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κακολόγοι δὲ πολίται.
ισχεὶ τε γὰρ ὅλβος οὐ μεῖονα φθόνον·
ό δὲ χαμηλὰ πνέων ἀφαντὸν βρέμει.

Pythian 11. 28-30

ἅλλ᾽ ὅμως, κρέσσον γὰρ οἴκτιμοῦ φθόνος

Pythian 1. 85

Pindar
POETIC REFORMATORIES

Think tomorrow your lyrics
being sheltered in institutions,
being reformed, disciplined
and disposed in standard editions

Χρόνια της Πέτρας – Ages of Rock (1953-1954)

Titos Patrikios
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Abstract

This thesis discusses the relationship of the poetry of Titos Patrikios to ancient and Modern Greek poetry as well as his treatment of Greek myth. The dialogue that Titos Patrikios has with his precursors has, as a starting point, the lyric poets of Greek antiquity. Archilochos from Paros and Pindar from Thebes are the two major poets to have an impact on Patrikios’ poetics as an artist and as an individual. What is more, the appropriation of Greek myth may be either direct or otherwise provided via the prism of another author. The reception of the mythological leitmotivs in Patrikios recalls the reception of the myth by the French-Algerian writer Albert Camus and by other Modern Greek poets of the twentieth century, such as Kostas Karyotakis, Constantinos Cavafy and George Seferis. This is a comparative approach therefore between modern and ancient Greek literature, taking also into consideration European literature with regards to the myth.
Acknowledgements

The story of the present thesis goes almost four years back to the island of Crete (where everything always starts for me), when Titos Patrikios was awarded his Honorary Doctorate by the Department of Philology at the University of Crete*.

I was surprised to listen to a Modern Greek poet reading us his unpublished poem about the dialogue he had with Archilochos! Later in life, I was given the chance to meet the poet in person and had my own dialogues with him many times. So for that, I owe a big thanks to the poet Titos Patrikios for all the lovely discussions we shared, his openness and generosity. For reasons other than his work, I am in love with him and I am happy that he knows it.

At an early stage of my research, I had the opportunity to talk with the talented Nikos Chrisikakis and I have to thank him for his kind cooperation; his documentary film Titos Patrikios: a poet in precarious balance provided inspiration as poetry per se.

This thesis would have never been completed without Mary Moschona, the commander-in-chief of the historical bookshop “Endohora” in Athens, who dug up all the rare editions I asked for; I was glad to meet a lady and a professional.

My research has come close to completion while I was working as a teacher assistant at the Pressessional Academic English Programmes at the University of Birmingham. This post has been the best professional experience I have ever had so far, that for, I

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* Titos Patrikios was awarded his Honorary Doctorate at Rethymno on 14/03/2011.
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   Angela Kastrinaki for her stimulation and pathway leadership
   Alexis Politis for his calm guidance and inspiration
   Yannis Tzifopoulos, my guardian angel

To Angela, Alexis and of course Yannis
INTRODUCTION

Titos Patrikios (b. Athens 1928) is a Modern Greek poet, the most prolific of the first post-war generation. His work covers a wide range of socio-political and historical themes and also includes prose texts and translations from English and French. Patrikios is still productive as a poet and as a translator: his latest work, Σε βρίσκει η ποίηση (Poetry comes to you, 2012), was published two years ago and his latest translation, yet unpublished, is an autobiography of Stendhal, La Vie de Henry Brulard. Titos Patrikios is acknowledged worldwide as a European poet and intellectual; he was been awarded the National Prize for Literature in Greece (1994) and the prestigious International Prize LeiriciPea (2013).

Seventy years of an impressive career have been the subject of important study, both from within and outside the academic community. Patrikios in fact received attention from scholars from the outset. Alexandros Argyriou was the first

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1 Alexandros Argyriou (1995: 221) in the birth-article of post-war poetry in 1957 classified Titos Patrikios among social poets and exceptionally distinguished him. Titos Patrikios biography is extensively presented in special issues dedicated to the poet and his oeuvre. There are three honorary volumes published by renowned literary journal in Cyprus and in Greece: Αnti, v. 19 (2006), Diavazo, v. 500 (2009) and Porfyras, v. 150 (2014). For a full biography of Patrikios, see also Antoniadou (2009b) and the film documentaries in the Appendix (p. 101).

2 Patrikios’ poetry has gained the attention of graduate researchers as well. The first one to introduce the topic of Patrikios’ poetics in academic scholarship was Theodouli Alexiadou in her leading dissertation at the University of Sorbonne (1992). Her insight more than twenty years ago is remarkable, since the poet’s interest on his own art is until recently a work-in-progress and it has been gradually extended during the last two decades; indeed, this introspective approach reached its zenith within Poetry comes to you – his poetical epilogue so far. Apart from the prophetic master research by Alexiadou, there are hitherto completed two more master theses on Patrikios’ poetry; these two postgraduate dissertations were completed at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and both were supervised by X. L. Karaoglou during the same year when the journal Diavazo released one of its last issues on Titos Patrikios; see Maria Lambrou (2009) and Fani Trypa-Pliakou (2009). There is also another earlier undergraduate essay written by Loredana Rasura (1998) “Titos Patrikios poeta e intellettuale dei nostri giorni” at the University of Palermo in Sicily, supervised by Vincenzo Rotolo. Not to mention, there is no doctoral research completed on neither the poetry and prose of Titos Patrikios nor his equally notable translative and critical corpus yet.
important critic to emphasize the social dimension of his work and promising début in poetry soon after the publication of his first volume the *Earth-Road* (1954); Dimitris Maronitis later stated that *Earth-Road* was a landmark in Modern Greek literature.

But there is a paradox: no matter how significant these studies are and how popular he is to readers and the public at a national and international level, this popularity does not translate to the paucity of academic studies published about his poetry – in the case of Patrikios, quality takes precedence over quantity. It is crucial, therefore, to recognize the minimal discourse around his name: Titos Patrikios, even though a productive poet and popular with readers, has not attracted much scholarly inquiry.

Dimitris Maronitis, Panagiotis Noutsos and Eleni Antoniadou keep publishing reviews and critical analysis of his oeuvre on a regular basis, while much of the most recent criticism is published in journals and newspapers.

Scholars divide Patrikios’ poetry into two periods: the socio-political (c.1948-1975) and the humanist (1975-);

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3 See Argyriou (1995a: 221) and Maronitis (2005:111).

4 Theodouli Alexiadou (1992:3) and David Ricks (1996:81) also refer to the silence around Patrikios.

5 For example, Dimitris Maronitis is often writing on Patrikios’ poetry in his weekly column in the Sunday newspaper *To Vima*, see “Ο καιρός της ποίησης” (*To Vima*, 25.11.2012), “Το φάντασµα της ποίησης” (*To Vima*, 2.12.2012) and “Αποκάλυψη τώρα” (*To Vima*, 9.12.2012) – all referring to his latest collection *Poetry comes to you*.

6 Maronitis is the one who sets the fundamental outline of Patrikios’ social-political approach among scholars (1976). The histories and introductions to Greek Literature present Patrikios as a social-political poet as well. Mario Vitti (1978:375) is the first to list Patrikios as a “new poet”, along with Costas Kouloufakos and Manolis Anagnostakis; he mostly emphasized their socialist orientation, together with their divergence from the Marxist orthodoxy. During late 1970s, Linos Politis (1978: 337-38, 367) in his *History of Greek Literature* (1978) included a chapter on post-war poetry and devoted one paragraph to Patrikios’ poetry, thus being by far the most generous in comparison to other histories of Modern Greek Literature up to that time; Politis classified him to socio-political poets with Manolis Anagnostakis and Aris Alexandou. Roderick Beaton, the only one to write an *Introduction to Modern Greek literature* (1999) and not a history, relates Patrikios with resistance to German occupation, mentioning him after Anagnostakis, Alexandrou and Livaditis. Finally, Vitti’s revised
(1975), is the turning-point between the two periods, while others date that turning-point as being earlier, back in the 1960s. Patrikios’ first period is marked by his experience of the end of the Second World War, mostly the December events (1944), the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) and the poet’s exile (1951-1954). The important political events in which Patrikios took part during the middle of the twentieth century and their impact on his first ideological period have been characterized as the “womb” that gave birth to his poetical production onwards, while his poetry is acknowledged as erotic and deeply human. The poet identified with Marxism during this time and this political ideology is widespread in his early work, while his tone changes later, becoming more introspective. His second period, a more meditative one, coincides with the poet’s return from Europe after the military dictatorship (1967-1974) was over.

Regarding the first period, scholars have recently cast Patrikios as a social commentator of his own time. David Ricks and Dimitris Raftopoulos have adopted a historical approach to their studies: Ricks presents Patrikios’ poetry as the poet’s take on the legacy of the Greek Civil War set into the globalized Cold-War context, while Raftopoulos highlights a transformative meta-political aspect of Patrikios’ art. Both

*History of Greek literature* (2003) comes back to Patrikios deviation from Marxist orthodoxy in a whole chapter dedicated to post-war poetry; Patrikios is the last poet to be mentioned.


Ricks and Raftopoulos focus on the same two collections: Learning process depicts the atmosphere of the Twentieth Party Congress (1956) and the de-Stalinization period onwards; additionally, Learning process over again, composed at the end of the 1950s and published after the official end of the Cold-War\textsuperscript{10}, functions as a recollection of old ghosts. According to Raftopoulos’ metapolitical approach, (metapolitical is used not as a political science term, but as a general term of political discourse on human life, closely connected to the ancient Greek meaning of the term political), Patrikios’ poetry after Learning process over again loses its political aim, which is the essence of political engagement\textsuperscript{11}.

Vyron Leontaris, based on the collections The Return by Thanasis Kostavaras and Learning process by Titos Patrikios, discussed post-war poetry in terms of defeat, as the result of the Resistance’s failure\textsuperscript{12}. If Charles Baudelaire was right that artists should be of their time, then Titos Patrikios as a post-war poet was deeply involved with the historical events that unfolded during his lifetime; perhaps, Patrikios is by far the most engaged of all the post-war Greek poets, his work marked by a sense of

\textsuperscript{10} The dates of publication of both collections are not indicative of the era they represent. Patrikios’ publishing does not usually follow the chronological order of the time of composition. For instance, Learning process was composed from 1956 to 1959 and Learning process over again, as the title is implying, was composed exactly afterwards from 1959 to 1962. Nevertheless, the two collections are published with a thirty years gap between them. This chronological gap from composition to publishing applies to many collections composed during the 1950s but published after the change of the regime. This point means that the poet reveals his poetical production into layers, often re-printing, adding or moving poems from one collection to another, always keeping readers’ interest alive. The first collective volume of Titos Patrikios was published in 1976 and it is retrospective. It includes poems composed from 1948 to 1954 – that is before his early publication of Earth-Road (1954). Poetic compositions were initially incorporated into other collections and they only become independent decades afterwards. For example, Long Letter (1952) was initially adapted into Earth-Road (1954), just becoming a separate collection in 1976 and the collection Deformations was incorporated into Learning process (1963), becoming an independent collection only in 1989.

\textsuperscript{11} See Raftopoulos (2012:354).

\textsuperscript{12} Leontaris (1963).
hope. What singles Patrikios out from the subjective pessimism found in Kostavaras, according to Leontaris, it is the fact that in Learning process there is no tragedy; Patrikios instead emphasizes the humanist aspect of an unpleasant reality. This humanist aspect of Titos Patrikios’ poetry has been re-emphasized lately by Panagiotis Noutsos, who recalls the humanist dimension of Patrikios’ poetry proposed by Leontaris half a century ago. Having a larger body of work available to him, he rejects the term “poetry of defeat” and views all the particular features of Patrikios’ poetry from both a biographical and literary perspective. Furthermore, Panagiotis Noutsos coins the term political anthropology to characterize the poetry of Patrikios. Deriving inspiration from social theory, he enriches his approach with an absolutely new anthropological argument, a more theoretical one, applying to both the person and the poetry of his subject.

The dualist approaches either socio-political and historical or humanist and philosophical provide a useful outline of Patrikios’ poetry. Beyond this, it is essential to analyze the nature of his engagement and disengagement with the above. Titos Patrikios appeared in the mid-1950s not only as a poet, but also as a translator. I note two phases in his career as a translator as well: the first is ideological (1950-1980) and the second is literary (1980- ). Being a core member of the editorial team of the Epitheorisi Technis (Art Review) he released his early translations via this memorable

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13 Maronitis (1976:61-2) and Raftopoulos (2012:334) have emphasized Patrikios’ optimistic attitude in contrast to Linos Politis (1978: 337-8) who characterized him as pessimist; otherwise, Takis Karvelis (1984: 85) places Patrikios between optimism and pessimism.


15 See Noutsos (2006:51).

journal, never losing contact with it, even after moving to Paris. The early translations from *Epitheorisi Technis* and the independently published translation of Georg Lukács *Studies in European Realism*\(^{17}\) establish Patrikios as a translator committed to ideological texts and literature. During the following decades, Patrikios would translate critical essays of Marxist scholars and philosophers, (i.e. Louis Aragon, Roger Garaudy and *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade*), directly from French into Greek. Later during the 1980s and, this is his second phase, the literary one, he would be engaged in translating the words of French writers and poets (i.e. Stendhal, Honoré de Balzac, Paul Valéry). The turning-point between the two phases, from the ideological to the literary, is the translation of Stendhal’s *Souvenirs d’ Egotism* (1983).

Combing the dual strands of poetry and translation and his stages of engagement with and detachment from the zeitgeist, I reach the conclusion that the two phases overlap at some point in the beginning of the 1950s and at the end of the 1970s. Since certain elements may co-exist at some points either earlier or later in his work, I prefer to use the term *phase* than period to describe that transformation, because phase entails a degree of evolution. In my view, the first period of his poetry depicts his engaged phase, while during his second phase he draws attention to his identity, not as an engaged poet anymore, but as an artist. During his first engaged phase, he is committed to the communist goal, but later on as his artistic aim is...
drifting away from politics, that commitment serves no further purpose. This is when the literary dialogues are set forth within both his poetry and translation.

Greek antiquity is a key-factor in defining the split between the first and the second phase and emerges after the poet’s return from Europe. Disengaging from Marxist, this offered Patrikios the chance to gradually enrich his poetry with mythology and thus broaden the thematic range of his poetry. The reception of Greek myth emerges in his late poetry and opens new opportunities for intertextuality in his work. Consequently, the methodological approach I have adopted is the close reading of the relevant poems in tandem with other poems from Modern Greek literature with which Patrikios shares common ground; all the translations of Patrikios’ poems from Greek to English are mine. Additionally, a comparative approach between ancient and modern literature is an essential methodological tool in analyzing the reception of mythological and poetical leitmotifs of the past to the present. My basic argument is that Greek antiquity is an allegorical world created to replace political utopias left defunct following the collapse of communist ideology. The Greek past as depicted via poetry and myth functions as an allegory in the poetry of Titos Patrikios; just as the Utopia of communism proved to be empty of meaning in practice, Greek mythology and poets of the literary past replenish this thematic lacuna in a covert, yet creative way.

