

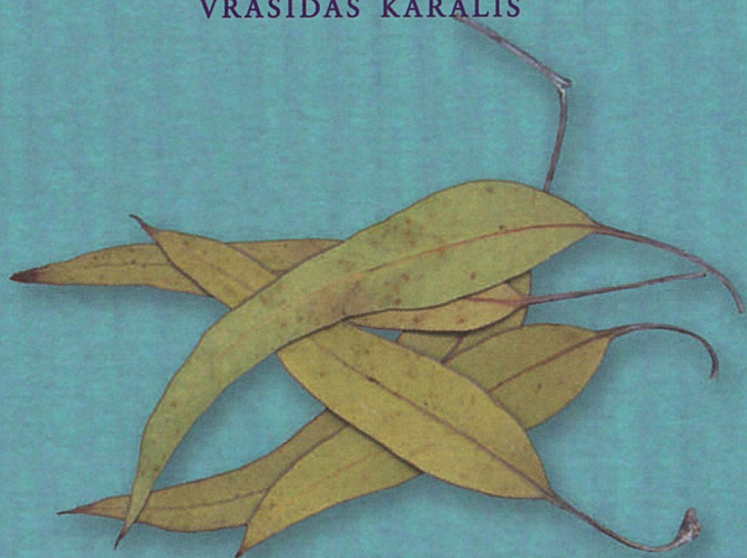
*Brandl & Schlesinger Poetry*

S.S. Charkianakis

*Australian Passport*

ENGLISH-GREEK EDITION

ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY  
VRASIDAS KARALIS



“Australian Passport, written during the last 30 years, reflects Charkianakis’ experience of Australia.

These poems present a humanistic vision of reality which embraces the diversity of human life and celebrates the importance of small things.

His main poetic concern remains the depiction of humanity in pain, and focuses on the ways a religious person could alleviate and assuage the nightmare of history.

His poetry lives and is inhaled out in the open market of contemporary life, where prophets live next to beggars and holiness co-exists with vulgarity.

Charkianakis has experienced the pain and the agony of the displaced person, not because he left his native country but because of he experiences the paradise lost of human innocence. In a world in which humanistic values are employed to justify injustice and the cultural achievements of the past are used as weapons towards the destruction of the other, Charkianakis’ poetry expresses the remorse of being grateful in an immoral society.”

Vrasidas Karalis



S.S. Charkianakis  
*Australian Passport*



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AND INTRODUCTION BY

VRASIDAS KARALIS

**BRANDL & SCHLESINGER**



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# *Introduction to S.S. Charkianakis' Poetry*

BY VRASIDAS KARALIS

## I

Archbishop Stylianos was born in Rethymnon, Crete (Greece) in 1935. His father was one of the leading members of the Greek resistance against the Germans during the battle of Crete in 1941. He was executed in a dramatic way in front of his fellow-fighters by the Germans and ever since his memory survived as a legend in his native island.

After the civil war in Greece Charkianakis left Crete for Constantinople (present day Istanbul) where he studied in one of the oldest existing theological institutes of the Orthodox Patriarchate, the Theological School of Chalkis. In 1957, he was ordained deacon and presbyter in the following year. In 1958, he went for further studies to Bonn (West Germany then) and studied under the most important theologians of Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. He stayed in Germany for eight years (1958-1966) and there developed the vision of harmonious co-existence between the different denominations of Christianity.

In 1966, after a personal invitation by Patriarch Athenagoras, he went back to Thessalonica where he served as the hegumen at the Vlatadon Monastery, one of the oldest

surviving monastic centers of spirituality since the Middle Ages. There he inaugurated and established with other scholars the Patriarchal Center for Patristic Studies, which has remained to this day as one of the leading research institutions for Christian scholars in Europe and especially for all Eastern Orthodox countries.

In 1965 he received his doctorate in theology at the University of Athens and in 1969 was elected Associate Professor of Systematic Theology by the University of Thessalonica. At the same time Patriarch Athenagoras appointed him as the exarch of the Ecumenical patriarchate over Northern Greece with special jurisdiction on the monastic community of Mt Athos.

