# LITERATURE AS PERFORMANCE

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# Abstracts

## Anastasia Bakogianni

**Performing Greek tragedy for the camera: Michael Cacoyannis' Euripidean trilogy**

The question this paper proposes to investigate is how the performance of Greek tragedy is transformed when it is transplanted into the medium of cinema using Michael Cacoyannis' Euripidean trilogy as a case study. Cacoyannis (1922-2011) created three cinematic receptions that were directly modelled on the ancient tragedian's plays. His Electra (1962), The Trojan Women (1971) and Iphigenia (1977) all lay claim to the ancient performative texts of Electra, Troades and Iphigenia at Aulis as their 'source'. By utilising the reception to 'return' to the 'original source' Cacoyannis' trilogy also allows us to think about ancient theatrical practice from a modern perspective.

The Greek-Cypriot director offers us a unique perspective because he is the only filmmaker to have completed a thematically linked trilogy based on Greek Tragedy which allows us to trace the development of his approach to filming Greek tragedy from his theatrical Electra to his more filmic Iphigenia. Using photographs and short clips from Cacoyannis' trilogy to illustrate the discussion this paper will focus on the performance of emotion on camera with particular reference to acting style, the use of the chorus and the impact of the choice of medium.

## Beatrice Daskas

***From a personal grief to a universal state of despair: Nicolaos Mesarites, on the death of his Brother John and the fall of Constantinople to the Latins (1204).* [Mes., Epitaph., *[28]-[29], pp. 41.16-42.31 Heisenberg I 1923]***

The following passages are drawn from Nicolaos Mesarites' *Epitaphios Logos* dedicated to his "brother", the monk John, who died on February 5, 1207, in the aftermath of the fall of Constantinople to the Latins. Likely born in Constantinople in the early 1160s, Mesarites was a well-established member of the Constantinopolitan literati society. Together with John, he was involved as a mediator in the political and intellectual controversies between the Greek and the Latin clergy at the beginning of the 13th-century.

The paragraphs belong to the lament section of the funeral oration (Men. Rhet., pp. 418-422, *RhG* III Spengel). Following the tradition, the text features some of the conventional motifs of *thrênos*. Just as we found the contrast between past and present as a theme developed into a reflection on the bygone favours of the dead to recall the sorrow of those left behind, so we also notice the typical reproaching address to the deceased as another typical way of expressing grief. The rhetorical dynamic between the orator and his mourning audience, taking part in the consolatory ritual, is made altogether clear throughout the text, disclosing the performative context of the funeral oration.

The scene for this mourning drama is set by the introductory account of a foretelling vision that

Mesarites had on the tragic fate of Constantinople about falling under Latin rule. A universal state of despair provoked by the loss of the city seems to take over any personal grief, becoming an ambiguous element entailing the sense of an impossible consolation, a never-ending sorrow for the living ones.

## Catia Galatariotou

***On the cultural context of the ritual lament***

This paper focuses on the backdrop to Margaret Alexiou's classic study, and to this workshop; a backdrop comprised of fundamental notions regarding the expression of the human experience of grievous loss.

What feelings are aroused by the experience of loss, and what conscious and unconscious, personal and collective forces shape their expression? Why do we need to ritualize and perform grief? Are ritualistic expressions authentic representations of human emotion or just stylized fulfilments of cultural expectation? What, in this context, is the meaning of loss, grief, ritual, performance, art? Is personal ritual possible, and if so how does it relate to communal ritual? Why have women been the historical carriers of lamentation for the dead? What are the implications of the recording of lament on oral tradition, and on literature as performance?

These questions refer to but some of the component parts of the rich, complex and elusive cultural hinterland in which the ritual lament is born and held. As far as I know there is no comprehensive map for this territory. I will bring instead questions and suggestions framed around insights from the fields of social anthropology, philosophy, and theoretical and clinical psychoanalysis.

