers to all the short stories related to unaccomplished love, as well as to the reason why love remained unaccomplished. In «Ἐρως-Ἡρως» the loved one is marrying an old man, in «Ἡ Νοσταλγός» she is already married to an ageing man. In «Ὀλόγυρα στὴ λίμνη» the youth is too young for her, in «Ἐρωτὰς στὰ χιόνια» the man in love is quite old and the circumstances do not favour the overt expression of his feelings, in «Για τὴν περηφάνια» the youth was as unwanted by the mother as by the daughter. Similar incidents occur in «Ἡ Φαρμακολύτρια», «Ἀπόλαυσις στὴ γειτονιά», «Τὰ ρόδιν' ἀκρογιάλια». See «Ἡ παράδοση τοῦ Ευρωπαϊκοῦ ρομαντισμοῦ», in Πρακτικά Ἀ' Διεθνoῦς συνεδρίου, op.cit., pp. 393-394.

³⁴⁹ El. Constantinides refers to «Ἡ Βλαχοπούλα», «Θέρος-Ἐρως», «Ὁ Ἀμερικάνος». Ibid, p. 395.

³⁵⁰ «Ἡ Βλαχοπούλα», «Ἡ Μαυρομαντηλοῦ», «Ὀλόγυρα στὴ Λίμνη», «Ὀνειρο στὸ Κύμα», «Ἐρωτὰς στὰ Χιόνια», «Ὡχ βασανάκια», «Νοσταλγός», «Τὸ Καμίνι». In the framework of pure love, obsessions do take place, especially when the woman is unattainable.

³⁵¹ Passionate love in the form of carnal desire as it is presented in Ὁ Γευποροῦ τῶν Ἑθνῶν. _____

«Άσπρη σαν το χιόνι»³⁵² about which they stated that Papadiamantis includes sexual hints related to sexual desire. Moreover, G. Ioannou pointed out that as a teenager the writer had all the worries young boys usually have at that age, and that his desires made him focus on the young beautiful women of his island whom he admired whilst hidden behind bushes. He might even sometimes dare talk to them.³⁵³ Furthermore, Z. Kaukalides, when commenting on Augousta in Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών, suggested that Papadiamantis was very well aware of vulgar pleasures. N.D. Triantaphyllopoulos wrote a long article in an endeavor to prove that what G. Valetas and P. Moullas had said about Papadiamantis was far from true. With arguments which derive basically from the text itself, he manages, in my opinion, to prove his case.³⁵⁴

N.D. Triantaphyllopoulos' opinion brings us to the second category of scholars to which he also belongs. Triantaphyllopoulos, throughout his numerous articles and books on Papadiamantis pointed out that the writer was an ardent Orthodox Christian, who participated in all religious ceremonies and followed the Christian Orthodox preaching closely. Consequently, he bore within his soul all the religious values, as well as his unavoidable erotic instincts, as every human being does.³⁵⁵ He continued by saying that Papadiamantis' eroticism is different, and that it makes him one of the Greek top-ranking erotic writers. It is true that religion and carnal pleasures do conflict in Papadiamantis' thoughts.³⁵⁶ Carnal pleasures tempt him, but at the same time he tries to avoid them. Though he manages this, he does not seem to be happy with his struggle for chastity, admitting that temptation is a constant torture for him.³⁵⁷

³⁵² «Άσπροκολοβούσα μου και άσπρη σαν το γάλα, σένα σου πρέπει λεβεντιά, σου πρέπει και καβάλα». 4, 197. G. Valetas suggested in analysing the verse that «όταν βλέπει την άσπρη σαν το χιόνι γυναίκα του κυρ-Κωνσταντή καβάλλα στο άλογο, αυτοσχεδιάζει το διπλονόητο εκείνο δίστιχο, που με την άδεια του καλαμπουριού εκφράζει πραγματικές σεξουαλιστικές τάσεις». See G. Valetas, Η ζωή-το έργο-η εποχή του. Mitilini, 1940, p. 184. P. Moullas argued that «η σεμνοτυφία του δεν αποστέργει τον αισθησιασμό και, κάποτε, το χοντρό υπονοούμενο» op.cit., pp. νδ'-νε'.

³⁵³ G. Ioannou, «Επιζωγραφισμένης εικόνας αποκατάσταση» in Φώτα Ολόφωτα, op.cit., p. 82.