Already at this period Archbishop Stylianos had written a substantial number of poems and critical essays, which gradually led to a full-scale dedication to poetry and creative writing. At the same time, his theological treatises remain to this day landmarks of the Orthodox dogmatic tradition and considered as the standard reference texts expressing the core beliefs of the Eastern Church.

In 1975, he was elected as the primate of the Greek-Orthodox Church in Australia and arrived to the country amongst general jubilations of the faithful. After his arrival he embarked on a full-scale program of restructuring within the Orthodox Church which led to the general expansion and elevated prestige of the Greek-Orthodox presence in the spiritual, cultural and social life of Australia.

Furthermore, he remains to this day the Co-President of the Bi-lateral Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches and has contributed substantially to the discussions between both traditions. He

also served for period of time as the co-chair to the dialogue between the Anglican and Orthodox Churches.

In 1986, he established St Andrews Theological College in Sydney, where he teaches Systematic Theology. St Andrews College is the most prominent Orthodox institution in the southern hemisphere and many students from all over Australia attend its courses.

However poetry has always been one of his main concerns of his life, since he believes that poetry could not be separated from prayer. He has written 25 collections of poetry in Greek and many of his poems have been translated into English, German, Serbian, French etc. He was awarded the Poetry Prize by the Academy of Athens (1980) and the International Prize Gottfried von Herder (1973) for his contribution to European culture. In 1985 he received honorary doctorate from the University of Lublin, Poland. In 2000, he was awarded *honoris causa* the Doctorate for Divinity by the Sydney School of Divinities.

His poetry presents a Eucharistic vision of reality which embraces all diversity of human life and celebrates the importance of small things. His main poetic concern remains the depiction of humanity in pain, and focuses on the ways that a religious person could alleviate and assuage the nightmare of history.

Without embellishments or naïve sentimentalism, Charkianakis' poetry is full of compassion and empathy; it includes everything that human senses can perceive without distinction of tradition or nationality. His poetry lives and is inhaled out in the open market of contemporary life, where prophets live next to beggars and holiness co-exists with vulgarity.

In his poems however all are reconciled in a harmonious and empowering symbiosis. The poet is not a preacher or an infallible authority. He is not even a philosopher or a theorist. On the contrary, he observes closely, analyses the events of daily existence and presents their fallible nature as if he is describing a unique epiphany and an incredibly important incident.

In his poems everything is transfigured and transposed into another level of existence. Charkianakis has experienced the pain and the agony of the displaced person, not because he left his native country but because of he experiences the paradise lost of human innocence. In a world in which humanistic values are employed to justify injustice and the cultural achievements of the past are used as weapons towards the distraction of the other, his poetry expresses the remorse of being grateful in an immoral society, the inner conflict of a vigilant eye over the falsification of every value.

Beyond this bleak perspective in life, Charkianakis' poetry expresses the firm belief in the restitution of human life to its essential integrity since the vision of a beauty beyond our senses lies at the heart of his poetic exploration.

## II

In this selection, we chose mainly poems talking about the poet's experiencing of Australia as cultural, natural and imaginary landscape. We must stress that in these poems the poet deeply experiences the concrete landscape: by living in this place, he incorporates it into his own adven-

tures. So for the poet living in Australia today means that his poetry is enriched as it absorbs new sensations and images. Charkianakis' poems referring to Australia create their own Australian content by translating their perceptions into the language of Greek tradition.

*Australian Passport* is also the key to exploring the life in Australia every day after the poets' arrival to the country. From the first months of his life in Sydney, we can see the conscious attempt to translate his experience of the place through the imaginative language of momentary episodes. Avoiding any sweeping generalisations about the remoteness or backwardness of Australia, which are the most familiar and most unfortunate themes of migrant poetry, he focused on insignificant details of his everyday encounters with people, nature and things. Probably one of his most emblematic poems was written in 1975 when he tried to define his emotional response to his new environment:

This land looks like the sea,  
vast, challenging, untamed, virginal  
with its bread rich and salty  
with its embrace ambivalent  
in every kiss.

(Charkianakis, 1994:9)

The poem stresses the element of ambivalence that Charkianakis observed everywhere, after he became resident in the country; no attempt to idealisation nor any morose grief about his fate. The poet sees Australia not as an abstraction but as a living organism with its contradictions and antinomies; and as such only ambivalence and



fluctuation can be experienced by anyone. Such ambivalence and fluctuation, focused around profound compassion for the lived experience of the people in the street and at the same time depicting a sense of perplexity in front of the newness of the surrounding environment, remained till this day the central themes of his poems.