## Gail Holst-Warhaft

***'The Orient emerges': Laments that stir the Greek soul.***

The interrelationship of ritual laments for the dead and ancient tragedy has already been recognized and explored in a number of important studies. In this paper I would like to extend the discussion of lament to Modern Greek literature and song, examining apparent similarities in the reception of lament in modern Greece to its reception in classical Greece.

In widely disparate Greek contexts, laments arouse similar emotions, and however much they are valued as cathartic, they are also feared as potentially disruptive and dangerous. One singularity of Greek lament throughout the centuries appears to be a perception that it is not quite Greek. Performed by women, foreigners, refugees, choruses of captives, lament has always been outside the realm of acceptable male/civic Greek behaviour, and tainted by its perceived 'oriental' character. The 'otherness' of lament has affected its reception at least from the 5$^{th}$ century BCE until the present day. Taking examples from tragedy, folk lament, late Ottoman music and twentieth century Greek literature and song, the paper examines the combination of disquieting foreignness and intense emotion that laments provoke in their listeners.

## Liz James

***Constantine of Rhodes' lament of the Mother of God***

Constantine of Rhodes' lament of the Mother of God survives, incomplete, as lines 946-981 at the end of his account of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople. It is a lament that has not really formed a part of discussions about either 'the Byzantine lament' or the lamenting Mother of God.

However, as I will discuss, it fits well into the traditions of both.

However, its performative context appears to be as part of a longer poem about the Holy Apostles. It is a text within a text and its role as a part of Constantine's narrative needs to be explored. What was Constantine's poem for and why might it have included what appears at first sight like a long digression in reported speech?

## Silvia Milanezi

***'I cry over my shield, over my cockerel, over my city': Greek comedy and ritual lament***

Greek comedy, as expected, is plenty of laughter and ridicule. But it would be wrong to consider that what pertains to ritual lament is irrelevant to comedy. Comic poets not only use a wide spectrum of the vocabulary of lament, but also cherish the opportunity to insert into their plays performances of ritual lament. Given that comedy evokes and comments tragedy, some comic laments can be understood as parodies of the "high style" tragic genre or of specific tragic scenes. But, there is more to it.

I would like to show how ritual lament is sometimes fundamental to the comic plot and how it is introduced in order to provoke laughter. First, I will underline the importance of the ritual lament vocabulary and its comic context, in order to show that *threnoi* are not alien to comedy. Then, I will study sung comic laments in order to show that they do not reflect only the souvenir of a given theatrical representation as the Epops' song in *Birds*, or Andromeda's song in the *Thesmophoriasuzae*, but also an element of a broader theatrical contest as that taking place in Hades (Aeschylus' *monodia* in *Frogs)*. Finally I will explore the exodus of *Acharnians* as a *threnos* over oneself and also as a comic reversal of the civic heroism and of an *epitaphios logos*. There is delight in tears and lament, as Homer puts it. Comedy mirroring tragedy shows that ritual lament is not only one of the most important components of drama but also that this source of delight tells the evolution of fifth century B.C. poetics of sorrow and laughter.

## Leonard Muellner

***Performance of gender, performance of poetry***

My starting point is the work of the Lesbian feminist Judith Butler, who distinguishes between a person's sex, her biologically determined sexual traits, and her gender. Butler defines the term gender as a performance that societies often represent as related to and determined by sex though in reality it is socially constructed. By performance Butler means theatrically acting out a recognizable pattern of behaviors within a public, social context, using verbal, gestural, and body language. That is not what we have in mind when we speak in the context of this conference of the performance of literature in a song culture like that of Greece or the former Yugoslavia. But there is one locus classicus in Homeric poetry in which these two notions of performance, one appropriate to poetry that is composed as it is performed, the other appropriate to notions of gender and theatricality in modern life, appear to intersect. What I have in mind is the lament that Achilles sings for Patroklos in the 19th Scroll of the Iliad, lines 315-337. Laments are otherwise the domain of women in the Homeric world, so the question I wish to address is: what does it mean that Achilles takes on a task that is defined as part of feminine gender performance (in Butler's sense) in the performance of a lament (in Albert Lord's sense) that, in the notional reality of Homeric poetry, a male (aoidos or rhapsode) was actually performing?

