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The editors would like to express their gratitude to Andras Berkes for his heroic efforts to make this journal readable.
This issue is dedicated to Veronica and Andreas.
According to traditional Greek folklore, the kallikantzari (sing. kallikantzaros) emerge on earth at night during the twelve days of Christmas. Whilst descriptions of them vary, in common are the characteristics of extreme ugliness and thinness. Each, moreover, is in some way deformed: ‘Some are lame, some are one-eyed, one-legged, bow-legged, with twisted mouths, hands, some are hunchbacked, wrinkled; and briefly, all of the defects and infirmities you will find upon them.’ Usually they are reported as having the stature of dwarfs, with long unkempt bushy hair, savage red eyes, boar-teeth, the hands of an ape ending in long hooked fingernails, and the feet of an ass; or alternatively, with one of an ass and one of a human. Their clothing is tattered and in wretched condition. Peculiar to this dress is the large thick cloak, the pointed cowl which they knit themselves from pig’s bristles, and shoes made of iron. They are very agile, climbing walls, walking on the roofs, entering by way of the chimney, etc. Their diet consists chiefly of worms, frogs, snakes, lizards, but even more so if fried. They are keen cognoscenti of the dance, a special dance being named after them: ‘the dance of the kallikantzari.’

Their customary habits during their sojourn are mills situated in deserted places: ‘They lie in wait in the ravines, wherever there is water, and near windmills,’ and where three roads cross. For the rest of the year they dwell in ‘the nether world,’ ‘in Hades,’ where they saw with their teeth the supporting pillars of the earth. By Christmas their labours are nearing completion and they ascend to the surface so as not to be overwhelmed, but when they return the pillars have been mysteriously restored and they must begin afresh.

Some believe that the kallikantzari are humans of a blighted destiny metabolised into demons for a fixed period. Susceptible are babies born at the time of the Epiphany who are not immediately baptised, others for whom the priest incorrectly recites the baptismal blessing, aborted infants, anyone who dies at Christmas, suicides, and those with guardian angels who do not possess sufficient character to protect their charges against evil demonic influence.

The kallikantzari, despite being very stupid and easily deceived, are capable of wreaking extensive damage. They sit upon the shoulder of anyone rash enough to stray into their vicinity,
compelling them, if an appropriate answer is not given to whatever is asked, to eat their disgusting food and afterwards carrying them away in dance and mischief-making; although it is also said that they reward the good dancer. Likewise they enter houses, flogging the inhabitants and snatching their clothes, ‘they torture lazy women… for this reason young girls hurry to spin as much yarn as they can at this time,’ pouring out the water, urinating in the pots of wine and olives, scattering the flour, soiling the meals and whatever else happens to be before them, particularly ashes in which they hide; hence the ashes of fires lit during the Epiphany (‘the paganness’ or ‘ash that didn’t hear ‘In the Jordan’’2) are deemed dirty and unsuitable for any use.

Various means are employed to deter the kallikantzari: 1) Practices of Christian worship: the sign of the cross towards the openings and windows of the house, and on the foreheads of unbaptised children, the sanctification of the house by a priest, and incense. 2) Refrains and indecent phrases: the formula ‘log of wood, burning torch’ is widely recommended because fire is a fear of the kallikantzari. The reading aloud of the Lord’s Prayer is a proven exorcism. 3) Magical practices: the use of smoke derived from the burning of foul-smelling substances, such as pieces of hide or old shoes thrown in the fire. Especially repellent to the kallikantzari is the smell of ground-thistle, from which they flee, chanting ‘Ground-thistle smells here! Such a village should vanish!’ Talismans hung behind the door are preventative, as are black-handled knives. The most efficacious however is fire, and in many houses fires are kindled upright, a blazing torch being maintained in the middle, for the length of the Epiphany. Torches are similarly held aloft if there is a need to venture outdoors. Some go so far as to capture kallikantzari by luring them with fries, and then setting them to count the holes of a sieve – a feat quite beyond them – or binding them with red thread or ropes made of rushes which they are powerless to break.

Following the departure of the kallikantzari, the village is purified with a fire being lit in the open. The hearth too is cleansed, or all the house. Most often the ashes are thrown out, but a few keep them for magic.

Theories proposed by scholars concerning the origins of the kallikantzari range from Pan, the satyrs and centaurs of ancient mythology to the Egyptian scarab. Others discern a relationship with beliefs about the figures depicted on the western pediment of the Parthenon.