³⁵⁴ «Υποστηρίζω ότι το δίστιχο είναι λευκότερον χιόνος, αρκεί βέβαια να μην το απομονώνουμε από το φυσικό του περιβάλλον και να μην το σφηνώνουμε στα δικά μας κείμενα σαν να πρόκειται για επίγραμμα της «Παλατινής Ανθολογίας». N.D. Triantaphyllopoulos, «Αναιρετικός ή η Φωνή των Πραγμάτων» in Παλίμψηστον, Dec. 1989/June 1990, vol. 9/10, p. 132.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 132.

³⁵⁶ K. Choreantis, «Δεσμά παιδαγωγικής δουλοσύνης στον Παπαδιαμάντη» in Διαβάζω, no. 165, op.cit., p. 48.

³⁵⁷ V. Lambropoulou, op.cit., p. 287.

We believe that though Papdiamantis might never have had a girlfriend or never married, this did not mean that he lacked erotic desires. It seems that the writer must have experienced disappointments in love several times, not necessarily because he was possibly rejected by women who moved him, but perhaps due to his fear to express his feelings, especially as a teenager.³⁵⁸ We have no references as to an actual love that might have lasted for a long time in his life. Only love in general terms existed for him. He was fond of female youth,³⁵⁹ being an admirer of its beauty with his eye, spirit and soul. His senses, secure from any priggishness, are set free to praise the youthful female body. A woman's dazzling beauty could arouse man's most passionate feelings or bewitch him in such a way that he would be helpless. It is as if the woman resembles a painting that can only be admired. It seems that Papdiamantis, remained a faithful admirer of that 'painting', but nothing further than that. We would therefore assume that this is the reason why the majority of his erotic short stories refer to unfulfilled love.

Apart from unfulfilled love, which contributes to the creation of an erotic atmosphere within his stories, feelings are channelled through nature and may achieve the same thing. Therefore, it could well be said that Papdiamantis' eroticism may have been channelled through nature. The way elements of nature are described give us the impression that a woman's figure is hidden behind them. In relation to this statement, P. Moullas suggested that in such a way Papdiamantis expresses indirectly his 'repressed' eroticism and releases it through descriptions of nature.³⁶⁰ It can be argued, therefore, that Papdiamantis eroticism was implicitly expressed through his writings.

An example of the above is Mavromantilou in the short story of the same name, who, according to village tradition, before being transformed into a rock used to be a woman always dressed in black (grief), never having experienced love (2, 159).³⁶¹ Yiannios, the main character of the story, having experienced a similar misfortune, found consolation in the bosom of Μαυρομαντηλού, who is depicted as

³⁵⁸ K. Papagiorgis, op.cit., p. 94.

³⁵⁹ O. Votsi, «Προσεγγίσεις στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη», in *Τετράδια Ευθύνης*, op.cit., p. 50.

³⁶⁰ P. Moullas, op.cit., p. νδ'.

³⁶¹ The tradition related to Mavromantilou's rock is commented on by I.K. Kolivas and collated as well with Niovi's legend. See I.K. Kolivas, op.cit., pp. 36-37.

... η ασφριγής και ανέραστος κόρη
 ... η οστρεοκόλλητος και κογχυλόφθαλμος νύμφη
 ... η άστρωτος και χαλικόσπαρτος ευνή
 ... η απείρανδρος γήρα, η απενθής μελανείμων. (2, 166).

It is once more the hidden desire of the main male character, which for the moment seems to find its way out through a woman whose life had many similarities to his life. Neither had children, or spouse, living a life full of torment.³⁶² Fortunately, the response is encouraging.

... μόνη αυτή έδωκεν άσυλον εις τον γηραιόν βασανισμένον ναύτην,
 και μόνη εδέχθη τας περιπτύξεις και τους ασπασμούς του Γιαννιού του
 εξαδέλφου μου. (2, 166).

The reason though, is that Mavromantilou is nothing but a lifeless rock

Πτωχή Μαυρομαντηλού! Πτωχότερε Γιαννιέ εξαδέλφέ μου! (2, 166).

The most sensual description however is that of the 'Royal Oak' in the short story of the same title, «Υπό την βασιλικήν δρυν», where Papadiamantis' sensualism and eroticism reach very high levels, regardless of the fact that the object of reference is merely a tree.

...Και ήτον εκείνη άνασσα του δρυμού, δέσποινα αγρίας καλλονής,
 βασίλισσα της δρόσου... Ησθανόμην άφατον συγκίνησιν να θεωρώ το
 μεγαλοπρεπές εκείνο δένδρον. Εφάνταζεν εις το όμμα, έμελπεν εις το
 ούς, εψιθύριζεν εις την ψυχήν φθόγγους αρρήτου γοητείας... Μ'

³⁶² El. Constantinides, «Η παράδοση του Ευρωπαϊκού ρομαντισμού», in Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς συνεδρίου, op.cit., p. 402. See also R. Zamarou, Φύση και έρωτας στον Παπαδιαμάντη. Ο συγγραφέας κηπουρός: Athens: Nefeli, 2000, p. 131.

έθελγε, μ' εκήλει, μ' εκάλει εγγύς της. Επόθουν να πηδήσω από του υποζυγίου, να τρέξω πλησίον της, να την απολαύσω: (3, 327).

If this paragraph is isolated from its context, it would be easy to conclude that it refers to a woman whom the narrator was bewitched by and deeply in love with.

G. Themelis takes the view that the whole short story is a lyrical love poem, arousing the human senses. The sight of the tree provokes admiration and adoration, along with strong desire, and on a number of occasions the narrator mentions the presence of God in creating such beauty (3, 327-328). It can easily be surmised that the narrator, and by extension the reader, are transferred from the tangible world to a heavenly world, where both body and soul experience exaltation. Hence, the narrator feels .. κρυφὴν ευτυχίαν, ονειρώδη ἀπόλαυσιν (3, 330).

In my view, the above description gives the feeling of an existing and gradually increasing sensualism. The gradual transformation of the tree into a woman takes place in the narrator's sleep during the day and it is described in detail. The roots are transformed into female legs, the trunk into a waist, the biggest branches into hands and the rich foliage into long hair. Thus: «Α! δεν είναι δένδρον, είναι κόρη! και τα δένδρα, όσα βλέπομεν, είναι γυναίκες!»

Papadiamantis, apart from expressing his characters' desire for the female through nature, used elements of nature to enhance the erotic atmosphere in several of his short stories. One of the most significant natural elements he frequently makes use of is the sea.³⁶³ In the stories «Όνειρο στο κύμα», «Η Νοσταλγός», «Έρωτες-Ηρώες», which have many things in common, the sea is instrumental in the approach of the hero to his loved one, thus creating an erotic atmosphere in the story.³⁶⁴ Their union lasts for a few moments, as does the hero's dream of love. Starting with «Όνειρο στο Κύμα» the sea element contributes to the arousal of the senses of the hero, who had wished to stay in the water forever. The moonlight, the sea, the naked girl, comprised the perfect erotic

³⁶³ G. Ioannou says that the sea, of all the natural elements, attracted Papadiamantis the most. See G. Ioannou, *Ο της (ρύσεως έρωτος)*, op.cit., p. 25.

³⁶⁴ The same view is expressed by R. Zamarou, op.cit., pp. 22-23. See also El. Constantinides, 'Love and death: The sea in the work of Alexandros Papadiamantis' in *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*, vol. 4, 1998, pp. 99-110. The writer indicates that the sea in Papadiamantis' stories may be the means of uniting the youth with his beloved, but can also be a force of death and destruction.

environment. Naturally, from his hiding place, the narrator could neither resist observing the naked girl swimming in a carefree way in the sea, nor hesitate to take the plunge and rescue her when she was in danger, since this was actually his only chance to be close to her silky, naked body. The sea is basically the means of bringing this couple together.

The same thing happens in «Ἐρως-Ἡρώς», where Giorgis is asked to ferry the girl he loves, along with her newly-married ageing husband, to their new home. In a vivid fantasy of his the boat capsizes, everyone drowns except the bride, who is rescued by him. Once again the sea was the means of uniting Giorgis and Archonto, even at a transcendental level.

Finally, in «Ἡ Νοσταλγός» the youth transports his beloved woman from one island to another by boat. In this instance, the heroine dominates the action since she is the one who takes the decision to return to her native island leaving her elderly husband behind. The short trip on the sea in the little bark was the hero's one and only chance to be with the woman with whom he was in love, whereas the reaching of land would inevitably lead to their separation.

An overall view of the above three short stories leads us to the conclusion that there is a strong connection between nature and eros, especially with the sea in mind, which as a natural element seems to help fulfil the hero's dream of love momentarily, making him feel free from the constraints of society, time, place and morality. The sea makes the hero happy for a few moments, fulfilling partly his dream, before he has to adjust himself to the cruel reality; a reality which does not permit him to be with the woman he loves.

The behaviour of the characters who are in love has been discussed in detail in this chapter. This behaviour was certainly influenced by the perceptions of society concerning love. Since parents were responsible for finding the proper husbands for their daughters, this in itself deprived women of the right to fall in love and marry the man they wished. The laxity of moral values, as can be seen in the Athenian short stories, allowed women to mix with men and therefore find an opportunity to escape from the rigid norm.

The aforementioned prohibitions did not apply to men, as they had freedom to assert their right to love. It is more likely however, as can be shown in Papadiamantis'

writings, that their love remained unfulfilled, either because their loved one was already married or because the woman rejected or neglected the man.

The erotic atmosphere displayed in several stories is created by the development of a love story, which may be about unfulfilled love or love with a happy ending. The channelling of the characters' feelings through an element of nature, behind which a female figure is hidden, can also create an erotic atmosphere. Moreover, a particular element of nature, the sea, contributes to the creation of an erotic context where a dream of love might be partly fulfilled, or thoughts related to love might develop, inspired by the erotic atmosphere that the sea creates.

In conclusion, we can say that the writer might be viewed as erotic not only because some of his short stories are about love, but also because in a number of stories, for various reasons, an erotic atmosphere is created, making Papadiamantis, indeed, one of the writers who succeeded in being considered as erotic³⁶⁵ in the wider sense of the term.

³⁶⁵ K. Choreanthis, op.cit., p. 48. See also E.Ch. Papademetrakopoulos, Επί πύλων αύρας νυκτερινής, op.cit., p. 72 and K. Plisis, 'Ο Παπαδιαμάντης και ο κόσμος του' in *Τετράδια Ευθύνης*, 1981, vol. 15, p. 157. N.D Triantaphyllopoulos, «Αναιρετικός ή η Φωνή των Πραγμάτων» in *Παλίμνηστον*, op.cit., p. 132.

CONCLUSION

When reading Papadiamantis' novels and short stories we have the opportunity to observe not only the development of his way of writing, which in time gave us short stories of great value but also of his thinking in regard to the females who inundate his writings. His lively presentation of female characters enables us to reconstruct the role and the position of women, both on the island of Skiathos and in Athens, during the second half of the nineteenth century. The picture we get when reading Papadiamantis' stories, with respect to the position of women in society, is no different from the general pattern some historical and folkloric studies furnish us with for the period specified.

Women were confined to the house up to the day they became engaged or got married. From a very young age they knew what the social context expected of them as females. The general idea was to serve their families as daughters, wives, mothers or grandmothers. Women had to fulfil all kinds of responsibilities within or outside the domestic realm, and if the male members of the family were useless they had to undertake their responsibilities as well. A female character, depending on the circumstances, could find herself acting at the same time as man and woman of the house, something that in the framework of the story contributes greatly to the emergence of the female character's personality.

All tasks performed outside the house in groups provided women with the opportunity for social mixing. Women's tasks within the house, as they are presented in the Athenian short stories, did not differ from those of the island women. Women of the middle and lower classes were equally responsible for accomplishing their tasks within the domestic field, in addition to having the opportunity to find jobs in small industries in order to assist their families financially.

Women were regarded as the basic keepers of certain important kinds of ritual. They would be the ones to carry out the traditional religious customs and be responsible for maintaining the household's appropriate relationship with the spiritual world and its institutional manifestations. Women would additionally undertake responsibilities when attending to liturgies, especially when those were held in the country. Women's religious

duties constituted either part of their domestic duties or extensions thereof, leading into the non-domestic sphere. In the Athenian short stories, a difference can be observed in regard to the performance of the traditional customs, as urbanisation and the new spirit of modernization brought in at the end of the nineteenth century resulted in the more superficial performance of the traditional customs, purely as a conventional activity.

In Papadiamantis' stories, particularly the island ones, women engaged themselves in magic rituals, the performance of which placed them either close to the Orthodox doctrine or close to the ancient Greek magic rituals. The women's aim when performing these magic rituals was to break a spell, to prevent or provoke evil or to fulfil a wish.

In addition to all the innumerable duties they had to perform, as guardians of moral values had to endure all the moral rules and the restrictions imposed on them, which deprived them among other things, of their right to love and get married to the man they chose. Parents would be the ones to select the appropriate man for their daughters. The number of the prospective grooms depended on the bride's good reputation and her dowry.