## Margaret Mullett

***Performability and the Christos Paschon***

I propose to look at lament material in this text, 'a dramatic hypothesis in the manner of Euripides', mostly now dated to the twelfth century rather than to Gregory Nazianzos who is credited in the manuscript tradition. There are 2610 iambic lines from *Medea, Hippolytos, Rhesos* and *Bacchae* (as well as some other plays) stitched into a cento, which is, according to Tuilier, a trilogy. It has been looked at by scholars trying to prove the existence or otherwise of a Byzantine drama, by Betsy Bolman on the Galaktotrophousa, and by Meg Alexiou on the Virgin's lament. It has quite often been performed but the model has often been passion play rather than tragedy, and almost never has it been performed with its source texts. Rather than look for performance indicators and argue for performance, I should like to assess its performability: to underline its status as a tragedy, to see how deep the bow to Euripides is, and to examine it as a very early example of the reception of Euripidean tragedy.

## Greg Nagy

***Genre and occasion: Examples of shifting forms in performance***

This paper takes its inspiration from the empirical observations of Margaret Alexiou about the crossings of boundaries in genres, as when a lament modulates into a love song or the other way around. I analyze a collection of examples where a given kind of verbal art shifts from its own kind to another on the occasion of a given performance, as when one genre is transformed into another - or when where one type of performer substitutes for another type. Featured among the examples will be situations where male performers substitute for female counterparts or vice versa.

## Ioanna Papadopoulou

***Dangerous emotions: Philosophical views on performance and lament***

Plato the poetician seems particularly interested in lamentation, which proves to be a key theme to the understanding of platonic poetics. Reading the platonic theory of mimesis through the theme of lamentation proves a rewarding exercise: Plato's/ Socrates' developments on poetry often focus on lamentation scenes and result in an ideal cultural policy which excludes staging of lamenting heroes, thereby censuring scenes as famous as Achilles' lamentation for Patroclus' death. In suggesting this course of action the philosopher seems conscious of depriving the Athenian public from one of the most popular poetic "hits", as lamentation scenes appear to be a substantial criterion of success for poets (playwrights, rhapsodes...) in Athens.

If time allows, I will adduce testimonials from other authors to show the importance of this sub-genre in philosophical approaches to poetry.

## Jan Parker

***Does mourning become Electra? Performative utterance and the transference of pain***

Itaque cum agi fabula videretur, dolor actus est.

(Thus, while it appeared that a play was being performed, what was performed was his, Polus', pain.) Gellius (1946), ii.34-7

Socrates

οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ θεατὴς τῶν δακτυλίων ὁ ἔσχατος, ὧν ἐγὼ ἔλεγον ὑπὸ τῆς Ἡρακλειώτιδος λίθουἀπ᾽ ἀλλήλων τὴν δύναμιν λαμβάνειν

(your spectator is the last of the rings which I spoke of as receiving from each other the power transmitted from the Heraclean lodestone) Pl. *Ion* 535e

This transference of pain – from poet-actor to audience – is objected to fiercely by Brecht (re the Polus anecdote in Gellius 'there is only one word for such an operation: barbaric' (Brecht (1974), 270) and by Plato's Socrates in the *Ion* and *Republic* X. Modern day Poluses such as Fiona Shaw have reported the damage and effect of embodying a traumatised and potentially traumatising character such as Electra: the residue of uncommunicated pain and mental distress left in the actor's body.

Sophocles play ends with a signally transgressive complex of metatheatrical performative utterances, with Electra on stage summoning up the long-planned revenge killing *offstage*:

Electra: Stab her doubly, if you can!
Clytaemnestra (within): Ah, wounded again!
Electra: Would that Aegisthus, too, were wounded!
Chorus
The curses bring fulfillment: those who are buried live.
For men long dead are draining their killers' blood in a stream of requital (*El.* 1416-21).