Given that classical reception is not a modern practice, but rather an ancient one \(^\text{18}\), ancient artists were always adapting their mythological leitmotifs according to their preferences or specific aims. As a matter of fact for the Modern Greek poet, classical reception sometimes seems to be closest to appropriation, since Patrikios

transfers ancient figures from the past to the present and occasionally appertains to adaptation. Even when mythological figures appear, the poetic dialogue does not end in antiquity, but carries on up to the twentieth or the twentieth-first century; for example, Oedipus as presented by Patrikios deals with the classical drama by Sophocles and the homonymous Cavafian poem at the same time.

The present thesis is comprised of two chapters discussing the issue of ancient and modern reception in the poetry of Patrikios. The dialogues Patrikios has with the literary past lead to his inter-textual relationships from Greek antiquity to Modern Greek literature. Chapter One focuses on the reception of mythological figures and how their presence supports the human dimension of the poetry of Patrikios. Chapter Two is comprised of two parts: Part One discusses the influence of archaic and classical poetry on his oeuvre and Part Two focuses on the intertextuality with Modern Greek poetry. As for the first phase, the dialogue is between Patrikios and Karyotakis, while during the second phase, the dialogue is between Patrikios and Cavafy. Nevertheless, the poetic shadow of George Seferis always remains in the background of the two phases; this is evident in the use of myth and methodology as well. If there is no parthenogenesis in art, as Seferis had said, then Titos Patrikios is its closest embodiment.
Chapter 1

PATRIKIOS AND GREEK ANTIQUITY

Titos Patrikios’ engagement with Greek antiquity emerges during the second phase of his work. As the effect of ideology fades, after the poet’s return from Europe, Patrikios seems not to be an engaged poet anymore. As his poetry becomes less socially engaged and he more detached from the ideology which characterizes his first committed phase, there is space left for new interests. This is both an active and passive engagement with antiquity and explains why the ancient past enters his poems during the second phase. This chapter argues how mythological figures (Oedipus, Prometheus and Sisyphus) are assigned new roles within French literature and how Homeric figures (Odysseus, Telemachus) are identified by Patrikios today and how he has re-written mythical beings (Minotaur, Eros) in modern contexts. He mostly allows one appearance for each figure, at once respecting their authentic nature derived from antiquity and subverting it, as follows. As I argue, antiquity plays an important role in the poetry of Titos Patrikios, (one not recognized in scholarly circles so far), not only because it fills the void left by the ideological phase, but also because it transforms his work.
1.1. Ancient Greek Myths in Patrikios’ Late Poetry

1.1.1. Oedipus, Prometheus and Sisyphus

Harold Bloom in The Anxiety of Influence (1973) defined poetical influences as the story of intra-poetic relationships\textsuperscript{19}. Those poetic relationships may also apply to ancient myths. Bloom makes an analogy between a poet’s task and his prototype using two familiar heroes of Greek antiquity, Oedipus and Prometheus, as exemplary cases. According to Bloom, good poets have to solve their own riddle, as Oedipus did, a riddle which endlessly re-presents itself, while Prometheus represents the humanitarian and liberating aspect of a poet.

Oedipus is the first ancient hero to enter Patrikios’ poetry, while the poet was still living in Europe, spending time between Paris and Rome. The poem “Oedipus’ story” (Ιστορία του Οιδίποδα) was published soon after his return to Greece following the end of the military dictatorship (1967-1974) in the collection Optional Attitude (1975) – this is his turning-point collection, as previously discussed\textsuperscript{20}. The figure of the ancient king of Thebes was definitely a good start.

\textsuperscript{19} Bloom (1973:5). Influences in poetry are revealed through six different categories and the technical terms used by Bloom in his The Anxiety of Influence (1973) are interesting enough. The first category is named after Lucretius and thus “clinamen” defines the divergence from the poetic prototype. The second category “tessera” entails the completion and the antithesis with the original one. Then “kenosis” symbolizes the repetition and discontinuity, followed by “daemonization” more as a reaction to the precursors. “Askesis” comes as purgation and soliplism, since the inner-promethean side of every strong poet is set forth and the final category is named “apophrades”, that is the return of the dead precursor as a closing circle of an endless procedure.

\textsuperscript{20} See pp. 9-10.
OEDIPUS’ STORY

He tried to solve the riddles
to light the dark
where all find a snug berth
no matter how it presses them down.
He was not frightened by the things he saw
but by others’ refusal to accept them.
Would he always be the exception?
He could not stand loneliness anymore.
And to find the people next-door
he put deeply into his eyes
the two pins.
Again he could discern with touch the things
nobody wished to see.

January ’71
Optional Attitude (1975)

---

Patrikios’ poem reflects the mental struggle for Oedipus in the story; his
dramatic choice to blind himself is his way of casting light on the darkness. Unable to
bear being lonely, he chooses the dark; having lost his vision, the only sense left to
identify reality is touch. Where does Oedipus disappear to after the title? The ancient
King’s name is not mentioned in the body of the rest of the text. This story is derived
from the mythological cycle of Thebes, concurrent with the Sophoclean dramas,
especially *Oedipus Rex*\(^\text{22}\). But the choice made not to name Oedipus, leaves the field
open for the reader to identify the protagonist. To sum up, this is similar to the story
of the Theban King, but Oedipus here seems to be an alter ego of the poet himself\(^\text{23}\);
Oedipus may function as a metaphor for Patrikios. Light (truth) and dark (ignorance),
as direct opposites of the same unit, exist as the two sides of the same coin. This coin
is poetry and the search for truth it entails.

As the Theban hero represents the interplay between light/dark as for
knowledge/ignorance respectively, the same metaphor applies to the representation of
Prometheus as the archetypical fire-bringer\(^\text{24}\). Prometheus appears in Patrikios’ poetry

\(^{22}\) See Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* (vv. 1182-85) when Oedipus addresses light as soon as the truth is
revealed; the English translation is mine:

> ιοὺ ιού· τὰ πάντ᾽ ἂν ἐξήκοι σαφῆ.
> ὃ φῶς, τελευταίον σε προσβλέψαμι νῦν,
> δόσις πέρασσαι φῶς τ᾽ ἄφ᾽ ὄν χρήν, ξίν ὦς τ᾽
> ὦ χρήν οὐκ ὠν, οὐς τέ μ᾽ οὐκ ἔδει κτανόν.

> Oh, oh, all brought to pass, all came true!
> Light, this is the last time I look at you now,
> accursed in birth, in wedlock cursed,
> incestuously accursed.

\(^{23}\) Maronitis interprets “Oedipus’ Story” as a poem about poetics too, see Maronitis (2005:78).

\(^{24}\) Prometheus throughout antiquity was the ultimate symbol for dignity and self-sacrifice. The
etymological root of his name (προ-μήδομαι< Προμηθεύς) is translated as acting before thought. The
myth of Prometheus in literature was introduced by Hesiod; see *Theogony* 506-616; *Works and Days*
lately as “A Provincial Prometheus” (Ένας Επαρχιώτης Προμηθέας) in his last but one collection *Co-living with the Present* (2011).

**A PROVINCIAL PROMETEUS**

If you search more carefully you find
the other one hidden inside
you call him self, you bind him in chains
saying you are done with him.
But there is a time that he might be released
turning into a hostile bird, into a vulture
while you become a provincial Prometheus
whose liver is constantly born again
until Hercules rescues you, solving the mysteries
a retired Hercules, let’s say a Poirot.
That’s all very well, but if you do not manage
once and for all to untangle one self from the other
that’s not the end of the world, after all
these are creatures of fantasy.

*Co-living with the Present* (2011)

---

42-105. The myth then passed onto the prominent Aeschylean trilogy (*Prometheus Bound, Prometheus Unbound* and *Prometheus Fire-Bringer*) and the Platonic dialogues; see Plato *Protagoras* 320c - 322a.

The myth functions as a short exemplum set in contemporary terms, so that this is a post-modern adaptation of the ancient myth, because it entails irony and depicts a grotesque atmosphere. Prometheus’ double role as a suppressed individual and as a humanitarian rebel lays the ground for the ambiguous identities to come: the ancient hero is represented as the projection of an individual’s double identity, the most human and giving they have. This humanitarian aspect is usually suppressed and bound in chains, though it sometimes alters and turns into a hostile bird, into a vulture that mangles you, until someone else is found to rescue you; he can be a retired Hercules or, for example, a Hercules Poirot! The humorous parallel between the mythical hero Hercules and the fictional detective of Agatha Christies’ renowned novels is of course accidental; although, it emphasizes the all-pervading intentional irony that begins from the title and keeps going up to the last verse raising all inner conflicts up to the level of fantasy. This is how the poet reconciles the inner conflict between one’s peaceful self (Prometheus) and one’s aggressive self (vulture), thus re-writing the Greek myth. The inner focus into the self is an appropriation of the Greek myth and betrays Patrikios’ post-modern approach, which is seen from a psychoanalytical perspective.

The ancient hero Sisyphus was introduced a little earlier through “Sisyphus’ Story” (Ιστορία του Σίσυφου) at New Lining (2007). The Sisyphean myth in antiquity is a story of punishment and eternal effort, with Sisyphus depicted as cunning, a symbol of deviousness and deceit26, close to the persona of Odysseus, often identified

26 Sisyphus’ story is traced in ancient literary sources often as an anti-paradigm having negative connotations. Sisyphus is usually enlisted into a catalogue of other famous heroes who suffered, along with Tantalos, Titos, Ixion et alii. This is the case in the Homeric Nekyia Odyssey, Book 11.593-600; Lucretius De Rerum Natura, Book 3. 995-1002 and Ovid Metamorphoses, Book 10.40-44. All three famous tragic poets Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides composed homonymous tragedies or satiric dramas based on incidents of his life, for instance Euripides Sisyphus and Autolycus (fragments). The
as his father. In the modern poetical adaptation of Patrikios, Sisyphus does the impossible: when he reaches the top after so much effort, he rolls the rock down again. This is a choice made to keep his myth and its multiple interpretations alive.

**SISYPHUS’ STORY**

He tried to move it, being certain
that it was firmly in place, he took a breath
and turned to enjoy the view
and suddenly he stopped –
if the torture finished so nicely
the myth would be erased at once
the constant interpretations would end
nobody would speech of Sisyphus again.
With all his remaining power he pushed the rock rolling it back down again.


---

27 According to that version of the myth, the son of Hermes Autolycus stole Sisyphus’ cattle and when he realized it, Sisyphus in reverse raped Autolycus’ daughter Anticleia, just before she got married to Laertius; therefore, Odysseus’ real father is not Laertius, but Sisyphus. See Sophocles *Philoctetes*, v. 417 and Euripides *Autolycus* (fragments) and *LIMC*, s.v. Sisyphos I, VII. 1: 781-7. This diversity of the myth seems to function as an aition, so that a cause to explain Odysseus πολυμηχανή into a hereditary sequence. This is similar to the link between Heracles and Sisyphus given by Euripides and implied by Homer, otherwise Hercules would not possibly come after him in Nekyia; see Euripides *Sisyphus* (fragments) and *Odyssey*, Book 11. 601-635.

What kind of interpretations are these? It is apparent that Oedipus, Prometheus and Sisyphus share a common tragic past. All three suffered for their choices due to punishments imposed on them by others. During the twentieth century, the myths of Sisyphus and Prometheus were revived in French literature, especially by Albert Camus (1913-1960), while Oedipus always remained their standard comparative medium in the works of the famous French-Algerian writer and philosopher.

Albert Camus published his greatly influential essay *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* (1942) during World War II. This is a treatise of the absurd trying to answer the mystery of suicide. While reasoning the absurd man, Camus questions the ideas of freedom, passion and revolt. The absurd man behaves like an actor who embodies another character for a while and then returns back to his original self. This space, being betwixt and between, finally leads to the creation of the absurd. By analyzing literary works from the perspective of the absurd, Camus arrives at the conclusion that where there is hope, absurdity fails. The last chapter of his essay explains the title: the absurd hero that is Sisyphus proved to be stronger than his fatal rock. Sisyphus, like Oedipus, is a tragic hero trapped in the same endless journey; Oedipus’ burden is his blindness, but Sisyphus’ burden is his rock.

Jean-Paul Sartre, when analyzing the absurd man, as presented by Camus not only in *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, but also in *L’ Étranger*, states that the absurd man is a humanist. Absurdity has positive connotations therefore, being away from the negative aspects of the world (i.e. as war). Given that the late poetry of Titos Patrikios, during his more artistic phase, is characterized for its human dimension, it is also humanism that brings Patrikios closer to Camus.

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29 Camus (1942:165-66).

30 Sartre (1943:35).
Roland Aronson has recently noted that Camus was engaged in the circle of the absurd after his encounter with Marxist philosophy\textsuperscript{31}. This period between Marxism and the absurd coincided with the publishing of *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* in the early 1940s, when Camus had realized that the world lacked meaning – shortly after its publication, Camus also met Jean-Paul Sartre and their interaction at a personal and ideological level always revolved around Marxism. According to Aronson, the modern myth of Sisyphus depicts the intellectual task of the artist, but more than that, symbolizes the physical effort made daily by the worker. The consciousness of the proletarian, like the consciousness of Sisyphus, mirrors a psychological resistance; this resistance can never be active, but functions in the background. From that perspective, *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* is a post-Marxist work\textsuperscript{32}. Given that Camus was critical of orthodox Marxism, as well as Patrikios, their stories about Sisyphus can be read as an allegory of the worker. What is more, Camus and Patrikios converge in the sense that they depict a psychological aspect of the classical myth; they both light the inner part of the individuals, revealing the decision-making process of their everyday struggle.

Besides Sisyphus, Patrikios seems to be influenced by the work of the French writer in the case of Prometheus. It is Albert Camus who deals with Prometheus twice in the twentieth century and presents him as a revolutionary individual and as a humanist in the *Prométhée aux Enfers* (1946), being also influenced by metaphysics in his second representation in *L’ Homme Révolté* (1951)\textsuperscript{33}. Camus introduced the ancient hero, as the first symbol of humanism and this is why he searches for his new

\textsuperscript{31} Aronson (2004:73).

\textsuperscript{32} Aronson (2004:73) and also see Carroll (2007: 64-65).

\textsuperscript{33} See Richardson (2012:73) and Hayden (2013:200-203).
role in the modern era. Camus argues that if Prometheus returned, people would probably chain him to the rock again, as the gods did in the past. Modern man remains a slave to the miseries this hero wanted him to be free from and this is how people betray Prometheus nowadays.

Modernity in Camus’ philosophy entails superficiality, seeing and hearing without the real activation of those senses, closely approaching the form of dreams. This move towards the interpretation of dreams brings Camus closer to the Freudian school of psychoanalysis. Freud used Greek mythology as a universal pattern for his own theoretical model, even though he did it partially; the father of psychoanalysis shed light only on the cycle of incest and skipped Sphinx’s riddle. For Camus, modern man seems to need neither seeing nor hearing; this is why Oedipus, as an alter-ego of the poet, uses the sense of touch in order to understand. In Camus, history is blind and not the man, which is why Prometheus has to return home. This Camusienne aspect of the hero, perhaps explains why Prometheus comes from Provence, which in Patrikios could not mean anything else but that the French province is an allegory itself. Last but not least, in the poem of Patrikios, it is Hercules who solves the mysteries, as Oedipus before tried to solve the riddles.