For Charkianakis the enigma of Australia does not abide in its foreignness; on the contrary the Australian perplexity lies in its openness, in its immense visual amplitude which, for him, is constantly translated into the universal theme of exploration. The poet is a permanent explorer of Australia; actually all poetry in such new tradition can only be an investigation of the human experience in the land.

Charkianakis constantly searches for the significant detail, the sign of differentiation which shows the characteristic locality of his experience. He always dates his poems so that we can see where exactly he had been when he 'received' the specific image and its textual configuration.

When Bruce Chatwin visited Australia in few lines he epitomised a vision of the land which could be found behind Charkianakis' poems also: "...the whole of Australia could be read as a musical score. There was hardly a rock or creek in the country that could not or had not been sung. One should perhaps visualise the Songlines as a spaghetti of Iliads and Odysseys, writhing this way and that in which every 'episode' was readable in terms of geology" (*Chatwin*, 1987:13). This musicality lies in the heart of the Australian enigma in Charkianakis' poetry. By fully living every moment of time in this country and its history, the poet can see Sydney's "erotic totality" ('Sydney'), or in the harbour cranes "emotions of archangelic intervention" ('Harbour Cranes')

or in the swan at Botany Bay “a miniature of an aeroplane-carrier” (‘The Swan at Botany Bay’) or in a boomerang an allegorical “circumnavigation of the world” (‘Boomerang’).

The landscape is never aesthetised; it never loses its material gravity and exactness. Within such vividness of emotion his poems of Australia become ‘elucidations’ of what it means to live in Australia today. The poems themselves by verbalising the emotion situate it in time and place, they immortalise it as manifestations of the common reality of being. Charkianakis looks for the human presence everywhere within the immensity of this land: only then the land takes on meaning and in return it signifies the ‘seeing-event’. The place is not a soulless geography; it is a pulsating body which embraces the poet and infuses him with the pain of its inhabitants. Every poem records the voice of such hidden or disguised emotions.

Charkianakis’ poems on Australia are profound meditations on the art of living here and now – something which in previous centuries would have been called spiritual life or even earlier incarnational theology expressed poetically. In an age terrorised by spiritual illiteracy, his poems reaffirm the sacredness of daily experience, of the mundane and the trivial, even of the profane and the secular. In his exploration of life, which started as original exile from the ancestral home, Charkianakis found in Australia the metaphor of a life in expectation and premonition, an intuitive life replete with the surprises and the puzzles of every ordinary existence.

The translation simply tried to follow and bring across to English some rhythms of the original; Charkianakis has deliberately chosen a vocal tonality which avoids strong

romantic contrasts and juxtapositions. His language in itself is an integral part of his poetic vision for the re-unification of everything through the re-enchantment of their verbal configurations. However, he follows a very modest poetic path by producing sound patterns of lucid simplicity which sometimes, as everything simple, puzzles with its immediacy and directness.

His language is full of internal alliteration, consonance and word games which usually refer to biblical or ecclesiastical texts. But at the same time this is an extremely personal idiom characterised by dense cohesion and by an almost liturgical unity; despite the varying elements in his poems, synthesising colloquialism and elevated diction, there is an admirable uniformity and harmony which in itself becomes a running commentary on its own subject-matter.

Charkianakis' language is lucid and at the same time indicative of many hidden sub-texts, which can be seen in the mottos used under the poem's title as salutations to his fellow poets, according to him, but also as intertextual signposts, guiding the reader to the direction of his essential poetic territory.

In the translation we tried to make some of these sub-texts obvious in English by adopting the vocabulary of other English poets with similar vision; namely Gerald Manley Hopkins, T.S. Eliot, D.H. Lawrence, W.H. Auden, Sylvia Plath and Seamus Heaney. Despite also their obvious differences, in Australian context, Charkianakis' poetry depicts a poetic vision similar to those of James McAuley and Les Murray. However, his diction avoids any form of over-suppression of emotion leaving his verse quite open to musical

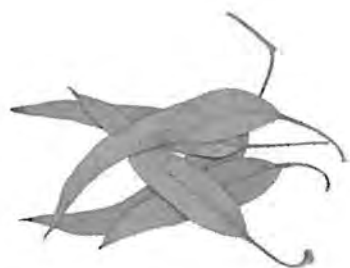
fluctuating with the easiness of subtle symmetries and unpredicted sound combinations.