Unlike the hysterical, death- and release- bringing final lament of Strauss' opera, there is no onstage closure for the character - or actor? Electra's final line is to urge Orestes to an act of bestial violence beyond the play.

This paper will consider the embedding and dramaturgy of 'performative utterance' in Sophocles Electra; for if performative utterance is where speech [successfully] realises and reifies, what happens when dramatic utterance fails to do just that? And when the trauma of a play's action is that failure, that *lack* of communication and transference from character to audience through the actor, that rejection - with Brecht - of Ion and Ars Poetica's ' if you want me to weep
First show me your own eye full of tears' ?

## Eirini Panou

### *Nikephoros Gregoras's homily on the lament of Mary's parents*

Nikephoros Gregoras (1295-1360) composed a homily on the Nativity and the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, where he also included the events that preceded Mary's Conception. Based on the second-century apocryphal *Protevangelion of James*, Gregoras elaborated on Anne's and Joachim's lament over their sterility. This theme had been repeatedly treated in Byzantium since the eighth century, but Gregoras stands out as the composer of a highly dramatic liturgical work, which largely incorporates elements that demonstrate his interest in astronomy, history, theology and nature. Thus, his homily will be treated as a product of fourteenth-century intellectual and theological developments in Byzantium, which nevertheless encapsulates a number of *topoi* that formed the core of homilies on Mary's early life throughout the Byzantine period.

## Neni Panourgiá

***Oedipus Bound: Performing Oedipus Tyrannus in a maximum security prison***

Anthropology and literature have been set on opposite ends of the knowledge spectrum—the former deals in and with "facts" while the latter engages with their creative re-presentation. The former operates on strict rules and regulations as to what constitutes such facts, while the latter freely fuses them together, creating an interpretive magma without regard to their actuality. They both produce knowledge that stands apposite to the information that produces it. But what is the knowledge that literature performs that could be of an epistemological or analytical value to anthropology? I will explore this question by looking at theatrical performances staged by prisoners as theatrical performances taking place in prisons have become more common over the last fifty years. While they belie an engagement with a vision of the prison as a rehabilitative and reform institution as described by Foucault, they also underline the deep rift between the realities of the prison ideology and its actuality. Nowhere is this rift more pronounced than in the performance of ancient drama, especially tragedy. In this presentation I will discuss briefly a few notable performances of ancient drama in spaces of internment (such as on Makronissos in the late 1940s) while I will describe and discuss a recent performance of Oedipus Tyrannus at the maximum security prison Sing-Sing in New York.

## Stratis Papaioannou

***Lament and Emotion in the Metaphrastic Menologion***

During the last decades of the tenth century, Symeon Metaphrastes and his team of writers revised earlier Saints' *Lives* into a performatively more capacious style. His *Menologion,* readings arranged according to the ecclesiastical calendar, became an instant success among Constantinopolitan churches, monasteries, and aristocratic households with immense influence on Byzantine literary aesthetics. Arguably, the texts included in the *Menologion* were some of the most performed narrative texts in eleventh- and twelfth-century Constantinople.

By focusing on a series of rhetorically embellished laments in the Metaphrastic corpus, the present paper examines contemporary discussions of proper delivery (*hypokrisis*) as well as performative techniques embedded in the composition of the lament set-pieces themselves. Evidence will be drawn from Metaphrastes, but also from Michael Psellos, who devoted an essay on Metaphrastes, and commentaries on Gregory of Nazianzos, in which *hypokrisis* is a prominent theme.

## Charles Pazdernik

***Thucydides' "letter of Nicias"***

"Lament" and "performance" provide potentially very intriguing frames for reading Thucydides' "letter of Nicias" (7.11-15), an imitation of which Procopius of Caesarea fashions into a letter addressed by Belisarius to Justinian during the first siege of Rome (Wars 5.24.1-17).

Most readers detect a despondent or despairing tone in the former, but I'm not aware that the formal or generic basis for such a conclusion has been fully explored. (There is the article by Zadorojnyi in CQ 48 [1998] suggesting that there may be an allusion to Homer's Agamemnon.) Katherine Adshead (in Clarke, ed., Reading the Past in Late Antiquity [1990]) has argued that Procopius' Belisarius reverses Nicias' self-pitying assessment, dwelling on the prospects of victory rather than defeat; here as in so many other instances Procopius serves as a witness for the reception of Thucydides.

Alexiou's tripartite schematization of the traditional Greek lament as consisting of a direct address, a narrative, and a renewed address accompanied by reproach and lamentation lends itself to the letters

of Nicias and Belisarius and potentially distinguishes them, as urgent requests for support from the field, from other specimens of military communication. (In this connection see also E. A. Meyer in Kraus, Marincola, and Pelling, eds., Ancient Historiography and Its Contexts [2010] on Thuc. and Sallust.) Certainly the idea that the reproach characteristically takes the form of an accusation of abandonment seems apposite in this connection.

The performative dimension of epistolary communications as these are embedded in historical narrative is also very interesting for the way that it focalizes the broad and complex field of action within a theatre of war and presents it as the dilemma of an individual. The manner then in which their letters represent Nicias and Belisarius in performance and situate them with respect to their addressees is key. Both Nicias and Belisarius dwell upon their past services and accomplishments as a way of pressing claims for support, but whereas Nicias seeks to be relieved of his duties Belisarius insists that he will remain at his station even if reinforcements are unforthcoming.

## Laure Petit

***Staging tragic lamentation today: Euripides'* kommoi**

In the tragedies of Euripides there are numerous *kommoi*, i.e. the ritual song of mourning performed by soloist and a choir in front of the deceased. The analysis of each structure of the *drama* (etymologically meaning action) shows that the *kommoi* played a central part. It is in the form of the *kommos* that Euripides moulds the scenes of overthrow, *metabolai* of the *drama*. Being pivotal points of the *drama*, they also play a most important role in the representation / performance. Starting from the example of Hecuba, I will show how Euripides, within the *performance*, takes on the dramatic strength of the ritual song of mourning, that is, the *kommos* and enhances its strength by superimposing the *kommoi* and the *metabolai* of the *drama*, thus creating powerful turns of events able to strike theatre audiences by combining a powerful scenic vision, singing, music and dancing. The aim of this paper is to show how the work of staging conducted by the company "Allez Bacchantes" sought to translate into theatrical language these visual and oral ways to convey the *metabolai*, ways that are barely echoed in the text of the play.

## Yiannis Petropoulos

***The* paraklausithuron *("love-lament") as a performance genre: The instances of Theocritus Idyll 11 and pseudo-Theocritus 23***

Scholars have treated the *paraklausithuron* as a bona fide amatory genre but paid little if any attention to this song type as a lament in its own right. In this paper I shall briefly examine the p's profound affinities with the conventional lament, and argue that it is essentially a performance of grief at separation from one's beloved.

## Aglae Pizzone

***How to stage a good reading: laments as extra-textual directions***

In commenting on one of the most emotional passages of the *Odyssey*, namely the lines wherein Odysseus covers his head and cries upon listening to Demodocus' song, Eustathios throws in an intriguing remark on the bard's performance. The cause of Odysseus' unusual response, Eustathios says, is the way in which Demodocus executed his song. The memories triggered by the tale alone would not have been enough to shake the hero's self-control. In particular, Eustathios stresses that the "bard had plucked the cords of his cithara so as to produce laments at chosen points". Eustathios, therefore, seems to imply that there is something 'outside' the Homeric text, something that is not

preserved by the written word. Such a 'performative paratext' is so powerful as to convey a pragmatic meaning and to shape the audience's response. On the one hand, this interpretation is in tune with contemporary, performative reading practices. On the other hand, Eustathios' awareness toward extra-textual insertions reinforcing the affective and performative dimensions of a given passage can tell us something more. Eustathios' remark, I argue, opens up new perspectives on the lemmata pointing to lament preserved by manuscripts bequeathing narrative/rhetorical works. Such lemmata can be seen not just as a guide for the readers to better understand a given text and its emotional tone, but also as a sort of 'blocking' or 'directions', indicating how the text had to be performed.

## Maro Prevelaki

***Three moirologia of the Virgin: maternal suffering as a drama* (O glyky mou Ear, Oi Ponoi tis Panagias, Epitaphios)**

Common suffering in face of an unexpected, unjust death reaches its highest level, literally and metaphorically, in a mother's lamentation. Virgin Mary, mother of all, an entirely human figure risen to divine immortality, is incarnated and re-incarnated through pain. No loss is heavier than the separation of mother and child, when the order is reversed; when a mother sees that "beauty has gone" and her son lies in his grave.

In the Virgin's Engomia, lamentation becomes a funerary eulogy, an active refrain to the dominating death. Varnalis in his "Ponoi" brings back this injustice by extending the Virgin's pain to a bitter acceptance of the illuminated innocents' fate, as humankind cannot stand the truth. In Ritsos' Epitaph, the moiroloi is focused to the loss itself.

In those three poetic expressions pain is dramatized, placing the Virgin as the central tragic person. On Holy Fridays, in church, the Orthodox participation takes the form of a massive funeral. In Varnalis' view, the Virgin foresees and feels the sacrifice, the fate, which she has to accept like all mortals. In Ritsos' verses, the worst has happened; its description compares life before to life after death has hit.

Pain, lamentation and moiroloi refer and function in a ritualistic archetype and the living linguistic traditions in time and space.

## Grigoris Sifakis

***Poetry or script for actors? The opsis misunderstanding that keeps overshadowing Aristotle's treatise on the* Art of Poetry**

If opsis in A.'s Poetics refers to the visual aspects of theatrical performance, its nearly synonymous expression, "ὁ τῆς ὄψεως κόσμος," is a wider description which should be taken to include, not only such visible features as costumes, masks and the like, but also acting and directing. Like the composition of music (μελοποιΐα), it is defined as one of the six "qualitative parts" (or constitutive elements) which characterize tragedy. Yet, Aristotle was not willing to deal with performative aspects of drama in any detail, because they had not been discussed or systematized before, and he was not prepared to write a technical treatise on theatre arts in addition to the art of poetry. The widespread view that he was dismissive of theater production, in the face of his statement to the effect that since dramatic imitation is carried out by acting agents "it necessarily follows, to begin with, that the order of theater spectacle would be a part of tragedy," is due to one of several misinterpretations of his text rather than to Aristotle himself.

## Foteini Spingou

***Commissioning the sorrow:* epitaphs, monodies *and their performance***

The *Anthologia Marciana*, the anthology of court poetry in manuscript Marc. Gr. 524, is our only source for many eleventh- and twelfth-century texts. Among these texts is an epitaph with the following intriguing title: 'On the tomb of the purple-born sebastokrator kyr Andronikos in the monastery of Pantokrator, as if from his wife, sebastokratorissa Anna'. Despite its obvious importance, the poem has never been published. The most interesting feature for our purposes is that the poem walks a tight rope between monody and epitaph. I will first discuss its historical context: who were sebastokrator Andronikos and sebastokratorissa Anna? What could have been the profile of the anonymous poet and why did he compose the text? Then, we will move to the burial site and try to find the function of the poem: did this text mean to be inscribed or performed? How sharp is this distinction? Did the use of the text affect its ritualistic character? In order to discuss these questions, evidence from letters, speeches and other twelfth-century poetic texts will be used.