The three mythological figures of Greek antiquity have been depicted by many artists across a range of mediums throughout the centuries. The myths, as Camus suggests, do not have life of themselves, but they expect us to incarnate them. Considering that the myths have a panhuman dimension, and then artists often use

them to identify themselves. Titos Patrikios rewrites the stories of Oedipus, Prometheus and Sisyphus, while he uses the archaic and classical myths as a mirror. The modern Sisyphus of the twentieth-first century opts for the irrational choice of rolling the rock down again, but we have to think of him as happy, as Camus suggested. This aspect of the absurd, as a personal choice, and the modern dimension of Sisyphus as a working agent, is the only way to keep up with interpretations about Sisyphus' legend. Furthermore, the double identity of Prometheus in the poetry of Patrikios, either as a suppressed individual or as a rebel, echoes Camus. According to Camus, Prometheus was the absolute rebel whose humanist aspect makes his persona unmatchable for mere mortals. Oedipus, like Prometheus and Sisyphus is locked in the same perpetual circle of identifications.

The Camusienne reception of Prometheus as well as Sisyphus in the twentieth century accentuates the positive aspects of their myths, while Oedipus functions as their counterbalance. Patrikios seems to internalize the Greek myth through the Camusienne prism. The Modern Greek poet deals with the ancient mythology and Camus' appropriation at the same time. Sisyphus, as Camus showed, is an absurd post-Marxist hero and Prometheus a rebel. The poet therefore as a rebel of old times, transforms his Oedipodean blindness into an insightful piece of creative art, happily carrying the burden of its own Sisyphean task; that is poetry per se.

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37 For the artistic adaptation of the myth of Prometheus, see also Trousson (1976:464-5) and Voisset – Veysseyre (2012).

38 Camus (1942:168): “Il faut imaginer Sisyphe heureux”.

39 See also Richardson (2012:74).
1.1.2. *Odysseus and Telemachus as travellers*

Pro-archaic heroes actually have never ceased to capture the imagination of poets, painters and artists in general as well as scholars. During the twentieth century, there was a boom in Homeric studies and their reception proved more modern than ever. Titos Patrikios, in his only purely mythological collection *Lions’ Gate* (2002), presents two narrative poems about the ingenious Homeric hero and his son.

The poem “The Tricks of Odysseus” (Τεχνάσµατα του Οδυσσέα) consists of three parts, each featuring one trick. Each one of the three trick sections begins with the name of Odysseus, plus the definite article: Ο Οδυσσέας. The first trick has to do with one of the paradoxes of Zeno the philosopher (c. 490-430 BC), probably his most famous one, about Achilles and the tortoise. Zeno said that if the tortoise begins first and moves with a steady speed, then Achilles will never catch it. Patrikios added that Odysseus knew the truth, that Achilles will naturally beat the tortoise, so he sets more tortoises in the race, so one is always in front of Achilles in spite of his great running speed. Patrikios in fact reforms the classical paradox. As for the characterization of the Homeric heroes, he uses their two formulaic adjectives: Odysseus is πολυµήχανος (Greek: πολύτροπος, ingenious) and Achilles is γοργοπόδαρος (Greek: ὀκύπους, fast-running).

The second trick is closely related to his nostos. Returning back to Ithaca after the war was over, he tried to be a lover and a husband in love, a popular king and a lonely traveller. Patrikios here emphasizes the multiple identities of his hero: as warrior, as lover, as husband, as king and as a traveller. These are the identifications which make up Odysseus’ male identity as a heroic image and as an ideal modern man too.
The conclusion of the poem has to do with age and the passing of time. Despite all the things the hero saw or that happened to him and his old age, he still feels full of desires. And age is difficult to combat, no matter how many longevity herbs one uses and it is therefore ever more difficult to renew oneself. The verse things that he saw and happened to him (τα ὅσα εἶδε καὶ κέπαθε) echoes directly the proem of the Homeric text; actually, the two epic verses are shrunk into one.

The three tricks of Odysseus function as metonymies for the actions which happen in the three phases of a man’s life: youth, maturity and old age. A man, during his youth, is bold and audacious with no sense of fear or respect for others. As the years pass and he collects experiences of his own life, entering his mature phase, he becomes more careful about what others think of him and he cares more about his profile –whether this image is true or false is another story. Finally, as he gets older and older, he realizes that he cannot fool anybody, not even himself. In fact, those three phases of human life are the question that Sphinx posed to Oedipus. This way Patrikios links the Theban and the Trojan mythological cycle as well as his modern representation of Oedipus and Odysseus; Patrikios’ Oedipus solved the riddle successfully, consequently his Odysseus has all the answers that he needs.

But it is not only the Odyssey that Patrikios rewrites in Lions’ Gate. The presence of Achilles echoes the Iliad and therefore Odysseus’ military past. The narrative of Patrikios in the poem “The Tricks of Odysseus” is the Iliad and the Odyssey in a nutshell. As Odysseus now is getting older and the poem reaches its end, the tone becomes more introspective and lyrical. The Homeric hero from Ithaca mirrors the poet’s alter-ego: a man who took part in the war and suffered a lot, a man
who fell in love and a man who travelled\textsuperscript{40}. Patrikios is identified as Odysseus who enjoyed life \textit{without having to be tied at the mast} (οὔτε χρειάστηκε να δεθώ σ’ ἕνα κατάρτι), as declared elsewhere\textsuperscript{41}. Titos Patrikios, even if he spent twenty years of his life wandering\textsuperscript{42} as Odysseus did, did not imitate his Homeric hero. Patrikios, unlike his Homeric archetype, left himself to be seduced by the female song of his Sirens, thus to find his own path in life.

In the narrative poem “Telemachus’ Trip” (Το Ταξίδι του Τηλέμαχου), Telemachus is making his own trip following the example of Odysseus; this is his \textit{small Odyssey}. Since he had never left his microcosm of Ithaca, this trip was Telemachus’ \textit{rite de passage} from childhood to adulthood\textsuperscript{43}. The Homeric version of the myth is abstractly cited; actually the reader never learns where Telemachus went\textsuperscript{44}. Patrikios opts to eliminate the visit to Sparta and the search for his father’s route after the Trojan War, as detailed in the Homeric text. On the contrary, the

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{40} The beginning of the famous proem of the \textit{Odyssey} (vv.1-4); the English translation is mine:

\begin{quote}
Muse, tell me of the ingenious man, who wandered many ways after sacking the sacred city of Troy.
Many were the men whose cities he saw and whose mind he learned, many the sorrows he suffered in his heart upon the sea
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{41} See at his collection \textit{Co-living with the present} the poem “Three Cities” (Τρεις Πόλεις).

\textsuperscript{42} See at his collection \textit{The Pleasure of Prolongations} the poem “Lost Years” (Χαµένα Χρόνια).

\textsuperscript{43} For the three stages of \textit{rite de passage}, see Gennep (1960:14).

\textsuperscript{44} Dimitris Maronitis, even though he notes the divergence Patrikios makes to the Odyssean version of Telemachus’ journey, he keeps analyzing the poem under the Homeric standards of the myth, see more Maronitis (2005: 104-7).
\end{footnotesize}
journey of Telemachus is characterized by a constant parallel between his journey and Odysseus’ wandering, exactly as we know it from Homer.

During his trip, Telemachus meets all his father’s enemies in the post-modern incarnations. These were modern Cyclops and Laestrygones, many types like Aeolus who controls media power, Cicones and Lotus Eaters, (these were almost the same), Sirens who look like models, modern Cerberus sponsoring singers and artists, Circes performing liposuction and also having bodyguards, and plenty of other figures whose description flirts with the grotesque and probably moves beyond. During this strange trip, he also meets his friends transformed and concerned only with themselves; confessions and self-criticism are for them impossible.

Telemachus seems to have travelled with a time machine from timeless myth to the modern world. A contemporary world which carries all the peculiar identities of its agents – the poem at this point sustains an ironic atmosphere towards the lifestyle of the so-called New Age. Telemachus’ wandering into the strange world of the modern era depicts the zeitgeist of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Patrikios adapts the classical myth by bringing the Homeric hero into the modern context. This is the adaptation he offers to the reception of the ancient myth.

The modern poet is identified with his mythological heroes. Titos Patrikios is Odysseus and Telemachus at the same time, because he made all their journeys: the long one outside Greece as did Odysseus and also the short one inside Greece as did Telemachus. What is more, the three phases of human life, as analyzed above, in the case of Odysseus, also recall Oedipus, another alter-ego of Patrikios’ persona. These are the identifications which the poet chooses as projections of his life and self through myth.
1.1.3. Labyrinths and other daemons

Myth does not end with heroes, but it can be extended into other types of representations. In “The Story of the Labyrinth” (Ιστορία του Λαβύρινθου) from Lions’ Gate the narrative is divided into two time levels: the mythological past and the present. In the first part, the poet provides an imaginary extension of myth – what happened after Theseus killed the Minotaur: the labyrinth was abandoned, the guards were dismissed and the buildings started collapsing, revealing the hidden, otherwise undeclared spaces for torture, cannibalism and secret treasures. In the second part, present time is set forth. The Minoan labyrinth is now transforming: simulations of labyrinths are built with new materials, new monsters, victims, heroes and patrons. This is how new labyrinths are made where new boys and girls enter to play an old drama adapted to a new stage by using the same ancient names: Minos, Pasiphae, Minotaur, Ariadne, Daidalus, Ikaros and Theseus. In the first part, the word labyrinth is mentioned only once in singular form with a definite article (ο λαβύρινθος), while in the second part the word is set in plural twice without definite articles respectively (λαβύρινθων, λαβύρινθοι). About what types of labyrinths does the poet speak?

Before answering that question, let’s have a closer look at another poem that is similar thematically, called “The Liberation of the Minotaur” (Η Απελευθέρωση του Μινώταυρου) from New Lining. The Minotaur there is not killed, as expected, but is liberated. Throughout this thought-provoking poem, which is full of existential queries and endlessly repeated agonies, there is a conclusion which comes as a surprise: a void is a way to make ornate labyrinths, just as Daidalus made his own. Actually, this is the only way to free the invisible Minotaur from our soul. The form used to refer to the labyrinth is the plural one: λαβύρινθος. Why is there more than one labyrinth and what does the Minotaur actually symbolize?
As the poet noted at the “The Story of the Labyrinth” these are new labyrinths λαβύρινθοι με λέξεις (labyrinths of words) which boys and girls enter each year. Taking into consideration, the fact that labyrinths are made from empty space, as later declared in “The Liberation of the Minotaur”, this timeless hot spot is nothing else but poetry itself. As Oedipus and Prometheus are two heroes employed as alter egos of the poet’s persona, the same poetic dimension applies to the Minotaur and its labyrinths. Supposing the Minoan labyrinths are a synonym for the labyrinths of poetical creativity, then the Minoan daemon, either visible or invisible, is the so-called daemon of creative inspiration. The Minotaur therefore symbolizes the primordial inspiration buried in the labyrinths of creative minds and of course artists and poets across the centuries. In Patrikios, the daemons of the past serve as a metaphor for poetry. When his Minotaur is liberated from the word-labyrinths of mind, it is nothing else but a daemon-like creature in need of freedom.

Fifteen years before the daemon was given a name, when the poet was describing the opposite process: how the daemon can be liberated from us. Under the title “The Daemon” (Το Δαίµόνιο), the poet described the controversial procedure which happens when the daemon tries to sneak out of the body and out of the mind. This is a surrealist description, not so common for Patrikios. What kind of daemon is this? Patrikios here produced a daemon-like creature, as in painted form, goat-shaped with a long tongue, flaming eyes and a snake’s tail. This is a creature without gender, androgynous, gestating inside us throughout our lives. The presence of androgyny and gestation in the poem reveal the dialogue and intertextuality with the Platonic Symposium.

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45 Maronitis (2005: 47) identifies some surrealistic elements in Deformations as well.
The *Symposium* (c. 384 – 379 BC) depicts the mature phase of Plato’s creative writing. It is comprised of seven speeches with Aristophanes’ and Socrates’ speeches being the most memorable ones. Aristophanes gives a famous parody of Hesiod’s *Theogony* and he refers to three human genders: male, female and androgynous. This is a comic fairytale depicting erotic passion in its more physical version.

Patrikios in “The Daemon” imitates Aristophanes’ speech in the Platonic *Symposium* by giving his own surrealistical account of physical attraction. The body and its humble functions is laid bare on stage. This erotic daemon is not about pure love, but sex. This is probably one of the most surrealistic poems in the corpus of Patrikios in the sense that the description of the daemon is unreal and rather photographic, verging on the grotesque.

When Socrates speaks as Diotima, the seeress from Mantinea, there is absence of the human body, since this double gender identity between a male and a female, actually embodies the androgyne, as discussed earlier by Aristophanes. What is more, Diotima via Socrates presents Eros as a daemon. Eros in Diotima’s speech is not possessive, but it is presented as a desire, moving between its mortal and immortal substantial sphere. This dual dimension of τόκος explains Pausanias’ initial distinction in the beginning of the *Symposium* between the heavenly and the popular Aphrodite: the heavenly Aphrodite represents homosexual love, while the popular Aphrodite stands for heterosexual love.

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46 The seven speeches of the platonic *Symposium* are delivered by Phaedrus (178a6 – 180b8), Pausanias (180c1 – 185c3), Eryximachus (185e6 – 188e5), Aristophanes (189c2 – d6), Agathon (194e4 – 197e8), Socrates as Diotima (201d1 – 212c2) and Alcibiades (215a4 – 222b7).

47 Plato *Symposium* 189 d7 – e5.

48 Plato *Symposium* 203 a6 – 7.
In the Platonic *Symposium*, Socrates as Diotima explains love through poetry – Socrates was in his mature phase when delivering the speech of Diotima as was Patrikios. The contemporary poet gives a modern account of an ancient myth. Patrikios borrows from Diotima the aforementioned mortal/immortal dimensions of desire as well as the leitmotiv of gestation, either for homosexual or heterosexual love. The ring composition of liberation is repeated here again: in the beginning, the daemon escapes from the body and exactly the same happens at the end of the poem, recalling the androgyne that exists in Aristophanes’ speech.

Plato was a poet at first, but philosophy engaged him more after his encounter with Socrates. *Symposium* is an experiment of comedy and tragedy translated into a philosophical context. Likewise, the same philosophical dimension applies to Patrikios, mostly during his second phase. *Symposium*, one of the most influential works ever written about poetry and love, is reset in a Modern Greek context. Titos Patrikios is a poet who releases his philosophical tendencies in small doses; a poet as well as a philosopher. The direct connection with Plato is a good example for Patrikios to express this aspect of his personality.

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1.2. The Reception of Greek Antiquity

Patrikios is primarily interested in myth and not in ancient history. In comparison to ancient history and archaeology, which he barely touches on\(^5\), myth is definitely given pride of place. Why is ancient history absent? One possible explanation may be his major preoccupation with modern historical events, for instance the Second World War, the Greek Civil War and the Marxist ideology which defined the middle of the twentieth century and the poet’s youth as well. If historians indeed are responsible for commemorating the important events of the past, as he says in his first published collection *Earth-Road* (1954), then the ancient Greek history, which is full of military events, has to be commemorated by implication, only by a historian. Therefore, historians are ascribed a different job to poets (argumentum ex silentio).