We borrowed structures of all these poets in order to establish a network of musical affinities in the new language. Since the same happens in the original we tried to make every affinity meaningful as part of the overall poetic vision. The translation is an act of transposition in a psychological and cultural level. Above all we tried, to the best of our abilities, to maintain the powerful simplicity of the original; if we failed then blame it on the translator. The simplicity of the original is probably the most consoling and purifying quality of his poetic vision.

However, poetry is multiplied through translation; therefore nothing is lost; only reborn and recast within a new framework of perceptual understanding. We hope that at least some rhythmic patterns and some new aural tonalities may become acclimatised in English: only then this translation would have transferred the core message of the original to its new recipients.

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## POEMS



## ΠΟΙΗΣΗ

‘ Η διά πασῶν τῶν τεχνῶν ἄρρητη ἀλήθεια.

‘ Η μουσική τῶν λόγων.

‘ Ο λόγος τῆς σιωπῆς.

Τό φῶς τῶν χρωμάτων.

Τοῦ φωτός ἡ πολυώνυμη δόξα.

‘ Η ἀνατροπή τῶν σχημάτων.

‘ Η ἀποκατάσταση ἐνιαίου σχήματος.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 29 May 2001*

## POETRY

The ineffable truth through all arts.

The music of words.

The word of silence.

The light of colours.

The polyonymic glory of light.

The reversal of shapes.

Restitution of the integral shape.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 29 May 2001*

SYDNEY

Τόση ἡ μαγεία ἀπ' τὸ ἀεροπλάνο  
 πού δέν μπορῶ νά ξεχωρίσω τὰ ἐπὶ μέρους  
     ἀπ' τὸ ἐρωτικό σύνολό σου.  
 Βλέπω μονάχα δρόμους τεντωμένους σάν φίδια  
 ἀγέρωχους συγχρόνως καί ἀνεκτικούς  
     στήν δοτὴ μακαριότητά τους.  
 Πλατεῖες σάν διεσταλμένο χαμόγελο  
     πού ἐπισκιάζουν ἀσυναισθήτως  
         τὰ γειτνιάζοντα κτίσματα.  
 Παραλίες καί ὄρμους ὅπου ἡ ρευστότητα  
                                     καί τὸ γαλάζιο  
 ἀντιπαλαίουν τὴν ἀρραγὴ σταθερότητα  
                                     τοῦ βυθοῦ  
     σ' ἓνα φῶς πού ὑποχωρεῖ σέ ἀχλύ  
 ὥς λιτανεῖα Φιλαρμονικῆς Ὁρφανοτροφείου.

*Sydney-Melbourne, 31 March 2001*

## SYDNEY

So is the magic from the aeroplane  
that I can't distinguish any parts  
                    of your erotic totality.  
I only see streets stretched like snakes  
                    simultaneously insolent and tolerant  
                    in their surrendered bliss.  
Squares like an open smile  
                    overshadowing imperceptibly  
                    near-by buildings.  
Beaches and bays where fluidity  
                    and the blue  
wrestle over the unbreakable fixity  
                    of the deep  
                    within the light that fades  
like the litany of an Orphanage Philharmonia.

*Sydney-Melbourne, 31 March 2001*

## Η ΜΠΑΛΛΑΝΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΕΝΤΡΟΥ

Ήταν τό δέντρο κι ἔβλεπα τό δέντρο  
καθώς μονοπωλοῦσε τόν ὀρίζοντα  
καί σκέπαζε τόν οὐρανό.  
Μά πάλι ὑπῆρχε κάτι πió βαθιά ἀπ' τό δέντρο  
πού 'κανε τήν ψυχή μου ν' ἀγκαλιάζει  
τά κλαδιά  
νά χαϊδεύει τά φύλλα  
νά θαυμάζει τά χρώματα  
νά μυρίζει τίς ρίζες καί τό χῶμα.  
Ήταν λοιπόν τό δέντρο πού μ' ἔκαμε  
νά δῶ τόν οὐρανό.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 6 April 2000*

## THE BALLAD OF THE TREE

It was the tree, I could see the tree  
as it dominated the horizon  
and overshadowed the sky.  
But still there was something deeper beyond the tree  
that made my soul embrace  
the branches  
caress the leaves  
admire the colours  
smell the roots and the soil.  
Well, it was the tree that made me  
see the sky.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 6 April 2000*

## ΕΠΟΠΟΙΪΑ ΤΩΝ ΑΝΤΙΣΤΑΣΕΩΝ

- ‘Ο λυρισμός τοῦ χώρου φωνή διάχυτη  
σέ τρεῖς διαστάσεις  
συλλέγεται πιό εὐκόλα ἀπό τοῦ χρόνου τή ροή  
ἀκόμη κι ἂν ὁ θεατής δέν διαθέτει  
εὐαισθησίες βαθύτερες.
- ‘Ο χώρος οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως ἔχει σταθερότητα  
σταματημένου ὀνείρου  
ἀσχέτως ἂν τοῦ προσθέτουν μυστήριο  
ἀναδυόμενες σκιές  
παρηχήσεις ἀμυδρῶν ἀναμνήσεων  
πού μποροῦν νά θεωρηθοῦν  
προϊόντα ὀφθαλμαπάτης.
- ‘Ιδού λοιπόν ὁ λυρισμός τῆς γραμμῆς  
στίς πιό ἀπρόβλεπτες διαδρομές της,  
ὁ λυρισμός τοῦ σχήματος σέ λεῖες ἐπιφάνειες  
σέ αἰχμηρές γωνίες.
- ‘Ιδού ἡ ἐποποιΐα τῶν ἀντιστάσεων  
ἄχραντος πόνος τῆς ἀφῆς.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 18 August 2000*

## EPIC RESISTANCES

The lyricism of space is a voice diffused  
in three dimensions  
easier recollected from time's flow  
even if the spectator doesn't possess  
any sensitivities.

One way or another, space has the stability  
of an arrested dream  
irrespective if mystery is added by  
emerging shadows  
alliterations of vague recollections  
that could be considered  
effects of illusion.

Well, this is the lyricism of line  
in its most unpredictable directions.  
the lyricism of shape on smooth surfaces  
and pointed edges.

These are the epic resistances  
the sacred pain of touching.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 18 August 2000*



## ΑΓΡΑΦΟ ΠΕΠΡΩΜΕΜΟ

Ποτέ δὲν ἦταν στό χέρι σου νά τή διάλέξεις  
 τήν πόλη πού θά κατοικοῦσες  
 ἀφοῦ εἶχες δεσμεύσει τόν ἑαυτό σου  
 σχεδόν παιδιόθεν  
 στά νοητά κι ἴσως γι' αὐτό ἀεικίνητα ὄρια  
 αὐστηρά καθιερωμένης στολῆς  
 γιά τήν ὁποία πειθαρχία καί ὑπακοή  
 εἶχαν ἀπ' τήν ἀρχή ρυθμισθεῖ στόν ἴδιο τόνο  
 μέ τό χρῶμα τοῦ ὑφάσματος.

Ἡ πόλη βέβαια ποτέ δὲν ἦταν  
ἄψυχο σύμπλεγμα ἀπὸ δρόμους καὶ πλατεῖες  
σπίτια καὶ δέντρα παραλίες καὶ λόφοι  
φωνές καὶ κίνηση θόρυβος καὶ καυσαέρια  
μήτε ἡ ἀποσιωπημένη στό βάθος  
κρυφὴ ζωή.

Μέσ' ἀπ' ὅλα τοῦτα καί πέρ' ἀπό τοῦτα  
ἢ κάθε πόλη ἓνα ἄγραφο πεπρωμένο  
κι ὁ δρόμος μιά συλλογική δυνατότητα  
νά κινηθεῖς πρὸς ὅλες τίς κατευθύνσεις  
ὥσπου νά βρεῖς ἢ νά χάσεις τό σῶμα σου  
οὔτως ἢ ἄλλως ταυτισμένο  
μέ τήν ψυχή σου.

*Sydney-Melbourne, 4 May 1998*

## UNWRITTEN DESTINY

It was never up to you the choice  
    of the city you would live in  
since you committed yourself  
    almost since childhood  
to the imagined and therefore perhaps ever-moving limits  
    of an austerey consecrated uniform  
for which discipline and obedience  
were from the beginning tuned to a melody  
    similar to the colour of fabric.

Certainly the city never was  
a soulless complex of streets and squares  
houses and trees beaches and hills  
voices and motion noise and gases  
neither of the silenced deep down  
    hidden life.

Through all these and beyond them  
every city is an unwritten destiny  
and every street a collective possibility  
moving towards all directions  
until you find or lose your body  
    one way or the other  
    identical with your soul.

*Sydney-Melbourne, 4 May 1998*

## ΟΙ ΓΕΡΑΝΟΙ ΤΟΥ ΛΙΜΑΝΙΟΥ

Ἄδρανοῦν σιωπηλοὶ καὶ προτεταμένοι  
σέ ἴση ἀπόσταση ἀπ' ἀλλήλων  
σάν λιπόσαρκοι ξεπαγιασμένοι φρουροὶ  
κι ὑποβάλλουν συγκίνηση  
παρεμβολῆς Ἀρχαγγέλων!

*Sydney, 18 April 1998*

## HARBOUR CRANES

They stand still silent and puffed up  
In equal distance from each other  
Like slender frozen custodians—  
and yet they stir emotions  
emotions of archangelic intervention!

*Sydney, 18 April 1998*

## Ο ΚΥΚΝΟΣ ΤΟΥ BOTANY BAY

ᾠ τὰ πουλιά πού ἀκούγαμε  
δέν ἔμειναν πουλιά

Γ. Σαραντάρης

Τόν εἶδα καθὼς ἔσπαγε τὶς φτεροῦγες  
 κι ἀναδιπλωνόταν  
 μικρογραφία ἀεροπλανοφόρου  
 γιὰ νὰ βυθίσει ἀμέσως τὸ μισό κορμί του  
 στὴν ἀφρισμένη θάλασσα  
 εἰς ἄγραν τροφῆς ἀβεβαίας.  
 Σέ λίγο ἀναδυόταν πρῶτα τὸ μακρὺ του  
 ράμφος  
 πού τὸ ξεδίπλωνε κι αὐτὸ σέ τριγωνικὴ σημαία  
 χρώματος ἀνοικτοῦ κεραμιδι  
 κι ὅλο τὸ τοπίο ἔσταζε ἀλμύρα  
 πικρὴ ἐπιδόξ στὶς ἀποτυχημένες προσπάθειες  
 τοῦ πεινασμένου πτηνοῦ.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 5 January 1998*

## THE SWAN OF BOTANY BAY

*Oh, the birds we were listening to  
didn't remain birds*

G. Sarantaris

I saw as he stretched his wings  
                    and folded them again  
miniature of an aeroplane-carrier  
and then immediately plunging half of his body  
into the restless sea  
in search for uncertain food.  
Shortly his long beak emerged  
                                    first  
unfolded into a triangular flag  
            in the light coloration of a tile  
whereas everything was trickling saltiness  
bitter refrain to the failed attempts  
                            of a hungry bird.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 5 January 1998*

## ΟΙ ΠΡΟΣΗΛΥΤΟΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΛΛΟΥ ΚΟΣΜΟΥ

Δέν θά 'λεγα πώς εἶναι πολύ διαφορετικοί  
ἀπ' τούς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους  
ἀφοῦ μιλοῦν καί ντύνονται μέ τόν ἴδιο τρόπο  
χρησιμοποιώντας τήν ἴδια γλώσσα  
ἴσως καί τό ἴδιο λεξιλόγιο  
χωρίς ἐν τούτοις νά συννενοοῦνται πάντα  
ἀκόμη καί μεταξύ των.  
Συχνά ἐπίσης τούς συλλαμβάνεις  
νά κάνουν πράγματα ἐνός ἄλλου κόσμου  
ὥστε νά νομίζεις πώς ὀνειρεύεσαι·  
συνομιλοῦν λόγου χάρη μαζί σου  
κι εἶναι ἀπόντες  
εἴτε ἀπλώνοντας τό χέρι νά σέ χαιρετίσουν  
ἔχεις τήν αἴσθηση πώς ἓνας κύκνος  
τεντώνει φτερό  
ἔτοιμος νά χαθεῖ στό βάθος τοῦ ὀρίζοντα.  
Ποιός ἐπί τέλους θά προσγειώσῃ  
φιλάνθρωπα  
αὐτούς τούς προσήλυτους τοῦ ἄλλου κόσμου;