## Anna Stavrakopoulou

***Separation, musical performance as lament and the healing power of love in the "Mute Violinist"***

At the end of the 19th century, the emancipation of women had placed the struggle between the sexes at the core of all public and private discussions, throughout Europe, including the relatively new, makeshift kingdom of Greece.

The "Mute Violinist" is an oral traditional tale, which starts with a premature wedding and ends with its much-awaited consummation. Through an unusual narrative, the tale deals with the usual folktale topics of intellectual maturity in the making, of the passage from adolescence to adulthood through love and betrayal, separation and loss, before the reunion of the couple at the end. At the same time, the tale stresses the vital impact of art: sculpture, artifacts and music in the narration help humans bond, on a communal and personal level. In this paper, I explore the changing dynamics of gender roles in Greek society at the end of the 19th century, as well as the role of music as lament and of lament as a prerequisite of rebirth, in the life-cycle.

## Ann Suter

***Incorporating ritual lament into tragic drama: Aeschylos' Persians and Euripides' Trojan Women***

It is a commonplace to observe that ritual lament is included in Attic tragedy of the 5th century. Some scholars, indeed, even argue that tragic drama developed from real-life lament. Whether this is so or not, what we see by 472 BCE, the date of Aeschylos' *Persians*, our earliest complete play, is a complex and ingenious use of lament within the newly-forming conventions of tragic drama. Almost sixty years later, after intensive and imaginative experimentation with the new genre, Euripides' *Trojan Women* of 416 shows the development of the use of lament in tragedy, based on Aeschylos' initial ideas, and with innovations of his own.

Far from a simple inclusion of "Form A" within "Form B", the appearance of lament in tragedy presented real dramatic problems. Chief among these was the appropriate adaptation of a genre (lament) with its own purposes, temporal context, development and climax into another genre (tragic drama) with very different demands for these things. Ritual lament always occurs at the death of someone, and presents certain attitudes towards the dead on the part of the living: praise, blame, love,

sorrow. It also may include other feelings: abandonment, desire for revenge. How does the dramatist fit all this into a play with its own story line?

Another important issue would have been that of metrical appropriateness. We do not know the meters of real-life lament, but there surely were some. Aeschylos was faced with the problem of the choice of appropriate ones to adapt and incorporate lament into the metrical conventions so far developed for drama.

I will trace the development of the solutions to these problems, basing my exposition on the work of Elinor Wright, who has developed careful criteria for the identification of laments of Attic tragedy. In general, she has separated her perceived laments into two groups, full and reduced.

The former have all the criteria for a lament, the latter only some. The former are always at the end of a play, thus allowing the temporal context of the lament and the climatic moment of the drama to coincide: life is at an end, and so is the drama. The latter always come before the end, and present only a few of the criteria, thus allowing the narrative plot and the emotional development of the play to continue. The reduced lament can be used for a variety of purposes: foreshadowing the future, interpreting the current scene, showing conflict among the characters onstage. It bends the demands of ritual lament to those of the drama.

I will give a fuller explanation of Wright's mythology, as well as examples of full and reduced laments taken from the *Persians* and the *Trojan Women*. For the moment I will point out only that the two plays I have chosen are perhaps the fullest of lament of any of our extant corpus, and, not surprisingly (if you accept my description above of the issues facing a dramatist who wants to use lament in his play), have the least plot of any of them. It is not that nothing happens in them (especially in the *Trojan Women*), but that they have little plot in the Aristotelian sense of beginning, middle and end.

The choice of these two plays as examples of how the accommodation of ritual lament into tragedy was effected permits the examination of another topic of scholarly debate, that of the origin of lament as we find it in 5th century drama. It is usually assumed, but seldom argued, that lament as we know it in Greece came through influences and borrowings from the "East". I will examine this assumption, and argue that there are many similarities between the laments in the *Persians* and the *Trojan Women* (both with Eastern casts), and the rest of the laments in the tragic corpus (with characters from many Greek locations). It is as though, in general cultural terms, lament is the same for everyone. I will also note some of the similarities between the Greek corpus and our evidence from farther east, and suggest that the likelihood of the Greeks "borrowing" from their Eastern neighbours is much less than the likelihood of the Greek lament being simply one manifestation of a general development, over centuries, of the forms of lament in the Near East, beginning with the Mesopotamian, through the Hittite, Hurrian, Luwian, Trojan, and Greek forms, among probably many others.

## Niki Tsironis

### *Coming to terms with the death of God: ritual lament and dogmatic perceptions in Byzantium*

The lament of the Mother of God represents a mediating factor through which humanity attempted to come to terms with the death of God. Ritual and doctrine are to be encountered intertwined in this process, which is testified in literary, theological and art-historical sources of the early and middle Byzantine period. The lament of the Virgin, emerging as a theme in the apocrypha, plays a vital role in the development of the subject in the geographical area of the Eastern Mediterranean. In this paper I intend to look into the development of the lament

and the Crucifixion read through theories of grief and bereavement formulated in the 20th century but also through the testimony of Byzantine art and homiletics, tracing its crucial turning points especially from the 5th to the 9th century, i.e. from the time of the Nestorian controversy to the end of the Iconoclastic era.

## Iosif Vivilakis

### *The Book as Stage: The case of Konstantinos Kaisarios Dapontes*

Konstantinos Kaisarios Dapontes, is one of the greatest poets of the 18th century, whose voluminous oeuvre covers a wide span of writings, such as sermons, ecclesiastical canons and dialogues. He has also edited and authored liturgical services, wrote about the lives and martyrdom of Saints, provided interpretations of the Divine Liturgy, recounted narratives about kings and stories about good and bad women.

Dapontes is the first author who writes the biblical story of Jephthah's daughter as a tragedy in Greek, dramatizing at the same time his own personal ordeal of imprisonment in Contsantinople in 1747. A key element in the work's structure is a chorus of girls lamenting their virgin friend who is about to be sacrificed. What we know from the work of Margaret Alexiou about ritual lament and the traditions pertaining to the representation of grief and sorrow are to be found here, in an enactment that takes place on the mountain, amidst nature, far removed from the world of men. By focusing on this kind of experimentation with the writing of tragedy, I try to fathom Dapontes's intentions in the presentation of his stories by a performer narrator, attempt to draw links with Byzantium and seek for the audience the poet addressed through his distinctive perception of theatre.

## Rebecca White

### *Seeing grief in St Gregory Palamas*

Two aspects emerge from an exploration of the notion of grief or mourning in the writings of the fourteenth-century hesychast theologian, Gregory Palamas. The first, that the theme of grief provides an important counterbalance to the light mysticism more commonly associated with Gregory Palamas. The second, that the theology of divine light itself is underpinned by an understanding of grief, which has Christ at its centre and may be described as incarnational. This is a transfigured and transfiguring grief which functions as a bridge in the journey from repentance to salvation, usually, but not exclusively, given the term penthos and variously called godly grief, spiritual grief, saving grief, blessed grief. This grief is distinguished carefully from grief which does not have repentance at its root and which can lead to despair.

The context of Palamas's most elaborate examination of grief is a letter written to the nun, Xene, in 1345/6, (PS 5, 193-230, especially section 48ff. (218-230); PG 150: 1044-1088), which establishes the link between poverty and grief on four interrelated levels and goes on to show how these are accompanied by four corresponding types of spiritual solace, including the vision of divine light. The theme of spiritual grief is directly linked to the debate about whether this is an experience of created or uncreated grace, an issue for which Palamas stood condemned at the time of writing this text, though later he would be exonerated and his theology celebrated at two synods in 1347 and 1351. This careful exposition of sorrow gives Palamas the opportunity to affirm the value of the body, and specifically human emotion, in the spiritual life, tying it in to his eschatological vision, experienced in part in the here and now. ●