NOTES

1 The text is a free adaptation of the entry in the Great Greek Encyclopaedia by Maria Ionnidou. Amongst her sources are Nikolaos Politis’ Traditions (1904) and John Cuthbert Lawson’s Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion (1910).

2 The Apolotikion of the Epiphany. It is the principle hymn of the day and is sung at the end of Vespers. The stanza begins: ‘As you were baptised in the Jordan, Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.’
OLD-FASHIONED SONG¹

(Translated by Michael Loosli)

Times change the years pass
the river of the world is turbid
but I will step out onto dream’s balcony
to see you stooped over clay
embroidering ships and swallows.

The sea bitter and meagre our earth
and water costly in the clouds
nakedness enfolds the cypress
grass burns its ash in silence
and ceaseless the hunt of the sun.

Then you came and sculpted a fountain
for the old shipwrecked sailor
who was lost though his memory remains
a luminous sea shell on Amorgos
and a salt pebble on Santorini.

And from the dew that stirred on the fern
I also took a pomegranate’s tear
so that I might in this notebook
spell out the heart’s anguish
with the first star of the fable.

But now that Holy Tuesday draws near
and Resurrection will be late in coming
I want you to go to the Mani and Crete
with your everlasting company there
the wolf the eagle and the asp.

And as soon as you see on your forehead
the fallen star of yore shining secretly
with a gentle glittering – rise up
and bring once more to life the spring
which yet abides in your own rock.
Times change the years pass
the river of the world is turbid
but I will step out onto dream’s balcony
to see you stooped over clay
embroidering ships and swallows.

NOTES

1 The poem is in rhyme, reflecting Gatsos’ tenure as a songwriter, and observes the structure ABABA. It also contains echoes of Seferis’ poetry.

2 The harsh and mountainous southern part of the middle peninsula of the Peloponnese, renowned because the Turks were never able to subdue its inhabitants.
NIKOS GATSOS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

I

1. POETRY

b) ‘You took...’ (Nea Estia, 121, 1 Jan. 1932, p. 39).
c) ‘Octet’ (Nea Estia, 126, 15 March 1932, p. 312).
d) ‘The Snow’ (Rythmos, 7, April 1933, p. 203).
e) Amorgos (Aetos, Athens, 1943).
g) ‘Death and the Knight (1513)’ (Tetradio, 1, Jan. 1947, pp. 31-33).
h) ‘Old-Fashioned Song’ (Tachydromos, 2 Nov. 1963, p. 21; reprinted in 2d). In homage to George Seferis.
j) ‘Memory of Death’ (Odos Panos, 66, March-April 1993, pp. 2-5). Also known as ‘The Young Kormopoulos’.

2. SONGS

c) See Lignadis: III, 17, pp. 185-230. Texts and excerpts from a number of songs.
d) Blow Breeze Blow Me, Don’t Abate Until (Ikaros, Athens, 1992). Includes most of the lyrics.

3. PROSE

d) ‘A View’ (Kallitechnica Nea, 31, 8 Jan. 1944, p. 2). In response to two lectures given by Angelos Sikianos on Kostis Palamas.
4. TRANSLATIONS


II

TRANSLATIONS

ENGLISH

1. C. Capri-Karka:

2. C. Capri-Karka and Ilona Karka

3. Marjorie Chambers:

4. David Connolly:
   ‘Elegy’ (The Charioteer, op. cit., p. 53).

5. Rae Dalven:

6. Kimon Friar:
   a) ‘Amorgos’ (second section) and ‘Death and the Knight’ (Poetry, Chicago, LXXVIII, 3, June 1951, pp. 177-80 & 184). Accompanying notes.


7. Martin Johnston:

8. Edmund Keeley:
   a) ‘In the Griever’s Courtyard’ (Beloit Poetry Journal, 7, 3, Spring 1957, p. 16).

9. Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard:
   a) ‘They Say the Mountains Fell’ (Western Review, 22, 2, Winter 1958, pp. 95-96).
   d) ‘Amorgos’ and ‘Death and the Knight (1513)’ in their *Four Greek Poets* (Penguin, as above, 1966).

10. Konstantinos Lardas:
   a) ‘Amorgos’ (Fulbright Review, Athens, I, 1, Fall 1964, pp. 31-35; reprinted in Generation, XVI, 1, Autumn 1964, pp. 21-30; East-West Review, Kyoto, I, 3, Winter 1965, pp. 309-16; and in III, 15b).
   c) ‘Song of the Old Days’ (Pilgrimage, 11, 2, Feb. 1976, p. 28).

