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## “Either of the Height or of the Depth”: Nanos Valaoritis’ De-stereotyping of the “Greeks” in the Time of Crisis

### Abstract

If there is anyone who has consistently de-stereotyped Greek culture, de-mythologized, de-constructed and ultimately reconstructed its imaginative potential, that person is Nanos Valaoritis who has now been turned into a cosmopolitan “cultural phenomenon.” Always “present” in the Greek scene no matter where he lived (Paris, London, Geneva, Oakland, California or Athens and Nydri), the 96-year old avant-garde Nanos Valaoritis, like a “gadfly,” kept paving the way for new ways of seeing and radical perceptions of the self, especially as dictated by his desire to re-examine the Ancients. Amidst the current crisis, Valaoritis indeed not only is “present” as a public persona, but he also has initiated long debates about the causes and effects of the crisis, especially since his open letter to the Greek Prime Minister Mr. Antonis Samaras, dated April 30, 2013, where he warned him about the dangerous effects of the increasingly appealing Neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn. Moreover, four new books of his came out of the Greek crisis from 2010 to the present: *Χρίσματα* (2011), *Ουρανός χρώμα βανίλιας* (2011), *Το Πικρό καρναβάλι* (2013) and *Η του ύψους ή του βάθους: Πρόσφατα άρθρα γύρω από τον πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της κρίσης* (2013). This article pays particular attention to the last collection of articles which present Valaoritis’s systematic exploration of the image of the Greeks as standing at the extremes, “either of the height or of the depth,” throughout their long history, in an effort to “eradicate the stereotypes against the Greek

nation that so unjustly is deeply tormented,” as the book itself claims. This article not only elaborates on the main points that Valaoritis makes in this collection of articles, but more importantly, it contextualizes them within the frame of his overall avant-garde contribution to the Greek Letters.

“What might the new Trojan Horse by Mr. Schrank contain this time, I wonder? Let me surmise. Installments, bonds, the History of the Greek Nation by Paparrigopoulos, the History of the Greek War of Independence by Gordon, sitting on the benches Kolokotronis, Plapoutas, Markos Botsaris, Karaiskakis, Androutsos, Makriyannis, Bouboulina, Manto Mavrogenous, Kanaris, Miaoulis, all of them with their scimitars and pistols, ready to break loose to loot the Eurozone, to kill the Euro...! To occupy the E.U. in Brussels, to ravage all officers of the Commission, Commissioners, the Troikans, to sack the new Troy.”

“Could it be possible however that besides the enraged and indebted Greeks a few others be unleashed out of the door (of the Trojan Horse), such as Elytis, Cavafy, Seferis, Ritsos, Kavvadias, Sachtouris, Manto Aravantinou, Kosmas Politis, Tachtsis, Alexandros Schoinas, to limit myself to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, these fight with speech, language, words, concepts, ideas and not by means of transactions in order to make a world different from the one in which we live yet with distinguishable features of our own. For them we are Greeks and not for the incompetent scoundrels who machinate among us.”

“Should we prefer the Turkish Islamists than the lustful, bloodthirsty, ‘Christian’ barons of the North.? I hope not, for there are also the Balkans and the Russians who are Christians and the Chinese, the Indians, the Latino-Americans, the Japanese, even the Kaffirs, the Eskimos and the Bushmen, who are peoples with honor and keep their promises.”

(Nanos Valaoritis, *Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis*, 2013)<sup>1</sup>

A careful reading of these excerpts constitutes an anatomy of the entire collection entitled *Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis* (*Η του Ύψους ή του Βάθους: Πρόσφατα Άρθρα για τον Πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της Κρίσης*) by Nanos Valaoritis

that comprises a full array of seemingly disparate articles, ranging from analysis of the current events in crisis-hit Greece to Surrealism and its main representatives in Greece. More specifically, besides its polemic and witty tone, one notices the loaded key-concepts and rhetorical devices and parallelisms that the author uses: the metaphor of the Homeric Trojan Horse with its dangerous cargo projected to today’s Greek debts and loans after a transition through the uprisings of the heroes of the Greek Revolution, ready to loot Europe. Also the mistrust in the relationship between the Europeans and the Greeks is well-established in this metaphor which yet takes on another form, even more powerful according to the author, and that is the possibility that amidst the cargo of the Trojan Horse may also be poets who fight with language and who hold the true image of the Greeks. After distinguishing between the two kinds of perceivers of the “Greeks”, the true ones such as the poets and the incompetent scoundrels who machinate among us, he hints to the latter as the Germans who then are directly attacked as “greedy, blood-thirsty ‘Christian’ barons of the North.” Finally, he suggests that there are other, more reliant allies with whom the Greeks could possibly establish all kinds of alliances, liberating themselves from the tyranny of the so-called Troika.



Image 1. The cover of the book *Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis* (Psychogios, 2013).

This is exactly the type of content and style of this carnivalesque collection of recent articles which was written in parallel with his poetry collection *Bitter Carnival* (*Πικρό Καρναβάλι*), also published in 2013 by the same publisher (Psychogios).

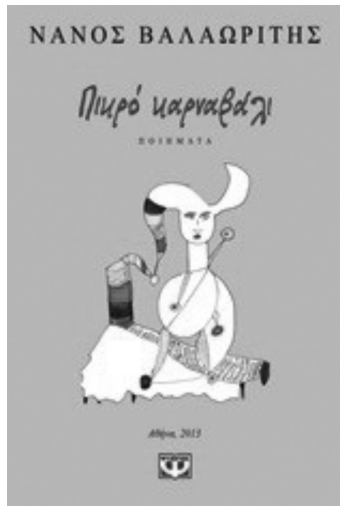


Image 2. The cover of the book *Bitter Carnival* (Psychogios, 2013).

I use the term carnivalesque here in the Bakhtinian sense from which also Valaoritis himself is inspired in both aforementioned books, in the sense “that carnivalesque literature — like the carnivals themselves — broke apart oppressive and moldy forms of thought and cleared the path for the imagination and the never-ending project of emancipation.”<sup>2</sup> In his article “Loki, The Return of Bakhtin” from *Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis*, Valaoritis compares Rabelais’ rebellious carnivalesque world to similar recent phenomena in Europe: “Such comic and serious phenomena, as Bakhtin would call them, started making their appearance in Europe in a time of economic crisis when people suffer from austerity measures that have paralyzed the economic life of the society. High taxation, salary and pension reductions, unemployment, capital controls, everything is the result of a central power that enforces austerity measures in a time of crisis. This power is called German austerity policy....” (203). These carnivalesque phenomena then, according to Valaoritis, constitute a form of true rebellion against another oppressive system, reminiscent of slavery in antiquity or of the Church and aristocracy in Medieval times.

Seen in the Bakhtinian light then, the two aforementioned books by Nanos Valaoritis, which are like communicating vessels, it comes as no surprise to those who follow the cultural phenomenon named “Nanos Valaoritis.” For, in his long life, for more than eight decades now, and after numerous distinctions worldwide, Valaoritis, “one of the most distinguished and enigmatic of modern Greek poets, full of Platonic wisdom”, to use Lawrence Durrell’s words<sup>3</sup>, like a gadfly, activates the mind of his readers and gives lessons of resistance to any kind of dangerous stereotypes, due to which the image of Greece has suffered tremendous damage during the last years of the crisis that hit the country, especially from German newspapers and media like *Focus* (image 3), something that Valaoritis did not let without a bitter reaction: “What would the Germans say about Hermes by Praxiteles showing his genitalia while stepping on a German flag? Certainly, they would enjoy the ‘Greek humor’ as an expression of free speech. The wars with words are not less harmful than the wars with guns and bear evidence of how little the Europeans feel that they constitute a union of people and cultures with mutual identity, respect and solidarity. They show how many biases there exist and how little the wounds of the World War II have been healed in a third generation” (*Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis*, 113-114).



Image 3. The cover of the German periodical *Focus*, published on February 22, 2010.<sup>4</sup>

Hurt by this outrageous and unethical attack through words, the Western image of the Greeks continues to suffer damage. I refer to all kinds of extreme stereotypes applied to the Greeks since antiquity, as, for instance, the one tied to the story of the Trojan Horse and summarized in the proverb “Fear the Danaans, even when bringing gifts”, or the Zorba type of careless, lazy and exuberant tax-evader Greek people who prefer to spend loans in having fun and as such are unworthy descendants of the ancient Greeks. Valaoritis, alluding to Odysseus Elytis, offers a poignant summary of such labels ascribed to the Greeks:

Since King Otto, Purifoy, to the Troika years, such friends become enemies, when they confront the recalcitrant and rebellious Greeks—regardless of ideology. Lazy, corrupted, against memoranda, tax-evaders, rich, poor, salaried, retired, sick, thieves, scoundrels, with their own clientele, living with debt and breaking the laws which they vote. Even these latter are preferable, because they are made in Greece, the epsilon in small case letter. And from a cosmopolitan frog I am transformed to a nationalist bull or rather another Minotaur, ready to devour annually six young men and six young women who will be sent to us as subjugation tax, no matter how improbable this may sound.

*(Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis, 112-113)<sup>5</sup>*

Indeed, if there is anyone who has consistently de-stereotyped Greek culture, de-mythologized, de-constructed and ultimately reconstructed its imaginative potential, that person is Nanos Valaoritis who has consistently fought against any type of authoritarian form, manifested either in society or in the canonical works of Western tradition. Always ‘present’ in the Greek scene no matter where he lived (Paris, London, Geneva, Oakland, California, or Athens and Nydri), the now 94-year old Nanos Valaoritis kept paving the way for new ways of seeing and radical perceptions of the self, especially as dictated by his desire to re-examine the Ancients. Amidst the current crisis, Valaoritis not only is “present” as a public persona, but he also has initiated long debates about the causes and effects of the crisis, especially since his open letter to the Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, dated April 30, 2013, where he warned him about the dangerous effects of the increasingly appealing Neo-Nazi party, Golden Dawn.

The goal of this paper is an attempt to offer an explanation for Valaoritis’ idiosyncratic and holistic approach to the current crisis in Greece with his systematic exploration of the image of the Greeks as standing at the extremes, “either of the height or of the depth,” throughout their long history. By the term “height or depth,” he refers to the moments of grandeur or humiliation in Greek history since antiquity respectively, bringing the following examples:

It is common knowledge that the Greeks usually distinguish themselves as a people better under urgent situations, as they did in antiquity. The Persian wars against the Carthaginians in Sicily, the height, the Peloponnesian War, the depth; the conquest of Alexander the Great, the height, his epigones, the depth; the 1821, the height, the civil wars, the depth. The list is long – and always in relation to foreigners, enemies, barbarians or between us, we will continue the same image along our history. What are the mysterious motives of this mechanism?

*(Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis, 219)<sup>6</sup>*

Valaoritis wonders, locating this mechanism in the psychology of the poor and downtrodden nation. The list goes on caustically attacking all responsible parties besides the weaknesses of the capitalist system. I quote, for instance:

It is also the fault of the lack of vision of the political elite who discourages local production for the sake of an easier importation policy with high taxation which offers temporary revenue. [...] Under the current circumstances, dogmatic Left rightly targets poverty, yet it forgets the reasons, that it is not only the economic factors but also the psychological and political ones, a mistake of choices on behalf of the entire society, due to lack of self-confidence and due to the prevalence of the easy pathways without any long-term goals. For all these unfortunately it is the fault of the entire mentality of the nation ...

*(Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis, 97)<sup>7</sup>*

Nevertheless, it is clear for Valaoritis that the Greeks are still the epigones of the ancient Greeks from whom the roots of the European civilization. And this is something that is not easy for the Europeans to swallow, especially since the Greeks changed the plans of the Germans in 1941, although they still remain the only nation that has not received the millions in compensation from a forced loan by the Nazis during the German Occupation in Greece. In the poem entitled “Why” from *Bitter Carnival*, Valaoritis concludes:

From the earthly map Greece has been erased  
And it became again as it used to be once  
An Idea which has ascended onto her geometric  
Heaven from where she never landed back.

(*Bitter Carnival*, 10)<sup>8</sup>

Intrigued by Valaoritis’ idiosyncratic, holistic and diachronic exploration of the image of the Greeks as standing at the extremes, I argue that he succeeds in undoing the stereotypes applied to the Greeks, thanks to the particular relation he has established with the classical tradition, a relationship revolving around two axes: his immersion in the study of the Greeks in their diachrony and his embrace of Surrealism, for whom it represents a genuine path to freedom. It is not accidental then that Surrealism covers a long part in his book *Either of the Height or of the Depth*. Thanks to Surrealism, which for Valaoritis is “neither a *dogma* nor a closed philosophical system, but an open and constantly readapted *method* of thought and life style” (*For a Theory of Writing*, 24), marked by the Dionysiac element, this avant-garde author was able to establish a particular relation with Greek antiquity, since for him, Surrealism’s basic contribution to Greece was in the 1930s and 1940s that it reintroduced the Dionysiac element: “The Dionysian element intruded in all sectors: existential, esthetic, philosophical, linguistic, or dramatic” (*For a Theory of Writing*, 9).<sup>9</sup> Thanks to Surrealism, Valaoritis has been intrigued by the ‘other’ Greek legacy, one that stands at the opposite of Attic rationalism. This is the Greek legacy that was brought to light by E. R. Dodds with his seminal study *The Greeks and the Irrational*, first published in 1951. As Valaoritis characteristically states, he aligns himself with the generation of classicists such as E. Rohde, Jane Ellen Harrison, Gilbert Murray, who, like E.R. Dodds, propose a different view of the Greeks, without excluding “madness, visions, night, dreams, the primitive, delirium and

vertigo, the ‘automatic’ gates of Mount Olympus and the chasmal entrance of Hades” (*For a Theory of Writing B’*, 10)<sup>10</sup>. For Valaoritis, “this dark side of Antiquity has been bequeathed to contemporary Greece through the oral tradition with almost no interruption since Homeric times or even earlier” (*For a Theory of Writing B’*, 10).