\(^5\) Many ancient references apply mostly to the Roman period, especially around the area of Magna Graecia, combined with other arts (i.e. painting, sculpture) and there is a stressed self-referentiality – the reception of antiquity in Patrikios’ verse remains always as such. The ancient historical background of Magna Graecia is set on stage twice in *Facing Mirrors* (1988), a collection of Patrikios’ maturity. There are two poems recalling the Greek past into that wider area: “Noon at the railway station of Paestum” (Μεσημέρι στο Σιδηροδρομικό Σταθμό του Παεστού) and “Name Retrieval” (Ανάκτηση Ονόματος).
NIGHT PLANS, V

Have we ever considered how many poets’ books are lost?
So many generals’ actions there were no historians to commemorate (or they did not want to)?
Have we ever considered so many lovely friends’ chats
Perhaps they deeply knew that one day are going to face each other like strangers?

Earth-Road (1954)

The difference between the aim of the historical and the poetical work above echoes the Aristotelian thesis on the same matter. Aristotle in his *Poetics* is suggesting that a poet has a different task to accomplish than a historian: a historian describes what happened τὸν μὲν τὰ γενόμενα λέγειν, while a poet says what could have happened τὸν δὲ οἷα ἀν γένοιτο (Poetics 1451a36-b5) Aristotel awards a privilege to poetry, because it is more philosophical and more important than history, since poetry deals with universal matters (τὰ καθόλου), while history deals with the details (τὰ καθ’

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52 Aristotle *Poetics* (1451a36-b5); the English translation is mine:

It is clear from what have been already said that this is the poet’s task, not to tell what happened, but what could happen either probably or inevitably. The difference between a historian and a poet is not that the historian writes in prose and the poet writes in verse (in fact Herodotus could be put into verse and still be a kind of history, whether in verse or not). The main difference is this: one tells what happened and the other what may happen. This explains why poetry is more philosophic and important than history, because poetry deals with general truths, while history deals with the details of the facts.
The implication for the poet’s work is not to present the real events, but to suggest what could happen or is inevitable.

Mythology is an ideal world, a world that never was. The turning from ideology to myth identifies myth as a theme, covertly at an initial stage and more openly after the millennium. But it is not only the roll-call to the figures of the myth that matters. In any single case, (i.e. Oedipus, Prometheus, Sisyphus, Odysseus, Telemachus), the poetic representation offers an insight into the human level of these heroes. The poet underlines their special inner characteristics to mirror his own persona. Even though they are fictitious characters, Patrikios treats them as if they were real personae and it is their human essence that he brings forth. The second phase of his work is generally identified as a humanist one and antiquity has a great deal to contribute to the human dimension of Patrikios’ art. This how Greek antiquity transforms the Marxist ideology into humanism.

Titos Patrikios applies the Aristotelian distinction into his work, when he discerns the two fields, history and poetry, respectively. Therefore, the reception of Greek antiquity in his poetry echoes the Aristotelian detachment between the focus of history and that of poetry. Titos Patrikios searches for an alibi and a good excuse to skip all the historical aspects of the ancient past and focus on his contemporary reality. Despite the few ancient historical references traced in his corpus, there is one important aspect emphasized through his poetic dialogues: this is the self-referential aspect of his poetry. Within those terms of poetry as a self-referential technique he carries on his dialogue with Greek poetry, either ancient Greek or Modern Greek poetry, as will be discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 2

PATRIKIOS AND GREEK POETRY

The present chapter identifies the paths trod by Patrikios to enrich his content in terms of artistic discourse. The first part sheds light on the lyrical patterns and personae of Greek antiquity, while the second part discusses the impact of contemporary poetry on the poetry of Titos Patrikios, focusing on Karyotakis, Cavafy and Seferis. When does Patrikios open the dialogue and how? What techniques are used? On the one hand, Patrikios innovates when he embeds Hesiodic leitmotivs into his oeuvre and, more than that, when he sets Archilochos and Pindar in the present. On the other hand, Patrikios seems to adopt the methods of Seferis, the themes of Karyotakis and Cavafian style to bolster their creative dialogues. As discussed next, the ancient Greek and Modern Greek poetry of the past seems to remain as a standard parameter for the poetry of Patrikios.
2.1. Ancient Greek Lyricism and Patrikios

2.1.1. Archaic Lyric Poetry: Hesiodic patterns and Archilocheian discourse

The first poet who thematized his inspiration was Hesiod. The proem of his \textit{Theogony} is astonishingly theatrical: Hesiod is a shepherd on Mt Helicon where he describes his encounter with the Muses (\textit{Theogony} 1-135). Hesiod as a poet and as a director sets his Muses for first time in literary history on Helicon, instead of Olympus, where they traditionally dwelt; this is one of the most primordial adaptations of the travelling Muses in the European literature.

One of the main subjects of the poetry of Titos Patrikios is inspiration. No matter if Titos Patrikios never names his lyrical precursor, he seems to be familiar with the Hesiodic adaptation of the Muses, as his verse proves: a high goal in one’s life is to meet the Muses on Helicon (να συναντήσουμε τις Μούσες πάνω στον Ελικώνα). The deific standards set in the poem begin from the conquest of Olympus and then proceed towards the encounter with the Muses on Mt Helicon. Therefore, there is reference to their initial residence (Olympus) and that functions as an implicit

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\textsuperscript{53} Hesiod originated from Askra in Boeotia and his corpus probably derives from the late eighth century BC; see Barron (1985:93). His major epic poems and first European samples of epic didactic poetry were oral compositions: \textit{Theogony} is a universe cosmogony and \textit{Works and Days} an admonitory catalogue of dos and don’ts in everyday work and life.

\textsuperscript{54} As Theodouli Alexiadou (1992:69) noticed in early phases of his work, Patrikios’ poems about poetry are a main subject. The poet’s last published collection \textit{Poetry comes to you} (2012) is nothing else but the peak of this self-referential poetical procedure. Actually, this short collection is an example of a poet’s resource material. Patrikios illustrates the themes of his own work, such as war, love and ideology and at the same time he gives an excellent account of a poet’s lab. If this is his poetical sphragis and the best way to conclude his whole oeuvre as a memorandum to the next generations of readers, this is still an open issue. It definitely depends whether the poet chooses to publish new material in the future. In any case, \textit{Poetry comes to you} handles the sensitive matter of the poetical inspiration and this is not a modern subject, but poetical inspiration is an ancient matter.

\textsuperscript{55} See the poem “The Vertigo of Height” (Ο Ίλιγγος του Ύψους), verse 4 in the collection \textit{Co-living with the present} (2011).
link to the poetic encounter (Helicon). This identifies the use of the Muses as a metonymy for poetry and poetical inspiration, both in Hesiod and in Patrikios.

The modern poet seems to be aware of the ancient adaptation of the Muses, not at a superficial level, but as his poetry indicates, at a deep level. The poem “The Three of Diamonds” (Το Τρία Καρό) from Facing Mirrors is more apocalyptic:

THE THREE OF DIAMONDS

I can make many stories
convincingly told as though they were true
I can present the truth as suspicious
seeming like a lie

Facing Mirrors (1988)
vv. 6-9

The poet confesses that he can make stories convincingly told as if they were true. This deceptive knowledge given by the Muses applies to the poetry of Titos Patrikios who is echoing Hesiod. This might derive from the Hesiodic verse. In particular, the Muses, during their epiphany, confess in chorus that they know how to tell many falsehoods as if they were true (Theogony 26-28).

ποιμένες ἄγραφου, κάκ᾽ ἐλέγχει, γαστέρες οἶον,
τὸς γὰρ πεῦδος πολλὰ λέγειν ἐπίμωσιν ὁμοία,
τὸς δὲ, εὖτ᾽ ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι.

Shepherds boorish, mean and ravenous,
we know how to tell many falsehoods as though they were true,
but we also know, when we wish, how to voice the truth.

Hesiod *Theogony*, vv. 26-28

The modern poet reverses truth and lies once more, being able even to make truth look suspicious as if it was a lie. Therefore, Titos Patrikios adopts a familiar leitmotiv about the diachronical deceptiveness of verse and reveals his capacity to reverse truth as well. This turns out to be a poetic lusus which follows the Hesiodic one, both presenting truth and lies as the other side of Janus’ face.

Titos Patrikios moves steadily from text to context when dealing with Lyric poets of archaic and classical eras. The most prominent example is Archilochos from Paros, a very interesting poetical case of antiquity, brought to the present. After Homer, who composed a great epic story, and after Hesiod, who composed an almost magical cosmogony, Archilochos staged his poetry on a more human level and his work is mostly occupied with aspects of everyday life (whether his poetry is autobiographical or not and to what extent is debatable). Archilochos throughout his work is identified as a poet, a warrior, a lover and a thought-provoking rebel. Titos Patrikios, as Archilochos, has a rich past as a warrior and a strong poetic record; his poems move around the topics of war, love and ideology as well.

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57 The English translation is mine.

58 The self-referentiality of the lyric “I” it will always raise issues for multifarious interpretation in ancient lyric poetry, see Buldeman (2009:16-17). For the present study, what matters is Archilochos’ identity as represented in his poetry. For Archilochos’ life, see Rankin (1977:10-35), Burnett (1983: 15-32), Carey (2009: 152-54). Unfortunately, his poetry has survived in fragments and only one poem today is quite extended (fr. 196aW).
Patrikios seems to be a great admirer of Archilochos as indicated by his oeuvre and the poem “The Shield” (Η Ασπίδα) in Facing Mirrors (1988). The poem begins with a fragmentary citation of an Archilochian poem where the lyrical ego dares to confess that he threw away his shield to save his life (fr. 5W).

59 For example, the poem “For Poles and Warriors” (Για Κοντάρια και Πολέμιστές) from Lions’ Gate echoes an Archilochian influence; the ancient lyric poet focus his attention on the war weapons as on arch and sword, see Archilochos fr. 3W. Patrikios’ poem begins with a dialogue between two poets, the poetic persona and his Italian friend, a poet too; the Italian poet talks about the javelin of an archetypical warlike historical figure, Alexander the Great. This is not an imaginary depiction, but derives out of a prominent mosaic of the Battle of Issus between Alexander and the Persian King Darius III – this is the mosaic of the Battle of Issus (or according to others the Battle of Gaugamela) which was found in the Casa del Fauno (House of the Faun) at the city of Pompeii and came into light during the excavation of 1831. The focus of the poem though is not the victorious army commander, but his Macedonian spear. This depiction leads the poet’s imagination to other impressive paintings of the Renaissance period by Paolo Uccello, Velazquez and Rembrandt, which are Battle of San Romano (three paintings, 1438-1455), The Surrender of Breda (1634/5) and The Night Watch (1642) respectively. The thematic link that connects all the above is the presence of spears and poles and how these are depicted in canvas. The poet underlines their beauty, but also their connection to death. This analogy makes vivid the image of physical pain, a pain caused by the spear; this image transforms itself into memory which reappears later during the night. Dimitris Maronitis (2005:109) reads this shift from day to night as a way to cover the beauty of the spears, and thus reinforce their fatal power; he emphasizes the memorable dimension of art and poetry in general, even when art is dealing with death. This painful memory turns to be a personal feeling or a traumatic memory of the poet. But Patrikios proves himself always an optimist. So, the traumatic experience is finally balanced by the beauty of the spears, while the paintings are transformed into a stage and the warriors are seen as agents.
THE SHIELD

One of the Saious now delights in the shield...

Should I care for that shield?

I admire Archilochos a lot more
not because he threw away his shield to rescue himself
but because he decided not to care about it
and to say so.
Thousands in our time escaped
from Saious of every kind
Today they claim that they performed that feat
in all the famous battles.

Facing Mirrors (1988)

A soldier dropping one’s shield, which is the symbol of fighting strength and stamina, thus being accused of being ῥίγασπις was one of the most shameful accusations levelled at a combatant during the archaic epoch. The ethical code of that era expected the soldier to die on the battlefield, rather than to return home alive without it. The mothers in Sparta are said to have bidden farewell to their sons before leaving for war with the famous phrase in the Dorian dialect ἵ τὰν ἥ ἐπὶ τὰς, that means either with it or on it, suggesting that they ownership of the shield represents a man’s valour. The taint of cowardice was unforgivable, which explains why this Archilocheian poem has attracted so much attention since the classical period.

ἀσπίδι μὲν Σαίων τις ἠγάλλεται, ἣν παρὰ θάμνωι,
ἐντος ἀμώμητον, κάλλικον οὐκ ὀθέλων·
ἂντὸν δ’ ἐξεπάνωσα. τί μοι μέλει ἀσπίς ἐκεῖνη;
ἐρρέτων ἐξαιτίς κτήσομαι οὐ κακία.

One of the Saious now enjoys the shield I discarded
near a bush without wanting to, for it was absolutely perfect,
but I escaped death. Should I care for that shield?
Let it go. I will get a better one.

Archilochos, fr. 5W

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61 The English translation is mine.
Patrikios is reviving the whole matter from the outset; the object of his admiration is Archilochos’ sincerity. He parallelizes Archilochos’ story with modern fighters, proven to be cowardly and weak-spirited, but who keep lying that they excelled in battle in front of their enemies; these are the Saioi of the twentieth century (fr.5W). Having knowledge of the historical context of the battles Greece engaged in during the twentieth century, Patrikios was energetically involved in the conflict. The battles alluded to here could be the Second World War, the December Events (1944) and the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) – besides his young age, Titos Patrikios took part in the final battles of the National People’s Liberation Army (ELAS) and in the December Events, as a fighter. Fatefully, this fighting experience identifies him with one aspect of Archilochos’ life, that is to say their common military background. As for the second identification, the poetic one, this is set forth by the poem itself.

Archilochos will reappear in Patrikios’ verse within “The Year 5000” (Το Έτος 5000) in the collection The Resistance of Facts (2000). The persona loquens is wondering how people are going to be in two or three thousand years from now, what they are going to look like and, most importantly, how they are going to differ from us in love, passion, reasoning and when facing death. What strikes the modern reader the most is the two poets named: all the poets of the literary past remain anonymous, save Archilochos and Sappho. He concludes with the notion that neither Archilochos, nor Sappho and other important poets cared how we are today.

The reference to Archilochos doesn’t shock, given Patrikios’ fondness for him. What about Sappho? Sappho is mentioned after the poet from Paros and is given
equal importance. Sappho is famous for her erotic, sensitive poetry that reached high levels of fragility and despair –for instance in fr.31W. For his part, Archilochos is not only famous as a warrior and as a poet, but also as a lover. The erotic and essentially sexual dimension of his art became notorious in antiquity, yet managed to balance sex with love and retain a delicate character and a high appreciation for the female. This explains why Patrikios’ retrospective collection *Loosing Limbs’ Lust* (2008), containing all of his erotic poetry has as a frontispiece an erotic Archilochean verse: *My friend, loosing limbs’ lust masters me* (fr. 196W: ἀλλὰ μ’ ὁ λυσιμέλης, ὃ ’ταῖρε, δάμναται πόθος). Maronitis in an article published the same year (2008) with reference to that collection, gives the etymological history of the word λυσιμέλης, closely connected to sleep in the Homeric *Odyssey* as well as love in the Archilochean and Sapphic poetry, also stating that Patrikios could not possibly be aware of the history of the word. Nevertheless, Patrikios had already published the poem “Sleep” (Ο Ὕπνος) in the collection *The Pleasure of Prolongations* (1992), dealing with the double meaning of the word λυσιμέλης for sleep and love, as follows.

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62 Sappho reappears along with Alcaeus, Orion and Longos in the poem “Molyvos, 1” (Μόλυβος, 1). Patrikios links all four of them with the island of Lesvos and with the eternal landscape of Molyvos in the collection *The Resistance of Facts*.

63 See also Riskin (1977. 57-73); esp. 57.

64 Maronitis (2008).
Taking into consideration the main topics of the poem as stated above (love, passion and reasoning), it is clear that these coincide with the Archilochean and the Sapphic leitmotivs. The ancient lyric has a spectacular finale in “Talking with Archilochos” (Κουβεντιάζοντας με τον Αρχίλοχο) in Co-living with the present (2011).

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Talking with Archilochos

And Archilochos was telling me:
"Translate them into my language
to see at last what you do write.
Mostly I want you to explain to me
those words which seem Greek
but confuse me.
What do they mean
television, governance, technocracy?
Leave the others as they are,
about economy, war, psychoanalysis
I know some".

Co-living with the present (2011)

This time the ancient poet is staged as an active agent, where Archilochos is
the addressee and Patrikios the addressee. Archilochos’ part occupies almost the entire
poem in direct speech. The dual scheme Archilochos/ Patrikios indicates an older
dialogue, literally and metaphorically speaking. The dialogue is set in the past in a
quite abstract and continuous way, while the beginning is abrupt: And Archilochos
was telling me (Και μου ἔλεγε ο Αρχίλοχος). Time though is not specified, leaving
open the space for a long interaction and an endless literary discourse. It could also be
a recalled memory from the past which is set forth in the present.

Archilochos makes a request of the modern poet to translate into his language, meaning from Modern Greek to ancient Greek in order to familiarize himself with the modern context. This is an indication of intralingual translation, though chronologically reversed.\textsuperscript{67} The ancient lyricist mostly focuses his attention for translation on three particular words: television, governance and technocracy which seem to be Greek but confuse him. As for the second group of economy, war and psychoanalysis Archilochos declares that he understands, not only the signified of the words, but more than that their signifier.

What exactly does Archilochos understand? Let us initially look at the triad which he does not understand at first. Television (τηλεόραση<τηλε+όραση) is a modern invention, but etymologically derives out of its ancient Greek roots tele (τηλε: far) and vision (όραση< órgω-ô: to see). So, Archilochos would naturally say that television seems Greek, but is confused. Governance (κυβερνητική) is also a Greek-like word, found in ancient Greek vocabulary, as an adjective and not as a noun as it is here. Finally, technocracy (τεχνοκρατία) derives from the same Greek linguistic origin, techne- (τέχνη) and to rule (κρατέω-ô), but its modern context is unknown.\textsuperscript{68}

The second triad, the one Archilochos understands, seems to be less complex. Economy (οικονοµία) is an ancient Greek word, in constant use since antiquity, but there has been a shift in meaning through the centuries: in antiquity economy was a synonym for house management, from the word eco- (οίκος) and the verb to manage (νέµω), while today economy refers to either the field of finance or the practice of

\textsuperscript{67} For the intralingual translation in this particular poem, see Kentrotis (2014:404). Intralingual translation in Greek is usually held from ancient Greek to Modern Greek, but here the type of intralingual translation suggested is exactly the opposite from modern to ancient Greek.

\textsuperscript{68} As George Kentrotis (2014:409, n.9) says technocracy is a neologism by William Henry Smyth dated in 1919.
saving money. Surprisingly, war (πόλεμος) remained the same word with exactly the same connotations; the only thing that has changed is the way people make war, the equipment needed and the advances in technology. Last but not least, Patrikios lists psychoanalysis (ψυχανάλυση); linguistically, it derives out of the ancient Greek terms psyche (ψυχή) and analysis (ανάλυση), but as terminology, strongly connected to the Freudian school of psychology in the beginning of the twentieth century, psychoanalysis has nothing to do with antiquity itself. It is valid for ancient myths, but only via the modern meanings ascribed 69.

The imaginary discussion with Archilochos is an example of how Modern Greek poetry receives the ancient literary past in terms of cultural images and language. The arrangement of the six words creates a significant hiatus. The two modern terms of the twentieth century are television and psychoanalysis, which come first and last in rank respectively; both easily split into their ancient Greek roots. Then, technocracy and economy may be embedded with ancient vocabulary, but have both undergone a more general shift in meaning today. The last matching pair in the middle, governance and war, function as supplementary terms: governance as connected to politics is always responsible for war. No matter what the ancient lyricist found confusing (if he really did), antiquity appears not to be an outmoded category, but a medium linking the past to the present.

Titos Patrikios as a poet of the twentieth and the twentieth-first century opens the dialogue with his lyrical precursors from Greek antiquity. This is an unusual practice for a poet in Greece today. Nevertheless, Patrikios sets the ancient literature in his intertextual dialogue in an original as well as a creative way. Patrikios chooses

69 The best example in the poetry of Patrikios is the myth of Oedipus and Prometheus, see chapter 1: pp. 17-21.
famous poetic agents to interact with, whose identities or thematic style, usually seems to be close to his. These ancient interlocutors share his main personal interests, such as poetry, love and of course war. From that perspective, the poetic patterns of Hesiod and the themes discussed with Archilochos sustain their authenticity and diachronical presence. As Charles Baudelaire later put it Il n’ existe que trois êtres respectables: le prêtre, le guerrier, le poète – savoir, tuer, créer (There exist only three respectable beings: the priest, the warrior, the poet – to know, to kill, to create). This work-in-progress proves that ancient poetry is not dead, but remains modern and universal, and therefore classical.

2.1.2. Choral Lyricism: Pindar and Patrikios’ Poetics

Titos Patrikios is fond of talking with poets from Greek antiquity – Archilochos is not alone. In this case the dialogue is with a choral poet from classical antiquity, probably the most influential choral poet of all time. This is Pindar from Thebes. Pindar had a creative literary dialogue with Homer and Aeschylus, while Hesiod and Archilochos are also mentioned in Pindaric corpus more than once. Pindar’s entry at “Talking with Pindar” (Κουβεντιάζοντας µε τον Πίνδαρο) in Co-living with the present contains a citation in ancient Greek; there is no real

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70 Pindar (c. 518-446 BC) was from Thebes and his oeuvre covers the first half of the fifth century BC. Alexandrian scholars included Pindar into the standard lyrical canon and ascribed to him seventeen books; today survive the four books of the Victory Odes, called Epinikia, see also Bowra (1964), Nisetich (1980) and Race (1986). For a discourse analysis between Homer and Pindar, see Nisetich (1989) and Nagy (1990); for the relationship between Pindar and Aeschylus, see Finley (1955) and Uhlig (2010). Hesiod is mentioned in Isthmian 6 (v.67) and also in Pindaric fragments (fr. 269); Archilochos is mentioned twice, firstly in Olympian 9 (vv. 1-4) in relation to the Olympian lyric ode he had composed and secondly in Pythian 2 (vv. 54-56) in a quotation that has caused a great debate since the antiquity.

71 Patrikios chooses to quote the last two verses of the Olympian 1, the victory ode for Hieron from Syracuse, a greatly successful poem. The couplet embeds the lyric ego of Pindar into a victorious context (Olympia 1, vv.115-16); the English translation is mine:
discussion of course, but the encounter is a form of interaction – otherwise, it would be a poetical monologue. The poem discusses the issue of poetic excellence as a motive for perfectionism. Patrikios emphasizes the difficulty of being an excellent artist. Excellence is unreachable; striving for it makes the work over-elaborate and is ultimately detrimental. He concludes that Pindar was unique in the way he saw the outside world.

TALKING WITH PINDAR

Being the best in poetry, no matter how you fight for this it will stay impossible it will seem pompous it will become deleterious. Just see something, discern amongst that surrounding amongst that happening something less that no one before has highlighted with your style.

Co-living with the present (2011)

εἴς σὲ τε τούτον ὑψὸς χρόνον πατεῖν, ὕμε τε τοσσάδε νικαφόροις ὁμολέψῃς, πρόφανον σοφία καθ᾽ Ἑλλάνας έόντα παντά.

You may walk on high eternally, as for me associating with victors, makes me special for my poetry everywhere among Greeks.

Pindar was established as the greatest professional lyricist of performance poetry; he was of aristocratic origin and his poetry was sponsored by wealthy patrons all over the Greek world. The poetry of Patrikios is not composed for performance, but it entails theatrical elements more in terms of image making and atmosphere in action.

This late chronological reference to Pindar does not mean that Patrikios’ encounter with choral lyricism was first introduced in the twentieth-first century. In my view, Patrikios’ literary dialogue with Pindar dates back to his early period during the 1950s. The poem “Open Frontiers” (Ανοιχτά Σύνορα) comes from the collection *Back to Poetry* and is dated January 1950. This is a unique poem in his corpus, structured in three parts. Likewise, Pindaric poetry is structured in three parts, together making up one stanza: strophe, antistrophe and epode; the Pindaric triadic stanza comprises either an encomium or praise (hic et nunc) and a mythological example (exemplum), always in organic link with the rest of the material.

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73 Pindar’s patrons came across the Mediterranean Sea, from Sicily to North Africa and from the mainland of Greece up to the north Aegean islands, see Bremer (1991).

74 Segal (1985: 228).
There are no long walks
along streets canopied with trees
at most some oleanders in dust at the waysides.
In our empty pockets stars do not ring
just a box of the cheapest cigarettes
and change from one thousand drachmas.
Foreign missions have made a reckoning at last
it is on newspapers in semi-black
it is ignored by Political Economies of the University:
at our place
we have per capita
eighty dollars income per year.

*Back to Poetry* (1948-1951)
vv. 1-12

Comparing the Pindaric stanza with that of Patrikios in “Open Frontiers”,
there are certain parallels identified with contemporary historical events. The strophe
describes the detrimental situation of post-war Greece: the Civil War was just over
and Greece was moving into the mending phase of economic recovery. The imaginary
images of long walks surrounded by trees are peaceful images absolutely at odds with
the Greek reality of the early 1950s. Since that time was not glorious enough (hic et
nunc), the persona loquens traces his ancient roots by reconnecting with the glorious
past that was Greece; this reconnection is achieved via the Acropolis which functions
as a mythological example (exemplum).

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OPEN FRONTIERS

Acropolis
ancient marbles looking at me
who passed
who fought
who engraved their name
who remained unknown forever
I am one of them.
I step on the same ground
with the hidden illegal books
and the automatics we grabbed from the enemy
living in the same city
that expands beyond frontiers and time.
And all happen to be one
everything dissimilar and afar.

Back to Poetry (1948-1951)
vv. 13-26

At the beginning of the antistrophe, he addresses Acropolis, the eternal symbol of artistic manufacture both for ancient and modern Greece. In the epode the poet is still located in Athens, but he addresses three cities in direct speech: Paris, St Petersburg and Madrid. Calling them by name ascribes to them an anthropomorphosis – all three cities are personified and the common link is the red utopias they symbolize. These cities which have their names with connected three great revolutions of the past could not be omitted from a Marxist orientation poem as its frontispiece reveals with the reference to Marx: Remember you had underlined the same/ at the same book of Marx... (Θυμάσαι είχαμε κάνει την ίδια υπογράμμιση/ στο ίδιο βιβλίο του Μαρξ...).

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77 The poet addresses Acropolis, but synecdochically he does not mean the site, but the monument. The ancient marbles look at him and not the opposite, as logically expected. Acropolis therefore is personified and the poet keeps asking for the people who passed, the people who fought, the people who inscribed their name and also for people who did not manage to skip the frame of anonymity. He declares that he steps on the same ground with the hidden books and the guns stolen from the enemy; this is his city which is expanded beyond frontiers and time. Acropolis becomes the linking symbol of the past up to the present, which unifies all the dissimilarities and distances. Acropolis is the ultimate symbol of the Greek history diachronically. What a better example to prove the Greek continuum indeed. Acropolis as a comparative point of Greek identity has been discussed by Tziovas (2001); for Parthenon as an eternal symbol for Greekness and classical antiquity into Modern Greek poetry, see Giannakopoulou (2002).

78 Paris was the cradle of the French Revolution and of the two historic Communas during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. St Petersburg was the birthplace of Lenin, who is also mentioned in the poem and he was the political leader of the Russian Revolution. Finally, Madrid is the capital of Spain and the focal point of the Spanish Revolution during 1930s.
Oh, you cities being close
I talk to you from Athens
crowned with an old sky
which is bored of being blue
this is the Red morning sky for us all.
Paris, I talk to you
with your old guillotines, cobble
washed by the rain, the blood,
the snubs of the communists,
Paris without the Seine for suicides.
You St Petersburg,
having your Winter Palace conquered
you were stripped of your name
to wear the simple uniform of Lenin.
Madrid, I talk to you
charcoal like us
nailed by Moorish lances,
Madrid beloved, barricade of our own.

Sometimes falling down but always victorious.
The military march.

January 1950
Back to Poetry (1948-1951)
vv. 27-46

While addressing the cities of the glorious revolutionary past, the poet has crowned the sky red and this is a metaphor for the communist ideology. But the crown has been an eternal symbol since time immemorial, also found in the Pindaric corpus.

as a metaphor for poetry\textsuperscript{80}. Pindar often personifies cities into his work as well: Thebes, Aegina, Olympia, Lacedaemon and Athens\textsuperscript{81}. What is more, the performative character of the Pindaric poetry and its setting implies collectivity and group activity. The lyric “I” found in Archilochos it is transformed into a lyric “We” in Pindaric poetry, thanks to the choral genre. As in Pindaric poetry, we can never be sure whether the persona loquens expresses itself or the collective identity of the chorus; the same collective identity is underlined throughout the early ideological poetry of Patrikios.

Each Pindaric ode is a small universe, based on its own inner structure, mainly containing initial information, praise, mythical narrative or exempla and gnomes\textsuperscript{82}. This same technique was applied by Titos Patrikios in his early poetry. When Titos Patrikios wrote “Open Frontiers” in January 1950, the Greek Civil War had just drawn to a close, not ending in victory for the Communist party. The concluding line *Sometimes falling down but always victorious* (Πέφτοντας κάπου µα πάντα νικώντας) borrows directly from the military march *To the Barricades* connected with the revolt of the Russian workers in January 1905 in St Petersburg – which was a prelude to the Great Russian Revolution of 1917. Despite the fact that Patrikios’ poem arose out of the ashes of the Greek Civil War, if it is an ode, it has to be a victorious one. Patrikios re-writes a modern victory ode, adapting the methodological structure of the Pindaric

\textsuperscript{80} For example, see Steiner (1986:25).

\textsuperscript{81} Pindar usually personifies his cities in the beginning of his victory odes: Olympia (*Olympia 8*, v. 1), Thebes twice (*Isthmian 1*, v.1 and *Isthmian 7*, v.1), Aegina (*Pythian 9*, v.98), Lacedaemon (*Pythian 10*, v.1) and Athens (fr. 64). The linkage to them is either personal as in the case of Thebes, which is his hometown and its sister-town Aegina, or strictly professional, as in the case of Olympia, the cradle of the Olympic Games where most of his clients were victorious athletes; Athens and Lacedaemon, the two most important cities of the ancient Greek world, simply could not be absent.

\textsuperscript{82} For the structure of the Pindaric ode, see Hamilton (1974), esp. 14-25 and Race (1986:24-35).
epinikion to inspire his readers to keep up with revolution. Titos Patrikios is not a Pindarist, but he is Pindaric in style.

2.2. Modern Greek Poetry and Patrikios

The dialogue of Patrikios with Greek poetry does not terminate in antiquity. His reading list from the nineteenth century onwards is seemingly endless (Kostis Palamas, Constantine Cavafy, Kostas Karyotakis, George Seferis, Yannis Ritsos, Tassos Leivaditis et alii). Karyotakis and Cavafy among them have played an important role in the formation of his own identity as a poet, while the affinity with Seferis will always give a hint of his literary influences. Patrikios’ engagement with Karyotakis, Cavafy and Seferis is not exclusive, but it is definitive.

2.2.1. The satire of Karyotakis and Marxist discourse

Titos Patrikios has always felt affiliated with Kostas Karyotakis for one simple reason: he was born in the same year as Karyotakis committed suicide (1928), just two months beforehand. However, that accidental coincidence or the fact that they both studied law is not enough for creative exchange to exist between the post-war poet and his intra-war precursor. Their dialogue is not only sustained in terms of atmosphere and thematic leitmotifs when sharing common themes, but also, most importantly, within Marxist discourse.

Patrikios is fond of using Karyotakis’ titles for his own poems. For instance, the retrospective publication of Patrikios’ first poems is inaugurated with the poem
“Don Quixotes” (Δον Κιχώτες)\textsuperscript{83}. There is an alternating rhyme scheme, echoing the same poem of Karyotakis. The chimerical dimension of the classical hero created by Miguel de Cervantes functions as a common axis between Karyotakis’ and Patrikios’ identically-titled poems. Patrikios will abandon rhyme very soon, but this remains as an early example of experimentation when Karyotakism was still wide-spread throughout his generation\textsuperscript{84}.

The use of the Greek myth in the poem “A Provincial Prometheus” recalls the Karyotakian atmosphere. Patrikios presents his hero having a double identity, a peaceful and an aggressive one, as discussed in the previous chapter\textsuperscript{85}. The two egos of Prometheus in combination with the subtle poetical irony link the dialogue with Kostas Karyotakis’ “Delphic Festival” (Δελφική Εορτή) in Elegies and Satires (1927). Karyotakis’ dualism in the description of the synchronous revival of the Delphic Festival is focused on the two versions of Greece, the Ancient and the Modern, the splendid Aeschylean in the past and the modern crowd of the present. The nature of the eagle in both poems may differ, but the same myth and an identically ironic and emotionally engaging atmosphere runs through the two.

Additionally, as Patrikios argues, Karyotakis is the first poet to discuss the phenomenon of the “alienation of labor” in the Greek poetry of the twentieth


\textsuperscript{84} See also Dounia (2000:143).

\textsuperscript{85} See chapter 1: p. 21.
The Cartesian division between the spirit and the body, set during the period of Renaissance, later became a classical opposition between spiritual and physical work and a canonical factor for Marxist theory. According to Marxism, that dichotomy in terms of labor was diminishing gradually: it would continue in the first phase of social reformation that was socialism, but it would disappear in the second phase of communism. Marxism suggested that communism would abolish this hierarchical parallel, thus making the balance even. For instance, an example of an unequal society is the birth of the city; the juxtaposition between the city and the village, based on their economic and cultural differences, is one that leaves villages behind. For Marxist theory, the birth of the capital was based on class struggle. The older feudal system of the countryside was replaced by the city’s industries: the modern worker is the single unit who activates the industrial machine and it is thanks to his work that the rich become richer – a worker’s work is the guarantee for the capital.

Kostas Karyotakis pays special emphasis to the domain of public administration within the city. But Karyotakis, according to Patrikios, succeeds in going further and his description applies to every working individual. In the poetry and prose of Kostas Karyotakis, it is the civil servant who takes centre stage. Patrikios’ work carries the thematic impact of Karyotakis’ verse, but quite differently, mostly dealing with the individual who works in the private sector during the 1950s.

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87 The employee of the public sector is the central theme in the poem of Karyotakis “Civil Servants” (Δημόσιοι Υπάλληλοι) from Satires and the prose text “The good employee” (Ο καλός υπάλληλος), see Karyotakis (2006).

88 Job hunting was an effort difficult up to impossible for Patrikios during 1950s, as stated in “The Sleep” (Ο Ύπνος) at Arguments; later, in his own office work becomes boring as in the final verses of “Father’s Occupation: Actor” (Επάγγελμα Πατρός: Ηθοποιοίς) at Learning Process.
the collections _Learning Process_ and _Learning Process over again_ reflect that strenuous effort. The dialogue is expressed in more open terms in “Careers” (Σταδιοδρομίες) and “Ballad of a little bureaucrat” (Μπαλάντα ενός μικρού γραφειοκράτη) respectively.

CAREERS, I

Hands in endless working hours  
empty of the caress inside them,  
working on detestable pieces  
provided for employers’ profits  
perhaps friends until the day before,  
working all day long and then another job  
just to sustain the body.

_Learning Process_ (1956-1959)

The singular “Career” (Σταδιοδρομία) in Karyotakian _Satires_ has been transformed into the plural in Patrikios “Careers” (Σταδιοδρομίες). Karyotakis’ career was standard in the public administration sector, while Patrikios, being an exile-on-leave in Athens during the 1950s did not have a standard occupation – only after he

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graduated from Law School and had his own office as a lawyer. The use of the plural form therefore is literal, but it also reinforces the irony of the poet about his situation. Manual work, for an intellectual, equals his daily death and this Cartesian dichotomy between the soul and the body has also appeared in the poem of Karyotakis⁹⁰. 

Patrikios lays out the anthropogeography of the private sector where inequality and workers’ labor is the main source of strength for the capital. Patrikios summarizes the classical antithesis of Marxism, aligning himself with core Marxist theory.

Marxism and bureaucracy may co-exist in the “Ballad of a little bureaucrat”. The formulaic repetition of the first verse in the beginning of every stanza A man as they said to be very much conscious (Ανθρώπος καθώς λεν πολύ συνειδητός) echoes the irony of the Karyotakian verse as well as his poem “Ballad for the unknown Poets of the Ages” (Μπαλάντα στους άδοξους ποιητές των αιώνων). Whether Patrikios’ bureaucrat, who is oscillating between ideologies and power struggle, is a poet himself, known or unknown, which is not ostensible from his verse. The dialogue of Patrikios with Karyotakis identifies the common ideological ground they both share. It is political ideology that affiliates the poetry of Karyotakis with the poetry of Patrikios.

⁹⁰Kostas Karyotakis “Career” (Σταδιοδρομία) vv. 7-8:

Την ψυχή και το σώμα πάλι/ στη δουλειά θα δίνω, στην πάλη.
My soul and body again/ I will give into the toil.
2.2.2. From Karyotakis to Cavafy

Titos Patrikios’ appreciation of Karyotakis applies in equal measure to the poetry of Cavafy, as his poetic and critical work reveals\textsuperscript{91}. Cavafy and Karyotakis share an interest for the city\textsuperscript{92}. Nevertheless, their pessimism is not an issue for Patrikios; even though he is influenced by their ironic tone, he manages to keep his identity as a poet, never losing his optimism either as an individual or as an artist.

Titos Patrikios has been reading Cavafy since his early adolescence and, as he reveals, when forced to choose a preference between Palamas or Cavafy, Patrikios was swayed Cavafy\textsuperscript{93}. In fact, he is not only aware of the standard edition of his oeuvre, the Canon, but Patrikios proves to be a reader of his hidden or rejected work. There are numerous instances where Patrikios deals directly with the poetry of Cavafy, sometimes by quoting his verse, or otherwise alluding to it. Nevertheless, the major part of their intertextual dialogue derives from poems outside the Canon.

The dialogue of Patrikios with the poetry of Cavafy actually starts in the mid-1950s. The poem “Windows” (Παράθυρα) in Arguments (1955) is an implicit reference to the Cavafian “The Windows” (Τα Παράθυρα). Fifty years later, the famous verse of “Ithaca” (Ιθάκη) about the Laestrygones and the Cyclops becomes an intra-textual citation in a poem of Patrikios where Cavafy is implied as the source\textsuperscript{94}. Furthermore, a verse citation of the Cavafian poem “Morning Sea” (Θάλασσα του

\textsuperscript{91} See Patrikios (1990, 1993).

\textsuperscript{92} Patrikios (1993:217).

\textsuperscript{93} Patrikios (1993: 216).

\textsuperscript{94} See in the collection The Resistance of Facts the poem of Titos Patrikios “The Effigies and the Things” (Τα Ομοιώματα και τα Πράγματα).
Πρωϊού, 1915) functions as the prelude of Patrikios’ poem “Afternoon Sea” (Θάλασσα του Δείλινού, 2007).

**AFTERNOON SEA**

*Let’s stand here and fool myself that I see…*
C. P. CAVAFY, “Morning Sea”

Let’s stand here and fool myself once
that all I see over again, just as
I saw them when I first came here
washed clean of fantasies and memories.

*New Lining* (2007)

The collation of the short poems of Cavafy and Patrikios demonstrates their interweaving dialogue. Patrikios’ poem deals with the second stanza of Cavafy, thus commenting on his verse. The poetical voice of Cavafy cannot be liberated from its fantasies and memories, while that of Patrikios can when it returns to the outset of the journey in question. It seems as if Patrikios mimics Cavafy by means of a circular logic, having time as its epicenter. The difference in timing should not be ignored. Unlike Cavafy, Patrikios’ sight becomes clearer during the sunset as well as in the implied sunrise (the sunset means that the day is now approaching its end). The morning/afternoon dualism may function as an allegory of the start/end of one’s life and this probably explains why *memories* is set at the end. According to Bloom,

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Patrikios here seems to practice a *clinamen*, thus going beyond his source of inspiration.\(^{96}\)

Clinamen is also the technique which characterizes the relationship between Cavafy and Patrikios, notwithstanding the context. This is the case with the poem about Oedipus. The first hero who entered the poetry of Cavafy as well as Patrikios is Oedipus. Both poets name their poems after the King of Thebes with the difference being that in Cavafy the case is nominative, accompanied by the definite article “Ο Οιδίπους” (1896), while in Patrikios the case is genitive case with the addition of the abstract word *story* as a noun phrase “Ιστορία του Οιδίποδα” (1971). As discussed in chapter one, Patrikios gives a psychoanalytical account of his persona via the ancient Greek hero who is used as an exemplary case. The Alexandrian, though, derives his inspiration from the description of a painting by Gustave Moreau; an early work by the French artist, known as *Oedipus and Sphinx* (1864).\(^{97}\) The painting gives a peaceful account of the encounter between Oedipus and the Sphinx – the Cavafian poem is supposed to be a realistic representation of Moreau’s painting, but it is not. Cavafy summarizes the Theban mythological cycle and his poem has a ring composition, beginning and ending with the Sphinx.

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\(^{96}\) For the six categories of influence introduced by Bloom, see n.19.

\(^{97}\) Gustave Moreau (1826-1898) was a painter greatly influenced by French symbolism. He used biblical figures or personified Christian terms (i.e. *Salome, Pietas*) and figures either from Greek mythology or history of Greek lyric poetry (i.e. *Zeus and Semele, Europa and the Bull, Prometheus, Hesiod and the Muse*). *Oedipus and Sphinx* is one of the first symbolist paintings in France which boomed the reputation of the painter onwards. Cavafy in the poem “Oedipus” is for the first time inspired by a painting and an ancient figure, see Cavafy (1983:105-106).
OEDIPUS
Written after reading the description of the painting
“Oedipus and Sphinx” by Gustave Moreau.

The Sphinx pounces on him
showing her teeth and nails
with all the vitality of her wildness.
Oedipus fell over after her first impulse,
he was scared by her sudden appearance –
such a look and such speech
he had so far never imagined.
Though the monster raised its two legs
to Oedipus’ breast,
he soon recovered – and now
he is not afraid of her anymore, because
he has the solution ready and he will win.
That victory though does not make him happy.
His glance full of melancholy
does not look at the Sphinx, but sees afar
the narrow road leading to Thebes,
and ending to Kolonos.
And clearly now his soul foresees that
the Sphinx will address there again
more difficult and greater
riddles without answers.

(1896)

The last Cavafian verse is *riddles without answers* (αινίγματα που απάντησι δεν έχουν), while Patrikios starts his own Oedipus story saying *He tried to solve the riddles* (Θέλησε να λύσει τα αινίγματα). Patrikios, echoing Cavafy, directs Oedipus’ entrance as an antithetical sequel to the last verse of Cavafy; his Oedipus is different, insisting on solving the riddles and never gives up. Additionally, the affinity with Cavafy is reinforced by the intra-textual antithetical repetition in their fifth verse: Cavafy states that Oedipus was afraid of the Sphinx, while Patrikios makes the statement that his Oedipus was not afraid of what he has already seen. Patrikios version is lacking the Sphinx, because she is replaced by the others, the people next to him. Patrikios clears his poetry from any mythological element, since the alienated others represent Oedipus’ Sphinx; this encounter with incompatible people is the monster that Patrikios, like Oedipus once upon a time, has to deal with – people are his riddle.

Quoting Jean-Paul Sartre that *L’ Enfer, c’est les autres*, this Oedipus prefers not to be subordinated by others. The emphasis given by Patrikios is on the antithesis between light and darkness, while Cavafy gives the sequence as a future-telling story. In the version of the Alexandrian, Oedipus is not blind yet; because of the framework of the painting of Moreau, his focus remains on the riddle and the Sphinx. Patrikios may have the final verse of Cavafy as a starting point, but he is also feeling freer than his prototype – the poem of Patrikios is deprived of any framework. Thankfully, Patrikios never rejected that particular poem as Cavafy did.

An evocative example of the literary dialogue that Patrikios has with the poetry of Cavafy is staged in the territory of Magna Graecia.99 Patrikios casts himself

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99 A part of the poetry of Patrikios as well as Cavafy deals with the Hellenism outside mainland Greece, especially in the south Italy and Sicily. This is where Greek language and culture flourished
as a tourist at the “Noon at the railway station of Paestum” (Μεσημέρι στο Σιδηροδρομικό Σταθμό του Paestum) in *Facing Mirrors*. Even though it is not clear whether he just stays at the station or if he actually visits the archaeological site, he recalls the Greek presence in the wider area of ancient Poseidonia. Patrikios pays special attention to the Greek temples, the local history and the Greek language. His focus is not accidental.

during the archaic and mainly the classical period, just before the advent of the Romans. Magna Graecia therefore as a place and as an ideal symbolizes the extension of Greekness. Situated at the periphery of the Greek world sets the geographical boundaries of Greece and at the same time emphasizes the cultural and linguistic identity of the nation.