11. Peter Levi:
   b) ‘Amorgos’ (extracts) and ‘This night a man is crucified’ in III, 16a, pp. 30-31 and 115, and 186.
   c) ‘The train left’, ‘The Maniote Vespers’ and ‘The days are evil’ in III, 16b, pp. 112-13, 197-98 and 204-05.
12. Sally Purcell: 

13. Avi Sharon: 

14. Agnes Sotiracopoulou: 
   'In the Courtyard of the Afflicted' (Poetry, Madras, 9, 2, 1968, p. 18).

15. Vasilis Stavropoulos: 
   'Amorgos' (Masthead, 4, n.d. [1999], pp. 5-6). Accompanying notes.

16. Nanos Valaoritis: 
   'Amorgos' in III, 26a. Extracts.

17. Various translators (C. Capri-Karka, David Connolly, Ilona Karka, George Pilitsis and Margaret Polis): 
   Selected Songs from *Blow Breeze Blow Me, Don’t Abate Until* (The Charioteer, op. cit., pp. 63-177).

**FRENCH**

18. A. Floca and E. Radar: 

19. Theodoros Grivas: 

20. Jacques Lacarrière: 

21. Robert Levesque: 

22. Nanos Valaoritis / Robert Levesque: 

**DANISH**

23. Ole Wahl Olsen: 
   *Ridderen og Døden (1513)* (Tekst og Grafik, Amsterdam, 1974).

**ICELANDIC**

24. Sigurður A. Magnússon: 
   Naktir stóðum við: 5 grísk nutimaskald (IDUNN, Reykjavík, 1975). Includes 'Amorgos' (2nd and 3rd sections) and 'Death and the Knight (1513)’. Introduction and short biography.
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ITALIAN


TURKISH


III

SELECTED CRITICISM


2. Evgenios Aranitis:
      [English translation by Margaret Polis: The Charioteer, op. cit., pp. 178-81].
   c) ‘Death and the Knight’ (Eleftherotypia, 13 May 1992, p. 23).
   d) ‘Nikos Gatsos’ (Odos Panos, 66, March-April 1993, pp. 6-18).
   e) See I, 1k, pp. 7-10.

3. Alexandros Argyriou:
   b) ‘Nikos Gatsos and Surrealism’ in Successive Readings of Greek Surrealists (op. cit.). Lecture.

4. C. Capri-Karka:

5. Manos Eleftheriou:

6. Odysseas Elytis:

7. Kimon Friar:
   ‘Nikos Gatsos’ in Modern Greek Poetry (op. cit., pp. 79-82).

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   ‘Nikos Gatsos – A very severe friend’ (Lexi, op. cit., pp. 100-07). Interview by Andonis Fostieris and Thanasis Niarchos.

9. Dimitris Karamvalis:
   a) ‘The Case of Nikos Gatsos’ (Odos Panos, op. cit., pp. 51-60).

10. Andreas Karantonis:

11. Nikos Karydis:

12. Edmund Keeley:

13. Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard:

14. Karolos Koun:

15. Konstantinos Lardas:

16. Peter Levi:

17. Tasos Lignadis:
    A Double Visit to an Epoch and a Poet: A Book for Nikos Gatsos (Gnosis, Athens, 1983). Includes a general survey of surrealism in Greece and abroad as well as texts, analysis and notes.
18. Haris Megalynos:

19. Dionysis Papadopoulos:
‘The Worship of the Fragmentary’ (Odos Panos, op. cit., pp. 41-44).

20. Takis Papatsonis:
a) ‘Recent Poetry Releases’ (Neoellenika Mousa, 4-5, July-Sept. 1943).

21. Giorgos Petropoulos:
‘Journeying to the Amorgos of Nikos Gatsos’ (Odos Panos, op. cit., pp. 45-50).

22. Christopher Robinson:

23. Michail Rodas:
‘A New Greek Tragedy’ (Elefthero Vima, 15 Oct. 1943). The title refers to a play by Angelos Sikelianos but it also includes a discussion of ‘Amorgos’.

24. A. Spyris:
‘Expressionist Themes (and the Amorgos of Mr N. Gatsos)’ (Philologica Chronica, 3, 1 April 1944, pp. 205-07).

25. Giorgos Themelis:

26. Nanos Valaoritis:
d) Introduction to Surréalistes Grecs, Cahiers pour un Temps (op. cit.). See pp. 8-9.

27. Nanos Valaoritis and Andreas Pagoutlas:

28. Gore Vidal:

29. Stavros Xarchos: