

**PAPADIAMANTIS' ATHENIAN SHORT STORIES:
SOCIAL REPRESENTATION AND CHARACTERIZATION**

by

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ABSTRACT

As a contribution to the re-evaluation of Papadiamantis' literary oeuvre this thesis sets out to explore the social dimension of his work by focusing on his Athenian short stories. This literary corpus, a significant part of the literature describing the urban environment in the last decade of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century, offers an insight into Papadiamantis' views on the social reality of the Greek capital and society at large. The first chapter outlines the socio-historical parameters that contributed to the increasing presence of Athens in Greek prose fiction of that period and explores the ways different urban narratives sought to record the changing physiognomy of the capital. The second and third chapters focus on the texts and provide a close reading of the Athenian stories. In particular, the second chapter concentrates on the social context and brings to the fore the complex range of social ills that the author wishes to stigmatize either explicitly or implicitly. The third chapter centres on the characters in the Athenian short stories and demonstrates how the urban social context moulds the individual's character and victimizes the most vulnerable social members. The critical representation of the capital in the Athenian short stories points to Papadiamantis' scepticism about the emerging norms of modern existence and reveals a socially conscious author.

To my parents

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INTRODUCTION

Alexandros Papadiamantis (1851-1911) is one of the most widely studied Greek prose writers. Since the author's death his work has been subject to a variety of interpretations that have sparked considerable debate. On the one hand, there are critics who tend to undervalue Papadiamantis' oeuvre, either by focusing on its "ethographic" elements or by overemphasizing the author's relationship with Orthodoxy.¹ On the other, there are those who see Papadiamantis as the supporter of authentic Greek values and way of life and associate his works with the Byzantine tradition.² In recent decades, a renewed interest in Papadiamantis' literary output has resulted in the publication of a great many studies engaging in a lively debate about the nature of his work. Thus, Panagiotis Moullas put the emphasis on the autobiographical nature of his fiction³ and Odysseas Elytis strongly emphasized the lyricism of his prose,⁴ while Lakis Prongidis sought to bring Papadiamantis closer to the European tradition of the novel.⁵ Others, like Guy Saunier, by focusing on the recurring myths found in Papadiamantis' texts, offered a psychoanalytic approach to his oeuvre.⁶

The present thesis aims to contribute to a re-evaluation of Papadiamantis' oeuvre by exploring its social dimension, a facet that is generally acknowledged but little discussed.

¹ This simplistic approach was epitomized by Constantinos Dimaras in *A History of Modern Greek Literature* (London: University of London Press, 1974), and persisted well into the 1960s.

² Zisimos Lorentzatos, *Μελέτες*, vol. I, Athens: Domos, 1994, pp. 235-258.

³ Panagiotis Moullas, introduction to *A. Παπαδιαμάντης Αυτοβιογραφούμενος*, Athens: Ermis, 1974.

⁴ Odysseas Elytis, *Η μαγεία του Παπαδιαμάντη*, Athens: Ermeias, 1976.

⁵ Lakis Prongidis, *La Conquête du Roman: De Papadiamantis à Boccace*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1997.

⁶ Guy (Michel) Saunier, *Εωσφόρος και Άβυσσος: Ο Προσωπικός μύθος του Παπαδιαμάντη*, Athens: Agra, 2001.

Focusing on his Athenian short stories (1891-1909),⁷ a literary corpus which portrays life in the Greek capital at the end of the nineteenth century, this thesis sets out to demonstrate the complex range of social aspects raised by these narratives. My analysis centres on the social context and the characters in the Athenian stories, in an attempt to present the picture of Athenian society which Papadiamantis chose to portray.

In the Athenian stories Papadiamantis shifts the plot away from the rural community to the urban setting. The Athenian narratives seek to register the urban reality at the end of the nineteenth century as experienced by the lower classes and internal migrants. These Athenian stories are a significant part of a wider range of writings in the latter part of the nineteenth century which deal with life in the capital of the newly founded Greek state. Along with a detailed representation of peasant life in the Greek countryside, prose literature of that period provides glimpses of Athenian life, at a time when the capital was experiencing the process of modernization.

The rapid development of and structural changes in the Greek economy and society during the 1880s, urbanization and the expansion of the press⁸ combined to stimulate a turning point in the prose fiction of that period. The multifaceted physiognomy of Athens and the demands for the daily press (addressed mainly to an urban audience) to reflect aspects of urban activities, paved the way for a more permanent presence of the capital in prose fiction. Prose writers who until then had been mainly preoccupied with the detailed depiction of the rural communities turned to the urban environment to recapture the

⁷ According to Alexandros Kotzias (*Αθηναϊκά Διηγήματα και δύο δοκίμια για τον Χρόνο*, Athens: Nefeli, 1992) we cannot be sure about the exact time when the last Athenian short stories were written, as there is nothing to date them by.

⁸ For a detailed discussion of the expansion of the daily and periodical press in the last quarter of the nineteenth century see Michalis Chryssanthopoulos "Anticipating Modernism: Constructing a Genre, a Past, and a Place" in Dimitris Tziouvas (ed), *Greek Modernism and Beyond*, Lanham: Roman and Littlefield Publishers, 1997, pp. 61-65.

complexities of the urban context. Papadiamantis occupies a prominent position among them.

Until recently critics perceived the Athenian stories as an inferior appendage to Papadiamantis' main work, set in Skiathos.⁹ Although Papadiamantis spent most of his life in Athens and dedicated a considerable part of his literary output to describing life in the capital, his works are mainly identified with life in the countryside. The well-established image of Papadiamantis, trapped in Athens while pining away for his rural island (an image partly cultivated by the author himself),¹⁰ was the main reason for playing down the Athenian stories.

In the opening lines of “Τα Χριστούγεννα του Τεμπέλη”, one of his Athenian stories published in 1896,¹¹ the narrator exclaims: “Κ’ έπειτα, γράψε αθηναϊκά διηγήματα!”¹² Critics who have written about Papadiamantis' fiction attribute the narrator's dismay not only to the author's own unease at writing Athenian tales but mainly to his repugnance for Athens.¹³ Papadiamantis has often been seen as engaged in the “πόλιν

⁹ Although Tellos Agras in 1936 was the first critic to observe that the Athenian stories were a distinctive area within the author's literary output, in the following decades the Athenian stories received little attention from the critics, Tellos Agras, “Πώς βλέπομε σήμερα τον Παπαδιαμάντη” in *Κριτικά Γ': Μορφές και κείμενα της πεζογραφίας*, Kostas Stergiopoulos (ed), Athens: Ermis, 1984, pp. 46-49.

¹⁰ In “Αμαρτίας φάντασμα” (1900) the narrator acknowledges his deep attachment to his native island: “Η ψυχή μου ήτο πάντοτε προς τα μέρη εκείνα, αν και τον πλείστον χρόνον απεδήμουν σωματικώς, και ενθυμούμην κάποτε τον στίχον του Σκότου αιδοῦ: ‘Η καρδιά μου είναι στα Ψηλάματα, η καρδιά μου δεν είναι εδώ’”, Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Αμαρτίας φάντασμα” in *Άπαντα*, ed. N.D. Triantafyllopoulos, (Athens: Domos, 1984), vol. 3, p. 227. Henceforth the references to the short stories will follow Triantafyllopoulos' edition.

¹¹ For a full list of Papadiamantis' Athenian short stories see Appendix.

¹² Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Τα Χριστούγεννα του Τεμπέλη”, vol. 3, p. 156.

¹³ Papadiamantis' deprecation of Athens has been pointed out by a great many critics. See for instance Valetas, *Παπαδιαμάντης, Η ζωή-το έργο-η εποχή του*, vol. Στ. in *Άπαντα* (Athens: Vivlos, 1955) p. λς' “Σιχαίνεται την Αθήνα, αηδιάζει από τους λογίους και τους δημοσιογράφους, απ' την πολιτική και κοινωνική ατιμόσφαιρα. Έρχεται και φεύγει. Και μένει, αλλά με το σκοινί στο λαιμό του σαν κατάδικος, σαν εξόριστος”. See also Moullas, op.cit. p. λη' “Ο ίδιος πορεύτηκε σας άνθρωπος του περιθωρίου και σαν εξόριστος μέσα στον κόσμο της Αθήνας”. In the same vein, Moschonas, “Διαδικασίες αφομοίωσης και άπωσης του εσωτερικού μετανάστη” introduction in *Αλέξανδρος Παπαδιαμάντης Αλληλογραφία* (Athens: Odysseas, 1981) p. η', observes that “η αγωνία του εσωτερικού μετανάστη μπροστά την άγνωστη πραγματικότητα μέσα στην οποία οφείλει να επιβιώσει” dominates Papadiamantis' attitude towards Athens. It is worth noting that this

της δουλοπαροικίας και των πλουτοκρατών”¹⁴ and his Athenian stories as the result of the author’s efforts on his part to accommodate the demands of the Athenian press.¹⁵ Critical approaches to his Athenian stories tend to assume that the author’s lack of ‘artistry’ was the result of his lacking inspiration in a city where he himself felt alienated.¹⁶

Alexandros Kotzias was the first critic to challenge the supposed aesthetic inferiority of the Athenian stories and to pave the way for their rehabilitation.¹⁷ Kotzias’ analysis is mainly based on the narratological and stylistic characteristics which distinguish the Athenian from the Skiathos stories. In this respect, the critic relates the lack of poetic elements to the thematic scope and the functional development of the subject (“Απουσιάζει η φύση γιατί διαφορετικά θα ήταν στοιχείο ξένο, παρέμβλητο, που θα εξέτρεπε την αφήγηση από τη σκόπευσή της, θα μείωνε τη λειτουργικότητά της”).¹⁸ Although Kotzias tackles the fictional treatment of Athens in Papadiamantis, he does not go on to explore the way in which the author portrays the urban social context in his Athenian stories.

Against this background, I would argue that the Athenian stories bespeak the author’s social and cultural immersion in a *milieu* that had turned away from indigenous Greek tradition to embrace western social, political and cultural models. Regardless of

stance had been cultivated by Papadiamantis himself as is clear from his letters and in some of his short stories.

¹⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis “Νεκράνθεμα” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 578.

¹⁵ See Angeliki Taligarou “Μια προσέγγιση στα αθηναϊκά διηγήματα του Αλέξανδρου Παπαδιαμάντη”, *Νέα Πορεία*, no. 533-35/227, 1999, p. 199. On the same critical approach see also Pantelis Voutouris, *Ως εις καθρέπτην... προτάσεις και υποθέσεις για την ελληνική πεζογραφία του 19^{ου} αιώνα*, (Athens: Nefeli, 1995), p. 233.

¹⁶ Tellos Agras op. cit. p. 47, initially claimed that “Τ’ αθηναϊκά διηγήματα είναι, πρώτα-πρώτα, ολιγότερο ποιητικά από τα σκιαθίτικα”. Manolis Chalvatzakis in *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης μέσα από το έργο του*, (Alexandria, 1960) p. 88, implies that many of Papadiamantis’ Athenian short stories “μπορούν να θεωρηθούν χρονογραφήματα, χωρίς μεγάλη λογοτεχνική αξία”. Georgos Ioannou in *Ο της φύσεως έρωας*, (Athens: Kedros, 1986), p. 12, argues that the Athenian short stories “δεν έχουν την πνοή, το σπαρτάρισμα και το χρώμα εκείνων των σκιαθίτικων. Σχεδόν δεν είναι Παπαδιαμάντης. [...] και αυτό γιατί τα βιώματα της Αθήνας δεν ήταν γι’ αυτόν ούτε πρόωμα, ούτε τερπνά, ούτε και βαθύτερα”.

¹⁷ Alexandros Kotzias, *Αθηναϊκά Διηγήματα και δύο δοκίμια για τον Χρόνο*, Athens: Nefeli, 1992.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Papadiamantis' attachment to or dismay over Athens, the intrusion of modernity and the predominance of urban values gave him the incentive not only to write but also to comment on the experience of the modern. "Highly cognizant of the gains as well as the losses of the modern",¹⁹ Papadiamantis grounds his short stories on an acknowledgment of the emergence of a new era. The rapidly changing urban context becomes the crucial pretext both for his fiction set in Athens and on Skiathos.²⁰ As Mary Layoun aptly notes, Papadiamantis' texts are narratives of a society sometimes in violent transition, disrupted by an urban, modernizing movement which, even when it remains on the periphery of the plot, is metaphorically omnipresent.²¹ As a result, the Athenian stories written in Athens and about Athens, the nucleus of the modernizing trends, constitute a substantial part of the author's literary and personal response to a specific socio-historical context.

As my analysis demonstrates, Papadiamantis looks at Athens critically and displays a particular reaction towards the emerging urban context. The question that inevitably arises is why Papadiamantis took that stance towards the capital and the standards it represented. A possible explanation can be found in the author's ideological attitude to modernization. In this respect, Papadiamantis sees the anonymity and dehumanization that characterize the urban space as well as the intrusion of the western way of life as an assault on the principles of a pre-existing traditional world. It is interesting to observe how he depicts the oscillation between tradition and modernity in "Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά" (1892):

¹⁹ David Ricks, "In partibus infidelium: Alexandros Papadiamantis and the Orthodox disenchantment with the Greek State" in *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism & the Uses of the Past (1797-1896)*, ed. Roderick Beaton and David Ricks, London: Ashgate, 2009, p. 251.

²⁰ Kotzias has indicated that from 1891 until his death Papadiamantis wrote Athenian short stories in parallel with those set on Skiathos, op.cit. pp. 16-17.

²¹ Mary N. Layoun, *Travels of a Genre, The Modern Novel and Ideology*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 46. Mary Layoun's observations are the result of her analysis of Papadiamantis' *The Murderess*, but in my opinion a latent tension between the pre-modern and the modern is apparent in much of Papadiamantis' fiction.

“Αλλ’ η οικία έπλεεν εις το μεταίχιμιον το αόριστον και αβέβαιον, εις το λυκόφως εκείνο, μεταξύ παραδόσεως και νεωτερισμού, όπερ ως λυκόφως δεν δύναται να διαρκέση, αλλ’ αναγκαίως θα υποχωρήση εις τον ζόφον και θα γίνη νυξ”.²²

On the other hand, one could argue that the author’s critical stance towards Athens is the result of his own difficulty in adjusting to the urban world. Coming from the periphery himself, but living and publishing in the metropolis, Papadiamantis encountered the disorderliness of the urban environment and turned to the safety of his memories of his native island. But since Papadiamantis does not idealize the rural community, it seems more accurate to say that his fiction “articulates the restrictions and limitations of the traditional way of life as well as the posturing and hypocrisies of the new bourgeois order”.²³

Within this framework, I propose that a society-based approach to Papadiamantis’ fiction may contribute to a better and deeper appreciation of his oeuvre. The scope of this study, which I shall briefly outline below, is limited to an analysis of the Athenian stories, since they have not been studied in this light before, but I hope it will contribute to a wider discussion of Papadiamantis’ literary output in general.

This thesis consists of three chapters followed by a conclusion and an appendix listing Papadiamantis’ Athenian short stories. The first chapter outlines the socio-historical parameters which contributed to the increasing presence of Athens in Greek prose fiction at the end of the nineteenth century. My discussion aims to place Papadiamantis’ Athenian stories in the wider context of urban representation in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. In particular, my analysis investigates the

²² Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Αποκρίατικη νυχτιά”, vol. 2, p. 309.

²³ Mary N. Layoun, *op.cit.* p. 24.

ways in which different narratives sought to register the multifaceted physiognomy of the capital. Focusing on *Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών* (1894) by Ioannis Kondylakis, “Το Παράπονο του Νεκροθάπτου” (1895) by Emmanuel Roidis and “Αθηναϊκές σελίδες”²⁴ by Michael Mitsakis, I shall present the different trends in urban representation. My discussion ends with Papadiamantis’ view of Athens. Through a parallel examination of Papadiamantis’ Athenian stories and the other urban narratives of the same period I seek to underline the latter’s deviation from the modes of urban representation employed by other urban prose writers.

The next two chapters concentrate on the texts and provide a close reading of the Athenian short stories. The second chapter focuses on the social context that the Athenian narratives portray. Starting from the observation that in Papadiamantis’ fiction the capital emerges as a dark and hostile space, I shall connect this image of darkness with the author’s own scepticism about social conditions in the city and the rise of urban values. My discussion seeks to bring to the fore recurring themes that point to the author’s unfavourable perception of the city. A careful examination of the texts reveals that Papadiamantis constantly focuses either on urban social conditions or on the representation of the hypocrisy of the clergy and the concomitant decline in religious belief. I argue that the Athenian stories allow Papadiamantis to engage with the new urban reality and to emphasize its shortcomings. More precisely, by implying a contrast with the past, Papadiamantis indicates that the modern urban context breaks down human relations, undermines moral principles and intensifies ontological insecurity.

²⁴ The title “Αθηναϊκές σελίδες” refer to a number of narratives about life in the capital which the author intended to publish in book form, see Georgia Gotsi, *Η Ζωή εν τη Πρωτευούση, Θέματα αστικής πεζογραφίας από το τέλος του 19^{ου} αιώνα*, Athens: Nefeli, 2004, p. 287.

The third and final chapter centres on the characters in the Athenian stories, in an attempt to explore the way the urban context impinges on the individual. The first part of my discussion focuses on the Skiathos stories in order to show that there is a stark contrast between the ways in which Papdiamantis portrays his heroes in the rural and the urban realms. More often than not Papdiamantis shows his solidarity with the heroes of the Skiathos stories. By contrast, in most of the Athenian stories he maintains an ironic distance from the characters and emphasizes their moral degeneration. My study is divided into three sections, each of which elaborates on a different human type presented in the Athenian stories. The characters are classified into three categories: men, women and children. Focusing on the characteristics that they exhibit, I demonstrate that the urban context inevitably moulds the individual's character and victimizes the most vulnerable members of the society. I hope that my analysis will contribute to a re-evaluation and perhaps rehabilitation of the Athenian stories, a body of writing that has hitherto received little attention from the critics. At the same time, this approach will hopefully contribute to a wider scholarly debate on the social dimension of Papdiamantis' oeuvre.

CHAPTER I

THE CITY AND THE TEXT:

THE URBAN EXPERIENCE IN GREEK PROSE FICTION AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (1890-1910)

Although the Greek prose fiction of the last decade of the nineteenth century reveals a strong penchant for detailed depictions of small, traditional, rural communities, the subject of urban life was not altogether overlooked. Until recently the literary production of the end of the nineteenth century tended to be grouped under the generic label “ethografia” (a form of realism devoted to the life of the peasantry in rural Greek),¹ while urban fiction of the same period was mainly associated with the novels of Xenopoulos. Recent studies aimed at reassessing the literary production of that era tend to underscore the shift in emphasis from the rural community to the urban setting² and to rehabilitate those authors who included urban issues in their prose.³ The increasing interest among prose writers in

¹ Although the term “ethografia” has been extensively used from 1880 up to the present day, it has caused debate among scholars, critics and writers as to its actual meaning thus rendering its usage problematic. For a discussion of the precise meaning of the notion, see Beaton, “Realism and Folklore in Nineteenth-Century Greek Fiction”, pp. 103-122, Politou-Marmarinou, *Το περιοδικό Εστία (1876-1895) και το διήγημα*, pp. 46-47, Vittì, *Ιδεολογική λειτουργία της ελληνικής ηθογραφίας*, pp. 178-180, Voutouris, *Ως εις καθρέπτην*, pp. 247-262, Gotsi, *Η ζωή εν τη πρωτευούση*, p. 31-55.

² It is worth noting that Henri Tonnet in “Ο χώρος και η σημασία του στα “Απόκρυφα Κωνσταντινουπόλεως” (1868) του Χριστόφορου Σαμαρτζίδη”, *Αντί*, vol. 641 (1997), suggests that the first attempts at representing an urban setting in Greek prose fiction appear in *Φιλοθέου Πάρεργα* (1718) by Mavrokordatos and in *Ερωτος Αποτελέσματα* (1792) by Karatzas, both of which are set in Constantinople. Tonnet links these narratives with urban mystery novels (*Απόκρυφα μυθιστορήματα*) of the nineteenth century, apparently on account of the backgrounds they use for their plot and their thematic scope.

³ See the studies by Tsirimokou, *Λογοτεχνία της πόλης*, (Athens: Lotos, 1988) Voutouris, *Ως εις καθρέπτην*, Gotsi, *Η ζωή εν τη πρωτευούση*. Moreover, since the end of the 1980s there has been a growing interest in the

representing life in the Greek capital coincides with the process of modernization and the transformation of Greek society.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century Greek society was marked by rapid progress towards modernization. Modernization meant “de-Ottomanization”, a move towards Western standards of civilization and a more general alignment with Western Europe. This was in accord with the belief, widely held in Europe, that urbanism was one of the most complete examples of modernity, as it was linked with the industrial revolution. Urban reconstruction became one of the most urgent tasks for the newly founded Greek Kingdom.⁴ In this context, the Greek capital became the political, administrative and spiritual nucleus of the country, where contradictory cultural tendencies converged, and a lure for many prose writers. Following the paradigm of the Western European novelists, who were endeavouring to come to terms with the increasing industrialization and urbanization of Europe, late nineteenth-century Greek prose writers responded to the birth of a new era by incorporating urban issues into their literary writing.

Throughout Europe, with the formation of urban centres, the city started to become the object of narratives that echoed the fascinating yet threatening nature of this apparently uncontrollable expansion. The city, a vortex bringing together the forces of good and evil, was viewed by the literary imagination with both excitement and reservations.⁵ Although

mystery novels (*Απόκρυφα μυθιστορήματα*), which describe the seedy and often violent aspects of urban life and set their plots in various cities. For a detailed discussion of the mystery novels see inter alia the articles of G. Gotsi, G. Drakou, H. Tonnet and P. Voutouris in *Avτί*, vol. 641 (1997), pp. 6-47.

⁴ For detailed information about urban reconstruction and the formation of urban policies throughout the nineteenth century see Vilma Hastaoglou-Martinidis, Kiki Kafkoulas and Nikos Papamichos “Urban modernization and national renaissance: town planning in 19th-century Greece”, *Planning Perspectives*, (Volume 8, no. 4, 1993, pp. 427–469) and “City Form and National Identity: Urban Designs in the Nineteenth-Century Greece”, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 13, 1995, pp. 99-110.

⁵ For a detailed discussion of the way the city has been represented in literature see inter alia Richard Lehan, *Realism and Naturalism: the Novel in an age of transition*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005 and Richard Lehan, *The City in Literature. An Intellectual and Cultural History*, New Jersey: University of California Press, 1998.

the embryonic industrialization of Greece at the end of the nineteenth century can by no means be compared with western European societies, this urban transition was recorded in the prose fiction of that period. Among the authors who tried to capture the complexity of the urban context, Papadiamantis occupies a prominent position.

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the way the city of Athens was conceptualized in the prose fiction of the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. In order to shed light on the parameters that made Athens the chief centre for literary expression, I shall provide a brief historical framework of Athenian society at the turn of the century. By focusing on the way writers such as Kondylakis, Roidis and Mitsakis chose to transcribe their experiences of the new urban reality, I hope to illustrate the different depictions of the city in prose writing while focusing above all on Papadiamantis. I argue that the urban landscape does not simply provide a setting for Papadiamantis' Athenian short stories but offers a framework within which the author juxtaposes social and ideological concerns and engages with contemporary life.

* * *

The modern city is at the very heart of Western culture. A product of the Enlightenment, the city has been seen since the eighteenth century as an evolving construct, surrounded by both enthusiasm and scepticism. In other words, as the embodiment of modernism, the city was considered to be the landscape of future prosperity and at the same time a source of social chaos. The city that emerged out of the industrial revolution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was emblematic of the problems posed and

opportunities offered to society. As such, the city was also a source of intellectual stimulation and challenge. Throughout the nineteenth century, literary expression in Western culture responded to the rapid urbanization by encapsulating the ever-changing and increasingly complex urban landscape. The period witnessed an unprecedented increase in the urban population following the transformation of Western capitals – especially London and Paris – from agricultural societies into commercial and industrial ones. The new industrial world left its imprint on the literary imagination: Defoe and Dickens became the recorders of the urban transition in England, while Balzac and Zola portrayed this phenomenon in France.⁶

By contrast, the Greek nineteenth century, after a long war of independence (1821-1827), was marked by efforts to establish a unified territory, an indigenous national identity and the parallel development of a modern European identity. Four centuries of Ottoman rule had kept the country isolated from the profound political, economic and social changes that had transformed the western world. Thus, at the end of the nineteenth century Greek society was still in the process of formation and oscillated between irredentism and industrialization. But the process of urbanization was rapid and intimately associated with the cruelty, injustice and fluctuations in prosperity characteristic of a capitalist order. In other words, the perception of the city in the Greek intellectual and cultural life of that period reflects the ambivalent treatment of the urban reality in Western culture. But in the case of Greece the parameters that formed the representation of the capital in the literary expression of the concluding decades of the nineteenth century were more complicated.

⁶ While Defoe welcomed the city as offering a new way of life, Dickens depicted the grotesque reality that came with the new commercial world. Zola captured in naturalistic mode the sweep of such change in his *Rougon-Macquart* novels and Balzac focused on the city as a set of competing dualistic forces (see Lehan 1998).

Athens, a city that sought to be on a par with any European metropolis, was compared and contrasted both with its glorious past through the prism of an inglorious present and the authenticity of rural life.⁷

Although Athens first emerges as an important preoccupation in the literature of the end of the nineteenth century, the urban environment had never been completely absent from Greek prose prior to that time. During the so-called “Romantic” period (1830-1850), prose writers engaged with the urban reality of the newly-founded Greek kingdom by expressing a deep scepticism towards the “moeurs” it represented. The common denominator in these texts is the discrepancy between Greece’s glorious past and its diminished present, as well as the distinction between nature and culture.⁸ The corruption of urban society, as opposed to the innocence of nature, renders the city a prison that oppresses the romantic hero. *Ο Λέανδρος* (1834), the epistolary novel by Panagiotis Soutsos, is a prime example of this antithesis between nature and culture. While the demand for a more “back-to-nature” of the early Romantic novels may reflect Rousseau’s views, it is also connected with Greece’s political and social problems during the early years of Independence.⁹ As Romanticism gives way to Realism, the novelists portray the seedy aspects of urban life, while Athens emerges as the setting for the plots of novels published between 1840 and 1870. *Ο Ζωγράφος* (1842) by Palaiologos, *Ο Πίθηκος Ξουθ* (1847) by Pitzipios and the anonymously published *Η Στρατιωτική Ζωή εν Ελλάδι* (1870-1)

⁷ Robert Shannan Peckham in *National Histories, Natural States. Nationalism and the Politics of Place in Greece*, London, 2001, suggests that the “back-to-nature” movement witnessed in Greece in the last decades of the nineteenth century was in part a reaction against the pace of urbanization and progress.

⁸ Dimitris Tziouvas in “Αγροτικό ειδύλλιο και συμβολικές αντιθέσεις: φύση και πολιτισμός σε μεταιχμιακές ελληνικές αφηγήσεις του 19^{ου} αιώνα” in *Ο Ελληνισμός στον 19^ο αιώνα, Ιδεολογικές και Αισθητικές Αναζητήσεις* ed. Voutouris and Georgis, Athens: Kastaniotis, 2005, explores the antithesis between nature and culture in nineteenth-century prose fiction.

⁹ Dimitris Tziouvas, “The novel and the crown: *O Leandros* and the politics of Romanticism” in *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism & the Uses of the Past (1797-1896)*, ed. Roderick Beaton and David Ricks, Ashgate, London 2009.

offer a rather critical approach to the urban environment, by satirizing the institutions and the mentality of Athenian society.¹⁰

In the same vein, some of the seedier aspects of urban life were portrayed from 1850 onwards in the *Απόκρυφα* (mystery novels) that abounded in the contemporary press and attracted a wide readership. These novels – designed for mass-consumption – were set in a variety of urban centres¹¹ (Athens, Constantinople, Syros, Smyrna) and explored the mysteries of the nineteenth-century city. Following the European tradition of urban mystery novels,¹² *Απόκρυφα* invite the reader to witness sinister scenes in inaccessible places, to encounter fearful and hideous characters and to transcend their own experience. The focus on the subculture of the transgressive and dangerous social elements was aimed at dramatizing the secrets and thrills of city life and at the same time at castigating the cruelty of urban life.¹³

By introducing the disjuncture between society and nature and by tackling the oppositions and the contradictions in Greek society, these early novels can be seen as the forerunners of an urban tradition that came into its own in the concluding decades of the nineteenth century. The contrast between nature and society – extended into an opposition between rural and urban life – coupled with the tribulations of an increasing urbanization,

¹⁰ It is worth noting that until recently the novels written in the early years of the Greek kingdom were conventionally characterized as “historical novels”. During the last twenty years this picture has begun to be radically re-evaluated as renewed interest in the texts of that period has revealed a wider thematic range than had previously been assumed. On the rejection of their characterization as “historical novels” see Denisi, “Για τις αρχές της πεζογραφίας μας”, *Ο Πολίτης* (no. 109, 1990, pp. 55-63) and *Το Ελληνικό Μυθιστόρημα και ο Sir Walter Scott* (Athens: Kastaniotis, 1994), Vayenas, (ed), *Από τον Λέανδρο στον Λουκή Λάρα: μελέτες για την πεζογραφία της περιόδου 1830-1880*, (Heraklion: University of Crete Publications, 1997).

¹¹ A separate reference should be made to the appearance of six “popular novels” in the decade 1884-1894, starting with the little-known *Απόκρυφα Αθηνών* which aimed to provide a comprehensive depiction of Athenian society. See Georgia Gotsi, “Experiencing the Urban: Athens in Greek Prose Fiction, 1880-1912” (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1996), pp. 52-53.

¹² For the connection between the *Απόκρυφα* and the European urban mystery novels see Pantelis Voutouris “Ο Ιωάννης Σ. Ζερβός και το απόκρυφο μυθιστόρημα: Eugene Sue Emile και Zola”, *Αντί*, vol. 641, 1997, pp. 32-40.

¹³ Georgia Gotsi, “Η ελληνική μυθιστορία των Αποκρύφων του 19^{ου} αιώνα”, *Αντί*, Vol. 641, 1997, p.6.

delineate the ideological and thematic coordinates of a range of narratives about Athens of that period. This particular body of writings paint a coherent, albeit multi-faceted, picture which includes depictions of everyday life as well as confrontations with urban realities. Rapid economic development, the structural changes in Greek society during the 1870s and 1880s, urbanization and the expansion of the reading public led to Athens taking centre stage in prose fiction, especially from 1890 onwards.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Greece was calibrating its progress on a new scale: by measuring how far it had gone from its immediate Ottoman past, and how close it was getting to civilized Europe. In this context, Athens acquired a crucial importance: it served practical and functional purposes as well as ideological ones. The proclamation of Athens as the capital of the new kingdom bespoke a wistful longing for continuity with ancient times. The Athens of the mid-nineteenth century sought to restore its ancient glory and at the same time to emulate the modern European capitals. The rebuilding of the city acquired a symbolic and programmatic significance; its meaning was rooted in the specific political and cultural orientation of the new nation, symbolizing the country's rebirth and westernization.¹⁴ There were several transitions in the city's history,¹⁵ but a major turning point in the 1880s gradually transformed Athens into an explosively growing urban

¹⁴ Eleni Bastea, *The Creation of Modern Athens: planning and myth*, Cambridge University Press, 2000. Bastea explores the role of civic architecture and planning in Athens in forging a modern Greek identity.

¹⁵ In 1833 Athens, a provincial town of about 10,000 people, was proclaimed the capital of the new Greek Kingdom. Thereafter throughout the nineteenth century the city went through different stages of development. For a discussion of the capital's development from King Otto's reign (1833-62) until the end of the century see Bastea (ibid).

agglomeration.¹⁶ Athens' metamorphosis into an elegant metropolis coincided with a push towards modernization initiated under Trikoupis.¹⁷

During the last decades of the nineteenth century Greece witnessed a spectacular acceleration in urbanization and Athens became the focus of the country's modernization process.¹⁸ Economic development stimulated by industrial growth, improvements in the country's transportation and technological infrastructure and the slow but steady stagnation of inland and island towns turned Athens into the seat of administrative and financial agencies.¹⁹ Urbanization was partly the result of incipient industrialization, but mainly caused by a rapid migratory movement, which drove about one-third of villagers away from their homes. By 1896 Athens' population was well over 100,000, making it the third largest city in Southern Europe, after Bucharest and Constantinople.²⁰ Furthermore, the repatriation of diaspora Greeks, who settled and invested their capital in Athens, boosted the city's monumentalization and technological innovation. The provincial Greek bourgeoisie began rebuilding the new capital as a city of luxury and wealth and contributed to the city's modernization. Their efforts were intensified during the "railway decade",²¹ the 1880s and 1890s, when electricity was installed in the city centre. This encouraged the

¹⁶ Lila Leontidou, *Πόλεις της σιωπής Εργατικός εποικισμός της Αθήνας και του Πειραιά, 1909-1940*, Athens: Themelio, 1989, pp. 47-95.

¹⁷ Further information about this historical period can be found in Nikos Svoronos, *Επισκόπηση της Νεοελληνικής Ιστορίας*, Athens: Themelio, 1976, pp.100-111.

¹⁸ Konstantinos Tsoukalas, *Εξάρτηση και Αναπαραγωγή Ο κοινωνικός ρόλος των εκπαιδευτικών μηχανισμών στην Ελλάδα (1830-1922)*, Athens: Themelio, 1977, pp. 161-259.

¹⁹ Guy Burgel, *Αθήνα: η ανάπτυξη μιας μεσογειακής πρωτεύουσας*, Athens: Exandas, 1976, pp. 139-242.

²⁰ Alexandros Kotzias in *Τα Αθηναϊκά διηγήματα και δύο δοκίμια για τον χρόνο* (Athens: Nefeli, 1992, pp. 44-45) offers interesting statistical data about the capital's population in the period when Papadiamantis lived there: from 1870 to 1900 the capital experienced an unprecedented rise in population: while in 1870 its population was not more than 45,000, by 1896 it was about 123,000.

²¹ The Greek "railway decade" began in 1883, during the years of Charilaos Trikoupis' liberal administration. It ended in the late 1890s with the unfortunate Graeco-Turkish war of 1897, the national bankruptcy, and the decisive electoral defeat of Trikoupis and the imposition of International Economic Control from 1898.

capital's rapid economic growth and strengthened its position within and beyond the national borders.

By 1900 Athens was transformed into an elegant capital with a number of new buildings: a palace (1843), a university (1864), a parliament (1871), an academy (1887) as well as newly-built private houses, which gave the city a distinctly European look.²² This monumental architecture put a stamp of grandeur and permanence on the city and its institutions. Furthermore, the successful organization and stewardship of the first Olympics (1896) left a legacy of optimism that modern Athens had become the crossroads, where the glory of the past and contemporary western prosperity could coexist. However, the desired homogeneity of the urban environment eventually eroded as new social structures emerged, resulting in visible urban differentiations.²³ Deep-seated differences based on social and cultural diversity and economic stratification were pronounced.

Already during the 1880s urbanization had created a sharp decline in the standard of living and poverty reached a peak. The emergence of industry in Athens and in Piraeus further contributed to the migratory movement of rural populations to the city. As a result, proletarian populations began to form a substantial part of the urban class structure.²⁴ This emergent working class was excluded from the urban market and neglected by the state. Their misery was exacerbated by unbearable working conditions in the factories and severe housing problems. In Athens subsistence wages went hand in hand with subsistence housing, cramped and poorly constructed, in unserviced locations and industrial areas. The elaborately articulated mansions of the city centre, privately financed with diaspora money,

²² Bastea, op.cit., p. 2.

²³ For a discussion of the public assembly halls and the appropriation of different parts of the city by the different classes, see Matoula Skaltsa, *Κοινωνική ζωή και δημόσιοι χώροι κοινωνικών συναθροίσεων στην Αθήνα τον 19^ο αιώνα*, Thessaloniki, 1983.

²⁴ Maria Korasidou, *Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών και οι Θεραπευτές τους, Φτώχεια και φιλανθρωπία στην ελληνική πρωτεύουσα τον 19^ο αιώνα*, Athens: Kentro Neolinion Erevnon E.I.E., 1995, pp.65-77.

stood in sharp contrast to the gloomy neighbourhoods on the southern boundaries of the city. While the capital's upper class enjoyed an elegant way of life, the lower classes confronted mounting social problems and harsh living conditions, caused by the lack of social-welfare programmes and absence of an adequate urban infrastructure. It seems that overcrowding and misery followed the emergence of modernization and urbanization in Athens.

The capital, a mosaic of contrasts, became the landscape where great expectations of future prosperity were created and frustrated. The complexities of the new urban reality as well as the contradictions of Athenian society become a major preoccupation in the prose fiction of the period under discussion. A considerable number of texts (devoted to the life of the capital), grouped under the label *Αθηναιογραφία*,²⁵ propose a more community-based approach to society and its problems.²⁶ While the emphasis on community was no less prominent in the rural “ethografía”, urban writing focused on the way social conditions were changing rather than depicting a static and timeless society. This can be seen in the titles of many of these texts as they take as a point of departure social types, the generic nature of which is often underscored by the use of the definite article (“Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών”, “Οι Φιλόστοργοι”, “Οι παραπονεμένες”, “Οι κουκλοπαντρείς”, “Άνθρωποι και κτήνη”). What unites these texts is the remarkably similar way in which they choose to record the experience of urban reality. Their focus is on social behaviour – usually in public spaces – and on the various behaviours of the city crowds. Furthermore, these narratives reflect the period's preoccupation with the opposition between countryside and city. As

²⁵ The term is introduced by Voutouris in *Ως εις καθρέπτην... προτάσεις και υποθέσεις για την ελληνική πεζογραφία του 19^{ου} αιώνα*, Athens: Nefeli, 1995.

²⁶ Lizi Tsirimokou in *Λογοτεχνία της πόλης* suggests that urban fiction of this period triggers the “democratization” of literature, as the emphasis moves on from the individual to collective experiences.

urbanism distanced people from nature, the urban world began to appear more grotesque and uncanny. The focus is often on subcultures, revealing the social disorder that prevailed in the marginalized areas of the new metropolis.²⁷ The authors share the belief that the dehumanized city is a landscape of degeneration and the source of social evil.

This notion dominates Kondylakis' novel, *Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών*,²⁸ (published in the newspaper *Estia* in serialized form in 1894), the first large-scale novel on life in the capital. As indicated by the title, Kondylakis draws on Hugo's *Les Misérables* and Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* in his efforts to offer a panoramic portrait of Athenian society.²⁹ Using a large cast of characters and several plotlines, the author attempts on the one hand, to comply with the conventions of realism, by depicting the life of all social classes and concentrating on the here and now of urban reality. On the other, Kondylakis seeks to respond to the demands of the expanding Athenian reading public to get a closer acquaintance with urban space.³⁰ By adopting an omniscient point of view and a detached perspective, Kondylakis renders the third-person narrator an acute observer of the various aspects of city life. In this context of urban representation, observation is associated with knowledge: viewing takes the form of reading and understanding the urban and the

²⁷ Dimitris Philiphidis in "Η περιθωριακή Αθήνα στην πρόσφατη λογοτεχνία", *Βιβλιοθήκη* in *Ελευθεροτυπία* newspaper (05/09/2003) relates Kondylakis' *Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών* and Papadiamantis' Athenian short stories to a tradition of urban representation that focuses on the seediest aspects of the capital. Philiphidis suggests that the abundance of prose writings about marginalized Athenians in the twenty-first century constitutes a sort of return to the atmosphere of Hugo's novel (*Les Misérables*), which dominated in nineteenth-century prose fiction about Athens.

²⁸ Scholars who have dealt with the urban prose fiction of the period under discussion link Kondylakis' novel with the tradition of the *Απόκρυφα*. See Voutouris, *Ως εις καθρέπτην*, pp. 174-176 and Gotsi "Υποθέσεις για το εικονογραφημένο μυθιστόρημα του 19^{ου} αιώνα. Η περίπτωση των Αποκρύφων", *Αντί*, vol. 641, 1997, pp. 42-47.

²⁹ Henri Tonnet in "Ο Ιωάννης Κονδυλάκης και ο Eugene Sue (*Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών* και να *Μυστήρια των Παρισίων*)" in *Ο Ιωάννης Κονδυλάκης και το έργο του (1862-1920), Πεπραγμένα του Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου*, Chania: Dimotiki Politistiki Epichirisi Chanion, 1996, pp. 143-153, points out the similarities between Kondylakis' novel and the novels by Hugo and Sue.

³⁰ Georgia Gotsi, Introduction in *Ιωάννης Κονδυλάκης Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών*, Athens: Nefeli, 1999, p. 10-11.

urbanite. The practice of urban exploration in *Οι Αθλιοι των Αθηνών* acquires a sinister feel as the author focuses on a nuanced urban reality that reveals urban dramas.

The novel deals with dire social problems particularly associated with urbanization: it emphasizes the harsher aspects of contemporary life by denouncing the dismal social conditions of the poor and underscoring the corruption and moral disorder of the upper classes. The hostile urban environment threatens the most innocent and defenceless members of society: women and children. Women are presented as exposed to various hazards and children are confronted with the cruelty inherent in an inhospitable and dangerous metropolis.³¹ Kondylakis depicts a degenerate urban space that inevitably affects the individual; the miserable people of the title (“Αθλιοι”) are only partly represented by the unfortunate and helpless protagonists Mariora and Tasos, who struggle to survive in dreadful circumstances. The generic title also encompasses the evil minor characters which abound in the novel. Regardless of their social position, these characters are presented as physically unprepossessing and morally vicious; rotten urban society is seen as dehumanizing individuals, bringing their dark side to the fore.³² Kondylakis implies that the urban world transforms humans into something more like animals. The transition from an agrarian to an urban world created new social forces and, as a result, new types of people.

In this light, the nightmarish quality of city life echoes the naturalistic depictions of the urban landscape in other works of western literature. European naturalists depict the transition from a feudal and agrarian society to one marked by commercial and industrial development in the dimmest colours. Modern man is displaced from the natural

³¹ Angela Kastinaki in *Η φωνή του γενέθλιου τόπου. Μελέτες για την ελληνική πεζογραφία του 20^{ου} αιώνα*, (Athens: Polis, 1997), argues that Kondylakis introduces the theme of the sufferings of defenceless and innocent children to prose fiction. By making an unprotected child his protagonist, he aimed to censure an emerging social problem.

