

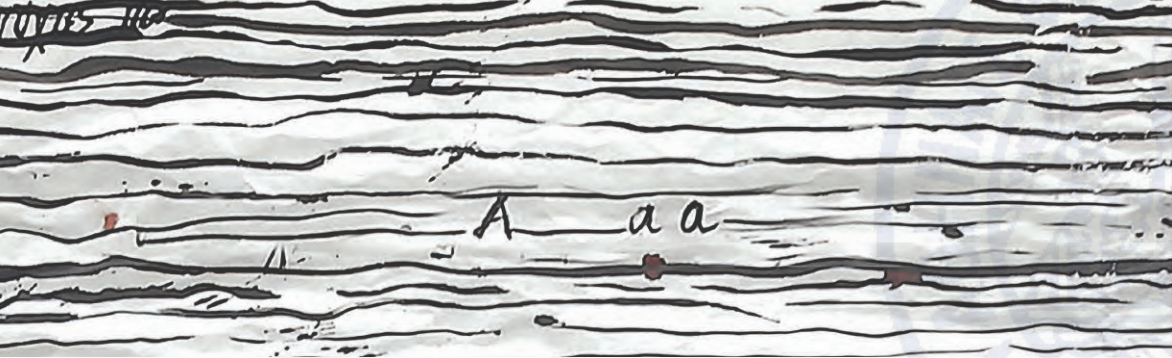


Literature as Performance

5-7 July

Word and Art Auditorium,
Books' Arcade
(Αίθουσα Λόγου και Τέχνης,
Στοά του Βιβλίου)

Athens, Greece



LITERATURE as PERFORMANCE

Description

Dedicated to "Literature as Performance", the conference will explore selected literary texts in the Greek language which were performed in a number of theatrical, liturgical or generally ritual contexts during the Greco-Roman, Byzantine, and Modern Greek periods.

Texts when studied as texts deprive us of insight into the qualities they possess if performed. Most texts were in fact composed to be performed rather than read (in the modern sense). Their successive performance (or 're-performance') was integral to their reception. Hence the effort to place texts in the setting of their reception may restore qualities overlooked by scholarship limited to approaching works as written records.

The present conference will be concerned with literature as performance with emphasis on two aspects: first, the method of composition of these 'texts', and second, their performative context (theatrical, liturgical or generally ritual) which arguably shaped the text itself. Specifically, we have chosen the topic and category of the lament, which is abundantly represented in ancient Greek, Byzantine and Modern Greek literature and folk-song.

The lament as a device for expressing grief for a misfortune or the loss of someone or something may be encountered in secular as well as ecclesiastical literature of almost all genres. Our aim is to explore themes, imagery and rhythmical patterns employed in laments, or lament elements embedded in other types of narrative. The continuous deployment of distinct elements in the lament throughout the literature composed in Greek has been studied by Margaret Alexiou in her pioneering *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, dealing with the period from antiquity to modern times. Apart from 'modern' folk-song, Greek literature proper from the 20th century affords rich examples of the lament which may be investigated in the light of the diachronic tradition and with emphasis on the aspects of composition and (re)performance.

Conveners:

George Babiniotis

Professor of Linguistics and ex-rector of the University of Athens and President of the Society for the Promotion of Education and Learning (Φιλεκπαιδευτική Εταιρεία)

Gregory Nagy

Francis Jones Professor of Classical Greek Literature and Professor of Comparative Literature at Harvard University, Director of the Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C., Harvard University

Conference Organizer:

Niki Tsironis

Researcher at the Institute of Historical Research of the National Hellenic Research Foundation and Associate in Byzantine Studies, Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C., Harvard University

cover illustration:

Venia Dimitrakopoulou

www.dimitrakopoulou.com

Shirt of Nessus 03, 2011

indian ink on chinese paper

1.90 x 1.60 m

first exhibited

Mapping Oneself

Athens Art Gallery @ Blue building,

Exarcheia

May – June, 2011

According to Greek Mythology, the hero Heracles put on the shirt which his wife Deianira had given him and suffered a tragic death because it had been dipped in the blood of Centaur Nessus and would burn the flesh of whoever wore it. Not knowing the whole truth, Heracles' wife thought that the shirt had magic properties that would bind Heracles to her in perpetual fidelity. In Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, at one point Antony utters the famous phrase, 'the shirt of Nessus is upon me', in his desire to express the tragic predicament and the oppressive burdens that had befallen him. The present work created from chinese paper and indian ink, bears on it a phrase from a love letter, a phrase that is repeated, crossed out, cut short and broken into fragments, thus constructing a landscape out of words and lines – 'linethoughts', a battlefield in which thoughts and words fight it out. The phrase refers to the elasticity of time: 'the two nights we spent together, twenty summers, my beloved' ... The love that renders the present eternal, or the single moment that can embrace the whole of eternity.

V.D.

♦ **Friday, JULY 5** ♦

9:00 Registration

9:30 Welcome address

9:45 Keynote address

Margaret Alexiou, George Seferis Professor Emerita of Modern Greek and Professor of Comparative Literature, Harvard University

Greek laments: Fifty years on

10:30 Gregory Nagy, Francis Jones Professor of Classical Greek Literature and Professor of Comparative Literature at Harvard University, Director of the Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C., Harvard University

Genre and occasion: Examples of shifting forms in performance

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Gail Holst-Warhaft, Professor of Comparative Literature and Biological & Environmental Engineering, Director, Mediterranean Studies Initiative, Cornell Institute for European Studies

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

12:00 Grigoris Sifakis, Professor Emeritus of Classics, New York University and President of the Governing Board, The University of Crete

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

12:30 Catia Galatariotou, Byzantine Cultural Historian and Psychoanalyst, British Institute of Psychoanalysis

On the cultural context of the ritual lament

13:00 Discussion

14:00 Lunch

15:30 Peter Meineck, Clinical Professor of Classics, New York University, Hon. Professor of Classics, University of Nottingham

Threnody, masked performance and depictions of grief

16:00 Aglae Pizzone, Researcher at the Centre Interfacultaire en Sciences Affectives, University of Geneva

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

16:30 Coffee Break

17:00 Leonard Muellner, Professor of Classical Studies, Brandeis University, Director of IT and Publications, Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C., Harvard University

Performance of gender, performance of poetry

17:30 Maria Prevelaki, Philologist, Special Researcher, Sorbonne

Maternal suffering as a sacred drama

18:00 Neni Panourgia, Visiting Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, New School for Social Research, New York

Oedipus Bound: Performing Oedipus Tyrannus in a maximum security prison

18:30 Discussion

21:00 The Cycle of Life. A Theatrical and Musical Performance by the Arsakeia Schools (Society for the Promotion of Education and Learning)

♦ **Saturday, JULY 6** ♦

9:30 Ioanna Papadopoulou, Université Libre de Brussels, EU Fellow, Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C., Harvard University

Dangerous emotions: Philosophical views on performance and lament

10:00 Silvia Milanezi, Professor of Ancient History, Université Paris-Est Créteil-CRHEC

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

10:30 Jan Parker, Senior Member, The University of Cambridge Classics Faculty and Chair, The Humanities Higher Education International Research Group

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

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Ann Suter, Professor Emerita of Classical Studies, University of Rhode Island

Incorporating ritual lament into tragic drama: Aeschylus and Euripides

12:00 Masa Culumovič, Mahindra Humanities Fellow at Harvard University, Post-doc Researcher at FHW

Death in life and life in death: Lament in Pindar's epinikia and threnoi

12:30 Yiannis Petropoulos, Professor of Ancient Greek Literature, Democritean University of Thrace, Director of the Center for Hellenic Studies (Greece), Harvard University

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

13:00 Discussion

13:30 Lunch

15:00 Charles Pazdernik, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Classics, Grand Valley State University

Epistolary lamentation: Nicias' letter to the Athenians and Belisarius' letter to Justinian

15:30 George T. Calofonos, Research Associate, Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation

Alleviating tragedy through performance in dreams: A case study from the miracles of St Demetrius

16:00 Coffee Break

16:30 Stratis Papaioannou, Associate Professor of Classics, Director of Modern Greek Studies Program, Brown University

Lament and emotion in the Metaphrastic Menologion

17:00 Foteini Spingou, Research Assistant, Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research, Oxford University

Commissioning the sorrow: Epitaphs and their performance

17:30 Beatrice Daskas, Università degli Studi, Milano

From 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

18:00 Discussion

♦ Sunday, JULY 7 ♦

9:30 Eirini Panou, Byzantine Historian, Independent Scholar

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

10:00 Niki Tsironis, Researcher, Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation and Associate in Byzantine Studies, CHS-Harvard University

Coming to terms with the death of God: Ritual lament and dogmatic perceptions in Byzantium

10:30 Liz James, Professor of Art History, University of Sussex

Constantine of Rhodes' lament of the Mother of God

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Kallistos Ware, Metropolitan of Diokleia, Oxford

A liturgical lament for the dead Christ: The encomia of Holy Friday

12:00 Margaret Mullett, Director of Byzantine Studies, Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University

Performability and the Christos Paschon

12:30 Ioli Kalavrezou, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine Art History, Harvard University

Expressions of drama in the scene of the Koimesis of the Theotokos

13:00 Discussion

13:30 Lunch

15:00 Rebecca White, Theologian, Independent Scholar, Oxford

Seeing grief in St Gregory Palamas

15:30 Iossif Vivilakis, Professor of Theatre Studies, University of Athens

The book as stage: The case of Konstantinos Kaisareios Dapontes

16:00 Anastasia Bakogianni, Lecturer in Classical Studies,
the Open University UK

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

16:30 Coffee Break

17:00 Laure Petit, Teaching Fellow in Greek Language and Theater
Studies, Paris IV Sorbonne, École Normale Supérieure and Stage
Director, Theatre Company "Allez Bacchantes"

Staging tragic lamentation today: Euripides' kommoi

17:30 Anna Stavrakopoulou, Assistant Professor of Theatre Studies,
University of Thessaloniki and Associate Director,
Center for Hellenic Studies (Greece), Harvard University

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

18:00 Lambros Liavas, Professor of Musicology, University of Athens

From the human voices to the musical instruments

18:30 Discussion

21:00 Lambros Liavas presents a performance of Epirot "Moirologia":
From the Human Voices to the Musical Instruments

Performances at the Atrium of the Books' Arcade

Friday 5th July, 21.00

The Cycle of Life. A Theatrical and Musical Performance

Literary texts – from Homer to Cavafy – will be staged: the performance will attempt a fresh and constructive reading of texts and figures ranging from Persephone to the Trojan Women, and from the Lament for Christ to folk songs and Modern Greek poetry. The Musical Society of the Arsakeia-Tositseia Schools, presents a performance revolving around the dialogue of life and death and combining poetry with the songs of Manos Hadjidakis.

Sunday 7th July, 21.00

The Epirot "Moirologia" (Laments): From the Human Voices to the Musical Instruments

Instrumental "moirologia" and polyphonic songs (laments) from Epirus
(Regions of Pogoni, Parakalamos, Deropolis)

Performed by the polyphonic vocal ensemble "Chaonia", the choir "Polyphono" of the Museum of Greek Folk Musical Instruments and the Thomas Lolis' Epirot instrumental ensemble ("kompania")

Director: Alexandros Lambridis • Repertory selection: Lambros Liavas