

METAMORPHOSES

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Margarita Karapanou. *Kassandra and the Wolf*. Translated from the Greek by N.C. Germanacos. Clockroot Books, Interlink Publishing. Northampton MA 2009. 130pp. ISBN 978-1-56656-771-8.

Margarita Karapanou. *Rien ne va plus*. Translated from the Greek by Karen Emmerich. Clockroot Books, Interlink Publishing. Northampton MA 2009. 184pp. ISBN 978-1-56656-772-5.

Amanda Michalopoulou. *I'd Like*. Translated from the Greek by Karen Emmerich. Dalkey Archive Press. Champaign and London, 2008. 129pp. ISBN 978-1-56478-493-3.

Ersi Sotiropoulos. *Landscape with the Dog and Other Stories*. Translated from the Greek by Karen Emmerich. Clockroot Books, Interlink Publishing. Northampton MA 2010. 168pp. ISBN 978-1-56656-773-2.

Ersi Sotiropoulos. *Zigzag Through the Bitter-orange Trees*. Translated from the Greek by Peter Green. Interlink Publishing, Northampton MA, 2007. 234pp. ISBN 978-1-56656-661-2.

CONTEMPORARY FICTION FROM GREECE: THREE WOMEN WRITERS

The end of the seven-year-long military dictatorship in 1974 marks a turning point in Greek fiction. For much of the twentieth century, one traumatic political event followed another. The Asia Minor Catastrophe AFTER WWI (often referred to in Greek simply as “The Catastrophe” and known

officially as “The Compulsory Exchange of Minority Populations”) led to the “return” to Greece in the early 1920s of Greeks who had been living for many centuries in what was to become the nation state of Turkey. Those lucky enough to survive the massacres arrived in Greece as wretched and unwanted refugees. Before Greece could fully adjust to the influx of thousands of refugees, came WWII, and the especially brutal German Occupation. There followed a bloody civil war between the Left (which had been responsible for the Resistance movement) and the conservative Right, whose ranks included collaborators and members of the notoriously brutal Secret Police; that war did not end until the 1950s, with the victory of the Right. In 1967 a triumvirate of Colonels, supported by ultra-conservative elements in the military and the police, staged a coup (backed also by the United States). During a repressive seven-year military dictatorship, many were tortured, killed, imprisoned, sent into internal exile—and everyone was afraid. Inevitably, fiction reflected upon traumatic historical events and the role of the individual as a politically engaged member of his or her society, on one side or another of a struggle. Once the Junta fell, writers who had been banned or muzzled by censorship were free to publish work critical of the dictatorship, and of the reactionary Right. In a sense, however, those works belong to the period that ended in 1974 even though they were, of necessity, published later.

The last thirty years or so have seen a shift from the politically engaged subject (and author) to the more solipsistic protagonist of contemporary fiction in the West generally. Many of the protagonists one encounters are obsessed with “self-identity” and finding some meaning in life; they are narcissistic, agonizing over personal and familial relationships, and tortured by trivia. But the best of this postmodern fiction transcends the limiting concerns of the aimless

individual's self-absorption, even when—as is the case with Margarita Karapanou—fiction can be seen as autobiographical, deeply rooted in the author's personal experience.

Karapanou (1946-2008) is the most original author of the three under review. Her first book, *Kassandra and the Wolf*, is also the most experimental, and disturbing of her works. She herself called it “a monster of a book.” The narrator is a very young girl-child, and her perceptions and actions are sometimes naive and innocent, while at other times they verge on the unselfconsciously demonic. The 56 “chapters” (130 pages) are all short, at times slivers, at other times somewhat larger fragments or vignettes. Chapter One (“The First Day”) reads, in its entirety:

I was born at dusk, hour of the wolf, under
the sign of Cancer. When they brought me to
her, she turned her face to the wall.

Karapanou's own family and childhood are recognizable in the text: a socially prominent Athenian family with old money and a mansion next to the royal palace; an absent playboy father; a famous mother with the same first name as the narrator (Kassandra in the novel, while Margarita Karapanou's mother was the fiction writer and playwright Margarita Lympiraki) who left her daughter as soon as she gave birth to her, to be raised by the child's grandmother while she herself returned to the life of an intellectual socialite in Paris. Both the fictional and the real mother had friends like Picasso, Camus, Sartre—all of whose nastier sides the child Margarita saw clearly, as an unwanted outsider with whose very existence her mother's great friends had no patience. Her mother is the focus of another novel, *Mama*, and Karapanou's love/anger relationship with Margarita Lympiraki remained powerful throughout her life, whether her mother

was abandoning her to live in another country or relegating her to the care of servants in Paris when Karapanou stayed with her, or—when, as an adult, Karapanou was struggling to cope with the manic depression that tormented her for most of her life—standing by her and focusing, finally, on her daughter.

Chapter 4 (“Mother’s Present”) is one of the book’s jagged fragments. It is particularly significant in the context of this novel but not alien to the kind of tyranny even the nicest little girls from the most loving homes can exert on their dolls with the impassive viciousness of a professional torturer:

One day, my mother, Kassandra, brought me a lovely doll as a present. She was big, and she had yellow strings instead of hair.

I put her to sleep in her box, but first I cut off her legs and arms so she’d fit.

Later, I cut her head off too, so she wouldn’t be so heavy. Now I love her very much.

One of the most disturbing threads running through this work is the sexual abuse of the narrator by one of her grandmother’s servants. Perhaps more chilling than the abuse itself is the matter-of-factness of the narration. One of the passages, early in the work (Chapter 5. “The Wolf”) is typical, and worth quoting in its entirety:

“Come on, let’s look at the book with the pictures.”

I’d run to his rooms with the book under my arm, and give it to him tenderly.

The first picture was of a wolf opening his mouth to swallow 7 juicy piglets.

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It was the wolf I usually felt sorry for. How could he gulp down so many piglets at one go? I always told him that, asked him that. Then he'd put his hairy hand in my white panties and touch me. I didn't feel anything except a kind of warmth. His finger came and went, and I watched the wolf. He panted and sweated. I didn't mind it too much.

Now, when they caress me, I always think of the wolf, and feel sorry for him.

Kassandra and the Wolf (*I Kassandra kai o lykos*) was translated into English by poet/translator N.C. Germanacos, who was also a close friend, and published in 1974 (when Karapanou was 28) by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. It was hailed by critics as a major literary event. John Updike spoke of its "lyric ferocity" and its "jagged, fantastic substance." *The New York Times* reviewer Jerome Charyn suggested she must be read "as one reads Rimbaud or Blake," and called the book "a stunning achievement." But while Charyn used "terrifying" as praise, many readers were sufficiently disturbed that they either chose to view the work as a glimpse into the mind of (any) child or as tastelessly sensationalist, pandering to sadism, voyeurism, prurience. Germanacos' masterful translation is now reprinted by Clockroot Books, and it is my hope that it will reach the wider public it deserves, and a public more used to experimental fiction and less easy to shock than readers in the early 1970s.

What is amazing about Margarita Karapanou is the way she can distill her very personal suffering into astonishing art. She talks about feeling terrified as a child, especially alone at night, isolated, "very much alone." Even as a mature and famous writer, the misery of her life in Paris, as her mother's unwanted baggage after her grandmother died

when she was an adolescent could wrench from her a heartfelt “I *hate* Paris!”

Margarita Karapanou was diagnosed with severe bipolar disorder at the age of 24, but she had been ill for a number of years before that. It’s possible that the end of what she describes as the four “normal” years of her life, between the ages of 12 and 16 (when her grandmother died) coincided with the onset of her manic depression. Her lifelong struggle with mental illness never stopped her from being a writer, from turning pain into art. She wrote her autobiographical novel *Yes (Nai)* not only *about* the psychiatric clinic where she was sent after a prolonged and severe bout with clinical depression, but *in* that clinic. Speaking to an interviewer, she has described the clinic as “a hell, an absolute hell,” with doctors and nurses who treated the patients as enemies. “I was writing with an intravenous tube stuck in my hand. It’s what kept me sane.” [A frank and wide-ranging television interview with Evi Kyriakopoulou, conducted a short time before Karapanou’s unexpected death in December 2008, is available on youtube. In Greek, no subtitles.]

Karapanou’s subject matter is often cruel and disquieting, but somehow her work is never bleak. “Because I got sick, I learned how to love, and how to feel compassion,” she told her interviewer shortly before her unexpected and untimely death. “I fought, and I won” and “I have a deep feeling of joy,” is how she put it, and what comes through again and again in that extraordinary interview is her ability to look with uncompromising honesty at herself, at others, at what her life has been, and still to be positive about the past as well as the now, and full of optimism and joy about the future. She had plans—to adopt a child, to write and to see more of her work translated into more languages, to spend time with good friends. Listening to her and watching her now, knowing that she would die of respiratory failure at 62, before that

future could be realized, makes one mourn her loss all the more.

New from Clockroot Books is Karapanou's novel *Rien ne va plus*, (published in Greek in 1991) translated by Karen Emmerich, whose translation of *The Sleepwalker* (*O Ypnovatis*, winner of France's Prix de meilleur livre étranger/ Best Foreign Novel) is also published by Clockroot Books. This is her third novel (*The Sleepwalker* was her second, published after a decade-long hiatus during which she was struggling with manic-depression), and it was followed by several more, including not only *Yes* and *Mama* but *Lee and Lou* (the names of the dog protagonists), a hilarious, biting social satire. "Real humor cannot fail to be revolutionary, and humor is only real when we have truly suffered," in Karapanou's own words. *The Sleepwalker's* motley crew of characters, gathered on an island (Hydra) waiting for something or nothing, would seem to have a good deal in common with those of *Rien ne va plus* or of Amanda Michalopoulou's *I'd Like (Tha ithela)*. But Karapanou never fails to surprise: God is so sick of whinging mankind that he sends a new Messiah to this island in the guise of a policeman, Manolis—the sleepwalker of the title, who remains unaware of who he really is even as the surreal replaces conventional reality and the sun refuses to set. When one begins to read, *The Sleepwalker* seems like yet another novel about the usual rootless people, the idle entitled (if not rich), the artists who cannot paint and the writers who cannot write. I have always wondered if that was another bit of humor on Karapanou's part—luring her unwary reader into a comfortably predictable novel before hitting her or him with satire, sly comedy, crime mystery, magical realism.

Rien ne va plus also seems, at first, to be a conventional novel about a relationship, between two suitably good-looking and privileged characters. But from the beginning,

traps are laid for the unwary. The very first chapter begins like a romance novel: “His eyes were purple, cold” and then the sentence ends: “the eyes of a fish” and pulls us up short. With the second sentence, “But he was so dazzlingly handsome that his beauty instantly obscured the sense I had of the horror that was to come” we are nudged towards the genre of the gothic romance, that sexy kissing cousin of the murder mystery. As the narrative unfolds, we are not disappointed: Alkis, the handsome veterinarian who is gentle with animals only when they are on the operating table, marries our narrator. His cruelty, his kinky sexual games, the narrator’s complicity, and the intense co-dependency of the couple, cohere to make a convincing story.

Explaining “rien ne va plus” to his wife, Alkis says:

It’s not as ominous as it sounds. But it marks the most crucial moment of the game. That’s what gives it that terseness, that sense of conclusion. [...] It’s the moment when you can’t affect the future anymore, for better or worse. [...] you either win or lose whatever you’ve bet. Usually you lose. [...] Roulette is a deadly game.

That seems to sum up the message of the title, as well, as long as we are still in Part One of the novel. It ends after 20 short chapters (47 pages) and the reader has a sense of closure. What could possibly come next? But wait! Part Two is 13 chapters short: each chapter consists of one, two, or at most a few short sentences. One of these pain-filled and despairing fragment-chapters that touch on death and Eros reads: “The game starts again from the beginning. The end is always another beginning. /This nightmare of eternity in time, this is our fate.” And this is what we find in Part Three,

which begins:

His eyes were purple, warm, friendly. He was so handsome that his good looks kept you from seeing how pleasant and agreeable he was.

All of what we have taken as true in Part One is up for grabs as the same story unfolds, but in what seems an alternate universe. I want to leave the pleasure of discovering Part Three unalloyed, for the prospective reader; I just want to say that this entire novel deserves, and repays, close attention and more than one reading. Karen Emmerich's translation is both faithful to the original and eminently readable, and one has come to expect no less of her.

Amanda Michalopoulou's *I'd Like (Tha ithela)* also comes to us in a deft translation by Karen Emmerich. Particularly drawn to metafiction, Michalopoulou counts Karapanou along with Borges and Calvino among writers who have influenced her. But if Karapanou "writes as if she were riding a wild horse, holding tight to its mane," as Michalopoulou has said in a much quoted statement, she herself comes across as cerebral, even calculating, and less surprising. If she wrote less well or were less inventive, her characters—one of whom laments, "These days we've got money, democracy and loneliness"—might fall easily into the category of protagonists we can't care about: self-dramatizing, agonizing over their inability to be creative, or to feel. But she pulls it off, as less polished writers do not. This is a novel that pushes the envelope of what we expect of a novel, though I suppose postmodern experiments have become so familiar that we might be more surprised if the unexpected were lacking. Characters switch roles, alternative plots move back and

forth through time. We are kept off balance, never quite sure who is who or where we are. *I'd Like* was born not as a novel but as a collection of short stories, each a fragmentary draft of a longer story. Michalopoulou's "A Classification of What I'd Like" comes at the end of the book, along with acknowledgments:

My original objective was to write a few short stories to supplement the twenty or so I've published here and there in the past few years. When I started to write, the old stories didn't fit in anywhere—they scurried back to the anthologies they'd come from. So a new objective took shape: to write stories that would read like versions of an unwritten novel. Or, better, to write the biography of those stories as well as of their fictional writer. (Berlin, March 2005)

If we're never quite sure where we stand with the human characters, the inanimate objects that keep appearing in different scenarios give us the greatest sense of continuity, for example a porcelain cat repeatedly "smashed into a thousand pieces." Karen Emmerich, whose translation is, as usual, fluid and smart, has chosen to translate literally a Greek cliché: lovers' hearts are regularly broken into "a thousand pieces" in a plethora of popular songs, along with crockery in daily speech. In this instance, the slightly foreignizing effect works nicely, as it calls attention to the recurring point of reference. Michalopoulou also blurs boundaries between what's real and what is surreal. That the forty-year-old narrator has a dialogue with her child self (whom she sees in a home movie) ignores any barrier between past and present, camera film and flesh, but any reader who wants to can as-

sume that the scene takes place in the narrator's head; when the narrator has a phone conversation with her double, however, we are in Borgesian territory. Metafictional postmodern magic conjures up a happy ending in the last story/chapter: the world is reconstituted, death and loss vanquished by the power of creating fiction. Even the shattered porcelain cat is miraculously and symbolically made whole.

Emmerich's translation captures the fluidity, economy, colloquial immediacy, rhythmic variation and careful word choice typical of Michalopoulou's style. When possible, the translator reproduces features like alliteration: *methoryvo kai tharros* becomes "with courage and clamor" (p.2). The translation is also literal, except that Emmerich reverses the order of the Greek nouns, attentive to even the smallest nuances of sentence rhythm in English. When keeping a Greek word is the only sensible way to convey word play in English, that's what she chooses to do: an abandoned puppy's "fur was the color of burnt sugar, *zahari*, so you named him Zacharias." (p.123) But sometimes, no matter how skilled the translator, something is inevitably lost in translation, without the Nabokovian encyclopedic gloss. The character refers to a short story entitled *Hygieis kai odoiporoi* (The Healthy and Travellers). Emmerich's solution is smart, and it works: "The Hale and the Hearty" (p. 68), since the story is about healing. No English reader experiences any loss. But the Greek title is a play on *astheneis kai odoiporoi* (The sick and travellers), the first words of a saying so ancient and familiar that it has acquired the cachet of Scripture. Everyone uses those opening words constantly, without even bothering to quote the rest (*hamartian ouk ehousi*). In its entirety the dictum means: "The sick, and travellers, are not guilty of sin" <if they do not observe a fast.> *Astheneis kai odoiporoi* is also the title of a major, epic novel by Georgos Theotokas centered on the years of the Occupation (WWII), published in 1964; in 2002, a televi-

sion mini series of the same title, based on the novel, aired in prime time on a major channel and attracted a huge and devoted audience. One need not “hear” any of this in order to understand or enjoy the text, but particularly when reading a translation as fluid and pleasing as Emmerich’s, it’s useful to remember that something may always be lost as well as gained in the exchange.

With Amanda Michalopoulou (1966-), this reader at least is always aware of participating in an intellectual exercise that sometimes feels like working overtime—something that may change as she continues to mature as an author. In contrast, her slightly older contemporary, Ersi Sotiropoulos (1953-), immediately and effortlessly makes the reader a complicit and engaged companion, whether in the best of her often unusual short stories or in her novels. Selected short stories appeared in 2010, translated by Karen Emmerich and issued by Clockroot/Interlink. In the first story, “Freehand,” we enter the lives of a married couple. The narrator’s voice is that of the husband, but we come to understand not only him but his wife and to understand their relationship with greater insight than he achieves. From the outset, Sotiropoulou’s dialogue grabs and at the same time positions the reader:

“You know what Giacometti said?” I asked,
my mouth full.

“The roast seems a little salty to me... what
do you think?” she replied.

Relationships—of couples, a mother and daughter, a sadistic four-year-old girl and her playmate/victim, a shy stalker and the object of his obsession—are revealed with surgical elegance. One of the most memorable stories in this

collection, “The Woman” (published in *Metamorphoses* 16.2, fall 2008), lays bare the depths of a love-hate, codependent relationship between an adult son and his controlling mother with such a deft use of everyday details, such economy of description, and such a skilled blend of dialogue, interior monologue and free indirect discourse that an entire novel seems to have been condensed into roughly seven pages. As usual, Emmerich’s translation is idiomatic and fluid, with little of the foreignizing; this may be why I was surprised by the translator’s decision to translate literally a trite and common Greek expression, “his soul in his mouth” (“Champion of Little Lies”) rather than using the English idiomatic equivalent, “his heart in his mouth.” There are a few small losses in translation, for instance of the context evoked by the song lyrics in “Kissing the Air,” whose connotations do not resonate with the English reader. But the economy, precision, and vibrancy of Sotiropoulos’ language comes across in Emmerich’s translation, testimony to the translator’s sensitive ear.

The first work of Sotiropoulos to be translated into English was her fifth novel, *Zig-Zag Through the Bitter-Orange Trees* (*Zig-Zag stis Neratziés*). Published in Greece in 1999, it won the State Prize for Best Novel in 2000, and the *Diavazo* critics’ book award. In 2001, the German translation was published in a trade paperback, and met with enthusiastic critical acclaim. Peter Green’s English translation was also published by Interlink, in 2007, and was greeted with unstinting praise by a wide range of critics. That this remarkable book, in Green’s beautiful translation, can reach a wide, general audience was proven to me when I taught the novel to a group of undergraduates from a variety of backgrounds and majors (Economics, Physics, Sociology, Psychology, Engineering, as well as languages and literatures). It deserves much wider distribution and more aggressive

marketing than a smaller publishing house can mount in the US market. The author's ability to make not only the four (or more, depending on one's criteria) major characters in the novel, but the large cast of minor characters—some of them commanding more space, others mere walk-ons—so very alive and individualized is quite astounding. Her skill in interweaving several plot lines, in a way that involves not only external circumstances and coincidence but the characters' complicated inner lives as well, calls to mind novelists like Dickens and Borges, as well as masters of the spy and detective novel like John Le Carré and Martin Cruz Smith. It does not seem too fanciful to think of her as a symphonic composer or a choreographer. The complexity of the novel, the author's unwillingness to privilege the perspective of any single character, has led reviewers to summarize the plot reductively: as the perspective of a dying young woman (Lia); as the close relationship between a brother (Sid) and sister (Lia); as the story of an aimless young man (Sid) whose revenge plot turns him into his victim's (Sotiris') accomplice and changes both his own life and that of his intended victim in unexpected, and unexpectedly positive, ways. We might also focus on the transformation of a frustrated, rigid, sadistic, both scary and pitifully comical young man (Sotiris) from a bully, an insecure nobody with delusions of grandeur, a provincial mamma's boy, to a pedophile with fantasies of murdering the twelve-year-old girl (Nina) with whom he is obsessed, to a normal young man in love with a mature young woman (Julia)—who herself has been transformed from a purposeless, sardonic Goth to a serious nursing student. Or we might be drawn to the rich fantasy world of the girl-child Nina, which liberates her from the tawdry environment (her aunt's island *taverna*) in which she is living—an environment she observes with blistering accuracy and a cynical wisdom beyond her years. And none of these

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characters is simple or single. We see the most obvious multiplicity of identities in Sid, whose given name is Isidoros—archaic, with a rather scholarly, conservative ring—but who likes to think of himself as Sid Vicious; when he lures Sotiris into a false friendship in order to avenge his sister (whom Sotiris, one of her nurses, has harassed and actually punched in the face), he takes on the name Thanassis, and a persona to go with his pseudonym. Multiple names or not, though, everyone is more than one person, and able to surprise both self and reader. How these characters interconnect, reflect and change one another, and particularly how their stories come together in an ending that promises an imperfect and hard-won but still hopeful resolution, is something readers must discover on their own. Despite the often bizarre, jarring, shocking, disturbing moments in the narrative and the unexpected turns of the plot, it struck me that the almost improbably positive denouement, with its moments of nearly slapstick comedy, seems less contrived than the metafictional redemption with which Michalopoulou ends *I'd Like*.

Peter Green's translation captures the idiomatic zing of Sotiropoulos' Greek and the beauty of her more lyrical passages. He is on target when it comes to register, perhaps because he worked closely with the author. For instance, it works to translate the Greek *prezóni* (literally: druggie) as “jerk” (p.14). When we move from the loser Sid in his squalid apartment to the character we will find out is his sister Lia, in the hospital dying from a mysterious viral disease, Sotiropoulos subtly links the two characters, suggesting a connection we will eventually come to understand:

Late that night it began to rain: a cleansing
downpour that fell with a steady roar from
the burst clouds. Sid did not hear the rain.
In his sleep he sense the unexpected coolness

stealing into the room and spreading out like
a cold compress over the baking walls. . . .
(p.4)

Lia was woken by the rain, and propped
herself up on her elbows. The windows
were curtainless, and the spectacle of water
beating fiercely against the panes suddenly
brought back the flavor of a long-lost morn-
ing. . . . (p.5)

I would like to single out a passage that illustrates Sotiropoulos' use of free indirect discourse to make the reader sympathize with Sotiris, a character who has been, up to this point, quite unsympathetic, and who will become shockingly repellent later in the narrative. Sid, posing as an old school buddy, the fictional Thanassis, has gotten Sotiris to baby-sit his obnoxious pet mynah bird, hence Sotiris has to take the bird with him when he goes to his home village to visit his parents:

The bus journey was pure hell. At the last moment he'd tried to put his visit off, and had called the village, but Mama Koula wouldn't hear a word of it. He'd been forced to buy a second ticket for the cage, since they refused to accept it for the baggage compartment. He'd put it beside him, and had to hang on to it for the entire trip because it kept sliding across the seat and falling off. Amd the filthy stuff the bird was munching on, something like sunflower seeds or coarse canary feed, spilled and scattered in the aisle with every lurch of the bus. Everyone kept staring at him

as though he were a one-man freak show. It was so hot the sweat was running off his forehead. “Hi there, Maria, hi there, Maria,” the bird shrilled, all the way. Nothing would shut it up. Even with his eyes glued on the view outside the window he could feel everyone else watching him. Each time his hand got numb and he changed position to restore its circulation, he’d see the passengers opposite him grin broadly and pretend to be looking somewhere else, and force a silly smile himself. What else could he do? “Hi there, Maria, hi there, Maria,” the bird kept squawking, frantically flapping its wings in its cage. And he kept the silly smile on his face (pp. 89-90).

No matter how exceptional the translation, though, the English occasionally—and unavoidably—lacks both the economy of the Greek and the layers of meaning of particular words. One small but illustrative example: Lia is thinking about Sotiris as “On fire and no idea why. A cardboard puppet. With a head like the top of a cock, a swollen red radish. A miserable prickhead with the eyes of a beat-up frog” (p. 99). The Greek is tighter: *enas xanammenos karaghiozes. Me kefáli kavlorápanou—ena dystychismeno kavlorápano me vlemma darmenou vatrachou*. (Literally: an inflamed/flushed Karaghöz. With a hard-on-radish for a head—an unhappy/miserable/wretched hard-on-radish with the gaze of a whipped frog.) And the puppet is not just any cardboard puppet, but the sly and comical “Black eyes” who came from Turkey to Greece centuries ago and is both popular and familiar, and whose name is a synonym for “clown,” someone who plays the fool and is derided by spectators. This is no criticism of Green’s fluent, finely attuned and excellent trans-

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lation—just a reminder that something is always at risk of being lost, or jettisoned, in translation and that a translation as outstanding as Green's has successfully negotiated hidden reefs invisible to the reader.