100 The area has a rich historical background since the archaic epoch, when Poseidonia was founded by Sybaris, another Greek colony, during the seventh pro-christianic century (600 BC), see Strabo *Geography* 5.4.13. Later during the classical period, it was conquered by the indigents Lucanians around the fifth pro-christianic century and two hundred years later by the Romans at the end of the third century (273 BC). It is not clear whether there were the Lucanians or the Romans who re-named Poseidonia as Paestum, but the city is better known by its Latin name; see Cerchiai, Jannelli and Longo (2004:62) who argue that Lucanians probably changed the name of the city from Poseidonia to Paestum, while Pedley (1990:11) argues that it was the Romans who made the change.
NOON AT THE RAILWAY
STATION AT PAESTUM

As the Greek temples abroad
put weight on and became stubby
this is how Poseidonia turned to Paestum.
It is nice though the stone – rosy
well conserved, columns in double rows
like a forest when seeing from the side
the three temples and nothing more.
There were Greeks here as well
at ease, with wealth, luxury and flesh,
always sure they made it.
At first, the woe came from the mountains
the Lucanians came down and ravaged them.
For one last time the people of the sea
were beaten by the people of the land,
and other Greeks celebrated
the crash of a Greek city.
Then the Romans came to rescue them
altering their language
making them Romans.
Until in the end they were cut down by malaria –
some left
as if they were passing tourists.

Facing Mirrors (1988)

Upon close inspection, Cavafy’s hidden poem “Poseidonians” (Ποσειδωνιάται) sheds light on the choices made by Patrikios. Cavafy’s inspiration in “Poseidonians” (1906) springs from a relevant passage of Athenaeus, where the gradual integration of the Greeks into the native population is discussed (Deipnosophistae 14.632a) and modern historians agree with him. Poseidonia may have become Paestum, but the Greeks never became Romans in the sense that they


did not lose their cultural identity; they lost their language, but they never lost the collective memory of their Greek past.

ΠΟΣΕΙΔΩΝΙΑΤΑΙ

Ποσειδωνιάταις τοις εν τω Τυρρηνικό κόλπω το μεν εξ αρχῆς Ἐλλησιν οὔσιν εκφαντισθαι τυρρηνοῖς ἢ Ρωμαίοις γεγονότοι και τὴν τε φονήν μεταβεβληκέναι, τὰ τε πολλὰ τῶν επιτηδευμάτων, ἄγαν δὲ μιᾶν τινα αυτώς τῶν εφτῶν τῶν Ἐλλήνων ἔτι καὶ νῦν, εν ἡ συνόντες αναμνησκόμεναι τῶν αρχῶν ανομάτων τε καὶ νομίμων, απολοφοράμενοι πρὸς αλλήλους καὶ διακρίσαντες απέρχονταί.

ἈΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ

Τὴν γλώσσα τὴν ελληνικὴν οἱ Ποσειδωνιάται εξέχασαν τόσους αἰῶνας ανακατευμένοι με Τυρρηνοῦς, καὶ με Λατίνους, κι ἄλλους ξένους. Τὸ μόνο που τους ἔμενε προγονικό ἦταν μια ελληνικὴ γιορτή, με τελετής οραίες, με λόρδες καὶ με αυλοὺς, με αγώνας καὶ στεφάνους. Κ’ εἶχαν συνήθεια πρὸς τὸ τέλος τῆς γιορτῆς τὰ παλαιὰ τοὺς ἐθήμα να διηγοῦνταί, καὶ τὰ ελληνικὰ ονόματα να ἕξαναλένε, που μόλις πιὰ τὰ καταλάμβαναν ὁλίγοι. Καὶ πάντα μελαγχολικὰ τελείων ἡ γιορτή τοὺς. Γιὰτι θυμοῦνταν ποὺ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤσαν Ἐλλῆνες — Ἰταλιώται ἦναν καρό κι αὐτοὶ καὶ τῶρα πῶς εξέπεσαν, πῶς ἠγιζαν, να ἔζουν καὶ να ὁμολογοῦν χιλιάδες βγαλµένοι — ὡ συμφορά! — ἅπ’ τὸν Ἐλληνισµό.

(1906)

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103 Cavafy (1993: 89).

104 Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard.

See: http://www.cavafy.com/poems/content.asp?id=169&cat=4
Cavafy chose to concentrate his interest on a common celebration the Poseidonian community observed around the fourth century BC; this was a Greek festival which included rituals, music, contests and the awarding of crowns. These events resembled an amalgamation of religious, musical and athletic contests. The tone of the poem towards the end ranges from the melancholic to the melodramatic. Their Hellenic identity is given more importance than their Italian one\textsuperscript{105}. The classical hierarchical system summarized in the dictum \textit{Πᾶς μὴ Ἕλλην Βάρβαρος} is implicitly sustained.

The last focus of Cavafy is on their language. That particular community had kept hold of its Greek cultural past, four centuries after its residence into the area, but it missed one key aspect of Greekness and this was the Greek language. The interest of Cavafy in the Greek language is a standard parameter of his poetry\textsuperscript{106}. This linguistic vestige of Hellenism in the area of Paestum, the Greek language that has

\textsuperscript{105} As Yannis Dallas (1986:42-43) argues, Hellenism in Cavafy has two versions, either is opposed to barbarism or Christianity.

\textsuperscript{106} See also Savvides (1990).
been lost forever, is emphasized by Titos Patrikios as well. In Patrikios’ poem, the word Greek and its derivatives as nouns and as adjectives are repeated four times (ελληνικοί ναοί, Έλληνες twice, πόλης ελληνίδας)\textsuperscript{107}. This pattern echoes the Cavafian poem where the identical root reappears five times as an adjective and as a noun as well (γλώσσα ελληνική, ελληνική γιορτή, ελληνικά ονόµατα, Έλληνες, Ελληνισµός). In Cavafy, Poseidonians still inhabit the area; this is a state of cultural co-existence and the associated melancholy has to do with their memory of the glorious Greek past. In Patrikios, memory is synonymous with the loss of language and identity. Here the dialogue between Patrikios and Cavafy ends. Patrikios goes further by adding the historically-based information about the fatal malaria\textsuperscript{108}. Both poems end within a dramatic context.

As underlined by Savvides, it will always remain a mystery why Cavafy never published that \textit{perfect poem}\textsuperscript{109} – though Patrikios did. As in the case of Oedipus before, Patrikios plays with the leitmotivs adopted by Cavafy. The poet from Alexandria stands as an archetypal figure for Patrikios in terms of titles, thematics and content. Nevertheless, Patrikios appropriates the Cavafian themes in terms of his own persona. Therefore Cavafy remains an authentic source which mediates Greek antiquity through the Modern Greek poetry scheme.

\textsuperscript{107}There are three well-preserved and emblematic temples in the archaeological site of Paestum; two temples of Hera (c. 550/ 450 BC) and one of Athena (c. 500 BC), according to Pedley (1990:43-59, 77-96); it has been also suggested that the three temples belong either to Athena, Hera and Poseidon (dedicated to Apollo though), see Cerchiai, Jannelli and Longo (2004:66-70).

\textsuperscript{108}John Pedley argues (1990:132, 163) that the wider area was under the threat of malaria due to the uncontrollable route of water streams and that for was abandoned during the modern times.

\textsuperscript{109}Savvides (1990).
2.2.3. Seferis and Patrikios

If poetry is the refuge to covet, as proposed by Karyotakis in his “Battered Guitars”, the same is not valid in the case of the Nobel-awarded Modern Greek poet George Seferis, who worked as a diplomat for the Greek state abroad for the majority of his career was probably searching for an alternative way out. His poetry is often an artistic expression; Seferis’ poetry seems to derive from his own life experience. Similarly, the poetry of Titos Patrikios functions as such (nevertheless, Patrikios’ diaries remain as yet unpublished)\(^{110}\).

Dimitris Maronitis was the first scholar to recognize the affinity between Patrikios and Seferis – this is an interesting observation made early in his scholarship, but remained more or less unnoticed until recently\(^{111}\). It is important though to outline the context of this affinity. If this is the case, that the poetry of George Seferis is somehow linked to the poetry of Patrikios, this does not happen in crystal clear terms. There is no intention to camouflage, but a reader would need to be extremely familiar with the work of both poets to realize the correlation between the two of them.

The intertextual dialogue of their poetics begins in the poem “Night Plans, XV” from Earth-Road, when Patrikios opens with two verses of Seferis’ Mythistorema which provide inspiration for the poem itself\(^{112}\); the wind which drives them crazy in Seferis, is given human form by Patrikios and becomes the stimulus for this new poem – Bloom would name it a clinamen. Furthermore, Patrikios often introduces famous verses of Seferian poetry into his own, as if they were own: But

\(^{110}\) Titos Patrikios keeps personal diaries since his childhood. His published prose work so far is just a sample (see Appendix, p. 97). The rest of the material is classified, but still handwritten.

\(^{111}\) Maronitis (1976: 63) and Antoniadou (2009\(^{c}\): 136).

\(^{112}\) As Patrikios says in the notes of his first retrospective collection (Ποιήματα, I, Athens: Kedros, 1998: 240), these two verses from Seferis were not included in the first edition of Earth-Road in 1954.
there are leap years (Μα είναι τα χρόνια δίσεχτα\textsuperscript{113}) is a verse that comes from *Thrush*; in addition, Patrikios’ poem “The Favor” (Η Χάρη) in *Facing Mirrors* is a creative re-writing, based on a Seferian verse from the poem “An old-man at the river’s edge” (Ενας γέροντας στην ακροποταμιά) from *Log Book II: I don’t want anything else, just this favor* (Δε θέλω τίποτε άλλο παρά να μιλήσω απλά, να μου δοθεί αυτή η χάρη).

In comparison to the previous poets who have influenced him, George Seferis is the only one mentioned in the poetry of Patrikios by his nom de plume\textsuperscript{114}. This reference to his name carries its own meaning in a poem of great importance; this is “Cava dei Tirreni” from *Facing Mirrors*. Why does Patrikios choose to refer to his precursor in this particular composition? Cava dei Tirreni is a city in southern Italy in the region of Campania. Travelling by train, there is a stop made there and the poetical persona is recalling the Modern Greek poet; it is the landscape which brings Seferis’ poem to Patrikios’ mind. By this unique name reference in his corpus, what Patrikios actually recalls is a famous poem composed by Seferis in that area back in October 1944. The poem “Last Stop” (Τελευταίος Σταθμός) from Seferis’ *Log Book II* depicts the last stop made by the exiled Greek government before returning back to liberate Greece after the Second World War was over at Cava dei Tirreni in Italy. The importance of the historical events combined with the poetical record are enough for

\textsuperscript{113} See Patrikios’ poem “Leap Years” (Δίσεχτα Χρόνια) from the collection *Arguments*.

\textsuperscript{114} Cavafy is implied as the poet of a quoted verse in italics, see Patrikios poem “Leap Years” (Δίσεχτα Χρόνια) from the collection *Arguments*. The name reference to Kostas Karyotakis is implicit since *Karyotaki* is the name of a street in the town Tripolis, named after the poet who lived there; see Patrikios poem “Capital of mountainous municipality” (Πρωτεύουσα Ορεινού Νομού) from the collection *Learning Process over again.*
Patrikios to remind him of Seferis. What is more, this is a famous poem not only because of its context, but also thanks to its content.

Seferis’ last stop is rather a literary palimpsest of classical and modern literature (Aeschylus, Virgil, Makrygiannis and Cavafy). In addition, when Seferis says that the rainy autumn in this hollow of the hills/ makes fester in the wounds of each of us (Το βροχερό φθινόπωρο σ´ αυτή τη γούβα/ κακοφορμίζει την πληγή του καθενός μας)\(^{115}\), this is a direct reference to the myth of Philoctetes, as I argue. The hidden parallel between Philoctetes, who was left at the island of Lemnos because of his wound, as well as Seferis and the whole Greek government waiting at Cava dei Tirreni is a strong one, not having attracted attention in scholarship so far. In fact, the motif of Philoctetes appears twice in the poetry of Patrikios, who uses that same parallelism, once for Greece and once for himself.

\textit{TIME DEPOSITS, II}\(^{116}\)

Greece stricken in the back
tyranized, its wounds festering

\textit{ADVENTURES OF THE BODY}\(^{117}\)

I will appear again like a useless Pantaloon
showing the wounds that festered

\textit{Learning Process (1956-1959)}

\(^{115}\) Translated by Roderick Beaton (2005: 22).


Indeed, Greek myths from the Trojan and Theban mythological cycle provide inspiration both for Seferis and Patrikios. King Oedipus, as presented in the poetry of Patrikios, moves between the opposing realms of light and dark. This tug-of-war between light and dark with the Theban myth in the background had been already touched on by George Seferis in *Thrush*. Seferis composed *Thrush* as an alternative nekyia in three parts, where parts one and two make up the pathway towards it, while part three is a nekyia *per se*. The Seferian nekyia ends with the tragic fate of Oedipus, not named by Seferis just as in Patrikios’ work. In *Thrush* Oedipus is just the “old suppliant” and in the background lies the blood of his two sons. Light being both angelic and dark is reflected on their blood, the blood of a civil strife.

Seferis composed this poem at the beginning of the Civil War (1946-1949) and published it one year after (1947), while the civil conflict was at its peak. As the Greek Civil War stands in the background of *Thrush*, the military dictatorship (1967-1974) stands in the background of Patrikios’ story of Oedipus. Oedipus’ travel through light, as depicted by Seferis in his nekyia, finds a close intertextual parallel in Patrikios two decades later. As Seferis reveals, the ego in *Thrush* is Odysseus; light is Odysseus’ home and this is where he wants to return. The Oedipus of Patrikios makes a useless effort to light the darkness, but he finally ends up using his sense of touch. This is why Patrikios chooses Oedipus and not Odysseus as his persona. This Oedipus of Patrikios may not see, being absent from Greece, but he definitely feels.

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118 Seferis (1974: 30-31) and Kagialis (2008: 159-160). Maronitis (2008: 18) characterizes *Thrush* as a poetic dialogue and especially a dialogue within the Greek space and time, dealing with Homer, Hesiod, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Plato as well as Kornaros and Cavafy and less with Kalvos, Sikelianos, Karyotakis and folk song – these are Seferis’ inter-dialogues

The intertextuality and the dialogue between Seferis and Patrikios will carry on up the twentieth-first century in terms of ancient context. In Patrikios “Lions’ Gate” from the collection of the same name, the door functions as a threat which in the last part of the poem turns out to be an everyday threat. Patrikios will use the gate of the Mycenae as a pretext to recall the old myth of the lion of Nemea and secondly as an eternal symbol of everyday passage (even though the location is never mentioned, it is easy to figure it out). Dimitris Maronitis, who has linked the poem with Seferis’ “Mycenae” has suggested that this threat is actually a comment for the deeper link between life and poetry.\(^{120}\)

**LIONS’ GATE\(^{121}\)**

The lions had already gone  
not even one in all Greece  
just a lonely one, hunted,  
was hidden somewhere in the Peloponnese  
without threatening anybody  
until Hercules killed that one as well.  
However the memory of the lions  
ever ceased to threaten  
it was threatening in their image on coats of arms and shields  
it was threatening in their effigy on the battlefields  
it was threatening in their relief  
in stone lintel over the gate.  
It always threatens us the weighty past  
it threatens the narrative of what has passed  
as writing carved in the lintel  
over the gate every day we are asked to pass.

*Lions’ Gate* (2002)

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\(^{120}\) Maronitis (2005:96).

