

each way, and all I would find at the other end would be some undistinguishable medieval fortifications. As to its being an ancient site, evidence to this effect was said to have been unearthed by a German archeologist some time ago, but it was not discernible, it seemed, to the untrained or uninformed eye. This is only another example of the extraordinary virginity of the island of Lesbos as regards its archeological treasures.

As I had promised to be back in Mytilene on the Saturday so as to be taken to the Gulf of Gera on the back of an obliging motorbike, and as the last bus back before Monday was the Friday one, I had to fall in with this curtailing of my plans. I cannot believe that my failure to present myself on the actual location of some of these alleged classical sites, where not one stone remains upon another, and where, as in this case, there is not even a stone which can be definitely said to be classical, will deprive the reader of any valuable additions to this book.

At the same time it must be said that it is distinctly disappointing not to be able to locate the temple at Antissa, for it is the traditional burial place of the head of Orpheus. After his return from his abortive expedition to Hades in search of his lost love Euridice, Orpheus retired to Thrace, where his charms of person led the women of those parts to make frequent and increasingly frantic advances to him; but finding that the musician continued obdurate in his rebuffs, they so far forgot themselves as to come to a decision to tear him to pieces, a thing they had no doubt often <sup>done</sup> in the figurative sense, but which they now proceeded to carry out literally. Of the poor remnants, his head, still calling on the name of his beloved Euridice, was borne down the river Hebron, and out to sea, till crossing the northern Aegean it was washed ashore at Antissa, his lyre, by a lucky chance, following on a succeeding wave of this providential stream. The pious inhabitants had evidently some means, perhaps supernatural, of recognising the relics for what they were, for they interred the head, and hung the lyre, in their temple of Apollo, thereby calling down on the island

Having since read Robert Graves on "The Greek Myths" I am thinking of enlarging the passage on Orpheus.

the gift of song and accounting for the birth there of the poets Sappho and Alcaeus. According to an awkwardly discrepant account, the lyre became a constellation; but this is no doubt an early instance, rendered rare only by the inanimate nature of its subject, of an entity possessing two bodies, one earthly, and the other (literally) astral.

A couple of peasants with their donkeys would be going to Sigri next morning at ten o'clock, and would take my pragmata while I followed on foot. If I rose at eight, I would have two hours to see Antissa, and yet get to Sigri in time to see it before sundown; then first thing next day the bus would bring me back to the foot of the hill on which the monastery stood. This sounded fine.

The schoolmaster accompanied me to the hotel and watched me feed, meanwhile entertaining me with a strange tale of the district which dates from no one knows how long ago, but certainly from no later than the middle ages. I had already heard rumours of this story while I was in other parts of the island. "There used to be a queen there", people would say when Antissa was mentioned, and then be unable to particularise further; though even this much of the tale was told in a way that showed it had gained great prestige in the minds of the tellers. I had tried hard to see how a queen at Antissa would fit into the history of the island as I knew it. The Turks would hardly have permitted such insubordination unless she had maintained an independence founded on force of arms, after the manner of Aly Pasha; but in that case her name would surely have rung through history. Byzantine times were full of gangles, but surely no Emperor worthy the name (of course, a good many were not) would have permitted an upstart to arrogate to herself the name of queen, almost, as it were, on his very doorstep? Throughout both regimes, Lesbos had been somewhat under the eye of Constantinople, always the source and centre of power. Perhaps there might be some grounds in this for me to hope for a classical origin. I even toyed with the idea that this might be a survival and distortion by local legend of the Sappho story, for this was Sappho's corner of the island.

Sigri  
Passage  
starts  
here



Sappho in truth ruled over no kingdom, but such a detail would be easily altered in the passage from mouth to mouth of an oral tradition, divorced as this completely from the written word. Very few of the older and less expensively educated islanders have even heard of the name of Sappho, and are completely ignorant of the fact that Lesbos in foreign parts is often famed for her and her alone.

But on this tack I was proved wrong by the very first detail of the story as I now heard it. For the Queen of whom it speaks was not born locally, nor did she rule in Antissa, but came here alone, to the castle by the shore (lent, perhaps, by a beneficent potentate), banished from her own kingdom (an unspecified land across the sea) because she was a leper. For many years she led a solitary existence, living none knows how. But one day, wandering in the forest, she chanced to see a herd of swine which she immediately diagnosed, calling on I know not what veterinary experience, as fellow-sufferers with herself from the dread disease of leprosy. By a fortunate coincidence the swine were at that very moment engaged in plunging into a pool from which they emerged, as the Queen with her customary acumen instantly recognised, cleansed of their infection. She wisely followed the example of the perspicacious pigs, with equally satisfactory results.

But transport must have been defective in those times; or such I imagine is the reason that the Queen continued to live alone in the castle, making apparently no endeavour to regain her native land. But one day there came to those shores by accident a young man who was none other than her brother; (I do not know the succession laws by which she and not he had gained the throne). At first they did not penetrate the disguises that time had laid on them, and it would seem from <sup>this</sup> circumstance that the youth must

have been travelling for some quite other purpose than that of looking for a lost sister, or he would not have ~~xxxxxxixy~~ failed to make an effort at recognition that could not have been totally unsuccessful. The story says nothing of how much time had passed, but perhaps it was as much as twenty years, and he quite an infant when she left, which would account for her not recognizing him. Some instinct, however, rather than pure chance, may have led her to cut her hand as he approached, and to have asked for his handkerchief with which to bind it. For the handkerchief turned out to have been embroidered by herself, and its pattern, not having altered with the years as their faces had done, brought about an immediate reunion of the siblings. So the story happily ends, and does not tell us whether they returned to their kingdom or lived on in the castle.

The schoolmaster also gave me the words and tune of ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ two parts of a song on the same ~~subject~~ theme, the rest having been lost to the memory of a generation no longer accustomed to spend its winter evenings in the full recital of long epics not committed to paper. The fact that even twelve lines have so survived is testimony enough that we are not so far removed in time from a Greek generation of rhapsodists comparable to those of ancient times who kept the works of Homer alive by constant reallocation during the hundreds of years that intervened between their composition and the invention of writing. The fact that writing was not commonly taught in certain areas such as Antissa (and they may have been many) presumably accounts for the survival till then of prodigious powers of memorization, for the one gift inevitably drives out the other, as will be exemplified in my account (p. ) of the Karangiozi theatre, where as many as a hundred dramas are sometimes in the repertoire of a single illiterate performer.

The two surviving sections of the poem add a few points to the story as I was told it, but the fact that the story tells so many of the parts of the story that these surviving fragments do not touch

*I think the words  
and tune of the  
song should be  
inserted here  
rather than on  
pp. 112 & 113.*



on shows that there must be those still alive or fairly recently dead who heard something like the complete epic sung during their youth. That the subject of the song should be a Queen who ~~was~~ in her ivory castle was in the constant habit of singing seems most appropriate for the village of Antissa that gave it birth, for it strongly suggests that ~~that~~ the legend of its being the place where the head and lyre of Orpheus had been enshrined had not been entirely forgotten ~~at~~ during the Middle Ages, when this song was presumably composed. I say "Middle Ages" because the "Frankish frigate" ~~etc~~ leads one to suppose that it dates from the Genoese occupation, or perhaps earlier, when relations with Genoa would have been only those of trade. The realm that the Queen had deserted was presumably in Italy. If it was the Queen's habit to lure ships in to the shore by her singing, and her brother not the first man so to be tempted, she was perhaps descended from Homer's Sirens. If so, it was presumably only the providential discovery of the handkerchief of her own embroidering that saved him from being killed, like the other victims of the Sirens. But perhaps that slaughterous habit had been symbolized by the leprosy of which she was now cured. How the brother, though lured by the music, came to arrive in the accoutrements of a hunter, is a puzzle. <sup>may have been</sup> That hunting ~~was~~ only a metaphor for his pursuit of the songstress, but one would not expect him to need heavy armour and a horse for this purpose. I like to think that the Queen accompanied <sup>singing</sup> herself on a lyre, perhaps that of Orpheus, and that it was the breaking of a string on that instrument, trembling as her brother's ship approached, that drew blood from her hand.

Here are the words in Greek:

Μιά Λυγερή τραγούδησε σέ κρυσταλλένιο Πύργο  
 κι' ὅσα καράβια τ' ἀκουσαν ὅλα λιμνοῦν κι' ἀράζουν  
 μιά μιὰ φρεγάτα Φράγκισσα ὅρτσα ὅλο πάντα στέκει  
 κι' ὁ καπετάνιος φώναξε σταθῆτε λεβεντάδες,  
 ν' ἀκούσωμε τή Λυγερή σάν τί τραפוῦδι λέγει.

Μέ κυνηγός καί ἔρχεται μαζί κι' ὁ κυνηγάρης  
 Καλή σου μέρα Λυγερή Καλῶς τό κυνηγάρη.  
 Δέσε τό σκυλαράκι σου σέ λυγαριᾶς κλωνάρι,  
 ἀκούμπησε καί τά ἄρματα σέ πέτρα σέ λιθάρι  
 ὅσ' μου τό μαντηλάκι σου τό ὁμορφοκεντημένο  
 νά δέσω τό χεράκι μου πού εἶμαι ματωμένο  
 καί ἄς μέ λέγουνε λεπρή σέ σένα δέν κολάει.

And here is the tune. It will be noted that it is not in one of the medi-  
 eval modes, but in what looks uncommonly like a modern G-minor, with a  
 modulation to D minor in the middle; but this is probably quite the wrong  
 interpretation to put on it. Indeed on re-examination I  
 saw it quite clearly was the wrong interpretation  
 and that is why I have got in touch with you  
 Als.



I had brought the words back from Greece confident that I would have no difficulty in translating them with the aid of Dictionary; but I soon found myself floundering, and had to send them off back to Greece to my friend Mr Francis King, to whom I am greatly indebted for the elucidation of several knotty problems. The difficulties arise not only from the Byzantine forms of some of the words, but also from the extremely elliptical nature of the actual meaning, making one inclined to disbelieve one's own eyes. I have kept the translation to the metre of the original, so that it could be sung to the original tune. It will be noticed that the Greek words fit in an extremely odd way. The tune covers one line, and then a stuttering version of the first half of the next line; the tune then repeats, the words starting again at the beginning of the second line. My English version of course fits the tune by the same system.

A graceful maid was singing, singing, from her crystal castle.  
 And every ship that heard her song hove to and dropped its anchor.  
 A Frankish frigate lies in shore, its head into the breezes.  
 The captain calls: Come, ship your oars, my bonny boys, and listen,  
 That we may hear what song it is this graceful maid is singing.

The huntsman now approaches her, and with him comes the hunter.  
 "Good day to you, my graceful girl!" - "Hail to you, my good huntsman!"  
 Your harness ring come tether here to yonder branch of osier.  
 Upon this stone, this rock, lay down, lay down your heavy armour.  
 And give me now your handkerchief, so beautifully embroidered,  
 That I may bind my little hand from which the blood is falling.  
 There's nothing here for you to fear, though men may call me leper."

After supper the schoolmaster suggested taking me to the travelling shadow theatre which happened to be in Antissa and had set itself up in one of the cafeneions. But we found that the manager had decided it was not worth giving a show tonight for want of an adequate audience. Practically everyone in the village, it seemed, had attended the night before.

However, at the schoolmaster's request he gave me a short demonstration of how the whole thing worked, and Karangiozi himself, this principal and eponymous character, a Punch-like figure full of artistry and fun, made a brief personal appearance on the screen.

I have since acquainted myself further with Karangiozi, as the whole art-form is called, through the medium of a book written in French by a certain Giulio Caimi (presumably from his name Italian; he admits, what is in any case clear from the text, that he is not French) with the help as illustrator of a Mr Klaus Vrieslander, who appears to introduce a Nordic element into this international venture. It was published by "Hellenikes Technes" (Athens 1935) under the title of "Karaghiozi" (his transliteration, of which I do not approve) "Ou La Comédie Grecque Dans L'Ame du Theatre D'Ombres". The theme, for the book is not content to be merely descriptive and historical, is that Karangiozi represents the only authentic and purely Greek theatrical manifestation since the liberation, and that it maintains a Dionisiac tradition derived from ancient Greece through the medium of Klephtic poetry and folk art. The first part of the proposition is easily granted. The shadow theatre, which is not, as one might think, related to the Sicilian puppet theatre or our own Punch and Judy, was brought to Athens from Constantinople in 1860. The Turks derived it from the Persians, and the Persians almost certainly from the Chinese. However, no sooner was the nomad entertainment acclimatised in Greece than it transformed itself from a rough, commonplace, highly obscene and largely repetitious presentation into a complex drama blending the elements of tragedy, history, comedy and farce, within each unit of a richly varied repertory.

The performer, for there is usually only one, though he may for special effects have an assistant, stands behind the screen and holds the puppets by sticks attached to their backs in front of a source of light such as a row of small oil lamps, in such a way that they throw their shadows



on the screen. The screen is a cotton sheet, opaque but translucent, so that the shadows are equally visible on the far side where the audience sit.

The puppets may have any number of articulations, from one at the waist, to ten, variously disposed. Karangiozi himself has ten, of which five are in one of his hands, this hand being his traditional means of self-expression. The performer not only manages the position of the puppets and the movements of their articulations, but also reproduces their voices by mimicry. Many of the characters have not only special voices but special dialects, so that vocal agility matching his sleight of hand is called for. In addition the performance is a considerable feat of improvisation, as there is no written text, many of the performers being in fact illiterate. Since they usually have a repertory of as many as a hundred full-length plays, it is clear that the extent to which actual wording can be committed to memory is limited. Indeed they boast that they adapt their type of verbage and their jokes to suit the audience and the locality.

The plots spring partly from mythology (St George and the Dragon, and other such themes), but mainly from the War of Independence (1821) and its precursor, the activities of Aly Pasha and his opponents. Further themes have been introduced from the Turkish wars of 1912 and 1922, so that Turkey, who presented the technique, has nevertheless largely become the whipping-boy. The stylised scenery shows (at least, I gather, in the prologue) on the left a hovel, and on the right a palace. Karangiozi lives in the hovel, the palace is the home of a representative of the Turkish Sultan, who personifies partly the hated Turkish oppression but also the to-some-extent admired and revered wise-man or king. Karangiozi represents the common man, but with an ever present sense of humour and buffoonery. A few other characters are in this sense stock ones, reappearing in play after play, while others, heroes, heroines, villains and the rest, appear only in particular plays as called for by the exigencies of the story.

All this was evolved at a time when there was in Greece no national theatre, indeed no theatre of any kind, an early venture just after the liberation having failed. It is easy to grant, therefore, that it is the most authentic indigenous representation of drama in Greece, though it owes nothing to intellectuals, and the plays are entirely the work of the practitioners of the craft. It is also possible to see that Klephtic poetry has not been without its influence in suggesting some of the themes, particularly the heroic, chivalrous, and amatory strands. When it comes to finding Dionysiac traits in these influences I am unconvinced. Granted that the Klephts, isolated in the mountains, kept themselves remarkably free of Turkish influence during the long centuries of occupation, boosting perhaps their military morale by their cultural contempt, it was Byzantium rather than Antiquity that they preserved, and the author's attempts to see anything classical, let alone Dionysiac (he seems almost to regard the two things as synonymous) in Klephtic poetry is far-fetched. When it comes to the music, he is certainly astray. He cites the fact that the Klephtic songs used in *marangiozi* are often in the Aeolian mode (the same as our minor scale but without the sharpened seventh) and that the other "Greek" modes are also found in the songs derived from the Klephts. But if there is one thing certain about the "Greek" modes it is that they are not Greek at all, or anyway not classical, but medieval and largely Italian. The real classical modes were pentatonic, three and not seven in number; not one of the three corresponds to even the first five notes of any of the medieval modes, and two of the three involved quarter-tones (or anyway subdivisions of the tone not found in our scales). In the case of music it is therefore clear that it is medieval and not classical forms which Klephtic art enshrines, and I suspect that the same is true in the case of the poetry.



Mr Caimi's book may, however, be read with pleasure and profit, both for the conspectus of Karangiozi and for much diverse matter of interest. For instance, the figure of Alexander the Great has returned to Karangiozi and to Greece after sojourning in the East for two millenia. There, after his Indian exploits, he became quite a hero of the story-tellers, and hence of the shadow theatre, and it is as a shadow-hero that he returns. This reminds me, perhaps incongruously, of the misadventures of the word "Cinema". We derived the word from the Greek word *κίνημα*, a movement ("the movies"), but owing to our ridiculous rules of transliteration the Greek "Kapa" as usual became an English C instead of a K, and as it came before an I it was pronounced soft as though it were an S. The modern Greek, who very sensibly transliterates phonetically, has taken back the word from us aurally, and now renders it with an initial "Sigma"!

Mention of the cinema brings me full circle back to Karangiozi, whose screen has forestalled and pre-experienced all the vicissitudes of our own cinema technique. Karangiozi adopted colour about the turn<sup>of</sup> the century, when some of the practitioners started making their puppets out of a new kind of treated leather from Egypt which was semi-transparent and could be painted so as to show its colour on the screen. The original screen was one metre wide by sixty centimeters high, about the proportion of our old-fashioned screen. Early cries for bigger and better screens were met by simply doubling these dimensions. But further expansion upwards being often impracticable and always of doubtful value, the call for yet greater size was met by adopting the Wide Screen, which was soon several times as broad as it was tall. Whether they also forestalled our terminology "in glorious puppetcolor", I do not know.

There being no Karangiozi to admire on that evening in Antissa, we sat and talked, and presently were joined by Pericles and Christ. Soon a large circle of youths had gathered round to listen to the conversation.

" Τ Ε Χ Ν Η "

ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΚΗ ΚΑΛΛΙΤΕΧΝΙΚΗ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ

ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟΣ 1964-1965

ΣΥΝΑΥΛΙΑ 11η

ΦΕΜΠΗ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΪΔΟΥ-ΣΤΑΜΑΤΑΤΟΥ

τραγούδι

Κ Α Ν Τ Α Τ Α

Ἐκεῖνος πού στό ἄπειρο βασιλεύει,  
ἢ Γιεχοβά ὀνομάζεται ἢ Θεός ἢ Φοῦ  
ἢ Βράχμα, ἄκουσε, ἄνθρωπε, τί σοῦ λέει  
μέ τῇ βροντερῇ φωνῇ του :

Ὁ ἥχος αὐτός εἶναι αἰώνιος καί βγαίνει  
ἀπ'τά ἔγκατα τῆς γῆς, ἀπ'τόν Ἥλιο  
κι'ἀπ'τό φεγγάρι.

Ἀκοῦστε καί σεῖς, ἄνθρωποι, τί σᾶς λέει :

" Ἀγαπήστε τὰ ἔργα μου

ἀγαπήστε στή φύση τήν συμμετρία καί τήν ἁρμονία.

Ἀγαπήστε ἑαυτούς καί ἀλλήλους.

Ἡ δύναμη τοῦ σώματος καί ἡ ὁμορφιᾶ



ἄς εἶναι ἡ εὐπρέπειά σας,  
ἡ φωτεινότης τοῦ μυαλοῦ, ἡ ἀρχοντιά σας.  
Δώστε στούς ἀδελφούς σας τὴν αἰώνια φιλία.  
Αὐτὴ ἡ προσφορά εἶναι πάντα πλανερὴ  
καὶ ποτέ ἀληθινή.  
Σπᾶστε αὐτά τὰ δεσμά τοῦ ψεύδους.  
Σχίστε τοὺς πέπλους τῶν προλήψεων.  
Ἀπαλλαχθῆτε ἀπὸ τὸ ὑποκριτικὸ ἔνδυμα  
πού σᾶς περιβάλλει σὰν σιδερένιο δρεπάνι.  
Ἄς εἶναι συγχωρεμένος ὁ ἄνθρωπος  
ἀπὸ τὸ ἀδελφικὸ αἷμα.  
Ἀνατινάξτε τὴν πέτρα μέ τίς μάῦρες σκόνες  
τῆς δολοφονικῆς σφαίρας,  
ἀπὸ τίς ἀδελφικῆς καρδιῆς πού πᾶλλουν.  
Δέν φτάνει νὰ ἀποζητᾷ κανεὶς τὴ δυστυχία του  
πάνω στὴ γῆ.  
Ἡ διδασκαλία μου ζητᾷ εὐεργεσία  
καὶ παρόρμηση σὲ καλύτερα ἔργα.  
Ἡ ἀνθρωπότης, ὅσο εἶναι τυφλὴ καὶ ἄμυαλη,  
στὴ δυστυχία βυθίζεται.  
Διαικῶς ὑποχωρεῖ καὶ χτυπιέται.  
Ἐμπρὸς λοιπόν, πρὸς τὸ φῶς τῆς ἀλήθειας.  
Νὰ εἴστε λευκοὶ καὶ δυνατοί,  
νὰ εἴστε ἀδελφοί.  
Τότε θὰ λάμψη ἀπάνω σας ἡ γαλήνη τῆς χαρᾶς μου.  
Τότε θὰ τρέχουν στὰ μάγουλα μόνο δάκρυα χαρᾶς.  
Τότε θὰ ἤχοῦν ὕμνοι ἀγαλλιάσεως.  
Τότε θὰ ἀπλωθοῦν μπροστά σας οἱ κοιλάδες τῆς Ἑδέμ.  
Τότε ὅλα θὰ γελοῦν στὴ φύση.  
Τότε θὰ ἔλθῃ σ' ὅλους ἡ Εὐτυχία.

ΠΑΙΔΙΚΕΣ ΣΚΗΝΕΣ

Μέ τῇ Νιάννια

ὦ καλή μου Νιάννιουσκα  
παραμύθια πές μου.

Ἔλα πές. Γιά τό Λύκο.

Ξέρεις ποιό.

Πού κρυφά στό σπίτι τρύπωσε,  
τά μικρά παιδιὰ ξεγέλασε,  
καί τά ἔφαγε...στάλα δέν ἄφησε....  
καί φωνάζαν, καί σπαράζαν, καί κλαίγανε....  
Νιάννιουσκα. Γιά τιμωρία, ἀλήθεια;  
Ναί; Γι'αυτό;

Δέν ἀκούγανε τῇ Νιάννιουσκά τους.  
Κι'οὔτε ὅσα οἱ γονεῖς τους λέγαν.  
Γι'αυτό τᾶφαγε ὁ Λύκος, Νιάννιουσκα;  
Ὅμως πάλι. Γιά τούς δύο βασιλιάδες  
γιά πές μου ξανά.

Κατοικοῦσαν σ'έναν πύργο, στό γιαλό.  
Ἔτσι νά. Κουτσός ὁ βασιλιάς,  
καί πολύ πολύ μικρός, τόσος δά .....

Κι'ἡ βασίλισσα σάν φταρνίζονταν,  
ὅλα γύρω σάν τρελά γυρνοῦσαν.....

Ξέρεις, Νιάννιουσκα;  
Πιό καλά γιά τό Λύκο, ἄχ. μή μοῦ πῆς.



Στό δάσος ἄσ'τον.

Πές μου τ'ἄλλο τώρα. Ναί, τ'άστεϊο.

----

Στή γωνιά

"Αχ κατεργάρη.....

Μέ ἄδειες βελόνες, λυμένο κουβάρι.....

"Αχ ἐσύ. Τό πλεχτό μου, πάει.

Μέ μπλέ μελανιές μοῦ τό λέρωσες.

Μπρός, μάρς.

Ἐκεῖ, στή γωνιά. θηρίο.

"Εγώ δέν φταίω διόλου Νιάνιουσα.

Τό πλεχτό σου καθόλου δέν πείραξα...

Ἡ γάτα. Μόνο αὐτῇ, τό ἔπαιξε.

Κι'οἱ βελόνες ἀπ'αὐτὴν ξεπέρασαν.

Ὁ Μίσηνκα, ὁ φρόνιμος Μίσηνκα

δέν φταίει αὐτός.

Ἡ Νιάνια εἶν'κουτὴ καί κακιά.

Τῆς Νιάνιας βρώμικ'εἶν'ἡ μύτη της.....

Τά μαλλιά τοῦ Μίσα εἶν'ὄμορφα.

Τό σκουφί τῆς Νιάνιας εἶν'στραβό.....

"Αχ τί ἄδικο, τό Μίσηνκα

ἀφήνεις νά στέκη στή γωνιά.....

Τώρα ὁ Μίσηνκα

δέν ἀγαπάει τὴ Νιάνιουσα.

Βλέπεις;

-----

Ὁ Σκάνθαρος

Νιάνια, Νιάνιουσα.

"Αχ, τί τρομερό. "Αχ Νιάνιουσα.

"Επαιζα κεῖ δά στήν ἄμμο,

κάτω ἀπὸ τίς πρασινάδες.

"Ένα σπιτάκι ἔχτιζα  
μέ τά κλαδάκια πού μασε ἡ Μαμάκα  
μέ τά ἴδια της χεράκια.  
"Ετοιμο ἦταν τό σπίτι  
μέ τή στέγη, τί ὠραῖο σπιτάκι.  
"Αχ... Καί νά στή στέγη  
ἕνας σκάνθαρος. Κατάμαυρος,  
σάν θεριό τρομερός.....  
Κουνάει τά μουστάκια, προχωρεῖ....  
Καί ἄγριος μέ κοιτᾷ στά μάτια.....  
"Ω, πῶς τρόμαξα.  
Καί ξάψνου νά. "Αχ ναί....  
Τά φτερά του ἀπλώνει,  
πετᾷ, κι ὄρμᾷ.... "Αχ.  
Καί δίνει μιά... Πάνω στό μέτωπό μου....  
"Επеса κάτω, Νιάνιουσκα,  
καί μόλις... πού ἔπαιρνα ἀνάσα.....  
Μέ τό 'να μάτι κοιτάζω κρυφά.....  
καί σκέφου. τί βλέπω, Νιάνιουσκα;  
Πάνω κεῖ στή στέγη στέκει  
εὐχαριστημένος τώρα,  
καί δέ θυμώνει,  
τά μουστάκια δέν κουνάει,  
οὔτε μουγκρίζει.  
Σιγοτρέμουν τά φτεράκια.....  
Μὴν πεθαίνει;  
Ψέματα νά εἶναι;  
Τί τοῦ συμβαίνει;  
'Εσύ τί λές, Νιάνια;  
Τί τοῦ συμβαίνει;  
Στό μέτωπό μου χτύπησε ὁ ὁμός.  
Τί τοῦ συμβαίνει; Τί νά χη;

---



Μέ τήν κούκλα

Τιάπα, ἄϊα,  
Τιάπα, κάνε νάνι.  
Κλεῖσε τᾶ ματάκια σου.  
Τιάπα. Μπρός, ἄκου.  
Τιάπα. κάνε νάνι  
σάν καλό παιδάκι.  
Ὁ κακός ὁ Λύκος  
θά ᾿ρθη νά σέ πάρη.  
Τιάπα, κάνε νάνι.  
Ἔλα, θά σοῦ πῶ  
τί θά ὀνειρευτῆς.  
Τόν μαγεμένο κῆπο πού στά δέντρα  
φρούτα ἀντί νά βγαίνουν  
λιχουδιές φυτρώνουν,  
ὁμορφα γλυκά.  
Κι ὅλα νά ᾿ν᾿ δικά σου.  
Ἄϊά, κάνε νάνι,  
ἄϊ ά . Τιάπα.....

-----  
Βραδινή προσευχή

Φύλαγε, Θεέ μου, τοὺς καλοὺς γονεῖς μου.  
Νά τοὺς εὐλογῆς, Θεέ μου.  
Καί τ᾿ ἀδελφια, Θεέ μου,  
τόν Βάσινκα, μά καί τόν Μίσηνκα.  
Θεέ καλέ μου, φύλαγε  
τή Γιαγιά τή χρυσή μου.  
Πολύ νά ζήση  
καί γερὴ νά ᾿ναι πάντα.  
Τί καλή ἡ Γιαγιά.  
Κι ᾿εῖν ᾿τόσο γριά..... Θεοῦλη μου.  
Καί, Θεέ, φύλαγε

θεία Κάτια, θεία Νατάσα, θεία Μάσα,  
θεία Παράσα, θεῖο Λιούμπα, Βάρια  
καί Σάσα καί "Ολγα καί Τάνια καί Νάντια.  
Θεῖο Πέτια καί Κόλια, θεῖο Βολόντια  
καί Γκρίσα καί Σάσα καί ὅλους,  
Θεέ καλέ, προστάτευε, φυλαγε,  
Φίλια καί Βάνια καί Μίτια καί Πέτια  
καί Ντάσα, Πάσα, Σόνια, Ντούνιουσκα....

Νιάνια, πές Νιάνια.

Τί λένε τώρα;

"Αχ, τί ἀπρόσεχτος εἶσαι σύ.

Πολλές φορές σοῦ εἶπα:

"Θεέ μου ἀγαπημένε καί ἐμέ φυλαγε."

Θεέ μου ἀγαπημένε, καί ἐμέ φύλαγε.

"Ετσι; Νιάνιουσκα;

---

#### Τό ξύλινο ἀλογάκι

Χάϊ, χόπ, χόπ, χόπ,

χάϊ σά σά. Χάϊ, χόπ,

τά τά τά τά.

χαϊντί, πρρρ...."Αλτ.

Βάσα, ἔ Βάσα.

"Ακου. "Ελα τώρα στό παιχνίδι.

Γρήγορα, ἔλα.

"Ελα, μπρός. Χόπ

γεια σου, Βάσα.

"Εχω ἀκόμα δρόμο.

Πρίν βραδιάση πρέπει νά 'μαι πίσω.

Στό κρεβάτι, τί φριχτά νωρίς πού πέφτω.

Μπρός λοιπόν, ἐμπρός.

Τά τά τά τά ....

Χαϊντί, χόπ. Χάϊ χάϊ.

Κάντε τόπο. "Οῦ :.....

"Οῦ. Στό ποδαράκι

τί πόνος φριχτός.



"Μάτια μου, ἄχ τό μικρό πονάει;-  
Μά πιά μὴν κλαῖς.  
Νά, πέρασε .  
Στό ποδαράκι ἦτανε κάτι.  
Μικρό μου , σήκω.  
Δές ἐκεῖ . Τί ὁμορφούλι.  
Δές το. 'Εδῶ στό θάμνο,  
"Αχ . τό πουλάκι, τί ὁμορφο.  
Τί φτεροῦγες . Βλέπεις;  
Λοιπόν; Καλά;" -Καλά.  
Τί μακριά πού ἔχω πάει.....  
Εὐθύς στό σπίτι νά τρέξω πρέπει.  
Χόπ, χόπ .  
Ξένοι θά 'ρθουν, ἔλα τώρα, τρέξε.

---

#### EINERLEI

Τό στόμα σου εἶναι πάντα τό ἴδιο  
μά τά φιλιὰ σου πάντα καινούργια.  
Τά μάτια σου τά ἴδια  
κι' ἡ ξάστερη ματιά τους μόνο γιά μένα.  
"Ω ἐσύ, μοναδική μου ἀγάπη,  
βρίσκω σέ σένα τόσα πολλὰ.  
Εἶσαι ὅλα . Καί εἶσαι ἡ μόνη.  
"Ω ἀγάπη μου μοναδική.

---

ΚΑΚΟΚΑΙΡΙΑ

Εἶναι ἕνας ἀπαίσιος καιρός.  
Βρέχει, φυσᾷ καί χιονίζει.  
Κάθομαι μπροστά στο παραθύρι  
κι' ἀγναντεύω ἔξω στή σκοτεινιά.  
Ἐκεῖ πέρα λαμπυρίζει ἕνα ἔρημικό φωτάκι.  
Ταλαντεύεται δῶ καί κεῖ ἀπό μακριά.  
Μιά μητερούλα μέ τό φαναράκι  
κλονίζεται πάνω στο δρόμο ἐκεῖ.  
Θαρρῶ πῶς ἀγόρασε μέλι, αὐγά καί βούτυρο.  
Ἐνα γλύκισμα θά φῆση  
γιά τήν ψηλή κορούλα της.  
Ἐκεῖνη εἶναι στο σπίτι, στήν πολιοθρόνα,  
καί νυσταγμένη ἀνοιγοκλείνει τά μάτια της στο φῶς....  
Οἱ χρυσές φλόγες φωτίζουν τή γλυκιᾶ μορφή.

---

ΣΕΠΕΝΑΤΑ

"Ανοιξε, ἄνοιξε,  
μά σιγά, παιδί μου,  
μή ξυπνήσης ἀπ'τόν ὕπνο κανένα.  
Τό ρυάκι μουρμουρίζει ἀπαλά,  
μόλις πού σαλεύει τό ἀεράκι ἕνα φύλλο  
στούς θάμνους καί στούς βάτους.  
Γι'αὐτό, μοριτσάκι μου, σιγά.  
Τίποτε μήν κινηθῇ.  
"Αγγισε ἀπαλά μέ τό χεράκι σου  
τό μάνταλο στο παραθύρι.  
Μέ βήματα τόσο ἀθόρυβα,  
μέ βήματα ὅπως τῶν φαντασμάτων  
πῆδα πάνω στά λουλούδια....  
Πέταξε ἐλαφρά στή φεγγαρόλουστη βραδιά  
κι' ἔλα νά τρυπώσης κοντά μου στόν κῆπο.



Ὡς καί τ' ἄνθη γύρω ἀποκαιμῶνται  
ποῦ ἀπαλά τὰ δροσίζει τό ρυάκι  
κι' εὐωδιά σκορποῦν.  
Μόνο ἡ ἀγάπη ξαγρυπνᾷ.  
Κάθισε ἐδῶ, κάτω ἀπ' τή φλαμουριά,  
στῆς σκοτεινιάς τό μυστήριο.  
Πάνω ἀπό μᾶς τό ἀηδόνι  
γλυκά ὀνειράτα θά βλέπη ἀπ' τὰ φιλιὰ μας.  
Καί τό ρόδο σάν ξυπνήση τό πρωῒ ἐκεῖ ψηλά  
κατακόκκινο θά εἶν' ἀπ' τή ντροπή του  
γιά ὅσα εἶδε χτέες τό βράδυ .....

---

Τά κείμενα μεταφράστηκαν  
ἀπό τήν κ. Φ. Νικολαΐδου-Σταματάτου