Finding traces of this irrational Ancient Greek legacy in contemporary folklore literature, bequeathed through the Byzantine times, Valaoritis claims that “contemporary Greece is the land of the absurd, the marvelous and the fantastic par excellence” (*For a Theory of Writing B’*, 10).<sup>11</sup> Thanks to this dark legacy, Valaoritis states:

Through our so ancient language, we, contemporary Greeks, bear the very heavy weight of traces, resonances and survivals of Antiquity: the nymphs, the Amazons, Meleager and Althaea, the mermaids, the chthonic bull, the pillar that holds the Heaven, the goddess Aphrodite, the grim Reaper, the Giants, the gods and Homer whom still the people of Chios mention.

(*For a Theory of Writing B’*, 11).<sup>12</sup>

Valaoritis’ relationship with the ancients is complex because it does not remain on a pedantic level, but instead, it is a formative relationship, one that constitutes a constant living experience thanks to his embrace of Surrealism in the sense of an ongoing quest for the marvelous, as Surrealists understood it, that is, as “an eruption of contradiction within the real,” (Aragon, 204). The surrealist marvelous is a concept full of multiplicity and variety, linked at times with knowledge, revelation, desire, dazzling, wonder, fear, awe, irrationality and miracle. By confronting the uncanny, the alien, the terrible, the unfamiliar and the desirable, the marvelous is appealing to Valaoritis, located primarily in the language and its liberating potential, which is able to open new realities thanks to an audacious rearrangement of the words and the juxtaposition of the most incongruous images. Through such alchemy of the word, the marvelous is capable of affecting the human sensibility and often challenging and altering the ways of knowing and perceiving the world. And since change of reality was Surrealism’s ultimate goal, the marvelous had the potential to serve as such a transformational tool, because it functions as a kind of inner revelation or truth rediscovered through a process of the beholder’s astonishment and surprise.

It is in this light of odd yet meaningful rearrangement of incongruous images that we should see the image of the Trojan Horse unleashing a chain of heroes of the Greek War of Independence out of its belly in one of the opening quotes of this paper, which is further analyzed in the seminal article “On the Trojan Horse” of the book *Either of the Height or of the Depth*, this time transformed in a cartoon (Image 4) by Swiss-born Peter Schrank in the Global Edition of the *New York Times* from the *International Herald Tribune* of Paris, first published in the Dubliner *Sunday Business Post* in Ireland, showing Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel looking at a Trojan horse standing on wheels like a toy within the walls of Troy or rather of the European Union, whose flag appears from a castle, while next to it the sign of Euro is like a statue on a pedestal. On the chest of the Trojan Horse a label is hanging reading in upper case letters: “FROM THE GREEKS THANKS AND NO HARD FEELINGS.” Then Sarkozy addresses Merkel as follows: “Nevertheless, I have a bad feeling about this thing,” referring to the Virgilian “Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.”

SCHRANK  
SUNDAY BUSINESS POST  
Dublin  
IRELAND



Image 4. Peter Schrank's cartoon. With kind permission of the *New York Times*.

Valaoritis goes on and muses about the possible content of the Trojan Horse, as the first sharp opening quote showed, by piling next to the loans and the debt of the Greeks also the enraged heroes of the Greek War of Independence and along with them necessarily all bankruptcies of the Greek history, including, Charilaos Trikoupis, Eleutherios Venizelos, and Metaxas. The list goes on to also include Karamanlis and Papandreou, all of them ready with wooden swords and fake revolvers to bring back Helen of Troy that the Eurozone took from us, and the tamed by the Germans Venus de Milo and slave of the French, the invaluable Parthenon marbles that amount to legendary amounts of money, looted by the British who should return them to the Greek people.<sup>13</sup>

Notice here all the caustic attack of the Europeans in this riveting and witty chain of unprecedented parallelisms from which no one can escape, reminiscent of another work by Valaoritis, the short play entitled “I Kokona i Maro” from the novel *The Broken Arms of Venus de Milo* (2003), performed among the “Monologues” of the Cultural Olympiad in 2003 in Thessaloniki by Maya Lymberopoulou for whom Savvas Patsalides wrote on the *Aggelioforos tes Kyriakes* (*Sunday Herald*), published in Thessaloniki, Greece, on October 26, 2003: “Maya Lymperopoulou, astonishingly theatrical and fulgurant, immerses herself in an inter-textual and intercultural collage from which she resurrected and selectively mocked everyone – from Korais to Engonopoulos. A body on the surface of which an entire nation sighs and the audience justly applauds” (Patsalides, 2).<sup>14</sup>

In fact, Valaoritis deconstructs the ancients only to reappropriate them, and Surrealism offered him the audacity to do so. Such is, for instance, Valaoritis' adventure with Homeric language. He becomes the scholar-chemist who sets out to understand the Homeric *Odyssey* through the letters of the Alphabet and devotes an entire study in the acrophonic theory of the composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which became the book *Homer and the Alphabet* (*Ο Όμηρος και το Αλφάβητο*).

As a new Homer, Valaoritis becomes another aoidos that conveys all the dramatic qualities of the book of *the Odyssey* that deals with the Land of the Cyclops. Amongst so many Homeric vivid images that always appear in his world, the image of these gigantic creatures intrude in Valaoritis' poetic imagination, as in the following lines from “The Difficulties of a Child of

a Century” from his English poetry collection *Pan Daimonium*: “The Pelasgians, a pre-Hellenic people / Left thick walls everywhere... Cyclopean” (*Pan Daimonium*, 236). Whether these walls recall the Mycenaean Cyclopean so-called walls or Cavafy’s walls (another decisive influence for Valaoritis), or the insurmountable wall of the Troika, this is primarily a Homeric reference, as is the following call to the Muse (ἑπικλησις) in the same poem included in the *Anthology of Modern Greek Poetry* he edited with Thanassis Maskaleris in 2003: “Help me o Muse to write what took place / In cold blood and passion: I attempt to slip between your legs / But the golden fleece is very thick” (*Anthology*, 237).

How should one react to such lines that abound in Valaoritis’ work and which audaciously revert or deconstruct the quintessence of a canonical text such as the Homeric epics? Humor is for sure at stake here but there is also irony and, more than that, a tragic sense of manhood. This is something that I consider tremendously successful and witty in Valaoritis’ encounter with the ancients: the way he links language to the materiality of the body out of which stems the pitiful status of a mortal.

Such textual weaving that welcomes humor while conveying an intense experience could not be so effective, if Valaoritis did not have a direct contact with the Ancients, a relationship fertilized by his initiation to Surrealism. Valaoritis has an immediate relationship with the figures of the Greek pantheon and mythology. He does not see them as distant or as occasions for moral lessons – he hates such a thing. Equally, he does not worship them in the sense of “hellenolatrea” or “hellenolagneia.” Instead, he stripes them of their sovereignty/deity or abstract quality and brings them down to their essential materiality.

He is fascinated by their very anthropomorphism and their humane quality and they naturally inhabit his creative world. As equal counterparts then, Valaoritis feels as if he had the right to treat them as such and therefore, when needed, he can parody them without remorse. While one could see this as a blasphemous act, for Valaoritis it is a healthy treatment that gives way to new paths of expression. There are numerous other examples of a variety of manifestations of marvelous encounters with the Ancients in Valaoritis’ work to the point that it would not be an exaggeration to say that the marvelous, which is mainly responsible for Valaoritis’ innovative voice, is constantly transformed thanks to the author’s audacious experiments with language.

This voice reflects his assimilation of three cultures and literary traditions, each one of which represents a distinct phase in his career. Valaoritis knows how to readdress the essence of the classical legacy in a new context and thus reach his audience. From the classical Greek tradition to the French, to Anglophone and American influences and, recently, back to the Modern Greek life and culture, Valaoritis dares to fight with his words as a poet and a grand orator, against all those who impose harmful stereotypes against his fellow Greeks. Either directly, or through his new poems that cannot yet be classified, he dares to cry out and become the voice of today’s Greeks whose dreams were stolen:

All we lost it – houses factories  
 autos – salaries – our independence – the pension – our holidays –  
 benefits – our job – the extra salary of Easter and Christmas  
 our hope for the future [...] and debt was left to us – taxes – anxiety  
 – humiliation – the job advertisement – despair – and anniversaries  
 – birthdays – the celebrations of Christmas and Easter  
 nominal celebrations – weddings  
 the christenings – funerals – cinema – soap operas –  
 memorials divorces –  
 Propo the lottery. Loans – bitterness – rent – accounts  
 OTE, EYDAP, UTILITIES  
 children’s tuition  
 their absent books – and  
 our Melancholy for the mundane – grief – football!

(“What we lost what we gained”, *Bitter Carnival*)<sup>15</sup>

For poems, according to Valaoritis, “are the magnifying glasses through which we can see reality. Small illuminations from a space that is enclosed,”<sup>16</sup> and therefore they are dangerous, I would add, like the belly of the Trojan Horse with which this paper started. For it may erupt at any moment. It would not be an exaggeration then if we see Valaoritis’ surrealist and Bakhtinian multi-faceted writing as another Trojan Horse, metaphorically speaking, whose hidden soldiers are his words and his arguments. After all, he sees himself as another Homer who sings the adventures of the modern *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, as the following poems of his bear evidence:

TROY

How many at sea, how many drowned?  
And those who shipwrecked  
Returning, expected to see you,  
Death alone wouldn't wait.

Remember, the dead on the beaches  
Will want to address you, as you pass.  
What we built will destroy us  
The defeated seem to have won.

This spring... no one knows  
The river was flooding my mouth  
And the sun held me by the hand

The horses returned without the body.  
When we came back that summer,  
My god, how the towers had changed color.

(*Anthology*, trans. Thanassis Maskaleris, 230)

Or, the third epigram 'Celaeno' from Valaoritis' "Stigmata (Dots)":

III

Celaeno

Is it my fault if the gods  
Give me apples  
And mortals give me claws?

(*Anthology*, trans. Thanassis Maskaleris, 232)

## Notes

- All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.  
The original reads as follows: "Τι να περιέχει άραγες αυτή τη φορά ο νέος Δούρειος Ίππος του κυρίου Schrank; Θα κάνω μερικές υποθέσεις. Γραμμάτια, ομόλογα, την *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους* του Παπαρρηγόπουλου, του Γκόρντον την *Ιστορία της Ελληνικής Επανάστασης*, καθιμεμένοι στα παγκάκια τους ο Κολοκοτρώνης, ο Πλαπούτας, ο Μάρκος Μπότσαρης, Ο Καραϊσκάκης, ο Ανδρούτσος, ο Μακρυγιάννης, η Μπουμπουλίνα, η Μαντώ Μαυρογένους, ο Κανάρης, ο Μιαούλης, όλοι με τα γιαταγάνια τους, και τις πιστόλες, έτοιμοι να ξεχυθούν να λεηλατήσουν την Ευρωζώνη, να εξοντώσουν το Ευρώ...! Μα καταλάβουν την Ε.Ε. στις Βρυξέλλες, να κατασπαράξουν όλους τους Κομισάριους, Επιτρόπους, Τροϊκανούς, να δηώσουν τη Νέα Τροία.» (*Η του Ύψους ή του Βάθους: Πρόσφατα Άρθρα για τον Πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της Κρίση*, 101.)  
  
«Άραγες θα μπορούσε, εκτός από εξαγριωμένους και χρεωμένους, να έβγαζε το πορτόνι και μερικούς όπως ο Ελύτης, ο Καβάφης, ο Σεφέρης, ο Ρίτσος, ο Καββαδίας, ο Σαχτούρης,

η Μαντώ Αραβαντινού, Ο Κοσμάς Πολίτης, Ο Ταχτσής, Ο Αλέξανδρος Σχοινάς, για να μείνω στον 2ο αιώνα. Αυτοί όμως πολεμούν με τα λόγια, τη γλώσσα, τις λέξεις, τις έννοιες, τις ιδέες κι όχι με χρηματιστηριακές δοσοληψίες, να φτιάξουν έναν κόσμο διαφορετικό από αυτόν που ζούμε, αλλά και με προεκτάσεις του δικού μας, εκάστοτε αναγνωρίσιμες. Γι' αυτούς είμαστε Έλληνες και όχι για τους ανίκανους, απατεώνες δολοπλόκους ανάμεσά μας.» (*Η του Ύψους ή του Βάθους: Πρόσφατα Άρθρα για τον Πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της Κρίση*, 103.)

«Μήπως πάλι προτιμήσουμε τους Τούρκους Ισλαμιστές απ' τους λαίμαργους αιμοβόρους Είναι οι 'λαίμαργοι, 'χριστιανούς' βαρόνους του Βορρά; Ελπίζω όχι, γιατί υπάρχουν οι Βαλκάνιοι και οι Ρώσοι που είναι χριστιανοί, και οι Κινέζοι, οι Ινδοί, οι Λατινοαμερικανοί, οι Γιαπωνέζοι, ακόμα και οι Κάφροι, οι Εσκιμώοι και οι Βουσμάνοι, που είναι λαοί με μπέσα.» (*Η του Ύψους ή του Βάθους: Πρόσφατα Άρθρα για τον Πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της Κρίση*, 119.)

- See: <http://englishliteratureumn11.blogspot.com/2015/01/anggi-syahputri.html>. [Accessed on February 7, 2017.]
- See the back cover of Nanos Valaoritis' book *My Afterlife Guaranteed and Other Narratives*.
- See: [www.passim.eu/la-crisis-griega-en-vinetas/](http://www.passim.eu/la-crisis-griega-en-vinetas/)
- The original reads as follows: "Από τον Όθωνα, τον Πιούριφοί, ως την Τρόικα, οι τέτοιοι φίλοι γίνονται εχθροί όταν αντιμετωπίζουν τους αντίθασους και ξεσηκωμένους Έλληνες – αδιάφορο ποιας ιδεολογίας. Τεμπέληδες, διεφθαρμένους, φοροφυγάδες, αντιμνημονιακούς, πλούσιους, φτωχούς, μισθωτούς, συνταξιούχους, άρρωστους, κλέφτες, απατεώνες, με πελατειακές σχέσεις, ζώντας με δανεικά και παραβαίνοντας τους νόμους που ψηφίζουν. Ακόμα και αυτούς τους τελευταίους προτιμώ γιατί είναι ελληνικής κατασκευής, με μικρό έψιλον. Και από βάτραχος κοσμοπολίτης γίνομαι ταύρος εθνικιστής και μάλιστα μινώταυρος, έτοιμος να καταβροχθίσει έξι και έξι ετήσιους νέους και νέες, που θα μας αποστέλλονται ως φόρος υποταγής, όσο απίθανο και να φαίνεται.» (*Η του Ύψους ή του Βάθους: Πρόσφατα Άρθρα για τον Πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της Κρίση*, 119.)
- This excerpt comes from the back cover of the book *Either of the Height or of the Depth: Recent Articles on Civilization in Greece of the Crisis*. It reads as follows in the original: "Είναι γνωστό ότι οι Έλληνες ως λαός συνήθως αναδεικνύονται καλύτερα στις έκτακτες περιστάσεις, όπως και στην αρχαιότητα. Περσικοί Πόλεμοι, εναντίον των Καρχηδονίων στη Σικελία, του ύψους του βάθους ο Πελοποννησιακός Πόλεμος η κατάκτηση του Μεγαλέξανδρου, του ύψους του βάθους οι επίγονοι ανάμεσά τους Έικοσιένα του ύψους, οι εμφύλιοι του βάθους. Ο κατάλογος είναι μακρύς — και πάντοτε σε σχέση με τους ξένους, εχθρούς, βαρβάρους ή μεταξύ μας θα συνεχιστεί η ίδια εικόνα κατά μήκος της Ιστορίας μας." (*Η του Ύψους ή του Βάθους: Πρόσφατα Άρθρα για τον Πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της Κρίση*, 219.)
- Here is the original: «Φταίει και η αδυναμία διορατικότητας της πολιτικής ελίτ που αποθαρρύνει την εγχώρια παραγωγή, χάριν μιας ευκολότερης πολιτικής εισαγωγών με υψηλή φορολογία, που προσφέρει προσωρινά έσοδα. [...] Στις παρούσες συνθήκες η δογματική Αριστερά ορθά δίνει έμφαση στη φτώχεια, όμως λησμονεί τους λόγους, πως δεν είναι μόνο οικονομικοί οι παράγοντες αλλά και ψυχολογικοί και πολιτικοί, ένα λάθος επιλογή από το σύνολο της κοινωνίας, λόγω έλλειψης αυτοπεποίθησης και λόγω της προτίμησης του εύκολου δρόμου χωρίς πρόβλεψη των μακροπρόθεσμων αποτελεσμάτων. Σε αυτά δυστυχώς φταίει ολόκληρη η νοοτροπία του έθνους...» (*Η του Ύψους ή του Βάθους: Πρόσφατα Άρθρα για τον Πολιτισμό στην Ελλάδα της Κρίση*, 97).
- Here is this stanza in Greek from the poem "ΓΙΑΤΙ" written in Athens in June 2009: Απ' τον γήινο χάρτη είναι σθησμένη η Ελλάδα/Κι έγινε πάλι όπως ήταν άλλοτες έναν καιρό/Μια Ιδέα και αναλήφθηκε στον γεωμετρικό/Της Ουρανό απ' όπου δεν ξανακατέβηκε. (*Πικρό Καρναβάλι*, 10).
- Here is the relevant reference in the original: "Το διονυσιακό στοίχειο εισέβαλε σε όλους τους τομείς: υπαρξιακό, αισθητικό, φιλοσοφικό, γλωσσικό, ή δραματικό." (*Κείμενα για τον Υπερρεαλισμό: Για μια Θεωρία της Γραφής Β'*, 9).



- 10 The original reads as follows: "... χωρίς επ' ουδενί να αποκλείουν την τρέλα, τα οράματα, τη νύχτα, τα όνειρα, το πρωτόγονο, το παραλήρημα και τη φρενιτιδα, τις 'αυτόματες' πύλες του Ολύμπου και τη χασματώδη είσοδο του Άδη." (Κείμενα για τον Υπερρεαλισμό: Για μια Θεωρία της Γραφής Β', 10).
- 11 The original reads as follows: "Όχι, η Ελλάδα είναι ως επί το πλείστον η χώρα του παραλόγου, του παράδοξου και του φανταστικού." (Κείμενα για τον Υπερρεαλισμό: Για μια Θεωρία της Γραφής Β', 10).
- 12 The original reads as follows: "Μέσω της τόσο αρχαίας γλώσσας μας, εμείς, οι σύγχρονοι έλληνες, φέρουμε το πολύ βαρύ φορτίο από ίχνη, απηχήσεις και επιβιώσεις της Αρχαιότητας: τις νύμφες, τις Αμαζόνες, τον Μελέαγρο και την Αλθαία, τις γοργόνες, τον χθόνιο ταύρο, τον στύλο που συγκρατεί τον ουρανό, τη θεά Αφροδίτη, τον Άδη, τον Χάροντα, τους Γίγαντες, τους θεούς και τον όμηρο, που ακόμα μνημονεύουν οι χωρικοί της Χίου." (Κείμενα για τον Υπερρεαλισμό: Για μια Θεωρία της Γραφής Β', 10).
- 13 The entire list of the content of the Trojan Horse can be found in the pages 101-103 of *Either of the Height or of the Depth*.
- 14 The excerpt in Greek is as follows: "Τελευταίο και μακράν το καλύτερο, το απολαυστικότερο και σπινθηροβόλο 'Η Κοκώνα η Μαρώ'—κεφάλαιο από το μυθιστόρημα του Νάνου Βαλαωρίτη *Τα σπασμένα χέρια της Αφροδίτης της Μήλου* -- με μία Μάγια Λυμπεροπούλου εξόχως θεατρική και απαστράπτουσα, να βυθίζεται με άνεση σ' ένα διακειμενικό και διαπολιτισμικό κολάζ και ν' ανασύρει (και κατά βούληση να διασύρει) τους πάντες, από τον Κοραή μέχρι τον Εγγονόπουλο. Ένα σώμα στην επιφάνεια του οποίου αναστενάζει όλο το έθνος, και η πλατεία δικαίως χειροκροτεί."
- 15 The original reads: "Όλα τα χάσαμε – τα σπίτια τα εργοστάσια | τ' αυτοκίνητα – τους μισθούς – την ανεξαρτησία μας – τη σύνταξη – τις διακοπές μας – τα επιδόματα – τη δουλειά μας – τα δώρα του Πάσχα και των Χριστουγέννων | την ελπίδα μας για το μέλλον [...] και μας έμειναν το χρέος – οι φόροι – το άγχος – η ταπείνωση – η αγγελία για θέση εργασίας – η απελπισία – και οι επέτειοι – τα γενέθλια – οι γιορτές των Χριστουγέννων και του Πάσχα | οι ονομαστικές γιορτές – οι γάμοι | τα βαφτίσια – οι κηδείες – το σινεμά – οι σαπουνόπερες – | τα μνημόσυνα τα διαζύγια – το προπό – | το λαχείο. Τα δάνεια – η πικρία – το νοίκι – οι λογαριασμοί | του ΟΤΕ της ΕΥΕΔΑΠ, των κοινοχρήστων | τα τέλη των σχολείων των παιδιών | τα απόντα βιβλία τους – και | η Μελαγχολία μας για τα εγκόσμια – η θλίψη – το ποδόσφαιρο!" (Νάνος Βαλαωρίτης, «Τι χάσαμε, τι κερδίσαμε», *Πικρό Καρναβάλι*).
- 16 This excerpt comes from an interview Nanos Valaoritis gave at the electronic journal Bookbar: <http://www.bookbar.gr/nanos-valaoritis-pikro-carnavali-i-tou-ipsous-i-tou-vathous/cocktails> «Τα ποιήματα είναι μεγεθυντικοί φακοί μέσα από τα οποία μπορούμε να δούμε την πραγματικότητα. Μικρές εκλάμψεις από έναν χώρο που είναι εγκλωβισμένος.»

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