“Lions’ Gate” summarizes all of Patrikios’ predecessors in terms of ancient and Modern Greek poetry, slightly projecting its themes towards mythology, ancient history and archaeology. The poem is divided into three parts. Firstly, the relief of the Mycenaean lions calls to mind the lion of Nemea, the first of the twelve labors ascribed to Hercules. Patrikios seems to undermine the merit of the hero’s great achievement, since his lion is not surly, but lonely and harmless. So, the legendary labor is downgraded and Hercules is grounded at a more human level. This technique is reminiscent of Pindar. The adventures of Hercules are one of the Theban lyric’s favorite myths, not only because both come from Thebes, but mainly because the Theban super-hero is closely associated with the foundation of the Olympic Games\footnote{Actually, one book of Pindar’s Victory Odes The Olympians is dedicated to patrons gained their athletic crown at Olympia, but Hercules appears to other victorious contexts too.} – their close affinity gives the poet licence to reshape the ideal form of his hero on occasion\footnote{For instance, when Hercules in Isthmian 3 appears as “short in shape” (v.71: \textit{μορφάν βραχύς}), this probably happens as a praising parallel to the laudandus of that ode, who despite his bantam appearance, succeed in to be a victor.}. The second and third parts of the modern poem are set in the present day. Lions now are just a memory and astonishingly enough this is a memory that still
threatens. Using a priamel technique, also introduced by Pindar, the representation of fear gains impetus and ends in a climax. Likewise, Pindar says that he is not a sculpture, so he does not make statues to be put on show, but he is a poet (Nemean 5, vv.1-2) – and I believe that Patrikios agrees. Lions therefore could be a synonym for the literary poetical past, but the door remains there to this day and it is up to us to go through it every day as well. Greek past just like Greek poetry is always at hand.

2.3. Greek Poetry and Titos Patrikios

Titos Patrikios is an artist who deals with the multiple, but quite standard themes in his poetical corpus: ideology within Marxist terms, contemporary wars, love, and poetics mainly define his verse. His themes are relevant to his references and communicate either with the literary past or the present. Whether it is the thematic that defines his interlocutors or those agents that define the thematic is a question without a satisfactory answer.

However, what is interesting to denote is the period when each dialogue begins and also the aim and the quality of these relationships. Paraphrasing Maronitis, Patrikios has always been Seferian. This statement has validated itself in the poetry of Titos Patrikios, since the publication of Earth-Road. It is not only the Seferian style that Patrikios embraces, like the whispering tone of a secret discussion, but also his methodology. Seferis uses verses from other poets in his poetry and Patrikios also does so, thanks to Seferis. Beyond the intra-poetical loans made, the relationship with Seferis is constant and never ceases. Additionally, the first phase is marked by the poetry of Karyotakis, while the second by Cavafy.

The dialogue with Seferis moves around the facts of their contemporary reality and myth is a useful tool to analyze or emphasize unpleasant aspects of the Greek
history of the twentieth century. Both Seferis, as well as Patrikios, were actively involved in important and crucial events of their time, each one undertaking different roles or activities, but they were at the frontline of the events. Although, both had leading roles, myth functions in the background of their poetics and this is a technique that Patrikios adopts from Seferis. Myth, as a reflection of reality, allows the truth to come out, a truth otherwise not stated or confessed. On the contrary, the dialogue within the poetry of Kostas Karyotakis is lacking any mythological element, being mainly focused on the parameter of ideology. Marxist ideology characterizes the first phase of Patrikios and his ideological argument is strong. The presence of Cavafy is reinforced after the poet’s return from Europe to Greece and his influence is identified with the second phase of Patrikios poetics. In the case of Cavafy, myth and reality can both be combined under the scheme of inter-textuality.

Regardless of modern or ancient context, Patrikios seems to align his thematic with his speaker. This is more evident when talking with Archilochos and Pindar. Both lyric poets of Greek antiquity appear in Patrikios’ poetics not only as a sign of nostos for the literary past, but also as a recognition of their influence. Patrikios borrows from Pindar the choral structure of the victory ode early in his poetry and the same applies to Archilochos with whom Patrikios cultivated an early thematic dialogue, but their discourse has not yet been brought to light until later. In contrast, Hesiod is never identified by name, even though Patrikios borrows from him the deceitful essence of poetry; as Hesiod stages the performance of his Muses, likewise Patrikios stages his own themes.

As myth previously did, the poets of the ancient and Modern Greek past form a space which is ideal for experimentation. Patrikios functions as a director when
setting his ancient and Modern Greek agents in his poetic world. The poetics of Titos Patrikios may express an ideal reality, a world that never was, as poetry per se.
CONCLUSION

The poetry of Titos Patrikios is essentially an ideological and a literary palimpsest. There is initially a strong focus on reality and ideology during the first phase of his work. In the mid-twentieth century, the communist ideology was the myth. Later, ideology comes behind in rank, and the poetical paradigm changes transforming into appropriation and sometimes adaptation of the leitmotivs of the Greek literary past. Myth comes into Patrikios’ work after ideology has closed its circle. The inter-textual and also intra-textual relationship within the literature of Greek antiquity as well as Modern Greek literature is not a marginal one, but a significant feature of his oeuvre.

Nevertheless, Patrikios, either during the first or even more during his second phase, lacks the historical context of Greek antiquity. Patrikios is more familiar with ancient literature than history, to a certain extent. Patrikios studies classics, though not systematically. He seems more aware of the lyric poetry than epic and drama. His knowledge is not the general learning acquired through the school curriculum, but his familiarity with the texts is deeper and more extensive. There is a reading engagement with the archaic and classical texts, especially lyric poetry, which shows signs in his early poetry, but is mostly evident during his second phase. The management of specific motifs and structural norms, as in the case of Pindaric epinikion, is characterized by a particular engagement with the ancient Greek lyricism, and also serves as a conduit for his personality.

The four leading collections dealing with the reception of antiquity are: Facing Mirrors (1988), The Pleasure of Prolongations (1992), Lions’ Gate (2002) and Co-living with the present (2011). As an artist, being between modernist and avant-garde, Patrikios renews his subjects and transforms his motifs, especially when it comes to
time and myth. In particular, *Lions’ Gate* signalled the poet’s clear shift towards mythological leitmotifs and ever since, the mythical past is set clearer on Patrikios’ stage.

The reception of antiquity is divided into two levels, or two universes, which co-exist in his poetics; this is his co-existing situation. Past and present not only communicate, but they also interchange levels: agents of the past are able to come into the present, acquire a synchronous voice and speak via Patrikios’ poetry. His poetry may deal with heroes, but the poet never talks with figures coming out of the myth; thus Patrikios avoids any irrational discourse. The discussion is with real agents, Archilochos and Pindar, otherwise the discussion represents a dialogic scheme which is a metaphor of interaction and artistic creativity.

This interwoven interest is proved in the cases of Archilochos and Pindar. Opting for the two lyric poets of the archaic and classical period was a personal choice, both being closely connected to Patrikios’ persona as an individual and as an artist. Archilochos of Paros is the best example of personalized war and love poetry, while Pindar from Thebes is the eternal aristocratic symbol of poetical excellence; What Pindar said about poetry and the arts in the fifth century BC still has resonance today. As for Greek mythology, Patrikios opts for myths and mythological figures from the Trojan and Theban mythological cycle. The development of those characters is exceptionally interesting, since all function as projections of the poet’s self. The stories of Sisyphus, Prometheus and Oedipus are metaphors for poetical inquest and artistic agony, while the travellers Odysseus and Telemachus seem to transcend distance and time and dwell in synchronous reality – all mirroring Patrikios. The use of antiquity therefore in the poetry of Titos Patrikios raises issues of identification in an effort made to construct his own artistic and male identity. Myth is the perfect
mirror to reflect his own life during his late phase, like hiding his real face under a tragic mask. Patrikios gives the performance of his life through his art.

Imaging the chronological sequence from Greek antiquity to Modern Greek literature, there is a piece of the puzzle missing; this is the Byzantine and the medieval scholarship. Byzantium is absolutely absent from the work of Titos Patrikios, as if it never existed. It might be that there is no specific explanation for this chronological gap. Besides which, Patrikios may not be interested in presenting this historical or literary aspect in his work; a possibility which also applies to ancient history.

On the contrary, the Bible does exist. It is apparent that Patrikios seems to be aware of the Christian canon, but it barely features in his work. All the relevant references traced appear in his first phase: some citations in *Earth-Road* (1954)\(^{124}\), *Time Deposits* (1954)\(^{125}\), *Sea Promise* (1959-1963)\(^{126}\) and *Optional Attitude* (1975)\(^{127}\).

It is interesting to remark that after *Optional Attitude*, all the biblical references seem to magically disappear from the poetry of Patrikios and the baton passes to Greek myth. This is a supportive argument of the view that *Optional Attitude* is indeed a turning-point collection, a view I also share, as well as the fact that Greek antiquity emerges during the second phase of his poetical work; Christianity and paganism could never effectively co-exist.

This contradiction encapsulates the dichotomy of the Greek identity. On the one hand is the eastern aspect of Romiosyni blending Christianity and Byzantium, while on the other hand is the western aspect of Hellenism, consisting of Paganism.

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and Europe. If neohellenism derives out of syncretism\textsuperscript{128}, then the dialogue that Patrikios has is related to the construction of identity as a citizen; the continuity of Hellenism is transparent in the shift made from the Eastern to the Western approach in his post-European poetics. What is more, the literary translations out of French symbolism and realism identify his second phase as well. So, before leaving for Paris Patrikios is a rebel and it is not only the ideology that marks his poetics, but also the Eastern aspect of his Greek identity with regards to Christian terms. After returning to Greece in 1975, he is closer to the European and Western tradition and already a European poet.

Being a cosmopolitan and a polymath, his varied learning extends not only to the classical and European traditions, but also to Modern Greek literature. Patrikios either has a dialogue with many Modern Greek poets, mainly poets of the post-war period, or there is an artistic dialogue with earlier and more established poets and a repetition of their mannerisms. This study has focused on three poets: George Seferis because he is always present, Kostas Karyotakis because he influences the first phase and Cavafy because influences the second phase.

The influence from Karyotakis is directly connected with Patrikios’ Marxist ideology, which surfaces during his first phase, the more committed one. Patrikios deals with the poetry of Karyotakis during the first two decades of his career and their dialogue takes place against the backdrop of Marxist economical discourse. Actually, this was the more intense politically and ideologically passionate period of Patrikios’ life, an aspect underlined by his poetics as well. His early work is mainly characterized by the human struggle for social change, following his life experiences

\textsuperscript{128} See Tziovas (2001).
throughout his political activism and his exile. Being an adherent of Marxism, either when close to the mainstream ideology of the communist party or when occasionally diverging from it, Titos Patrikios remained a Marxist.

On the contrary, the dialogue with Seferis and Cavafy shares common ground with the myths from Greek antiquity that are used. This dialogue starts in his early period, making regular appearances from then onwards. Patrikios actually has always been Seferian. In addition, comparing Patrikios to other Modern Greek poets in terms of how Hellenic or Christian their poetry is, brings Patrikios closer to Cavafy. As Yannis Dallas has shown, there are two contrasting pairs within Hellenism according to Cavafy: Hellenism versus barbarism and Hellenism versus Christianity\textsuperscript{129}. The second pair is the one that appears in Patrikios. Of course, the dialogue of Patrikios with other poets cannot be explained in one single, simple way. The affinity between Patrikios and Yannis Ritsos, despite their relationship as student and teacher, is not evident in terms of style and leitmotifs used. But pinning down the exact extent of influence in these cases can be notoriously difficult.

As for the second phase, the introspective tone continues up to his latest collection, published two years ago, \textit{Poetry comes to you}, but thematically it has an absolutely different orientation: poetry is now his epicenter. It seems as if Patrikios takes us into his laboratory just at the moment of inspiration. Is this a new turning-point or has Patrikios started closing his productive circle? Regardless of what new poetic material the poet will publish in the future (if he does so), the existing corpus offers a clear-cut overview of his poetry. His canvas is always framed by love as a

\textsuperscript{129} Dallas (1986:42-43).
standard medium, at first the politically-engaged poetry, extending to myth and later poetics. In my view, *Poetry comes to you* is his poetic epilogue.

When I asked him how he wishes to be remembered, Titos Patrikios replied that he would like to be remembered as a useful poet. I firmly believe that he is. His poetry covers the historical developments of the second half of the twentieth century from a national and an international perspective. It is Modern Greek history and politics that passes through his verse along with his personal adventures and wanderings. Patrikios, just as Archilochos, fought and fell in love, just as Oedipus he tried to solve the riddles which his comrades may have refused. Sometimes he suppressed the rebel inside as Prometheus did or even took absurd decisions as Sisyphus did and he most certainly accomplished the wandering journey of Odysseus across Europe. Finally, Patrikios as Pindar highlighted all the above through his poetry; Seferis and Pindar are the two poets always in Patrikios’ background. Being flexible in moving from a public to a private sphere, from negotium to otium, and vice-versa, Patrikios is the history of the twentieth century incarnate and a rebel with a cause, turning his life experience to his artistic advantage during the twentieth and twentieth-first centuries. Titos Patrikios is an independent agent and this is what makes his poetry special and unique.
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APPENDIX

LIST OF PATRIKIOS’ WORKS

I. POETRY: Collections

1. Πρώτα Ποιήματα – First Poems (1943-1948)
2. Επιστροφή στην Ποίηση – Back to Poetry (1948-1951)
3. Largo (1951)
4. Μεγάλο Γράμμα – Long Letter (1952)
5. Ασκήσεις – Exercises (1952)
7. Χρόνια της Πέτρας – Ages of Rock (1953-1954)
8. Το τέλος του καλοκαιριού – Summer’s End (1953-1954)
19. Η Πύλη των λεόντων – Lions’ Gate, Athens: Diatton 2002
21. Κοινός μαθήματα με το παρόν – Co-living with the present, Athens: Kedros 2011, 2012
22. Σε βρίσκει η ποίηση – Poetry comes to you, Athens: Kichli 2012
II. POETRY: Collected Poems

   - Επιστροφή στην Ποίηση – Back to Poetry (1948-1951)
   - Largo (Athens, 1951)
   - Μεγάλο Γράµµα – Long Letter (1952)
   - Ασκήσεις – Exercises (1952)
   - Χωµατόδροµος – Earth-Road (1952-1954)
   - Χρόνια της Πέτρας – Ages of Rock (1953-1954)
   - Το τέλος του καλοκαίριού – Summer’s End (1953-1954)

   - Πρώτα Ποιήµατα – First Poems (1943-1948)
   - Επιστροφή στην Ποίηση – Back to Poetry (1948-1951)
   - Largo (Athens, 1951)
   - Μεγάλο Γράµµα – Long Letter (1952)
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   - Χωµατόδροµος – Earth-Road (1952-1954)
   - Χρόνια της Πέτρας – Ages of Rock (1953-1954)

   - Το τέλος του καλοκαίριού – Summer’s End (1953-1954)
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   - Αντιδικίες – Arguments (1955)
   - Μαθητεία – Learning Process (1956-1959)

   - Θάλασσα Επαγγελίας – Sea Promise (1959-1963)
   - Παραµορφώσεις – Deformations (1959-1963)
   - Προαιρετική Στάση – Optional Attitude (1967-1973)

   - Αντικριστοί Καθρέφτες – Facing Mirrors (1988)
   - Η ηδονή των παρατάσεων – The Pleasure of Prolongations (1992)
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