³² Ifigenia Triantou-Kapsomenou, “Αστικός και αγροτικός χώρος στο έργο του Κονδυλάκη: Η διαλεκτική των αντιθέτων” in *Ο Ιωάννης Κονδυλάκης και το έργο του*, pp. 208-225.

environment, has lost contact with his inner self and is distanced from nature, thus gradually acquiring monstrous qualities. The city created a “survival-of-the-unfittest” syndrome, with a bestial upper class and an emotionally exhausted lower class. Although Kondylakis relies on the naturalistic paradigms, the disparagement of the city in *Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών* is to be understood through the prism of the opposition between urban and rural life. The innocence and happiness of the rural life, emphasized at the beginning of the novel, recall the ethnographic texts which privileged the countryside over a restrictive and unhappy city life.

The antithesis between the purity of rural life and the cosmopolitanism of Athens becomes the main subject matter in *Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών*. The story of the heroine, a young girl from the island of Tinos, exemplifies the displacement of the peasantry to an urban *milieu*. Her dreams of a successful and happy marriage in the capital turn to nightmares, as, ignorant of city ways, she confronts the capital’s ‘wildness’. Kondylakis creates a melodramatic world in which good and evil are entirely distinct. Good is identified with the purity of the rural life, while the urban setting is presented as the embodiment of evil. Thus, the representation of Athens in the novel emerges as a site on which the concerns surrounding urbanism are mapped out. At the same time, Kondylakis’ Athens vividly dramatizes the commonly held belief that the roots of the new Greek nation were to be found in the country, far from the degenerative effects of the city.³³

As noted above, many of the urban narratives of the period under discussion treat the theme of the discrepancy between the happiness of rural life and the corruption and greed of city dwellers. These narratives register an anxiety about the repercussions of

³³ From the very beginning of the novel Kondylakis introduces the stereotypical notion that “Οι Έλληνες προτιμώμεν...την εν υπαιθρω ζωήν”, *Ιωάννης Κονδυλάκης Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών* Athens: Nefeli, 1999, p. 49.

modernity as well as highlighting “the marginalization of the frontiersman in an increasingly centralized kingdom where city values were moving out to claim the country”.³⁴ The problems faced by country people in adjusting to city life is vividly depicted in “Η Φλογέρα” (1890) by Michael Mitsakis and in “Το παράπονο του Νεκροθάπτου” (1895) by E.D. Roidis. Both texts articulate, albeit from different perspectives, their heroes’ introduction into an alien and hostile urban environment. Mitsakis’ protagonist is an old man from the mountains of Roumeli who plays folk tunes on his pipe outside the Royal Gardens in central Athens.³⁵ The commotion of the capital is sharply contrasted with the idyllic nature of rural life, which is the subject of the old man’s tunes. The folk tunes he plays on his pipe reflect the protagonist’s nostalgia for his birthplace and his youth in the mountains. By illustrating how the old man becomes a spectacle for passers-by, the author focuses on the hero’s alienation and his displacement in the urban milieu.³⁶ Thus, Mitsakis suggests that the life of villagers more often than not has no urban equivalent, and as a result these migrants find themselves marginalized in urban society. An implicit contrast is drawn between the superficial and foreign modernity of the city and the countryside which is thought to be the repository of Greek culture. Authentic Greek values, embodied by the peasantry, are ironically relegated to the margins of the city.

³⁴ Robert Shannan Peckham, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

³⁵ The theme of a public music performance recurs in “Ο ξεπεσμένος δερβίσης” (1896) by Papadiamantis. In his story the protagonist is a so-called dervish who plays the “νάι” in the cafes around Thisio. Georgia Gotsi explores the self-referentiality of the two narratives: “Όπως οι οργανοπαίχτες των διηγημάτων τους, οι συγγραφείς βρίσκονται εντός του νεωτερικού άστεως αλλά επιθυμούν να υψωθούν μακριά του”, *Η ζωή εν τη πρωτευούση*, p. 359.

³⁶ At the end of the short story the narrator remarks: “Και βλέπων αυτόν, τόσω ξένον προς τον κόσμον, εντός του οποίου ευρίσκεται, τόσω ξένον προς το πλαίσιον όπερ τον περιβάλλει, σου έρχεται δια μιας η ορμή να διασχίσης τον ανθρώπινον συρφετόν, να τον αρπάξης καθώς κάθεται με την φλογέραν του και την καπότα του, να τον απαγάγης εν στιγμή, μακράν των αμαζών και των τραίνων και των νοικοκυραίων και των λιμοκοντόρων και των δεσποινίδων και των παγωνίων, εις κανένα βουνόν της Ρούμελης...”, Μιχαήλ Μητσάκης *Το έργο του Μιχαήλ Peranthis* (ed.), Athens: Estia, 1956, p. 199.

In “Το παράπονο του Νεκροθάπτου” the distinction between the happiness and self-sufficiency of rural life and the poverty and “effeteness” of the capital becomes clear-cut and explicit. Roidis refashions the seediest aspects of urbanization. By focusing on the sufferings of the internal migrants, the author castigates the dreadful living conditions of the poor in the bleak neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the city. The protagonist of the short story leaves the island of Syros and moves to the capital, prompted by a vision of wealth and prosperity. But his dreams of a better future collapse, as he finds himself marginalized in Athens, where he ends up as a gravedigger. The narrator eloquently portrays the differences between the city and the country: the protagonist recalls his garden on the island which stands in sharp contrast to the graveyard. But in “Το παράπονο του Νεκροθάπτου” the depiction of the rural landscape goes far beyond idyllic reminiscences of the past; the distinction between the island and the capital underlines the predicament of the present and further reinforces the repercussions of modernization for the internal migrants in the capital. Roidis points out that by moving to the city country people suffer economic, social and mental decline.³⁷ The protagonist exemplifies the swelling urban population which had hoped for a better life in the capital only to find these expectations thwarted. Thus, Roidis broadens his thematic scope to encompass the problems of the lower social strata in Athens, caused by the lack of social-welfare programmes and the absence of an adequate urban infrastructure.

Harsh criticism levelled against a slew of problems linked with urbanization and the problematic infrastructure of the Greek kingdom in general emerges as the main subject matter of Roidis’ various narratives about Athens. Roidis, a well-educated cosmopolitan,

³⁷ The protagonist acknowledges with unconcealed bitterness that within the urban realm “Ο πρώτος της Σύρας λεβέντης έγινα χαμάλης! [...] Από νοικοκύρης, νεκροθάπτης. Άσχημη αλλαξιά!” Emmanuel Roidis, “Το Παράπονο του Νεκροθάπτου”, *Άπαντα*, Alkis Angelou (ed.), vol. 5, pp. 88 and 89.

essentially visualized the equalization of the Greek capital with a civilized Western European metropolis. But, faced with the political inertia and lack of public order in Athens, the young idealist became a caustic journalist and a satirical prose writer.³⁸ In “Αθηναϊκοί Περίπατοι” (1896), a series of snapshots of Athenian public spaces coupled with impressions of the urban landscape, the author laments the indecorous and feculent appearance of the city. Wandering in the working-class areas on the edge of the city, the narrator observes that, though rich in monuments, mansions and palaces, nineteenth-century Athens is characterized by unplanned development and backward technical infrastructure.

Roidis’ writings about Athens contain powerful social criticism of aspects of the city which were unsightly and unpleasant: transport and lighting were inadequate and accessible only to higher-income groups. Water supply, sewage and drainage systems were limited to the central areas and were absent from the petit-bourgeois neighbourhoods. This was of little consequence for the affluent quarters, but in the popular neighbourhoods it threatened peoples’ lives. Thus the author expresses his concerns about public health: dusty roads, dirty streets and a poor sewage system contributed to an increase in epidemics and deaths among the poor.³⁹ For Roidis, however, censuring the problems that went hand in hand with urbanization did not mean rejecting the idea of the city. Rather, the capital which Roidis ideated is along the lines of western capitals.

³⁸ Athena Georganta, *Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης. Η πορεία προς την Πάπισσα Ιωάννα*, Athens: Istos, 1993, pp. 203-261.

³⁹ “Ότω και οι κάτοικοι των Αθηνών μόνον εις εκτάκτους περιστάσεις πρέπει ν’ αναπνέουν άοσμον αέρα, να μη γλιστρούν εις αίματα και να μη σκοντάπτουν εις σάπια πορτοκάλια και λείψανα γατών και ορνίθων;” And “Σοφός καθηγητής πανεπιστημίου μας μου έλεγε προ τινων μηνών, ότι εις μόνην την περισσοτέραν ακαθαρσίαν του Γαζοχωρίου, της Αγίας Τριάδος και εν γένει των κάτω μαχαλάδων, πρέπει ν’ αποδοθή ο μεγαλύτερος αριθμός των προώρων θανάτων.” Emmanuel Roidis, “Αθηναϊκοί Περίπατοι Γ’”, *Άπαντα*, vol. 5, pp. 156-158.

In the same vein, Michael Mitsakis sees the newly-founded nation as oscillating between its Ottoman past and modernization and envisages the country's westernization. But unlike Roidis, who mainly describes the seedy aspects of urban life, Mitsakis endeavours to present Athenian society in its entirety. Mitsakis' point of departure is the keen observation that the capital's reality leads to a knowledge of the contours of the nation's identity.⁴⁰ His "Αθηναϊκές Σελίδες"⁴¹ (Athenian Pages) present sketches of the capital's public life coupled with impressions of a landscape or a scene and focus on the various "moeurs" of the city crowds. Through his depiction of the complexity of the urban reality, the author records the fluid character of Greek society in a time of transition.⁴² Thus Mitsakis' "Αθηναϊκές Σελίδες" concentrate on the disturbing effects of the Athenian urban space marked by profound upheaval. The diversity of the city locales, paired together with the cultural and social incongruities characterizing its population, constitute a representative sample of the country's controversies and contradictions.

This particular narrative follows the tradition of the European *flâneur*:⁴³ a narrated perambulation within a city aiming at informing the reader of the peculiarities and sights of well-known and lesser-known places.⁴⁴ Strolling around a city is a multifaceted activity. The narrator-*flâneur* wanders the city's streets in an attempt to explore the city and to

⁴⁰ Georgia Gotsi, *Η ζωή εν τη πρωτεύουση*, p. 291-92.

⁴¹ The denotation *Αθηναϊκές Σελίδες* appears as a title or a subtitle in most of Mitsakis' manuscripts and texts published in the contemporary press.

⁴² "Τον κυκεώνα, ον παριστά παρ' ημιν πολιτεία άμα και κοινωνία, του εθνικού οικοδομήματος το ασυμπαγές έτι και ακατάρτιστον, ουδαμού θα ηδύνατο τις να εύρη ούτω προφανώς εικονιζόμενον όσω εις την incoherence των βιοτικών έξεων και φαινομένων", Michael Mitsakis, "Η ζωή εις την πρωτεύουσαν", (1887) in *Το έργο του*, pp. 66-67.

⁴³ According to Robert Alter, "the flâneur is the idling pedestrian, the curious, perhaps disinterested, purposeless observer of teeming urban variety, the spectator connoisseur", Robert Alter, "Flaubert, The Demise of the Spectator" in *Imagined cities. Urban Experience and the Language of the Novel*, United States of America: Yale University Press, 2005, p. 9.

⁴⁴ Georgia Gotsi in "Narratives in Perambulation: Poe's 'The Man of the Crowd' and Mitsakis' 'Αυτόχειρ'," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, no. 20, 1996, pp. 35-55, explores how Mitsakis articulates the practice of urban exploration by adopting the *flâneur* technique.

recapture scenes of everyday urban life, the true meaning of which the inattentive person cannot “see”. Mitsakis adopts the perspective of the curious *flâneur*, aspiring to refashion the turbulent Athenian society while at the same time commenting on the ever-changing urban world. The narrator engages with the bustling life of the urban centre, either as a detached spectator of the crowd or as part of it, hoping to interpret its multifarious signification. The author’s observations of the urban space – whether inner and private or outer and public – indicate visible differentiations: life in the capital is a mixture of contrasting realities. In other words, Mitsakis conceptualizes the capital as a visual object, surrounded by mystery, which the narrator-*flâneur* seeks to penetrate.

The common denominator in these authors’ different approaches to the city is their attempt to endow the city with identity by depicting what they consider to be the characteristic human types and costumes of the urban landscape. The authors endeavour to circumscribe the multifaceted urban reality and turn the city into a conveniently shaped and accessible object. Their panoramic survey aims not only to convey urban reality, but also to portray its complexities. Unlike the other authors, who present Athens in its entirety, Papadiamantis, who dedicated a significant part of his literary output to the Greek capital, offers a more partial representation of the capital. Paradoxically, Papadiamantis leaves out of his observations the profound economic, technological, and architectural changes that transformed the capital’s landscape. The urban space that he chooses to portray in his Athenian short stories emerges as an enclosed and oppressive landscape, where poverty, misery, insularity and depression reign.

Critics and scholars who have dealt with Papadiamantis’ literary output tend to agree that his Athenian short stories constitute a coherent though distinctive corpus within

the author's literary output.⁴⁵ That Papadiamantis turned to the urban environment as a canvas for his prose writing was in part due to the demand from the expanded urban reading public for stories concerning the urban space. But it was mostly due to the author's own desire to engage with the social issues that accompanied the emergence of modernization and urbanization in Athens. Papadiamantis seems to have realized that the consolidation of a new urban reality was bound to be surrounded by the intensification of social problems. The threatening urban and modernizing trends are reflected in the structure of the texts: the Athenian stories do not narrate a series of events in a sequence of cause and effect but present juxtapositions of characters or incidents that the author wishes to highlight. Similarly, the heroes are not individuals but generic characters who represent particular patterns of behaviour.

The main way in which Papadiamantis' descriptions differ from the modes of urban representation that the other urban prose writers of that period employed, is that he constantly focuses on the marginal, neglected areas on the edge of the city. He leaves out of his observations the life of the upper class and its various public activities, choosing instead to dramatize the dismal living conditions of the poor. In the Athenian stories one can hardly detect a single reference to the cosmopolitan and elegant portrait of the capital that recurs in other urban sketches of the period under discussion. I would suggest that this preference for the unsightly aspects of city life, the victims and the underdogs, was a conscious one; Papadiamantis, who viewed the capital through the prism of the internal migrant, keenly

⁴⁵ Tellos Agras was the first critic to observe that Papadiamantis' oeuvre could be divided into two main categories: the Skiathos and the Athenian short stories. (Tellos Agras, op. cit., p.47). In 1960, Manolis Chalvatzakis dedicated a section of his book entitled *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης μέσα από το έργο του* to Papadiamantis' Athenian short stories. (Manolis Chalvatzakis, *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης μέσα από το έργο του*, Alexandria, 1960). In 1992 Alexandros Kotzias published an extended study on the Athenian short stories. (Alexandros Kotzias, op. cit.). The importance of this body of writings and their association with the new urban reality in Greece are demonstrated in more recent studies by Tsirimokou, Voutouris and Gotsi.

conscious of the problems that urban life entails, foregrounds urban cruelty and injustices. He writes about the conflicts and turmoil that emerge and questions the prosperity that urbanization purports to offer by accentuating the difficulties that people face therein. Although Papadiamantis does not adopt the perspective of a social rebel in his Athenian stories, one can trace an implicit denunciation of certain social phenomena (poverty, extreme hardship, alienation, moral disorder) that go hand in hand with urban life. His harsh criticism of the social reality of his time and his deep scepticism about the urban model of life constitute the framework within which the author weaves his Athenian stories.

The distinction between rural and urban life is never placed at the centre of the Athenian stories. These narratives actualize the immediate experience of the present to the point where they tend to erase all nostalgic recall of the unadulterated rural life. It is important to note that during the first decade of the twentieth century when the preoccupation with idyllic country themes was beginning to fade, the production of Athenian stories increases.⁴⁶ In this respect, the absence of idyllic descriptions of the landscape and the realistic depictions of the everyday life of the poor are potentially connected with the gloomy atmosphere of the urban environment that often acquires tragic import.

Nevertheless in the Athenian stories an implicit antithesis between the urban and the rural community, the past and the present is reflected in the way the urban space is perceived and depicted. The urban landscape is presented as a fragmented and enclosed space that brings about a sense of suffocation and intensifies insecurity. On the other hand in the Skiathos stories the rural environment is equated with openness, and this seems to

⁴⁶ Georgia Farinou Malamatari, “Η ειδυλλιακή διάσταση στο Παπαδιαμάντη” in *Η αδιάπρωτη μαγεία, Παπαδιαμάντης 1991, ένα αφιέρωμα*, Athens: Idrima Goulandri-Chorn, 1991, pp. 68-69.

contribute to a sense of familiarity and security reinforcing the community's coherence.⁴⁷ By contrast, in the Athenian stories the hostile urban environment shatters the notion of community and results in a sense of alienation.

The latent disparity between the urban and the rural realm, which recurs in the Athenian stories, is to be understood as the antithesis between the gloomy present and the peaceful past of the author's childhood in Skiathos. But aside from expressing the author's nostalgia, this antithesis points to the realization of the establishment of a new reality the consequences of which are far from beneficial. It is worth noting that in a number of Papadiamantis' Skiathos short stories published in the same period, the antithesis between nature and culture becomes prominent.⁴⁸

While in the Skiathos stories comparatively few scenes take place indoors and the characters are often depicted in the open air, the preeminent setting for the Athenian stories appears to be the enclosed space of a house or a courtyard. But instead of providing snugness, the urban domicile imprisons its dwellers and becomes a place of grief and strife. The remote neighbourhoods where Papadiamantis places his Athenian heroes serve as a boundary, excluding its inhabitants from the outer urban world and public activities.

The Athenian stories focus, almost exclusively, on people on the fringes of society in their disorienting encounter with modernity and their struggle with morality. Papadiamantis' preference, as has often been remarked, is for the neglected and lowly, for those who find themselves without the comfort and security afforded by a happy family and adequate means. This is fully materialized in the Athenian short stories. Papadiamantis

⁴⁷ For a discussion of the textualization of the urban and rural space in the urban prose fiction of that period see Tsirimokou's study: *Λογοτεχνία της πόλης*, pp. 24 onwards.

⁴⁸ For example in the short story "Όνειρο στο κύμα" (1900) the protagonist, working as a lawyer in Athens, expresses his nostalgia for his native island and his lost innocence and laments his present life in a corrupt society. Similarly, in "Όλόγυρα στη λίμνη" (1892) the anonymous protagonist is depicted as a slave to "civilization", while his playmate is presented as a freeborn child of nature.

implies that the urban environment and anti-social and deviant behaviour are interrelated. He points up the animosities in human relations fostered by the new industrial urban space and the human suffering which results from economic difficulties. Poverty appears to be related to the prevalent social problems imprinted in his stories: the ending of marriage, domestic violence, alcoholism, gambling and the bitter hatred that dominates human relations.

The city and the world that it represents in Papadiamantis' fiction acquire a sinister meaning from the fact that it was the trigger for the transition from a small community to society at large. The representation of the city and the emphasis on its darkest sides are potentially connected with the emergence of a disorienting world. Thus, in Papadiamantis' case the emphasis on the gloomy and tenebrous atmosphere of the city and the implicit references to a society in violent transition does not necessarily indicate the author's rejection of modernity. On the contrary, it points to the necessity for re-evaluating the notion of modernity rather than defending or preserving a lost world.

This chapter has sought to show how the newly established urban reality was portrayed in Greek prose fiction at the end of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century. Products of a mainly urban press, the urban narratives were meant both to inform and entertain, as well as to help the readers come to terms with disturbing urban realities. The urban world which urban prose writing portrays appears to some extent ambivalent. It projects the aspirations of the modern Greek nation to alignment with Western civilization while at the same time registering deep scepticism about the problems urbanization engenders. Despite thematic and stylistic differences, the urban literary production of this period seems to converge in the critical representation of the capital. One can argue that three different trends in urban representation were developed, which in turn

each reflect different ideological stances. Thus, the denunciation of the city is expressed through a juxtaposition of the capital's glorious past and its diminished present, the antithesis between the city and the country and the association of the urban space with social evil.

Unlike the other urban prose writers who presented the city in its entirety, Papadiamantis depicts the marginalized urban world that he himself inhabits. Papadiamantis views Athens from the same angle as fellow Athenians of the lower classes and internal migrants, who found themselves alienated within the urban context. Indeed, to a certain extent, the author tends to identify with his heroes, while at the same time maintaining an ironic distance from them.⁴⁹ In this way, the Athenian short stories actualize the author's experience in the city and at the same time his critical stance towards the urban social context. It is to that particular stance that the following chapter now turns.

⁴⁹ Guy Saunier in "Μερικές μεθοδολογικές παρατηρήσεις και προτάσεις για τη μελέτη του Παπαδιαμάντη", *Διαβάζω*, no. 165, 1987, pp. 34-42, suggests that "[...] Ο Παπαδιαμάντης μοιάζει όχι να περιγράφει απ' έξω σκηνές της λαϊκής ζωής, παρά να κρίνει από μέσα τα δράματα μιας κοινωνίας της οποίας είναι μέλος [...] και στις δύο περιπτώσεις, της παραδοσιακής κοινωνίας και των κατώτερων στρωμάτων της καινούριας, ο Παπαδιαμάντης εμφανίζεται σαν αναπόσπαστο μέλος του συνόλου και σαν από μέσα μάρτυρας", p. 40.

It is interesting to note that Angeliki Taligarou in "Μια προσέγγιση στα αθηναϊκά διηγήματα του Αλέξανδρου Παπαδιαμάντη", *Νέα Πορεία*, no. 533-35/227, 1999, pp.199-213, argues that Papadiamantis remains aloof from the world that he describes: "Τα αθηναϊκά διηγήματα δεν έχουν τον χαρακτήρα των σκιαθίτικων [...] είναι φανερό η έλλειψη συμμετοχής του συγγραφέα στα τεκταινόμενα [...] αλλά κυρίως παρατηρούμε έλλειψη συναισθηματικής σύμπλευσης και ταύτισης με τη βιοθεωρία και τον ψυχισμό των ηρώων του. Σ' αυτά τα διηγήματα ο Παπαδιαμάντης φαίνεται να περιγράφει ένα κόσμο που δεν καταλαβαίνει, ένα κόσμο στον οποίο δεν ανήκει" p. 201.

CHAPTER II

THE ATHENIAN STORIES: PAPADIAMANTIS' CRITICAL STANCE TOWARDS THE URBAN SOCIETY

The Athenian short stories deal almost exclusively with the cruel urban reality confronting the lower classes in the capital. Papadiamantis depicts the living conditions prevailing in the shanty towns of Athens in the darkest colours. The urban landscape emerges as a disoriented world which constrains the individual, precludes intimate human relations, values money above all else and gradually leads to corruption and immorality. Papadiamantis' encounter with the increasingly depraved reality of the capital at the beginning of the twentieth century marks a turning point in his fiction: he gradually abandons the idyllic longing for a *locus amoenus* and in realistic vein focuses on the predicaments of the present.¹ But, while in the Skiathos stories the author portrays life as a kaleidoscope, allowing bright images to form, Athens seems to banish optimism and hope. Happiness appears to be excluded from the capital and by extension from these narratives about the capital. Even in the case of an initially “καλόν και αγαπημένον ανδρόγυνον”² the image of conjugal felicity is violently disrupted with tragic consequences for the family.

¹ On the predominance of the present in Papadiamantis' 20th-century fiction Farinou-Malamatari observes: “Είναι, πάντως, ενδιαφέρον ότι κατά τον 20ό αιώνα η ‘Μούσα του Παπαδιαμάντη’, σε επαφή με μια ολοένα και σκληρότερη εξωτερική πραγματικότητα [...] αποβάλλει αρκετή από τη ‘νοσταλγία’ της Λαλιώς και εφοδιάζεται με τον ρεαλισμό της: δεν ζει ‘στο όνειρο της πατρίδας πέρα’, αλλά ζει παρατηρώντας- χωρίς ιδιαίτερη, βέβαια, συμπάθεια- τη μικρογειτονιά της Αθήνας και της Σκιάθου.”, “Η ειδυλλιακή διάσταση στον Παπαδιαμάντη”, *op.cit.*, p. 79.

² Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το τυφλό σοκάκι”, in *Απαντα* vol. 4, p. 115.

Papadiamantis presents all human afflictions as the result of a hostile urban *milieu* and the appalling social circumstances it entails.

In this chapter I focus on the urban social context presented in the Athenian stories. By providing a close reading of these texts I propose to highlight all the elements which point up the author's critical representation of the capital. Aside from recording the tribulations and the turmoil of the emerging world in Greece, Papadiamantis displays his concerns about some disturbing social phenomena. On the one hand, the author deplors the sufferings of the most vulnerable members of society who struggle to survive in dire circumstances. On the other, he expresses deep scepticism about the impersonal nature of society and the indifference that dominates human relations in the capital and emphasizes the moral decline. Similarly, Papadiamantis does not hesitate to touch on the moral degeneration of the priesthood.

Although Papadiamantis does not adopt the perspective of a social rebel, as he does not suggest radical reform of the flawed social structures, implicit denunciation of the above-mentioned phenomena that seem to dominate the capital's life at the dawn of the twentieth century is evident. Similarly, Papadiamantis does not view Athens from the point of view of a journalist³ seeking to chronicle developments in the urban infrastructure. This largely explains the lack of references to the profound economic and structural changes taking place in the capital at the end of the nineteenth century. In my opinion, the Athenian stories are the author's response to the new reality as he perceived it, in a capital, where problems proliferated faster than solutions could be found.

³ Robert Alter notes that in many cases depicting the urban landscape in the 19th-century took the form of a reportage as some writers imagined "their activity as a kind of uniquely privileged form of reportage about the contemporary world", Robert Alter, *op. cit.* p. x. This journalistic form, as my first chapter has shown, has been adopted to some extent by all the other urban prose writers.

A theme that occurs and recurs in the Athenian stories is the impoverished misery of the urban slums where the hardships were at their most extreme. As noted in the previous chapter, Papadiamantis sets the plots of these stories in the neglected neighbourhoods on the outer edge of the city, “κατά την δυτικήν εσχαιά της πόλεως”⁴ and depicts their abject squalor in the darkest colours. His preference for the most wretched of urban dwellers was partly the result of the correspondence between the world he describes and his personal experience in that world.⁵ Indeed, to a certain extent, Papadiamantis’ concentration on the blighted urban areas and the emphasis on their poverty echo his own economic deprivation in the capital and the hardships he experienced there.⁶ Without challenging the importance of the author’s personal background in the formation of his fictional world, I would argue that this preference mainly reflects his own distressing experience of modernization and his scepticism about the social dramas that urbanization can engender.

The shabby, dimly lit houses and the impoverished surroundings of the courtyards all suggest the bleakness of poverty and point to the social marginalization of their inhabitants: “Τα άλλα οικήματα, έξ επτά δωμάτια χαμόγεια, εις γραμμίν, όλα παμπάλαια,

⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!”, in *Άπαντα* vol. 3, p. 90.

⁵ The autobiographical element in Papadiamantis’ fiction has been acknowledged by a number of critics (for a detailed selection of the critical approaches to Papadiamantis’ oeuvre see G. Farinou-Malamatary (ed.) *Εισαγωγή στην Πεζογραφία του Παπαδιαμάντη*, Heraklion: University of Crete Publications, 2005). It was first extensively explored by Moullas (op. cit.). As far as the Athenian short stories are concerned, it has been argued that the narrator expresses his sympathy for the humble characters because he feels that he himself is also a part of the neglected and the hard-pressed urban dwellers. See for instance how Thanasis Papathanasoulou explains Papadiamantis’ preference for the petit-bourgeois: “Με τον φτωχόκοσμο που ζει και κινείται στη ‘νέα Βαβυλώνα’, στην ‘πόλιν της δουλοπαροικίας και των πλουτοκρατών’, ο Παπαδιαμάντης αισθάνεται πως είναι δεμένος με δεσμούς πνεύματος και ψυχικής όσμωσης”, “Ανθρωπογεωγραφία του άστεως στα Αθηναϊκά διηγήματα του Παπαδιαμάντη” in Αλέξανδρος Παπαδιαμάντης *Αθηναϊκά Διηγήματα*, (Athens: Filipotis, 2007), p. 15. Similarly, Mari Theothosopoulou in *Μετ’ έρωτος και στοργής, κείμενα για τον Παπαδιαμάντη*, (Athens: Nefeli, 2001), observes that in his Athenian short stories Papadiamantis “επιλέγει την οπτική του συμπάσχοντος”, p. 53.

⁶ Observe how Papadiamantis depicts his living conditions in the capital in one of his letters to his father: “Με 6 χιλ. δραχμιάς διειτηρήθην εγώ εις τας Αθήνας επί 10 έτη, πότε νηστικός και πότε χορτάτος. Αυτή είναι η αλήθεια. Τον ένα μήνα είχον μιαν προγύμνασιν, τον άλλον δεν είχα. Συνεχής τις και μόνιμος εργασία δεν ευρέθη δι’ εμέ. Όσάκις τυχόν μοι εμειδία επ’ ολίγον μια ελπίς, η σκληρή τύχη μοι την αφήρπαζε. Ό,τι επεχείρησα να κάμω, εμπροστά ευρέθη. Ατυχία, παντού ατυχία.”, in Αλέξανδρος Παπαδιαμάντης, *Αλληλογραφία*, Emmanuel Moschonas (ed.), (Athens: Odysseas, 1981), p. 109.

τρώγλαι, άλλα χωρίς παράθυρα, όλα σχεδόν με σαθρούς τους τοίχους, κατείχοντο από διαφόρους [...] Η μάνδρα με τα πενιχρά οικήματα εκείτο εις τινα πάροδον, ανάμεσα στου Ψυρρή και στου Τάτση”.⁷ In many of the Athenian stories the afflictions of urban life are presented as a kind of foreground. Economic oppression and weariness dominate the urban society that Papadiamantis depicts; his heroes’ lives become a constant struggle for survival, a struggle that is almost unbearably grim. In “Τα Χριστούγεννα του Τεμπέλη” (1896) the main character, exhausted by the ordeals of his life, exclaims with evident bitterness: “Εμένα η φαμίλια μου δουλεύει, εγώ δουλεύω, ο γυιός μου δουλεύει, το κορίτσι πάει στην μοδίστρα. Και μ’ όλα αυτά, δεν μπορούμε ακόμα να βγάλουμε τα νοίκια της κυρά-Στρατίνας. Δουλεύουμε για τη σπιτονοικοκυρά, δουλεύουμε για τον μπακάλη, για τον μανάβη, για τον έμπορο”.⁸ What the narrator implies here is that the living conditions in the city accelerate the process of impoverishment and exacerbate the destitution of the poor.

While Papadiamantis does not adopt Roidis’ harsh polemic against the absence of social welfare, he does nevertheless display a deep scepticism about an urban society which turns its back on its most defenceless members. In “Οι Παραπονεμένες” (1899) the narrator acknowledges that “πολλά πλάσματα, κατοικούντα εις τας συνοικίας τας σκοτεινάς, εις τας ανηλίους τρώγλας - πλάσματα παραπονεμένα, εξ’ ατυχιών, εξ ελλείψεων πολλών”⁹ are abandoned to the cruelty of the laws of the jungle and barely manage to survive in the urban landscape. In other words, Papadiamantis presents the indigenous populations of the capital as the victims of a dehumanized social system: “Εως πότε όλη αυτή η αυστηρότης των ‘αρμοδίων’ θα διεκδικήται και θα ξεθυμαίνει εις βάρος των πτωχών

⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Γείτονας με το Λαγούτο”, in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 293.

⁸ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Τα Χριστούγεννα του Τεμπέλη”, *op.cit.* p. 160.

⁹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Οι Παραπονεμένες” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 194.

και των ταπεινών;”.¹⁰ Faced with the indifference of an unjust society, the proletariat are exposed to various hazards that exacerbate their difficulties. Thus, economic deprivation intensifies uncertainty, threatens personal dignity and inevitably leads to despair.

Indeed, in “Ο Αυτοκτόνος” (1954)¹¹ Papadiamantis indicates that appalling living conditions are the main source of despair. The story shows how extreme poverty and disgrace drive the main character to desperation. The author depicts the circumstances that made the hero’s decision to commit suicide inevitable and highlights the hardship he confronts: “Ήτο λοιπόν άστεγος; Είχε δωμάτιον, αλλά που ετόλμα ο πτωχός να εισέλθη από την σπιτονοικοκυράν του. Εχρεώσται τρία ενοίκια.[...] αφήρει τα χαλασμένα και σχισμένα πέδιλά του και κρατών αυτά με την αριστεράν, επάτει με τες κάλτσες, ενέβαλλε το κλείθρον με απείρους προφυλάξεις [...]. Άνοιγε την θύραν έσωθεν, δεν ήναπτε το φως, δεν είχεν άλλως είκοσι λεπτά δια ν’ αγοράση κηρίον, δεν εξενδύνετο, ελαφροκοιμάτο [...] και ηγείρετο [...] επάτει ως λαμπάς, έτρεμεν ως κηρίον (εκ... φόβου... μήπως... αφυπνισθή) η σπιτονοικοκυρά του, και τα χαράματα (ως κλέπτης) έφευγε. [...] Ο Σακελλάριος εντρέπετο, εθύμωνεν, εντρέπετο, παρεκάλει, και τα ενοίκια δεν επληρώνοντο ποτέ”.¹² The tragic tenor of the narrative reveals the extremes of human vulnerability within the city. The hero’s drama is further intensified by the fact that his reluctance to die is attributable to his unwillingness to be a burden to others: “Δεν κατεδέγετο τώρα που έζη ακόμα, να δώση

¹⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Χωρίς στεφάνι” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 133.

¹¹ In December 1891 the newspaper *Εφημερίς* announced the publication of the short story “Ο Αυτοκτόνος”. The text did not ultimately appear in the newspaper and was first published in 1954 by Giorgos Valetas who assumed that Papadiamantis had not published it “γιατί οι χριστιανικές αντιλήψεις του συγγραφέα τον εμπόδισαν να διαπραγματευθή ένα τόσο αντιθρησκευτικό θέμα, όπως η αυτοκτονία.”, in Αλέξανδρου Παπαδιαμάντη, *Τα Άπαντα*, (ed.) Giorgos Valetas, vol. 5, p. 623.

Lizy Tsirimokou observes that Papadiamantis deals with suicide in a number of his short stories. As far as “Ο Αυτοκτόνος” is concerned, Tsirimokou argues that the author’s main source of inspiration was Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* which Papadiamantis had translated in 1889, Lizy Tsirimokou, “Το φάσμα της αυτοχειρίας” in *Εσωτερική Ταχύτητα Δοκίμια για τη λογοτεχνία*, Athens: Agra, 2000, pp. 254-259.

¹² Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Αυτοκτόνος” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 631.

ενόχλησιν εις τον κόσμον μετά θάνατον. ‘Προς τι να τους βαρύνω, τους ανθρώπους;’ Είπεν. ‘Αρκεί, ότι τους εβάρυνα ζωντανός’.¹³

In a number of his Athenian texts the author underscores the fact that the urban *milieu* victimizes its most vulnerable members, namely women and children.¹⁴ These narratives dramatize the sufferings of abandoned women and orphans and their plight in adverse circumstances. As we shall see in the next chapter, the author censures men’s inability to ensure the welfare of their family, due to laziness or drink: “[...] η γυνή υπέφερε μεγάλως, καθότι ο μάστρο- Αχιλλέας πολύ ολίγα λεπτά έφερνε, ως φαίνεται, στο σπίτι [...] Η γυνή εξήγησε με ταχείας θερμάς λέξεις ότι είχε τρομεράν ανάγκην από χρήματα, και κατέκρινε τον σύζυγόν της επί ασωτία και αστοργία”¹⁵.

The same theme, invested with a profound sense of solidarity with the hard-pressed heroes, becomes the subject of “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!” (1895). The author, prompted by a single event, dramatizes a family tragedy and simultaneously incorporates his critical comments on some disturbing social phenomena.¹⁶ Papadiamantis displays a deep sensitivity towards the victims of society and brings to the fore women’s economic instability and social marginalization and the severe ordeals undergone by innocent children. The father of the family “εννοείται ότι διήρχετο εν κραιπάλη από το Σάββατον εσπέρας έως την Δευτέραν πρωί”, while the mother “ήτο φιλεργός. Είχε ραπτικήν μηχανήν και [...] εκέρδιζεν ούτω έν τάλληρον την εβδομάδα, το οποίον [...] μόλις ήρκει προς συντήρησιν της οικογενείας”.¹⁷ When the father eventually abandons the family his

¹³ Ibid. p. 632.

¹⁴ See for instance, “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!” (1895), “Οι Παραπονεμένες” (1899), “Το θαύμα της Καισαριανής” (1901), “Η Χολεριασμένη”, “Οι Δύο δράκοι”(1906).

¹⁵ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Οι Δύο δράκοι”, in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 105.

¹⁶ Nikitas Parisis, *Αλέξανδρος Παπαδιαμάντης Τρία Διηγήματα: Το μυρολόγι της φώκιας· Όνειρο στο κύμα· Πατέρα στο σπίτι· Αναζήτηση της αφηγηματικής λογικής*, Athens: Metehmio, 2001, pp. 167-195.

¹⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 91.

unfortunate wife and children can hardly survive: “έμεινε χωρίς άρτον εις το ερμάρι και χωρίς φωτιάν εις την εστίαν, χωρίς φόρεμα, χωρίς στρωμνήν, χωρίς σκέπασμα, χωρίς χύτραν και χωρίς στάμναν· και χωρίς ραπτικήν μηχανήν”.¹⁸ In the concluding lines of the story the narrator implicitly castigates human indifference in the impersonal urban society: “Και το τρίτον παιδίον [...] ήρχετο εις το παντοπωλείον, και εξήτει από τον μικρόν μπακάλην, όστις ήτο ακριβής στα σταθμά, αλλά δεν ενόει από ελεημοσύνην, ήρχετο και εξήτει να του στάξη ‘μια σταξιά λάδι στο γυαλί’, από το οποίον θα ήτο άξιον να στάξη μιαν σταγόνα νερού εις πολλών πλουσίων χείλη, εις τον άλλον κόσμον”.¹⁹

In some cases the author’s subtle criticisms become a trenchant indictment of the social conditions of the urban space that oppress its most vulnerable inhabitants. In “Οι Κουκλοπαντρείές” (1903) Polytimi, one of the people living in the courtyard, rebels against the landlord, who personifies the oppressive power in the city: “Όχι, πώς έχουν κάτι παλιοκοτέτσια εκεί, που δεν είναι χειρότερα από αχούρια, και σε βρίσκουν στην ανάγκη, και σε πνίγουν, και σου ζητούν δεκατρείς και δεκαπέντε δραχμές νοίκι! Πού το ηύραν γραμμένο; Μ’ αυτά και μ’ αυτά πλουτούν αυτοί, με του φτωχού τον ιδρώτα, οι αιματοφάγοι”.²⁰ In the same text the author implies that, while the urban social context entails strict moral codes, implementing them becomes in effect impossible. Thus, women are exposed to the cruelty of a society in which the dangers of prostitution become very real:²¹ “Κι επιτέλους αυτή δεν έχει λεπτά να πληρώση. Την βλέπει η κυρα-Ζαφείραινα πως ξενοδουλεύει και ζη. [...] Από πού να πληρώση τόσο νοίκι; Και τι να φάη; Με μια δραχμή

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 91.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 94.

²⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Κουκλοπαντρείές” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, pp. 570.

²¹ The theme of prostitution becomes the main subject of “Το Ιδιόκτητο” (1925), (Vol. 4, pp. 569-572). The author criticizes the superficiality of the moral principles that the neighbours of “Το Ιδιόκτητο” seem to embrace: “Όλη αυτή η εθιμοτυπία θα ηδύνατο και να λείψη, αλλ’ εκρίνετο αναγκαία, ως φαίνεται. Η υποκρισία εσέβετο την φωλέαν της, ας ήτο κοπρισμένη. Η σεμνοτυφία ηγάπα να διακωμωδή αυτή εαυτόν” p. 570.

την ημέρα που μπορεί μια να βγάλει με το εργόχειρο... όταν έχει δουλειά· [...] Αυτοί να όψωνται! Τους βγάζουν την ψυχή ανάποδα, κι ύστερα αγανακτούν τάχα γιατί δεν τις βλέπουν να κάνουν φρόνιμα!... Αυτοί τις σπρώχνουν να γίνονται άτιμες!”²²

As indicated by the above quotation, extreme hardship and dehumanization are likely to be interrelated. The author suggests that economic oppression leads to moral degradation and shatters human attachment. “Ο γάρ θάνατός σου, η ζωή μου”²³ becomes a maxim which runs through human relations within the urban context. Poverty, aside from creating oppressive living conditions, appears to dissolve the coordinates which establish social structures based on friendship and cooperation. The close proximity in the run-down neighbourhoods, rather than evoking a sense of solidarity and compassion, fosters animosity against one’s fellows in misfortune. If the courtyard functions as a microcosm of society, Papadiamantis implies that interpersonal disconnectedness dominates the wider urban social context.

Even the most adverse living conditions or human pain, instead of inspiring generosity and compassion, leave the urban dwellers untouched. In “Η Χολεριασμένη” (1901) the lack of sympathy for the heroine’s illness from both her husband and her neighbours becomes emblematic: “Σαν μ’ έπιασαν οι εμετοί και τα άλλα συμπτώματα, Θεός να φυλάη - μακρυνά από σας - ο Λευθήρης, αυτός που βλέπεις, μ’ απαράτησε κι’ έγινε άφαντος. Πέρασαν πολλές ώρες και δεν εφάνη. Ο αδερφός μου ο Θύμιος, κι αυτός ούτε θέλησε να με ζυγώσει. Εκαθόμουν στην ενορία των Αγίων Αποστόλων, σ’ ένα στενό σοκάκι, στην Ακρόπολη αποκάτω. Είχα το παιδί στην κούνια κι έκλαιε. Εγώ υπόφερνα απ’ τους πόνους της αρρώστιας, κι εδίψαγα φοβερά. Εφώναζα να’ ρθη κανένας. Εζητούσα ένα

²² Ibid. p. 570-571.

²³ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Κουκλοπαντρείς” op. cit., p. 571.

ποτήρι νερό για έλεος. Κανένας δεν ήρχετο. Οι γειτόνισσες, άλλες είχαν φύγει, [...] κι άλλες έκαναν τον κουφό και δεν άκουαν. [...] Σηκώθηκα, και βγήκα έξω. [...] Αυλόπορτες κλεισμένες. Παράθυρα κλειδομανταλωμένα. Ψυχή δεν εφάνετο πουθενά”.²⁴ The above quotation echoes the apathy that dominates the urban social environment: the modern capital becomes synonymous with dehumanization and indifference. Similarly, in “Οι Κουκλοπαντρείες” the heroine’s traumatic experience of the fragmented humanity in the capital, may echo Papadiamantis’ perception of Athens: “Και τι κόσμος είναι αυτός, στην Αθήνα!... Κρίμα στ’ όνομα που έχει! Στην Πόλη, που είναι Τούρκος, και πάλι σε πονούν και σε βοηθούν καλύτερα. Εκεί σε πονούν και σε συμπονούν οι Τούρκοι... κ’ εδώ ξεπονούν οι Χριστιανοί και σε γδύνουν...”.²⁵

The emerging “*moeurs*” of the capital preclude mutual commitment and promote superficial sentiments and cruelty. As the above quotations have indicated, the urban dwellers, with few exceptions, are heartless and self-centred. Their exclusive concentration on their personal interests and their indifference towards the public sphere become evident in “Το Ψοφίμι”²⁶ (1906). The abandonment of a dead dog and the subsequent negligence on the part of both citizens and city authorities provoke the narrator’s dismay. With bitter irony the narrator acknowledges that instead of attracting public attention the incident “μόνον έγινε χρονογράφημα εις εφημερίδα”.²⁷

Papadiamantis grounds his Athenian stories in the realization that modernity is bringing about the disintegration of those factors which established the close-knit

²⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Η Χολεριασμένη” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, p. 362-363.

²⁵ “Κουκλοπαντρείες”, op. cit. pp. 570.

²⁶ According to Valetas, “Το Ψοφίμι” belongs to a corpus of Papadiamantis’ Athenian texts that the author intended to publish in a separate collection. (Valetas, op.cit. pp. 53-55). Twelve of these narratives that can be characterized as “χρονογραφήματα” were published in 1906 in *Νέον Άστυ*. For the generic distinction of “χρονογράφημα” from the short story and its connection with the urban prose fiction of the end of the nineteenth century see Gotsi, “Experiencing the Urban”, pp. 44-46.

²⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το Ψοφίμι” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 101.

community of the past. The strong ties that kept people together in pre-modern societies and the mutual attachment found among members of traditional communities was being destroyed. This profound loss permeates the Athenian stories. The author portrays the increasingly impersonal nature of human relations either explicitly or through suggestive comments scattered throughout his Athenian texts. The modern city, a vortex which eliminates kinship ties, is equated with anonymity and de-personalization. In “Εξοχικόν κρούσμα” (1906) the narrator, evidently shocked by the superficiality of human relations, remarks: “Φαντασθήτε, τώρα, να γνωρίζη τις εν όνομα, και να μη γνωρίζη τον άνθρωπον· ή να γνωρίζη κατ’ ουσίαν επί χρόνον μακρόν πρόσωπά τινα, και ν’ αγνοή πώς καλούνται. Να ηξεύρη έν όνομα – λέξιν – να γνωρίζη έν πρόσωπον – όψιν – και ν’ αγνοή ότι το όνομα αυτό ανήκει εις το πρόσωπον εκείνο”.²⁸ In this respect, Papadiamantis emphasizes that intimate human relations had no place in the impersonal metropolis.²⁹

In some cases the disintegration of the urban space and the anonymity that entails become clear through an implicit contrast between the city and the countryside. As I have already mentioned in the first chapter, the contrast between the countryside and the city is not explicitly described in the Athenian stories. Nevertheless, it appears implicitly or is subsumed in the discrepancy between the past and the present.³⁰ “Η Βλαχοπούλα” (1892) is the only one of the Athenian stories in which the setting of the plot is transferred from the city to the provinces. The story evokes the current treatment of the city as the personification of evil. The young heroine, after confronting the corruption and promiscuity of the capital, returns to the safety of the countryside: “Αλλά όταν άρχισε να μεγαλώνει, ο

²⁸ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Εξοχικόν κρούσμα” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 129.

²⁹ In “Ο Γείτονας με το Λαγούτο” the hero’s acknowledgement acquires a sense of bitterness: “Ξένοι στα ξένα, κυρά μ’! ξενάκια όλοι είμαστε. Που να καθίσω, να ξενοχτίσω; Αχ! Είναι κακός ο κόσμος, κυρά μ’! δεν μπορεί να πη κανείς τον πόνον του!”, op. cit. p. 296.

³⁰ On the difference between the city and the countryside and its ideological implications in Papadiamantis’ fiction see Voutouris, op. cit. pp. 233-239.

αφέντης της, πλούσιος ιδιοκτήτης εν Αθήναις [...] ήρχισε να της ρίπτει ερωτικά βλέμματα και άπαξ ή δις εξήτησε να την θωπεύση”.³¹ It is worth noting that, unlike the rest of the Athenian stories, in “Η Βλαχοπούλα” long, lyrical descriptions of nature abound. The narrative construction of the story reflects its thematic scope: the countryside is perceived as a coherent entity that can ensure happiness, while the crumbling city threatens it. In the same story Panos Dimoulis, the Athenian day-tripper appears to envy the carefree countryman: “επανήλθε μελαγχολικός εις την πόλιν, φθονών ολοψύχως τον Ζήσον”.³²

In the same vein, in “[Η Ψυχοκόρη]” (1925) the difficulties experienced by the country people in adjusting to the urban environment become the main source of their distress. The old woman of the story, implanted in the urban environment, finds herself alienated in the city: “Η γερόντισσα παραπονείτο συχνά εις την κόρην της [...] Απήτει όμως να την στείλουν οπίσω εις την πατρίδα, δια ν’ αποθάνη εν ειρήνη εκεί. Είχε χάσει τα νέρα της εις την άκρην εκείνην της Αθήνας. [...] Καλύτερον θα ήτο δι’ αυτήν ψωμί και σκόρδο, και να πνήη τον αγνόν αέρα εις το παραθαλάσσιον χωρίον της”.³³ Similarly, displacement within a hostile urban environment becomes the subject of “Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά” (1892), a tale of the alienation experienced by a young student, ironically set on the last night of Carnival. The protagonist’s difficulty in integrating into urban society acquires a sinister sense and attracts the narrator’s sympathy: “Ερρέμβαζεν εξηπλωμένος επί της κλίνης του, ο Σπύρος ο Βεργουδής, [...] όστις και αν ήθελε να εισέλθη εις τον κόσμον δεν είχε τα μέσα. [...] πώς να υπάγη αυτός, δειλός, άπειρος του κόσμου, κακοφορεμένος, εν μέσω τόσων αγνώστων; [...] απεσύρθη από της ογδόης εις το δωμάτιόν του με το

³¹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Η Βλαχοπούλα” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, p. 372.

³² *Ibid.* p. 377.

³³ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “[Η Ψυχοκόρη]” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 612-613.

παράπονο εκείνο, οίον ο ξένος έχει μέσα του εις τοιαύτας ημέρας”.³⁴ It seems quite possible that the hero’s isolation and the pain he feels at being displaced are feelings shared by the author as a result of his experiences in the capital.

But Papadiamantis is not a champion of the pre-modern society, wishing to extol the rural life as a paradise. By implying the incoherence of the urban world, the author criticizes the modern city for creating weaker interpersonal links. In “Το Θαύμα της Καισαριανής” (1901) the urban environment emerges as a fragmented world which tragically dissolves the bonds of affection established in the past: “Τότε ήτον άλλος κόσμος. Οι άνθρωποι είχαν πόνο, είχαν αγάπη αναμεταξύ τους. Εύρισκες πολλούς καλούς ανθρώπους, κι εδώ μέσα, και στα βουνά έξω. Το είχαν σε καλό τους να δίνουνε. [...] Άλλος κόσμος τότε! Που κείνα τα χρόνια”.³⁵ The contrast between the past and the present echoes the author’s perception of modernity. The modern world appears as a place of depersonalized human relations where behaviour is motivated by self-interest.³⁶ In this respect, the portrayal of the seedy aspects of urban life seems to be related to the author’s resistance towards those aspects of modernity that disunify the community and impose constraints on the individual.³⁷

³⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, pp. 308.

³⁵ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το Θαύμα της Καισαριανής” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, p. 355.

³⁶ The stigmatization of that particular behaviour is also prominent in “Μικρά Ψυχολογία” (1903) a short story set in Skiathos but which takes an incident in Athens as its point of departure. The narration acquires a didactic function, as the narrator indicates that the social context encourages indifference towards human suffering: “Αφ’ ετέρου, όπως και δια την μικράν περίπτωσιν του παιδιού, του πεσόντος επίστομα επί του μαρμαρίνου ουδού, δεν έπρεπε να συναγάγη τις απαισιοδόξως το συμπέρασμα, ότι δεν πρέπει να βοηθή τις τον πλησίον του, διότι αδίκως υβρισθή τις υπό αμαθούς ή επιπολαίου ή φθονερού· αλλ’ οφείλει τις να κύπη, ν’ ανεγείρη τα πεσμένα παιδιά, και αν αναξίως μέλλη να υβρισθή, όπως και ο Χριστός ήγειρε τον πεσόντα, ‘τω βόθρω επικλιθείς απτότως’”, vol. 3, p. 606.

³⁷ It is interesting to observe that Peter Mackridge relates the author’s writing in *katharevousa* with his scepticism about certain aspects of modernity: “His unique brand of *katharevousa*, [...] is perhaps an indication on his insistence on the timeless continuity of traditional Greek culture and his resistance to certain aspects of modernity.” Peter Mackridge, *Language and National Identity in Greece 1766-1976*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 207.

In some cases the impersonal nature of human relations leads to extreme promiscuity. Life in the impoverished neighbourhoods is dominated by malicious gossip, argumentativeness and even hatred: “[...] η Λεμονού πότε εκ της παραμικράς αφορμής πότε άνευ αφορμής ωρισμένης, τα έβαζε σήμερα με τη μίαν, αύριον με την άλλην των δύο γειτονισσών της. [...] Εμάλωναν δια κάθε πράγμα”.³⁸ The daily contact, instead of reinforcing the inhabitants’ kinship, evokes a sense of malice and enmity against their neighbour: “Αι τέσσαρες γυναίκες, [...] έκαμαν μέγαν συνασπισμόν και σταυροφορίαν εναντίον της Σταυρούλας. Δεν επίστευον εις την εξαδερφοσύνην της, την εσκυλόβριζαν, την έλεγαν, ότι είναι μια ‘από κείνες’. Δεν την άφηναν να προκύψη εις την θύραν, χωρίς να ζητήσουν να εύρουν αφορμήν καυγά εναντίον της. [...] Ποτέ αυτή δεν ήκουσε τ’ όνομά της. Όλα τα περεγκώμια, όσα δεν υπήρχον εις κανέν εκδεδομένον λεξικόν, της έρριπτον κατάμουτρα”.³⁹

In texts such as “Το τυφλό σοκάκι” (1906) and “Απόλαυσις στη γειτονιά” (1900) malicious criticism coupled with callousness acquires a tragic connotation. In the first of these two stories malevolence and gossips ruin an initially happy family⁴⁰ and in the second the neighbourhood tendency to curiosity and gossip minimize the drama of a suicide. In both cases Papadiamantis employs his narratives to illustrate social problems: the effects of superficial morality and the lack of social consciousness respectively. The author’s subtly ironic or at times cynical stance is intended to censure the shallowness of human ties. In an analogous manner, in “Η Μακρακιστίνα” (1906) Papadiamantis foregrounds the superficial

³⁸ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Αποκριάτικη νυχτιά” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, pp. 301-302.

³⁹ “Ο Γείτονας με το Λαγούτο”, *op. cit.* pp. 301.

⁴⁰ Lakis Prongidis in his analysis of “Το τυφλό σοκάκι” observes: “η μικρή κοινότητα στην οποία είχε εστιάσει την προσοχή του ο μεγάλος πεζογράφος καθ’ όλη τη διάρκεια της καλλιτεχνικής του ζωής, δεν ήταν ούτε κάποιος χαμένος παράδεισος, ούτε κάποιο φολκλορικό απόθεμα προς καταγραφή και διάσωση, αλλά ένας ανθρώπινος χώρος που στέγνωε, μαράζωνε και διέπραττε το κακό πλέοντας ταυτόχρονα σε πελάγη ευτυχίας”, “Η μικρή κοινωνία στο έργο του Παπαδιαμάντη” in *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης και η Δύση, πέντε μελέτες*, (Athens: Estia, 2002) p. 92.

compassion displayed by the story's heroine to the sufferings of her neighbours. The fact that the heroine appears a devout Christian further reinforces the irony inherent in the author's approach and points up his social criticism: the emergence of the new era marks not only the disintegration of the moral codes but also a decline in religious belief.

The idea of the derogation of religious beliefs within the urban context recurs in a number of the Athenian stories.⁴¹ The impersonal urban landscape, as well as exacerbating estrangement and loneliness, leads to the disruption of communication between men and God. Papadiamantis portrays the superficial devotion of the Athenians and satirizes the false piety they display: “Ο μάρμπα Μάρκος εφάινετο ότι εφόρει την ευσέβειαν ως είδος μοναχικού μανδύου ή κουκουλίου εις την εκκλησίαν”.⁴² In “Ο Διδάχος” (1906) the foundation of religious associations has replaced pure religious sentiment. Here the author parodies the fake decorum of the main character and at the same time castigates the commercialization of religion: “Ανάμεσα εις τα τόσα νεοπλάσματα των ποικιλωνύμων συλλόγων, κοντά εις τας διαφόρους Αναστάσεις, Αναμορφώσεις, Αναγεννήσεις, Αναζυμώσεις και Αναπλάσεις, τας επαγγελλομένας την διόρθωσιν – επειδή μεταξύ όλων των επαγγεμάτων, εις όλον το Γένος, περνά εξόχως το επάγγελμα της θρησκείας, καθώς και το του πατριωτισμού – εδοκίμασε και ο περί ου ο λόγος, [...] να συστήση και αυτός ένα σύλλογον. [...] Τέλος εφαγώθη ένα γιουβέτσι, εψάλησαν άσματα τινά θρησκευτικά και πατριωτικά και ο σύλλογος διελύθη”.⁴³

In a similar manner, in “Ο Κοσμολαΐτης” (1903) Papadiamantis caricatures the excessive religious devotion of the main character who sees the church as a means to serve

⁴¹ See for instance: “Ο Καλόγερος” (1892), “Ο Κοσμολαΐτης” (1903), “Ο Αειπλάνητος” (1903), “Άλλος Τύπος” (1903), “Ο Διδάχος”(1906), “Η Κάλτσα της Νώενας” (1907).

⁴² Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Άλλος Τύπος” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 594.

⁴³ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Διδάχος” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 147.

his personal material security and social relations. The author suggests that the corrupt urban life offers the perfect breeding ground for the spread of mountebanks who are keen to benefit from religion: “Ἐπεσκέπτετο τας οικίας των ‘ευλαβητικών’, ανδρών και γυναικών, όσοι εσύχναζον εις θρησκευτικὰς συνάξεις. Εδέχετο πολλάκις περιποιήσεις, γεύματα κλπ. Κάποτε εισέπραττε συνδρομάς, κατ’ εντολήν ή άνευ εντολής. [...] Ο Καλοχεράκης συνέβαινε να λαμβάνη μικράς προκαταβολάς εκ πέντε ή οκτώ δραχμών προς τελετήν λειτουργίας [...] Είτα την τεταγμένην ημέραν εγένετο άφαντος, χωρίς μήτε ν’ αποδώση, μήτε να χρησιμοποιήση προς τον σκοπόν τα χρήματα”.⁴⁴ While the depiction of the degeneration in religious observance “conveys a sense that modern Athenian society is a milieu that now stands in the need of being re-evangelized”⁴⁵, it also points to the emerging “*moeurs*” of the city.

Bearing in mind that the neighbourhood functions as the agent of social representation, what Papadiamantis wishes to suggest is that the emerging modern society triggers drastic changes in traditional values. In the estranging urban civilization money seems to be the predominant value: “Τώρα όμως η πράγματι επικρατούσα θρησκεία είναι ο πλέον ακάθαρτος και κτηνώδης υλισμός. Μόνον κατά πρόσχημα είναι η Χριστιανοσύνη”⁴⁶ and has the power to dissolve the previous atmosphere of generosity and solidarity. The notion that materialism has become a modern disease recurs in a considerable number of the Athenian stories. In “Φιλόστοργοι” (1895) the obvious irony of the title underscores the promotion of self-interest over the interests of the community. The character on whom the story focuses is an avaricious and greedy woman who hesitates to take on the simplest

⁴⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Κοσμολαΐτης” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 535.

⁴⁵ David Ricks, op. cit. p. 251.

⁴⁶ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ιατρεία της Βαβυλώνας” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 608.

social duty (“το απλούστερον κοινωνικόν χρέος”).⁴⁷ She appears unwilling to help a lost child to find its family. The concluding line of the story recapitulates the gist of the tale: “Κι η κυρά Πράπω, θαρρώ πως πήρε το βρεθίκια της”.⁴⁸ The notion of moral duty is sharply contrasted in this instance with the desire to earn money. Similarly, in “Ο Γείτονας με το λαγούτο” (1900) materialism is criticized in moral terms, as the main criterion for evaluating people appears to be their credit rating: “Έννοια σου, κι’ η τιμή τιμή δεν έχει... [...] Έχουν αξία όλα τ’ άλλα πράγματα, κυρά μου, εις έναν κόσμο, που μόνον οι παράδες έχουν τιμη;...”⁴⁹

What Papadiamantis suggests is that social transition is inevitably linked with radical change in the existing ethos. Within the context of modernity money appears to have the power to putrefy traditional values and undermine morality. The moral disorder and corruption of the urbanites is skilfully depicted in “Το ιδιόκτητο” (1925). The author castigates the subordination of morality to gain. The neighbours’ protest against the house of ill repute is in fact hypocritical, as their only concern is to ensure the payment of the rent: “Αι καλαί οικοκυράδες της γειτονιάς εταλάνιζον την κατάστασιν αυτήν. Τι καλά παραδείγματα που θα ιδούν τα κορίτσια μας! [...] Αλλ’ αι καλαί οικοκυράδες είχαν δωμάτια δι’ ενοίκιον μέσα εις τας αυλάς των, και τα ενοικίαζον με αδρόν ενοίκιον εις όλες τις Λουίζες και τις Γιοζεφίνες και τις Μαρίκες, αίτινες [...] επλήρωνον εμπροσθέσμως και προκαταβολικώς. Αι καλαί οικοκυράδες επροτίμων πάντοτε τους νοικάρηδες και τις νοικάρισσες της τάξεως αυτής, από πτωχούς εργατικούς ανθρώπους με οικογένειαν, οίτινες δυνατόν να είχαν πολλάκις κεσάτια, και να τα ‘έφερναν σκούρα”⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Φιλόστοργοι” in *Απαντα*, vol. 3, p. 103.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p. 103.

⁴⁹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Γείτονας με το Λαγούτο” in *Απαντα*, vol. 3, p. 294.

⁵⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το Ιδιόκτητο” in *Απαντα*, vol. 4, p. 570.

Similarly, the corruption of the urban dwellers is aptly exemplified in “Τα πετρόεντα δώρα” (1907), an allegory of urban life that recapitulates the way Papadiamantis viewed Athens and its “*moeurs*”. The story offers an overall comment on the urban reality coupled with the author’s latent criticism of urban values. The disintegration and the moral disorder within the urban context seem to dominate not only the upper class but equally the lower strata. The angel of God, discouraged by “το ψεύδος και την σεμνοτυφίαν, την ανίαν και το ανωφελές της ζωής”⁵¹ of the bourgeoisie who led their life “μετρούντες αδιακόπως χρήματα [...] οινόβαρείς και κατερχομένους από τα χαρτοπαίγνια, μεθύοντας χειροτέραν μέθην”⁵² and dismayed by the disaffected family relations among the poor,⁵³ covers his face and abandons the capital. The allegory, which points to the breakdown in communications between man and God, is extended to encompass the overall social and moral disorder that surrounds the emergence of the modern era.

If the intrusion of modernity threatens to dissolve the moral code, it is also responsible for a deterioration in indigenous Greek tradition. Mary Layoun has remarked that Papadiamantis’ fiction is an unspoken invocation against the secular, Western, bourgeois way of life that Athens represents.⁵⁴ In stories such as “Ο χορός εις του κ. Περιάνδρου” (1905) and “Μεγαλείων οψώνια” (1912) the author’s irony and humorous approach to towards various foreign customs are equally pronounced.⁵⁵ In the first of these

⁵¹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Τα πετρόεντα δώρα” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 191.

⁵² *Ibid.* pp. 191-192.

⁵³ *Ibid.* pp. 191, “Επήγεν εις την καλύβην πτωχού ανθρώπου. Ο ανήρ έλειπεν όλην την εσπέραν εις την ταβέρνα. Η γυνή επροσπάθει ν’ αποκομίση με ολίγον ξηρόν άρτον τα πέντε τέκνα, βλασφημούσα άμα την ώραν που είχεν υπανδρευθή. Τα μεσάνυχτα επέστρεψεν ο σύζυγός της, αυτή τον ύβρισε νευρική με φωνήν οξείαν, εκείνος την έδειρε με την ράβδον την οζώδη.”

⁵⁴ Mary Layoun, *op. cit.* p. 45.

⁵⁵ Ilias Papadimitrakopoulos in “Το χιούμορ του Παπαδιαμάντη”, in *Επί πύλων αύρας νυχτερινής*, (Athens: Nefeli, 1992) explores the humorous element in Papadiamantis’ fiction. Referring to “Μεγαλείων οψώνια” the critic observes: “Το χιούμορ, η ειρωνεία, ο σαρκασμός συνιστούν όπλα με τα οποία ο Παπαδιαμάντης άσκησε την (οξύτατη) κοινωνική κριτική του – την πολιτική του κριτική.”, p. 35.

two stories the author mocks the shallow imitation of foreign customs by a representative of the Athenian upper class. Papadiamantis' ironic stance towards the hero's pretensions is clear cut: "Πρέπει να συμμορφούται τις με το πνεύμα της εποχής...[...] Αυτοί οι χοροί οι ντόπιοι, φίλτατέ μου, είναι μια μονοτονία αφόρητος. [...] Ο Ευρωπαϊκός χορός έχει ζωηρότητα, φίλτατε, έχει χάριν, έχει σικ...".⁵⁶ The second story has a more didactic function: the heroes' propensity for affluence and social glamour proves to be the main source of their sufferings. The concluding lines of the story emphasize the effects of the characters' pretensions and reveal the author's stance towards the imported customs: "Η ξενομανία που τους εκόλλησε είναι σαπρόν δένδρον, και δεν μπορεί παρά να κάμη καρπούς σαπρούς".⁵⁷ What Papadiamantis seems to castigate here is not modernity in general, but those aspects of modernity that are incompatible with indigenous Greek tradition and which intensify human suffering. In this respect, it seems plausible to assume that Papadiamantis was not just a conservative adherent of Greek tradition, but a perceptive critic of his era.

Up to this point, I have tried to illustrate Papadiamantis' critical stance towards the urban social conditions that oppress the individual, dissolve the sense of community and inevitably lead to re-evaluation of the traditional moral code. In this respect, the city is endowed with the power to undermine all the reference points by which the individual steers his course through the world. The inevitable existential insecurity that emerges is further intensified by the breakdown in communications between men and God. As I have tried to show, the author perceives Athens as a fallen religious community and emphasizes the decline in religious belief. This appears to be partly the result of the disturbing effects

⁵⁶ Alexandros Papadiamantis, "Ο χορός εις του κ. Περιάνδρου" in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, "Μεγαλείων οψώνια" in *Άπαντα*, vol. 4, p. 430.

of modernization, but it is also related to the Church's and the clergy's inability to inspire unaffected religious devotion.

In a number of the Athenian stories Papadiamantis focuses on the Church in order to criticize either the hierarchy or the lower clergy and to expose their uncharitable behaviour and their hypocrisy. The institutionalized Church, infected by immorality, leads the urban dwellers astray – away from God – and fails to assure relief or existential security. “Αλλά τι να ειπή τις περί των αρχιποιμένων του περιουσίου λαού, οίτινες κουρεύουσι τα πρόβατα του Κυρίου, εις το πρότυπον βασιλείου; Αυτοί είναι οι μάλιστα υπεύθυνοι, και οι μόνοι, της παρούσης εκλύσεως. Αυτοί ‘χάριν μισθαρίου και δοξαρίου’ δεν είναι οι απεμπολήσαντες πάσαν ανεξαρτησίαν, πάσαν αξιοπρέπειαν, εις την πολιτικήν εξουσίαν;”.⁵⁸ Here, as well as castigating the moral degeneracy of the Church leaders, Papadiamantis launches a mordant critique of the Greek state's guardianship of Greek Orthodoxy.⁵⁹ Papadiamantis sees the intrusion of politics in the Church as the main source of its corruption. The immorality of the Church leaders and the author's thinly veiled polemic against their corrupt practices become prominent themes in “Ο Κοσμολαΐτης” (1903): “Την εβδομάδα του Πάσχα εις τα 19... επρόκειτο να γίνη εκλογή ηγουμένου εις την πλούσιαν εκείνην Μονήν. Του τέως ηγουμένου όστις είχε κατηγορηθή δια καταχρήσεις αλλ’ απηλλάγη, δι’ έλλειψιν αναμαρτήτου όστις να βάλη τον πρώτον λίθον, είχε λήξει η θητεία [...] προσέθηκε πολλά υπέρ του πρώην ηγουμένου, λέγων ότι είναι χρηστός και όσιος, και ότι οι εχθροί του τον είχαν συκοφαντήσει. Ας όψεται η πολιτική!”.⁶⁰ In this

⁵⁸ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Καλόγερος” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, p. 328.

⁵⁹ For a discussion of Papadiamantis' attitude towards the relations between the government machine and the autocephalous Orthodox Church in Greece see the illuminating analysis of David Ricks, *op.cit.* pp. 249-257.

⁶⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Κοσμολαΐτης” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 539-540.

respect, institutionalized religion appears to be a profession and not a vocation. The priesthood of all levels is permeated by corruption and self-interest.

The representatives of the lower clergy on whom Papadiamantis focuses are presented as avaricious. In “Ο Αειπλάνητος” (1903) the merciful main character who “εκοίταζε πώς να σώση την ψυχήν του”⁶¹ stands in sharp contrast to the uncharitable behaviour of the church officials: “ο πάτερ Μελέτιος, ο οικονόμος, μ’ εμάλωνε να μη δίνω κομμάτια ψωμί και γαβαθάκια με κολοκύθια ή μελιτζάνες στους διαβάτες...”.⁶² Similarly, in “Άλλος Τύπος” (1903) the author attacks the hypocrisy of the lower clergy, who use the Orthodox texts to manipulate the congregation, and benefit from its ignorance and fear: “Και άρχισεν εκ του προχείρου ν’ αναπτύσση τότε, συντόμως και πρακτικώς, προς τους πτωχούς ακροατάς του, πως η κοιλία είναι η ρίζα των κακών, και πως η εγκράτεια είναι η αποκοπή της ρίζης ταύτης και πως ο μεν εγκρατής άνθρωπος ευκολότερον γίνεται και ευεργετικός και πράος και ελεήμων, ο δε λαίμαργος αποθηριούται, και γίνεται πλεονέκτης, και οργίλος και λάγνος, και φονεύς. Προσέτι, είπεν, ότι η Εκκλησία ομοιάζει με την φιλόστοργον μητέρα, ήτις γνωρίζουσα καλώς, ότι τα ανήλικα παιδιά δεν έχουν ποτέ χορτασμόν, εν τω δικαίωματί της, κλειδώνη εις το ερμάριον τα γλυκά και τα φρούτα [...] παρομοίως πράττει η Εκκλησία, κλειδώνουσα με πνευματικούς κλειδας τα κρέατα και όλα τα λιπαρά βρώματα, επειδή ημείς όλοι, ο λαός, είμεθα ηθικώς και πνευματικώς ως νήπια”.⁶³ The ironic voice that we hear in this passage reveals the author’s dismay at the decadence of the clergy coupled with a sort of chagrin.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Αειπλάνητος” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 575.

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 577.

⁶³ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Άλλος Τύπος” in *Άπαντα*, vol. 3, p. 597.

⁶⁴ David Ricks argues that, although references to the demerits of the clergy are commonplace in contemporary fiction, “Papadiamantis, as son of a rural priest, and with the priestly character inscribed in his choice of surname, cannot but view this with chagrin.”, David Ricks, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

To sum up, by providing a close reading of the Athenian short stories, this chapter has aimed to support the argument that the disturbing nature of the urban reality motivated Papadiamantis' critical approach to urban living conditions in his stories. The author, dismayed by the distressing experience of urbanization, foregrounds human predicaments and sufferings and depicts a devastated world from which relief, optimism or hope seem to have been banished.

Focusing on human affliction, Papadiamantis indicates that economic deprivation, moral corruption and interpersonal estrangement tend to go together. The impersonal city represents the repression of personality, the deterioration of morals and the disintegration of the community. The imposed loneliness and grimness are further intensified by the loss of communication between man and God. Communication with the divine could serve as an alternative to the exclusive rigidity of urban space, but that seems impossible: the urban dweller has become cut off from the real meaning of Christianity and institutionalized religion appears incapable of inspiring pure religious devotion.

If the emerging urban culture becomes the symbol of modernity, Papadiamantis' critical perception of the modern city reflects an anxiety about the emerging norms of modern existence. Mainly concerned with the hard-pressed human beings and their plight in difficult internal and external circumstances, he portrays their disorienting encounter with modernity. Using of a large cast of characters, the author aims to explore how the urban environment impinges on the individual. But that brings us to the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

CHARACTERIZATION IN THE ATHENIAN STORIES

Papadiamantis' Athenian stories tend to foreground the awful urban experience suffered by the lower classes and the migrants to the capital by focusing on the hostile urban environment. The representation of urban life in Papadiamantis' fiction acquires, as I have suggested in the previous chapter, a sinister feel, since in his view urban life causes the disintegration of those elements necessary to establish a coherent community. Equally, the anonymity and compartmentalization of city dwellers results in disruption to the harmonious relationship between *milieu* and individual. This disruption seems to leave its mark upon the characters of the Athenian stories. The hostile nature of the urban space and the adverse living conditions within it, coupled with the estrangement from nature and by extension the natural way of life, generate the emotional and moral disorder experienced by the characters.

By contrast, in most of the Skiathos stories Papadiamantis indicates that the intimate relationship between the characters and their native island is the main source of coherence in the local community. Accordingly, by connecting its inhabitants with their organic *milieu*, the rural landscape stimulates a sense of security. The island, despite the restrictions it imposes upon the individual, is presented as a unified world consisting of ordinary, self-sufficient, humble people who appear to be in close contact with each other. While Papadiamantis does not idealize the countryside and frequently touches upon the harshness

of the islanders' existence, his heroes remain humane and benevolent: “Φυλακισμένοι στις ώρες και τις μέρες και τα χρόνια της στέρησης και της βιοπάλης, δείχνουν τον παραμορφωμένο από τους σφαδασμούς και τον μόχθο κόσμο τους, χωρίς να χάνουν βέβαια την ανθρωπιά τους”.¹

But if the rural space integrates the human and natural element and the divine presence in a cohesive whole, his fragmented representation of Athens, limited to the west side of the city, evokes a sense of restriction that inevitably leaves its imprint on the characters in the Athenian stories. Referring to the significance of the natural world in Papadiamantis' oeuvre, Giorgos Ioannou observes that the characters in the Athenian stories: “είναι απελπισμένοι, γιατί ζουν σε ένα περιβάλλον από όπου δεν έχουν να περιμένουν τίποτε. Αυτή η απελπισία, η αδυναμία και η ασημαντότητα των ανθρώπων έξω από το φυσικό περιβάλλον, είναι θαρρείς, η βαθύτερη ουσία των αθηναϊκών διηγημάτων του Παπαδιαμάντη. Άνθρωποι μακριά από το πρόσωπο του Θεού”.² Building on Ioannou's observations, I would argue that as well as their estrangement from the natural environment, the bewildering urban experience, the hostile urban environment and the adverse living conditions imposed on them seem to be the parameters that form the human types who dominate the Athenian narratives.

In this chapter I concentrate on the characters of the Athenian stories in an attempt to shed light on the human types that Papadiamantis suggests are representative of the new urban reality. The main question to be addressed in this chapter is to what extent the urban context has the power to mould the character and to forge the ethos of this group of individuals. By focusing on the main characteristics of the characters and by examining the

¹ Mattheos Mountes, “Η Διάρκεια του καημού στον Παπαδιαμάντη” in *Φώτα Ολόφωτα. Ένα αφιέρωμα στον Παπαδιαμάντη και τον κόσμο του*, N.D. Triantafyllopoulos, (ed.), Athens: E.L.I.A., 1981, p. 137.

² Giorgos Ioannou, *Ο της φύσεως έρωας, Παπαδιαμάντης, Καβάφης, Λαπαθιώτης*, Athens: Kedros, 1985, p. 26.

narrator's attitude towards his Athenian protagonists, I propose to show that it is the urban social context that causes the deterioration in morals, the disintegration of the personality and the predominance of social evil. In other words, I argue that Papadiamantis presents the physical and moral degeneration in the characters in the urban context as the result of the hostile urban environment and the social conditions it entails.

One way to start is to turn to the Skiathos stories and contrast the way the author portrays his protagonists when they are depicted in the countryside. Since a detailed examination of the Skiathos stories goes far beyond the aims of the present thesis, I shall limit myself to certain general observations that reinforce my argument. In the Skiathos stories Papadiamantis turns to his memories to portray a coherent community, aiming to restore the unity between the world of nature and the world of men. As Farinou-Malamatari has rightly remarked, the rural community serves as a suitable background for such a portrayal as it still has the characteristics of an “ειδυλλιακού χρονοτόπου”.³ Within the rural context, time and space tend to be interdependent; the cohesion of the landscape promotes the constantly recurring cyclical time of the Christian calendar. Thus, human types presented in the Skiathos stories, while they are supposed to be typical of their place, tend to be more or less timeless.⁴

The island appears to be a paradise: “Η τερπνή, η πρασινίζουσα πευκόφυτος και ελαιόφυτος νήσος, εφαινετο ως μικρά γωνία πρώην ερημικού παραδείσου”⁵ and the characters are presented as being in close contact with their native land and sea.⁶ The author

³ Georgia Farinou-Malamatari, “Η ειδυλλιακή διάσταση στον Παπαδιαμάντη”, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

⁴ “Πολλοί από τους ήρωες των διηγημάτων θα μπορούσαν να έχουν ζήσει σε άλλη περίοδο, είναι κατά κάποιον τρόπο υπεριστορικοί”, *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁵ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Βαρδιάνος στα Σπόρκα”, vol. 2, p. 571.

⁶ For a detailed analysis of the way in which Papadiamantis demonstrates the close relation between the characters and their native island in the Skiathos stories see Peter Mackridge, “The Textualization of Place in Greek Fiction, 1883-1903”, *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1992a, 148-68 (pp. 160-165).

tends to foreground the virtues and advantages of those characters, who have a harmonious relationship with the natural world: they appear to be unpretentious and genuine and to enjoy freedom and self-sufficiency. In many cases the humble and innocent heroes function as long-suffering agents of kindness. Despite the hardships they face or their material deprivation, they remain charitable and affectionate. In texts such as “Φτωχός Άγιος” (1891) and “Η Θητεία της πενθεράς” (1902) the disinterested generosity of the main characters is emphatically emphasized. In the former story a poor goatherd abandons “τας αίγας του [...] εις το έλεος του Θεού”⁷ in order to save the community from a pirate raid. While the story ends tragically (the hero is slaughtered by the pirates), the poor goatherd appears to be canonized by the narrator: “Και ύστερον, πώς να μη μοσχοβολά το χόμα;”⁸. In the second story, the heroine is presented as a paragon of charity and tolerance. The narrator displays a deep sense of solidarity with the ordeals experienced by the heroine who: “ήτο εις την υπηρεσίαν του γαμβρού της, συνάμα κηπουρός, ορνιθοτρόφος, χηνοβοσκός, συβώτις, αιγοβοσκός και ονηλάτης...και συγχρόνως παραμάννα δια τα επτά παιδιά”.⁹

Far from idealizing the rural community, Papadiamantis points up the silent sufferings of men and women in the small island community and at the same time surrounds the hard-pressed peasants with profound affection: “τις θα διηγηθή τα συναξάρια των θαλασσομαρτύρων τούτων, των βιοπαλαιστών, των αξιών παντός οίκτου και συμπαθείας;”¹⁰ For, as Papagiorgis has remarked, Papadiamantis’ preference for the humble and the lowly, for those who lack adequate means constitutes “μια ειλημμένη θέση

⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Φτωχός Άγιος”, vol. 2, p. 220.

⁸ Ibid., p. 227.

⁹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Η Θητεία της πενθεράς”, vol. 3, p. 409.

¹⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το Ενιάυσιον θύμα”, vol.3, p.223.

που προβάλλει την λαϊκότητα ως αυθεντική μορφή αγιότητας [...] το αυθεντικό ήθος, η γνήσια θρησκευτικότητα, η αγνότητα της καρδιάς αναζητείται με κατιούσα κατεύθυνση. Όχι στα υψηλά διαζώματα της κοινωνίας, παρά στις τάξεις των ταπεινών”.¹¹ The rural community, protected from the corrosive effects of modernity, is endowed with authenticity and purity. The characters who live “εις τα ήμερα βουνά τα εγγύς της πολίχνης, όπου ο παρείσακτος νεωτερισμός ακόμη δεν είχε ποδάρια για να αναρριχηθή”¹² stand in sharp contrast to those who abandon the realm of the countryside and move to the “civilized” city. In “Όνειρο στο κύμα” (1900) a story that can be seen as “a manifestation of the opposition between nature and culture”,¹³ the hero’s removed from his natural element, feels constrained, oppressed and frustrated.

In the Athenian stories all reminiscence of a stable past has completely faded and Papadiamantis turns to the present to portray the turmoil of the daily experience in the capital.¹⁴ Thus, the human types presented in the Athenian stories, in contrast to the Skiathos characters, who are portrayed as being timeless, seem to be embedded in a particular moment in and space. They represent the ordinary people of the capital in their disorienting encounter with the seediest aspects of modernity. Urban growth and progress coincide with severance from the natural world and confinement in the hostile urban environment. Thus, the urban experience disrupts the harmonious relationship between the landscape and the individual, who is transferred from the freedom of nature to the bondage of the urban enclosure. In “Το Ζωντανό κιβούρι μου” (1926) the narrator’s comparison of

¹¹ Kostis Papagiorgis, *Αλέξανδρος Αδαμαντίου Εμμανουήλ*, Athens: Kastaniotis, 1997, p.143 and 145.

¹² Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Η Συντέκνισσα”, vol. 3, p. 583.

¹³ Dimitris Tziouvas, “Dialogism and interpretation: reading Papadiamantis’ *A Dream Among the Waters*”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 17, 1993, p. 150.

¹⁴ W. J. Harvey in *Character and the Novel* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1965) observes that in a relatively simple and static world the author may easily convey a sense of a whole community in action, but in more complex societies the problems are greater. But in either case the characters achieve reality by remaining embedded in some social context, p. 57.

his room to a tomb exemplifies the oppression imposed on the individual in the urban context: “Εξύπνησα με την εντύπωσιν -καθότι έβλεπα κ’ ένα κυπαρισσάκι να σείεται θλιβερά, αντίκρυ εις μιαν αυλήν, πέραν του δρόμου- ότι είχα κοιμηθη μέσα στο κιβούρι μου, το οποίον μου είχε κτίσει, όπως προαπολαύσω και λάβω πείραν του πράγματος, η ευμενής Μοίρα”.¹⁵

This oppression seems to be intensified by the adverse living conditions experienced by individuals. The restrictions and hardships imposed upon Papadiamantis’ protagonists tend to be the common denominator in his stories, whether set in Skiathos or in Athens. But while in the Skiathos stories these hardships do not by and large pervert the characters, in the Athenian narratives the corruption and dehumanization that affects the urban dwellers appear to be the result of their urban social context. This explains, at least to some extent, why the hard-pressed heroes of the Athenian stories - with a few exceptions – fail to elicit the author’s sympathy.

As briefly suggested in the first chapter, the protagonists of the Athenian stories tend to be generic characters who represent particular behaviours and the mentality of some sector of the emerging urban world. In other words, Papadiamantis portrays human individuals but he is less interested “in their particularity and individuality than in what they do or stand for”.¹⁶ In most cases the heroes tend to be victims of the cruel, urban society. But even in those cases where the heroes appear to be complicit in the urban degradation, Papadiamantis implies that their behaviour and mentality is socially accepted if not constructed.

¹⁵ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το Ζωντανό κιβούρι μου”, vol. 4, p. 618.

¹⁶ Jeremy Hawthorn, *Studying the Novel*, London: Hodder Education, 2005, p. 106.

The following discussion will try to elaborate on the human types presented in the Athenian stories. I will classify the characters into three main categories according to their gender and age: male, female and children.

Male Characters

The male characters of the Athenian stories can be subdivided into two main categories. On the one hand, Papadiamantis portrays the impoverished representatives of the lower classes, whose lack of material means becomes emblematic. On the other, the second category embraces the representatives of an emerging urban middle class which – with few exceptions – are presented as the personification of social evil.

The representatives of the former category are presented as passive and indolent. Their economic deprivation appears to be intensified by their reluctance to work. Poverty, instead of motivating activity and nimbleness results in passiveness and resignation. In “Τα Χριστούγεννα του τεμπέλη” (1896) the narrator indicates that the character’s straitened circumstances are directly connected to his laziness: “Πώς να έχει πεντάρα; Καλά και τα λεπτά, καλή και η δουλειά, καλό και το κρασί, καλή και η κουβέντα, όλα καλά. Καλύτερον απ’ όλα η ραστώνη, το δόλτσι φάρ νιέντε των αδελφών Ιταλών”.¹⁷ Papadiamantis seems to imply that the characters’ indolence is their response to a social context that condemns the poor to live in abject squalor on the margins of the society. In the same text the protagonist exclaims with obvious bitterness: “Υστερα κόπιασε, αν αγαπάς, να αργάζης τομάρια. Το δικό μας το τομάρι άργασε πια, άργασε...”.¹⁸

¹⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Τα Χριστούγεννα του τεμπέλη”, vol. 3, p. 159.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 160.

In many cases men's induced indolence and passivity is coupled with their propensity for drinking. Alcohol dependence partly serves as a relief from the hardships and adversities suffered by the characters: "Μόνην παρηγοριά είχε να κάμνη αυτά τα συχνά ταξιδάκια, καθώς τα ωνόμαζε".¹⁹ But, the problem of alcoholism that recurs in the Athenian stories is mainly associated with men's inability to assure the welfare of their family and by extension with the sufferings of the family. In "Πατέρα στο σπίτι!" (1894) the male character appears to be responsible for the family's poverty, which is partly due to his inertia but mainly to his inclination for drink: "Ο Μανώλης ήτο ξυλουργός, αλλά δεν διέπρεπε πολύ επί φιλοπονία. [...] Ο Μανώλης δεν έπαυσε να μεθύη τακτικά από το Σαββατόβραδον έως το ξημέρωμα της Δευτέρας. Η Γιαννούλα δεν είχε πλέον δεύτερον φόρεμα. Τα παιδιά δεν είχαν πάντοτε ψωμί. Η εστία σπανίως ήτο αναμμένη. Η γυνή εγόγγυζεν. Ο Μανώλης όταν ήρχετο την έτρωγε από την γκρίνια. Τα παιδιά έκλαιαν".²⁰ Here the author decries not only men's inadequacy in shouldering responsibility for the family but primarily the fact that they remain untouched by the drama of their own family.²¹

Similarly, men's inertia coupled with their promiscuous way of life accelerates the family breakdown and victimizes women. In "Η Μακρακιστίνα" (1906) conjugal felicity has been replaced by quarrels and fighting within the domestic realm. The traditional

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 159.

²⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, "Πατέρα στο σπίτι!", vol. 3, p. 91.

²¹ It is worth noting that in "Μικρά Ψυχολογία" (1903) - one of his Skiathos stories - Papadiamantis invests the same theme with a profound sense of empathy for the drunkard hero. The main character who "είχε πέσει εις το ελάττωμα της μέθης" appears to be affectionate towards his family: "ήτον αισθηματίας, και ηγάπα την γυναίκα του με αληθή έρωτα. Έπινε πολύ. Ήξευρεν ότι δεν έκαμνε καλά, αλλά δεν ημπορούσε να το κόψη". When the narrator censures the protagonist for his disregard of his family the latter appears a penitent sinner who comes to remedy his errors and omissions: "- Και τι κάθεςαι τώρα; Δεν πας στο σπίτι; Έφαγες; Δεν έφαγες! Δεν μαζώνεσαι και συ, επί τέλους;... Εκείν' η χριστιανή δεν έχει ψυχή, που σε καρτερεί τόσες ώρες στο σπίτι;... Τα παιδάκια σου που περιμένουν πότε να φανή ο πατέρας... ώς που να τα καταλάβη η νύστα, ν' αποκοιμηθούν. Μου εφάνη πως είδα δάκρυον να στίλβη εις τα ματόκλαδά του. Έξαφνα: - Πάμε, μου είπεν" (Vol. 3, p. 603). The difference in treatment of the same subject matter between the Skiathos and the Athenian stories reinforces my assumption that the urban context has the power to pervert the character.

gender roles seem to be violently inverted in the urban context. Papadiamantis constantly undermines the stereotype of the male as supporter of the family and points out that men's apathy is the main source of the problematic gender relations: "[...] η Διονυσούλα έπιανε καυγάν με τον σύζυγόν της, ευρίσκουσα αυτόν κοιμώμενον ακόμα –Βρε κανάγια!... βρε κ... που ήσουν εσύ να μπησ στον κόσμo να πάρης ψυχές στο λαιμό σου, παλιάνθρωπε! Βρε άτιμε, αν είσαι άντρας εσύ, που μ' εκατάνησες σ' αυτή την κατάσταση... από το μπεκριλίκι σου κι από την κακομοιριά σου!...".²² In many cases Papadiamantis seems to take the side of the oppressed women who emerge as the victims of male indifference or cruelty: "Άφηνε την γυναίκα του νηστικήν. Την άφηνε σβυστήν. Αργούσε το βράδυ στα καπηλειά, και την άφηνεν επί ώρες μονάχην της. Αυτή ήτον τεσσάρων μηνών έγκυος, και λιγουρούσε η καρδιά της".²³

Male cruelty is often extended to aggravated assaults against the innocent women who, as I will demonstrate in the next section, are presented as more competent than men and usually the breadwinners of the family. Again, the men's violent behaviour is the result of economic deprivation. In "Οι Παραπονεμένες" (1899) a man's violent assault on his defenceless sister has a monetary incentive: "Την προτεραιάν ο αδελφός της Μαρίκας, αρχιμόρτης της γειτονιάς, εκμανείς, διότι έμαθεν, ότι η μητέρα είχε τάξει πεντακόσιας δραχμάς του γαμβρού, είχε δώσει μιαν σπρωξιάν της Μαρίκας και την έρριπεν επάνω στο αγκωνάρι της πόρτας. Η νέα χθες έφερε δέμα περί το πρόσωπον· σήμεραν έχει μαύρην την γνάθον, μαύρην την γωνίαν του βλεφάρου".²⁴ The large number of abused women hints at the danger of dehumanization in an environment which has the power to pervert the character and turn human beings into monsters. In this respect, the former peasant in "Οι

²² Alexandros Papadiamantis, "Η Μακρακιστίνα", vol. 4, p. 158.

²³ Alexandros Papadiamantis, "Οι Κουκλοπαντρείς", vol. 3, p. 567.

²⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, "Οι Παραπονεμένες", vol. 3, p. 194.

Δύο δράκοι” (1906), who is described as “καλός άνθρωπος”,²⁵ once transferred to the urban context, becomes violent and brutal: “Την έδερνε, την εστουμπούσε, καθώς ήτο γερμένη στο κρεβάτι, άρρωστη, ύστερα την έρριχνε κάτω στο πάτωμα, και την χτυπούσε με τα χέρια, την κλωτσούσε με τα πόδια, την αφάνιζε, την έλυωνε”.²⁶

As mentioned briefly above, the second category of male characters in the Athenian stories embraces human types that tend to be characteristic of the rising middle class. The latter seem to function as agents of the emerging urban values, as they appear to have all the characteristics of the depraved urban context. Most of these characters are presented as corrupt and immoral and elicit the author’s condemnation. Papadiamantis seems to imply that morality is not a given, but socially constructed. Thus, the moral degradation within the urban context exacerbates the character’s corruption.

In many of the Athenian stories Papadiamantis portrays wealthy and influential characters who seem to personify the deterioration in standards and the loose morals of the urban populace. In all of these stories economic prosperity goes hand in hand with moral decline. As noted in the previous chapter, Papadiamantis criticizes materialism in moral terms as a modern disease that has the power to undermine an existing situation of interdependence between individuals. In an analogous manner, equating wealth with corruption, the author shows how the innocent members of the society are threatened by depraved characters. The most characteristic instance is presented in “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!”, where the *koumbaros*’ (best-man) attempt to seduce an innocent woman is blamed on his affluence:²⁷ “Ο κουμπάρος ήτο άγαμος και τεσσαρακοντούτης, παχύς, ευμορφάνθρωπος,

²⁵ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Οι Δύο δράκοι”, vol. 4, p. 104.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 104.

²⁷ The same theme occurs in “Το τυφλό σοκάκι” (1906), where the best man’s intrusion coupled with the nosiness and malice of the neighbourhood, results in the break-up of the family.

με πλατύ ζωνάρι. Ήτο μέγας και πολύς, κομματάρχης ενός των πολιτευτών της Αττικής, είχε κερδίσει χρήματα από κάτι ενοικιάσεις. Ήτο άνθρωπος με επιρροήν. Κατ' αρχάς ήρχετο άπαξ του μηνός. Είτα ήλθε δις εις μίαν εβδομάδα, φέρων κρέας και μικρά τινα δώρα δια τα παιδιά. Κατόπιν ήρχισε να έρχεται ημέραν παρ' ημέραν. Τέλος ήρχετο καθ' εκάστην, φέρων πάντοτε οψώνια”.²⁸ The gradual intrusion of the powerful relative into the domestic realm could be seen as a metaphor for the slow but steady moral decline imposed on the individual within the urban context.

Male characters often serve as agents of the loose moral codes operating in the city. In most cases a breakdown in the moral code goes hand in hand with inappropriate sexual behaviour. The “respectable” and powerful characters, who like the “πλούσιος ιδιοκτήτης εν Αθήναις” in “Η Βλαχοπούλα”²⁹ seek to seduce a pure girl, abound in the Athenian texts. These characters are presented, without exception, as immoral and leading debauched lives. In “Το Κουκούλωμα” (1925) the protagonist’s immorality and depravity becomes emblematic. His sexual liberty is responsible for the seduction of women and the fathering of illegitimate children: “Είχεν αλλάξει έως τώρα τρεις ή τέσσαρας παλλακίδας, με τας οποίας συνέζη κατά καιρούς· συνήθως συνήπτε σχέσιν με μίαν δευτέραν, πριν τα χαλάση ακόμη καλά με την πρώτην, ίσως δια το ασφαλέστερον. Και ούτω συνέβαινεν επί τινα χρόνον να φαίνεται τάχα ως ‘δίγαμος’ [...] Είχε διασπείρει νόθα εις όλας τας γειτονιάς”.³⁰ Papadiamantis seems to criticize these men’s sexual gratification in moral terms as something inevitably linked with the spread of immorality.

Similarly, in “Κοινωνική Αρμονία” Papadiamantis emphasizes in another way the fact that urban life not only creates corrupt characters but also corrupters. The protagonist

²⁸ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!”, op.cit., p. 92.

²⁹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Η Βλαχοπούλα”, vol. 2, p. 372.

³⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το Κουκούλωμα”, vol. 4, p. 593.

of the story, “αρχιμόρτης με περιουσία”³¹ is presented as the personification of social evil. He gathers poor and innocent children around him in order to deprave them: “Όπως ο γέρο-Σειληνός, τον παλαιόν καιρόν, είχε τους Σατύρους του, ομοίως και ο Φοραμπάλλας, εις μας ημέρας μας, είχε τους μόρτηδες του. Τους έβοσκε, τους εποίμαινε, τους εσαλάγα, τους εσφύριζε, και τους ωδήγει εις νομάς...απωλείας. Εστρώνετο όλην την ημέραν έξωθεν του καφενείου, παρά την οδόν, χονδρός, παχύς, προγάστωρ, βωμολόχος, κυνικός, χαλκοπρόσωπος. Μια ολόκληρος αγέλη νέων ηκολούθει την διδασκαλία του. Δευτέρα αγέλη μαθητευομένων παιδαρίων ηκολούθει τα παραδειγματά του”.³² By the obvious irony of the title *Papadiamantis* suggests that peace and tranquility in the community has been banished from the urban social context, since it has the power to reproduce corruption.

In short, the male characters of the Athenian stories tend to typify social trends and exemplify urban moral degradation. The representatives of the lower orders point to an exhausted lower class excluded from the public life of the capital, while the representatives of the middle class personify the predominance of immorality and corruption within the urban context.

Female characters

Throughout his literary output *Papadiamantis* seems to display a significant preference for the representation of women. Ranging from the murderess or the treacherous

³¹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Κοινωνική Αρμονία”, vol. 4, p. 139.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 139.

mother-in-law or foster mother to the most exemplary females, women are always at the centre of the author's attention. Similarly, in the Athenian stories the dismal neighbourhoods and the impoverished courtyards are mainly inhabited by women of all ages. But, while in the Skiathos stories Papadiamantis portrays various female types, in the Athenian narratives he focuses on a specific female type: the pure and innocent young girls of the lower orders who suffer greatly in the hostile urban *milieu*. Generally, these characters tend to elicit the author's sympathy; he demonstrates a kind of solidarity with his hard-pressed heroines, who are presented as being exposed to various hazards.³³

Papadiamantis constantly underlines the silent women's sufferings, which are frequently due to the cruelty of men or the wider social context. In most cases, poor and long-suffering women appear as the victims of men's incompetence and inability to support the family: “Η φτώχεια μας έδερνε, να δουλέψη ο ίδιος δεν μπορούσε. Ο Θεός ξέρει πως τα' φερνα βόλτα, με ψέμματα, με αλήθεια”.³⁴ Thus, poverty adds to their household tasks and most of them have to find jobs outside the domestic realm. Unlike the men who, as I have stressed above, appear unwilling to work, women appear hard-working. In most cases, they either contribute to the family income or they are presented as the sole supporters of the

³³ Papadiamantis' **disdain** for old women, much in evidence in the Skiathos stories (see for instance: “Το Χριστόψωμο”, “Η Φαρμακολύτριά”, “Στρίγλα μάνα”, “Τα δύο κούτσουρα” “Η στοιχειωμένη κάμαρα”) is also prominent in the Athenian stories. The comparatively few old women that appear in the Athenian stories are presented as evil and mischievous. Observe, for instance, how Papadiamantis portrays a mother-in-law in “Οι Κουκλοπαντρείες”: “Όταν η Ζαφείραινα έμεινε μόνη με την κόρη της, καθότι όλα τα άλλα δωμάτια εδόθησαν κατά προτίμησιν εις ‘μπεκιάρηδες’, ήρχισε κακήν φαφούραν με την κόρην της την ιδίαν, ήτις ευρίσκετο εις το τελευταίον στάδιον της εγκυμοσύνης. Την ύβριζε, την έτρωγε, την εβασάνιζε. Έκαμνεν όπως μια άσχημη, ήτις θα επειθέτο περί της ασχήμιας της- θα έσπαζεν, ως λέγουν, τον καθρέπτην, δια να μη βλέπη το πρόσωπόν της. Την έδερνε, την εδάγκανε και την κατήρατο να την θάψη. Όταν θα την έθαπτεν, επεφυλάσσετο να δέρνεται μόνη της.”, vol. 3, p. 574.

³⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το Θαύμα της Καισαριανής”, vol. 3, p. 353.

family: “Ἡ κυρία ἦτο φίλεργος καὶ ἀνήσυχος· ἐσιδέρωνεν, ἐρραπτεν, ἐπωλούσε καὶ πούδρα εἰς τὴν γειτονίαν”.³⁵

Papadiamantis seems to be quite concerned about the social position of women both in the countryside and in Athens. The theme of hard-working women recurs throughout his literary output. In the Skiathos stories the author frequently foregrounds the onerous duties ascribed to women: they are responsible for the household and for feeding the children and at the same time they have to work in the fields.³⁶ But, while in the Skiathos stories women work in order to contribute to the family, in Athens many of them work in order to provide their dowry. The problem of the dowry in the city remains a persistent one for the young women of the lower classes. The protagonist in “Ποῖα ἐκ τῶν δύο” (1906) who “ἦτο βιοπαλαίστρια ἐκ ἀπαλῶν οὐχῶν”,³⁷ appears to shoulder the burden of her dowry almost single handed: “εἰτελέσθη μνηστεία, ἀλλ’ ὁ γάμος ἐμελλε ν’ ἀργήσῃ, ὅπως λάβῃ καιρὸν ἡ φιλόπονος μέλισσα, ἡ νύφη, νὰ ἐργασθῇ καὶ νὰ δυνηθῇ νὰ συμπληρώσῃ τὴν προίκα τῆς”.³⁸

Within the hostile urban environment, women entering the labour market acquires a sinister connotation. To the miserable living conditions of the urban environment is added the corrupting potential of the city. Working women tend to be exposed to the dangers of prostitution or concubinage. As Georgia Gotsi rightly notes, these women are condemned to “a double servitude, first economic and then sexual”.³⁹ In “Οἱ Κουκλοπαντρεῖές” (1903) the breakdown of the family unit goes hand in hand with woman’s adultery. The divorced

³⁵ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ἡ Μακρακιστίνα”, vol. 4, p. 157.

³⁶ “Δεν ἔπαυε νὰ ἐκτελεῖ μὴν, κατὰ περιόδους καὶ ὥρας, ὅλας τὰς ἀγροτικὰς ἐργασίας ὅπως συνηθίζουν αἱ γυναῖκες· τὸ θειάφισμα, τὸ ἀργολόγημα, τὸν τρύγον, καὶ προ πάντων τὴν συλλογὴν τῶν ελαιῶν, διαρκοῦσαν ἐπὶ τινὰς μῆνας τοῦ φθινοπώρου καὶ τοῦ χειμῶνος.”, Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ δράκου”, vol. 3, p. 607.

³⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ποῖα ἐκ τῶν δύο”, vol. 4, p. 107.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

³⁹ Georgia Gotsi, “Experiencing the Urban: Athens in Greek Prose Fiction, 1880-1912” (unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1996), p. 204.

woman who struggles to survive appears immoral and corrupt: “εξενοδούλευεν, έπλεκεν, έρραπτε και ζούσε. Είχε κάμει απ’ ολίγους μήνας πλησίον οικογενείας εν Αθήναις, ως υπηρέτρια ή μαγειρίσσα. Δύο ή τρεις φορές είχε παρουσιασθή στην κάμαραν της ένας νεαρώτατος ξανθός, με λεπτόν μύστακα. Αυτή είπε ότι ήτον πατριώτης της, σχεδόν αδελφός της, ο ‘Βασιλάκης της’, με τον οποίον είχε συναναστραφή. [...] Ο Βασιλάκης είχε μάθει ότι η νεαρά γυνή εσύχναζε ακόμη εις την οικίαν εκείνη, όπου είχε διατελέσει επί μιαν σελήνη ως μαγειρίσσα και όπου υπήρχον και δύο νέοι άγαμοι, υιοί της οικογενείας”.⁴⁰

Similarly, in “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!” the protagonist yields to sexual temptation in order to support her family. Once again, women’s corruption or immorality is blamed either on men’s cruel and degenerate behaviour or on the hostility of the social context. Although Papdiamantis censures the loose sexual behaviour of young women in the capital, he displays some sympathy for the tragic fate of his abandoned heroines. In the same text the narrator seeks to rehabilitate the poor heroine: “Τις οίδε ποίους σκοπούς έτρεφεν ο κουμπάρος. Πλην η Γιαννούλα ήτον τίμια, όσον και πάσα άλλη. [...] το μόνον έγκλημά της ήτο ότι, ίσως είχε πολιτέψει τον κουμπάρον, και δεν τον είχε διώξει μιαν και καλήν”.⁴¹ Papdiamantis seems to imply here that within the urban context innocence is not an automatic right.

The theme of the abandoned women who suffer greatly because of their innocence recurs in many of the Athenian stories. Victims of their purity, they end up isolated or dead: “Ο Κοσμάς εξηκολούθη πάντοτε να υπόσχεται ότι έμελλε να ‘στεφανωθή’. Τέλος η γυνή, φιλάσθενος ούσα, εμαράνθη, έκλινε, και απέθανεν αστεφάνωτη”.⁴² Such heroines are presented as powerless in a society where the most vulnerable members are condemned

⁴⁰ Alexandros Papdiamantis “Οι Κουκλοπαντρείς”, vol. 3, pp. 569 and 571.

⁴¹ Alexandros Papdiamantis, “Πατέρα στο σπίτι!”, vol.3, pp. 92-93.

⁴² Alexandros Papdiamantis, “Το Κουκούλωμα”, vol. 4, p. 593.

either to suffer in silence or die. For, apart from their poverty these women face the risk of social marginalization.

In “Χωρίς στεφάνι” (1896) the heroine’s social stigmatization is the result of her cohabiting with a man outside wedlock: “Χωρίς στεφάνι! Οπόσα τέτοια παραδείγματα!...”.⁴³ Papadiamantis indicates that pure and innocent women easily fall prey to the sexual demands of corrupt men.⁴⁴ Christina, who once was “οικοκυρά κι αυτή στο σπίτι της και στην αυλή της [...] νέα με ανατροφή,⁴⁵ spends her life in darkness and silence as prejudice forces her into self-imposed withdrawal. The fact that she is excluded from the Easter service, a moment where Christian love is celebrated, illustrates the cruelty of the urban social context. The poor woman is exalted by Papadiamantis to the ultimate paradigm of stoicism: deceived by an immoral male and humiliated by society, “δεν έλεγε πλέον τίποτε. Υπέφερεν εν σιωπή”.⁴⁶ In the tragic case of Christina death appears her only hope of rehabilitation and peace. As we shall see in the next section, Papadiamantis seems to imply that innocence is condemned to death in the urban *milieu*.

While Christina is not criticized in moral terms, Papadiamantis frequently castigates women’s sexual liberation. The comparatively few female characters such as Koula in “Οι Παραπονεμένες” or Katerinio in “Ο Γείτονας με το λαγούτο”, who are described as “πολύ ελευθέρα κόρη”⁴⁷ and “θαρρετή κ’ ελεύθερη γυναίκα”⁴⁸ respectively, personify the loose moral code within the city. It seems that sexual awareness (equated with depravity) goes

⁴³ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Χωρίς στεφάνι”, vol. 3, p. 136.

⁴⁴ “Από τον καιρόν όπου είχε ανάγκη από τας συστάσεις των κομματαρχών δια να διορίζεται δασκάλα, εις των κομματαρχών τούτων, ο Παναγής ο Ντεληκανάτας, ο ταβερνιάρης την είχε εκμεταλλευθή. Άμα ήλλαξε το υπουργείον, και δεν ίσχυε πλέον να την διορίσει, της είπεν: Έλα να ζήσουμε μαζί, κι αργότερα θα σε στεφανωθώ.”, vol. 3, p. 136

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 131.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 136.

⁴⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Οι Παραπονεμένες”, vol. 3, p. 193.

⁴⁸ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Ο Γείτονας με το λαγούτο”, vol. 3, p. 295.

together with the gradual imposition of degenerate urban values. In “Απόλαυσις στη γειτονιά” (1900) a woman’s inappropriate sexual behaviour further exacerbates the drama of a suicide. The young man of the story seems to have committed suicide on account for a woman who “εκοίταζε πολλούς· είχε εργολάβους. Έκανε αργολαβίες με το μεροκάματο”.⁴⁹ In “Το νόμι της” (1906) the same woman⁵⁰ appears licentious and lascivious. The author decries the heroine’s pretensions and her loose moral principles: “την βλέπω μιαν εσπέραν, με κομψόν ένδυμα, με μαλλιά βοστρυχισμένα καμπύλα -τις οίδε πόσα κάρβουνα θα είχε δαπανήσει της σιδερώστριας, της μητρός της, δια να φτιάνη τα κατσαρά της! - να διέρχεται συνοδευόμενη από ωραίον νεανίσκον, όστις δεν θα ήτο εικοσαετής ακόμη”.⁵¹ Papadiamantis looks critically on women’s sexual emancipation, which is depicted as one of the disturbing results of modernity. It seems to me that his reluctance to acknowledge women’s sexual initiation reveals his realization that women of the lower classes almost invariably paid for it with marginalization or emotional disorder.⁵²

In brief, female characters are presented as the victims of urban degradation. Subjected to male cruelty and exposed to the hostility of the urban environment they suffer greatly. The chaste and vulnerable women of the lower orders are constantly victimized by a depraved upper class. Since the urban social context has the power to deprive characters of their innocence, women face the dangers of degradation and social stigmatization.

⁴⁹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Απόλαυσις στη γειτονιά”, vol. 3, p. 255.

⁵⁰ Although “Το νόμι της” was published 6 years after “Απόλαυσις στη γειτονιά” and the neighbourhood is not named, it seems to me the same female character recurs in the two stories. In both stories she has the same seductive potential.

⁵¹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Το νόμι της”, vol. 4, p. 120-121.

⁵² In “Εξοχικόν κρούσμα” (1906) Papadiamantis implies that upper-class women can freely enjoy love. The illegal love affair of the affluent female character, has a happy ending.

Child characters

Child characters are commonplace in Papadiamantis' fiction. In the Skiathos stories the representation of children frequently echoes Papadiamantis' own experiences and memories of his own childhood. As Vicky Patsiou observes, “πολλά διηγήματα είναι αυτοβιογραφικά και σε μερικά τον πρωταγωνιστικό ρόλο έχει ο ίδιος ο συγγραφέας πριμοδοτώντας την πραγματικότητα της μνήμης και της αυτοαναπαράστασης σε βάρος του επινοημένου μύθου.”⁵³ Thus, in the Skiathos stories, while children share their family's tragic living conditions, they frequently appear to enjoy the insouciance of childhood.⁵⁴ Children in the countryside are depicted in the open air (mainly in the fields or on the seashore), echoing their freedom.⁵⁵ By contrast, in the Athenian stories the representation of children reflects the hostility of the urban context and the cruelty in entails.⁵⁶ Thus, within the urban enclosure the restrictions on movement metaphorically stand for the restriction of their freedom. In the Athenian stories the reader can scarcely find images of carefree and happy children.

⁵³ Vicky Patsiou, “Αναπαραστάσεις του παιδιού στην πεζογραφία της γενιάς του 1880” in *Το παιδί στη νεοελληνική κοινωνία 19ος - 20ός αιώνας. Αζίες, αναπαραστάσεις, αποτυπώσεις*, Vasso Theodorou – Bassiliki Kontogianni (ed.), Athens: E.Λ.Ι.Α., 1999, pp. 148-149.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of the position of children in Papadiamantis' oeuvre see Vassiliki Patsiou, *Το πρόσωπο του παιδιού στη πεζογραφία (1880-1930)*, Athens: Dodoni, 1991, pp. 43-56.

⁵⁵ See for instance the way Papadiamantis depicts children's activities in “Ολόγυρα στη λίμνη” (1892): “[...] εφαινετο αισθανόμενος ίσην χαρά με τα επταετή παιδιά, τα οποία φεύγοντα το σχολείον, με τον φύλακα ανηρητημένον υπό την μασχάλην, ευρίσκουσιν άφατον ηδονήν να τρέχουν εις τις ακρογιαλιές και εις τους βάλτους, και να караβίζουν με μικρότατα κομψά караβάκια, τα οποία οι επιδεξιότεροι μεταξύ των κατασκευάζουσιν.”, vol. 2, p. 398.

⁵⁶ Vasso Theodorou in “Ο λόγος των φιλανθρώπων για τα φτωχά και περιπλανώμενα παιδιά 1870-1990” in *Το παιδί στη νεοελληνική κοινωνία 19ος - 20ός αιώνας* op. cit., pp. 121-141, observes that “η τύχη των εγκαταλελειμμένων και περιπλανώμενων παιδιών απασχολεί συχνά την αρθρογραφία του αθηναϊκού τύπου το τελευταίο τέταρτο του 19^{ου} αιώνα”, p. 122.

The impoverished urban living conditions erode the happiness of childhood; poverty likewise haunts the defenceless children, who in many cases labour in unbearable working conditions: “μετ’ ολίγον εισήλθε μικρός υπάλληλος του Γκαζιού, ακολουθούμενος από παιδίον 12 ή 13 ετών, φορτωμένον την γνωστήν τρόμπαν, την έχουσαν σχήμα κώνωδος. Το παιδίον, κάθιδρον, εφαινετο πολύ κουρασμένον. Η αριστερά του ήτο δεμένη όλην την παλάμην, κ’ επόνει την χείρα· ίσως να είχε πληγωθη εις την εξάσκησιν του επαγγέλματός του”.⁵⁷

Children in the Athenian stories are presented as the personification of innocence and purity. But, as briefly suggested above, the city is endowed with the power to deprive people of their innocence. Thus, uncorrupted children are either exposed to the corrupting influence of the capital, or die. Papadiamantis always displays deep sensitivity and sympathy towards infant mortality. But at the same time, it seems that he presents death as a kind of liberation from the ordeals imposed by the hostile social environment. In “Χωρίς στεφάνι” the death of the illegitimate infants is to be understood as a relief: they avoid their mother’s tragic fate: “Κ’ εκείνα τα πτωχά, τα μακάρια, περιίπταντο εις τα άνθη του παραδείσου, εν συντροφία, με τ’ αγγελούδια τα εγχώρια εκεί”.⁵⁸

The theme of the “άκακα νήπια”⁵⁹ who die in the city recurs in a considerable number of the Athenian stories. In “Μια ψυχή” (1891) and “Τα τραγούδια του Θεού” (1912) the narrator laments the loss of the two girls who are presented as paragons of kindness and beauty. In the former story, poor Angelikoula, who was “φιλομαθής και φίλεργος παιδίσκη κ’ επρώτευε εις τα χειροτεχνήματα”⁶⁰ stands in sharp contrast to her

⁵⁷ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Κοινωνική αρμονία”, op. cit. p. 140.

⁵⁸ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Χωρίς στεφάνι”, vol. 3, p. 136.

⁵⁹ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Πατέρα στο σπίτι”, vol. 3, p. 94.

⁶⁰ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Μια ψυχή”, vol. 2, p. 230.

grown-up brothers who “ούτε γράμματα δυνηθέντας να μάθουν αρκετά, ούτε προς χειρωναξίαν ικανούς, ούτε προς εμπορίας επιτηδείους”.⁶¹ A first reading of the story suggests a religious interpretation. Since Angelikoula’s death appears unreasonable and to some extent unjust, it can be seen as “επιστροφή της αθώας ψυχής στην πρωτινή της αιώνια πατρίδα”.⁶² Papadiamantis seems to mistrust the potential of the social context to dispense justice; thus rehabilitation and peace are to be sought within the divine realm. In my opinion, the deaths of innocent children are the author’s violent response to the degeneracy and corrupting power of the urban society.⁶³

As noted in the previous section, the threat the city represents lies in its ability to corrupt the most vulnerable of its inhabitants. Children of all social strata seem to face the dangers of depravity. In “Τα τελευταία του γέρου” (1925) the son of the family, “ο μόρταρος”, leads a promiscuous life (“εκοπροσκυλούσε όλην την ημέραν, κ’ εξενοκάτιαζε την νύχτα”).⁶⁴ The narrator acknowledges that the young man’s corrupt behaviour has become a stereotype within the city: “ο υιός εβγήκε μόρτης, όπως όλοι...”.⁶⁵ Similarly, in “Κοινωνική αρμονία” Papadiamantis shows how the hostile urban environment impinges on the character and the moral principles of children. Innocent children turn into “δίποδα” who “ποδοπατούν και κλωτσούν την σκουμμένην κάτω και αδικημένην”.⁶⁶ By suggesting

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 230.

⁶² Giorgos Themelis, *Ο Παπαδιαμάντης και ο κόσμος του*, N.D.Triantafylloopoulos (ed), Athens: Diaton, 1991, p. 43.

⁶³ It is interesting to observe how Papadiamantis equates maturity with degeneration and corruption in “Ο Πανδρολόγος” (1901): “Ήτον ο καθρέπτης του μέλλοντος, εκείνος. Εκεί έβλεπαν όλα τα ανήλικα όντα την μέλλουσαν ασχήμιαν των, οποίον μούτρον θα έκεμναν αν έσωναν να γίνουν άνδρες... Εκεί θα ηύχετο κανείς, αν δεν ήτο εις αγνωσίαν και πλάνην οικτράν περί των πραγμάτων του κόσμου και περί της μελλούσης τύχης του, να ήτο αρκετά θεοφιλής δια ν’ αποθάνη νέος... δια να μη σώση ποτέ ν’ αναπτύξη τόσην ασχήμιαν, σωματικήν και ηθικήν, όσην σήμερα...”, vol. 3, p. 379.

⁶⁴ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Τα τελευταία του γέρου”, vol. 4, p. 578.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 579.

⁶⁶ Alexandros Papadiamantis, “Κοινωνική αρμονία”, op. cit., p. 142.

that purity has no place in the city, Papadiamantis presents the city as a fallen world that inevitably degrades people's characters.

Papadiamantis, a writer who endeavours to expose social ills, emphasizes the lurking dangers in urban life. The author condemns the abuse and corruption of children, while at the same time he implies the importance of preserving their goodness and innocence. But since the purity of childhood seems to be condemned to wither away within the urban context, death tragically emerges as the only solution.

In conclusion, this chapter has sought to demonstrate that the urban social context is endowed with the power to mould the character and to corrupt the moral principles of individuals. Exposed to the cruelty and corruption of urban life, the characters in the Athenian stories appear to be the victims of the hostile urban *milieu*. In particular, male characters represent the extremes, whether as poor people in a dehumanized social system or as immoral and depraved members of the upper classes. The innocent and vulnerable female characters of the lower orders oppressed by their economic instability and threatened by the corrupting powers of the city, end up marginalized and emotionally exhausted. Similarly, children, the personification of purity, are presented as the most tragic victims of urban degradation. Papadiamantis creates living characters to represent recognizable human types. In this respect, aside from representing the common people of the capital, the significance of the Athenian protagonists transcends the characters themselves to make a general comment on the world of the city.

CONCLUSION

The multifaceted nature of Papadiamantis' oeuvre and of his personality have resulted in various and sometimes contradictory approaches to his work and interpretations of it. Papadiamantis has frequently been seen as a devout Orthodox Christian and a strong supporter of Greek tradition who was intensely opposed to the western orientation of Greek society. But above all, Papadiamantis has been identified with the vivid depiction of rural communities. Although the importance of the social commentary embodied in his texts has been acknowledged, further scrutiny is called for.

In an attempt to explore this issue further, I have chosen to deal with his Athenian short stories, a significant part of the author's literary output that has hitherto received little attention from the critics. In my opinion this particular body of writings deserves more detailed analysis, as it offers an insight into the way Papadiamantis responded to a specific socio-historical context. Written in Athens and about Athens in a time of transition for the city and for the whole country, the Athenian stories incorporate not only Papadiamantis' views on the capital but on Greek society in general.

Thus my study of the Athenian short stories has been intended to serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, it has aimed to provide a re-evaluation of these narratives while on the other, it set out to demonstrate that Papadiamantis was a socially conscious author. To this end, I have focused on these texts in order to bring to the fore the complex range of social issues they raise. Furthermore, by placing Papadiamantis in the wider context of urban fiction at the end of the nineteenth century, I have endeavoured to show that the

Athenian stories add another facet to the way urban prose writers represented and reflected the reality of the city.

The parallel reading of the urban narratives discussed in the first chapter suggests different perceptions of the changing city, which to some extent reflect different ideological perspectives. Kondylakis and Mitsakis treat the city as an independent entity. The former views the city panoramically as an opaque complexity and aims to give shape to its multifaceted reality. The latter, employing the technique of the narrator-*flâneur*, moves through the city and tries to convey some of its lesser known aspects. By contrast, Roidis and Papadiamantis offer more partial representations of the city. Roidis' preoccupation with the urban slums points to the author's political preoccupations: a cosmopolitan author attacking the immoral and corrupt political system and the arbitrariness of the political status quo in general. On the other hand, Papadiamantis, an internal migrant to the capital himself, depicts the predicament of the lower classes, which to a considerable extent he himself had experienced in the capital. But Papadiamantis' critical representation of the city goes far beyond the recapitulation of his own personal experience there.

A close reading of the Athenian stories has shown that Papadiamantis constantly focuses on the social environment and he seems to suggest that the repression of the individual and the decline in morals are due to that context. An exploration of the social context portrayed in the Athenian stories, reveals an author highly critical of the social problems urban life engenders. In this respect, the critical representation of the capital reflects Papadiamantis' scepticism about the emerging norms of modern existence rather than his opposition to a world that had turned away from indigenous Greek tradition. The stigmatization of social phenomena that go hand in hand with urbanization and the questioning of emerging urban values are evidence of the author's social awareness.

The gloomy background against where the Athenian narratives are set points to the ordeals that the poor, defenceless urban dwellers face. Human sufferings are further intensified by the cruelty and indifference that the urban space imposes upon its inhabitants. For aside from extreme poverty the urban populace has to face loneliness and alienation within a hostile urban environment. Thus the disintegration of the community, which Papadiamantis emphatically highlights, becomes the main source of existential despair. This ontological insecurity is reinforced by the breakdown in communications with the divine. In this respect, the individual remains exposed to the corrupting influences of their social context.

My discussion of the characters in the Athenian short stories has aimed to demonstrate that the hostile nature of the urban environment is inevitably imprinted on the character's personality and mentality. Totally embedded in the urban reality, the protagonists of the Athenian narratives live in the here and the now of the capital and face the tribulations and the turmoil of urbanization. Thus the adverse living conditions, coupled with the prevailing corruption of society undermine the characters' morality and exacerbate their emotional sufferings.

By implying that an individual's character is more often than not socially constructed, Papadiamantis emphasizes the fact that people are exposed to the cruelty of any given social context. In this respect, men's lack of motivation and their concomitant passivity and the victimization of women are symptoms of an oppressive external social reality that constrains the individual. Similarly, the deaths of innocent children are to be seen as the author's tragic, even violent response to a social context that drives out purity and innocence. Thus the emphasis on human drama that pervades the Athenian stories

could be seen as the result of Papdiamantis' dislike of an impersonal and morally degenerate society.

The discussion of the Athenian short stories has demonstrated that this particular body of writings deserves to be valued in its own right and not merely as an inferior appendage to Papdiamantis' narratives set on Skiathos. Despite their stylistic differences from the Skiathos stories, the Athenian stories are coherent, elaborately organized and efficiently functioning entities. Moreover they offer an insight into Papdiamantis' thinking in regard to the changing nature of Athenian society and Greek society at large. The social commentary that emerges from the Athenian stories bespeaks a socially conscious author and at the same time contributes to a better and deeper appreciation of Papdiamantis' views on his contemporary reality. As Alexandros Kotzias has rightly remarked, Papdiamantis “κατόρθωσε να αποκρυσταλλώσει αφηγηματικά κατά τρόπο συχνά συγκλονιστικό ή συναρπαστικό όραμα καθολικού ενδιαφέροντος” which “αδιαλείπτως επανέρχεται από το ένα αφήγημα στο άλλο ως εάν όλα μαζί - σκιαθίτικα και αθηναϊκά διηγήματα - απαρτίζουν οργανικό σύνολο, ένα ‘έργο εν προόδω’”.¹

The exploration of social issues associated with the urban context of the Athenian narratives reveals the need for a more sociological approach to Papdiamantis' literary work as a whole. Although critics and scholars have already tackled the representation of society in some of his Skiathos stories, a more systematic and analytical discussion of the social dimension of his oeuvre will highlight another facet of this great prose writer.

¹ Alexandros Kotzias, op. cit. pp. 62-63.

APPENDIX

This is a full list of Papdiamantis' Athenian short stories. They are listed in chronological order, according to the dates of their original publication (my main source is Triantafyllopoulos' critical edition of Papdiamantis' *Άπαντα*) and the list includes the title of each short story and the title of the newspaper or periodical where it first appeared.

Title	Date of first Publication	Newspaper/periodical or other publication
<i>Πάσχα Ρωμέϊκο,</i> (Σύγχρονος Ηθογραφία)	Easter 1891	<i>Αττικόν Μουσείον</i>
<i>Μια ψυχή</i>	1 Sep. 1891	<i>Παρνασσός</i>
<i>Αποκριάτικη Νυχτιά</i>	17 Feb. 1892	<i>Εφημερίς</i>
<i>Ο Καλόγερος</i>	24-29 Feb. 1892	<i>Εφημερίς</i>
<i>Η Βλαχοπούλα</i>	5 Apr. 1892	<i>Εφημερίς</i>
<i>Πατέρα στο σπίτι!</i>	1 Jan. 1895	<i>Ακρόπολις</i>
<i>Φιλόστοργοι</i>	25 Dec. 1895	<i>Ακρόπολις</i>
<i>Ο Ξεπεσμένος Δερβίσης</i>	18 Jan. 1896	<i>Ακρόπολις</i>
<i>Χωρίς στεφάνι</i>	24 Mar. 1896	<i>Ακρόπολις</i>

<i>Τα Χριστούγεννα του τεμπέλη</i>	Christmas 1896	<i>Χριστουγεννιάτικη Ακρόπολις</i>
<i>Οι Παραπονεμένες</i>	5 Mar. 1899	<i>Το Άστυ</i>
<i>Απόλαυσις στη γειτονιά</i>	15-16 Aug. 1900	<i>Το Άστυ</i>
<i>Ο Γείτονας με το λαγούτο</i>	25 Dec. 1900	<i>Σκριπ</i>
<i>Το Θαύμα της Καισαριανής</i>	15 Aug. 1901	<i>Παναθήναια</i>
<i>Η Χολεριασμένη</i>	31 Oct. 1901	<i>Παναθήναια</i>
<i>Ο Κοσμολαΐτης</i>	30 Jun.- 2 Jul. 1903	<i>Αθήναι</i>
<i>Οι Κουκλοπαντρείες</i>	2, 3 and 7 Sep. 1903	<i>Σκριπ</i>
<i>Ο Αειπλόνητος</i>	20-21 Oct. 1903	<i>Τά Νέα [Βώκου]</i>
<i>Άλλος Τύπος</i>	27 Nov. 1903	<i>Σκριπ</i>
<i>Ο Χορός εις του κ. Περιάνδρου</i>	4 Jan. 1905	<i>Σκριπ</i>
<i>Το Ψοφίμι</i>	5 Aug. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Οι Δύο Δράκοι</i>	8 Aug. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Ποια εκ των δύο</i>	12 Aug. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Η Θεοδικία της δασκάλας</i>	15 Aug. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>

<i>Το Τυφλό σοκάκι</i>	19 Aug. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Το “Νάμι” της</i>	21 Aug. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Εξοχικόν κρούσμα</i>	2 Sep. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Το Θαλάσσωμα</i>	13 Sep. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Κοινωνική αρμονία</i>	18 Sep. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Η Γραία κ’ η θύελλα</i>	23 Sep. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Ο Διδάχος</i>	6 Nov. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Η Μακρακιστίνα</i>	25 Dec. 1906	<i>Νέον Άστυ</i>
<i>Τα Πτερόεντα δώρα</i>	1 Jan. 1907	<i>Αλήθεια</i>
<i>Η Κάλτσα της Νώενας</i>	7 Jan. 1907	<i>Αλήθεια</i>
<i>Τα Καλαμπούρια ενός δασκάλου- Αναμνήσεις φοιτητικού βίου</i>	15 Apr. 1908	<i>Παναθήναια</i>
<i>Ο αντίκτυπος του νου</i>	15 Dec. 1910	<i>Χαραυγή Μυτιλήνης</i>
<i>Τραγούδια του Θεού</i>	March 1912	<i>Ο Καλλιτέχνης.</i>
<i>Μεγαλείων οψώνια</i>	May 1912	<i>Ο Καλλιτέχνης</i>
<i>Το Ιδιόκτητο</i>	5 Jun. 1925	<i>Ελεύθερον Βήμα</i>

<i>Τα Τελευταία του γέρου</i>	7 Jun. 1925	<i>Ελεύθερον Βήμα</i>
<i>Το Κουκούλωμα</i>	14 Jun. 1925	<i>Ελεύθερον Βήμα</i>
<i>Ιατρεία Βαβυλώνας</i>	17 Aug. 1925	<i>Ελεύθερον Βήμα</i>
<i>[Η Ψυχοκόρη]</i>	13-14 Sep. 1925	<i>Πολιτεία</i>
<i>Το Ζωντανό κιβούρι μου</i>	12 Dec. 1926	<i>Κυριακή Ελευθέρου Βήματος</i>
<i>Ο Προστάτης των χηρών</i>	1947	A. Papachristou, <i>Ο Άγνωστος Παπαδιαμάντης</i>
<i>Ο Αυτοκτόνος</i>	1954	<i>Τα Άπαντα Αλέξανδρου Παπαδιαμάντη</i> . 6 vols, Giorgos Valetas (ed)

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