The institution of the dowry was very important. Girls would occupy themselves from an early age with the preparation of their trousseaus. Their families had to provide them with a house, and in some cases with cash. It is for those reasons that the parental family regarded females as nothing but a burden; moreover, a burden that should be transferred as soon as possible to the future husband.

It was quite usual for women to get married to an incompetent man who would have respect neither for her nor their children. Some men are presented as being gamblers and drunkards, using violence against their wives. They are also presented as neglecting their families for a long time if they were engaged at sea.

The most important state after marriage which occupies a considerable part of Papadiamantis' writings, was maternity. Women, despite knowing in advance the difficulties a pregnancy involved at a time when methods of delivery were underdeveloped and there was a high risk of death, sought to give birth to as many offspring as possible, preferably male, in order not to be looked down upon by society. The presence of children provided women with additional tasks within the domestic

sphere, as they were the ones to spend a long time with them and teach them the social and family values.

The way Papadiamantis embodies these matters in his stories shows that he is very well aware of women's role in the family and society. The skills the writer ascribes to the female characters distinguishes them from the male ones, who do not seem to attract his attention equally. This is because the writer mostly uses females as the major characters in his stories. We would suggest that the abilities women are attributed with, compared to those of men, contradict the general attitude of mind which regarded the former as inferior beings.

It can be inferred from the stories that there was no hope of women altering their downtrodden position within society for the better, since they had no right to even raise their voice and complain. It was not until some decades after the writer's death that a slow improvement occurred in regard to the position of women, and the opportunity came about mainly after the publication of the weekly feminist periodical 'Ephimeris ton Kyrion', under the auspices of Calliroe Parren, through the articles of which a number of well-educated, wealthy women, who could not remain speechless in view of the grave discrimination they had to contend with, struggled towards emancipation. For this reason, only in some of his mature stories do we observe a slight change with regard to the education of women, indications that women were gaining some degree of social emancipation, but in the face of which the writer is somewhat puzzled and thoughtful, as to the need for women's education.

Apart from education, there is no evidence of change as regards the other issues, related for example to women's household tasks, obedience to their parents, obedience to the restraints put upon them by society, which remain unchanged within the development of Papadiamantis' writings. There is evidence however, of a slight change in the moral outlook as presented in the Athenian short stories, in that the writer refers to prostitution, social gatherings and new habits adopted by women.

Papadiamantis' stories do not only portray women's household tasks and responsibilities, but also the external appearance of women of different ages. Young good-looking women tend to have delicate characteristics which may be enhanced by reference to elements of nature, similes that derive from nature or metaphors. The image

of an old woman is not as attractive since she is accorded unflattering comments related either to her facial or bodily characteristics.

The stories encompass a whole range of female characters, who display a variety of positive and negative features. Negative features can be seen in great frequency, usually in the short stories. They are related to malevolent gossip which is caused mainly by curiosity and may lead to quarrels. They may also encompass jealousy or oddities such as being hypochondria or oversensitivity. Positive features may refer to prudence, diligence, modesty and patience. Each of the aforementioned behavioural characteristics leads to certain social behaviour, which in turn may be bound up with the external appearance of the character.

Considering that the favourable descriptions refer to young women and that the majority of negative features are ascribed to older women, we can easily discern Papadiamantis' preference towards female youth which is expressed only indirectly through his writings. The fact that Papadiamantis chose to live a celibate life resulted in a diffused and latent eroticism appearing throughout his writings.

The erotic atmosphere that is present in a number of the stories may constitute the context in which either unfulfilled love or love with a happy ending is unfolded. Papadiamantis' eroticism is implicitly expressed through the description of elements of nature, behind which female figures may be hidden. An element of nature that contributes particularly to the creation of an erotic context is the sea, as it would appear to help the male hero momentarily fulfil his dream of love.

Papadiamantis' female characters, the majority of whom are women of the middle and lower classes, are not just the vehicles employed by him whereby he draws attention to current traditions and morals. If that were his purpose, we would attribute to his writings a simple folkloric element. His heroes, however, are people from real life; people who daydream, feel sorrow or happiness, struggle with the powers of evil or fight against their own weaknesses. Consequently, this makes Papadiamantis not just fully cognizant of Greek tradition, but also fully cognizant of the human soul, especially the female one, which he observed from a very close distance.

Although numerous studies have been written on many different topics related to Papadiamantis and his oeuvre, the particular subject dealt with here has not been

thoroughly examined. The present research, therefore, contributes to the exploration of aspects concerning women in Papdiamantis' stories which have not been examined before or if so, have been examined from a different angle.

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