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 17 February 1998*





## ΟΙ ΠΟΙΗΤΕΣ

Οί ποιητές δέν θά κουρασθοῦν  
νά ἐπικαλοῦνται  
τ' ἀνύπαρκτα γιά νά ὑπάρξουν  
τά πεθαμένα γιά ν' ἀναστηθοῦν  
τά ἐξαντλημένα γιά νά βροῦν τή δόξα  
πού ντύνεται ὁ ἥλιος ὅταν βασιλεύει.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 12 January 1998*

## POETS

Poets will never get tired  
of invoking  
the inexistent in order to exist  
the deceased in order to be resurrected  
the wasted in order to find the glory  
invested by the sun on his way down.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 12 January 1998*

## BOOMERANG

*Κι ό γλάρος, όλος ό γλάρος τοῦ όνείρου  
θά σχίσει τόν όρίζοντα.*

*Γ. Σαραντάρης*

Κάθε φορά πού πρόσεξα ένα σῶμα  
    αδιάφορο ἄν ἦταν κτίσμα  
        ἔμψυχο ἢ ἄψυχο  
μοῦ ἐπέστρεψε τό βλέμμα  
        μαχαιριά στό κορμί.  
Ἡ μνήμη πιά δέν μπόρεσε νά τό ξεχάσει  
μήτε βεβαίως οἱ πέντε μου αἰσθήσεις.  
Στοιχειώνουν φαίνεται οἱ μορφές  
        πίνοντας αἷμα  
κι ἀναπαράγουν φαντάσματα ἔνσωμα  
μέχρι σημείου νά μᾶς πνίγει τό ἀδιαχώρητο  
        χωρίς ποσῶς νά όλοκληρώσουμε  
        τόν γύρο τοῦ κόσμου.

*Brisbane, Kangaroo Point, 30 August 1997*

## BOOMERANG

*“and the seagull all the seagull of the dream  
will shuttle through the horizon”*

G. Sarantaris

Any time I looked at a body  
    indifferent if it was of a creature  
        animate or inanimate  
it returned my gaze  
    —a stab in my body.  
Memory could never forget this  
or my five senses definitely.  
It seems that forms become haunted  
    drinking blood  
and reproduce embodied ghosts  
to the point we suffocate from congestion  
    without ever completing  
    the circumnavigation of the world.

*Brisbane, Kangaroo Point, 30 August 1997*

## MIS-TAKE

Σχεδόν δισύλλαβη λέξη ενός λαοῦ  
ἀσκημένου σκληρά στήν ἀντίφαση  
τοῦ ἀνθρώπινου βίου  
ιδίως ὅταν μετρηθεῖ τό σχετικό  
τοῦ φθαρτοῦ  
μέ τό ἀπόλυτο μέτρο  
τοῦ αἰωνίου.  
Ἐσφαλῶς δέν ὑπάρχει συντομότερη λέξη  
σύνθετη στή σωματική ἄρθρωση  
σάν δικοτυλήδονο δομημένη  
κι ἐντούτοις αὐτοαναιρούμενη  
μπρός-πίσω  
ἀπό τά δύο της ἀντιπαλαίοντα συνθετικά  
μνημεῖο ἀγγλοσαξωνικῆς ὀξύνοιας  
ὑπόδειγμα φιλοσοφικῆς εἰρωνείας.  
Ἐπάρχει πικρότερος αὐτοσαρκασμός  
ἀπ' τό νά ὁμολογεῖς μονολεκτικά  
ὅτι σέ κάθε ἀποτυχία σου  
παίρνεις ἀπώλεια  
καί χάνεις ἀκριβῶς στό βαθμό πού παίρνεις;

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 26 June 1996*

# MIS-TAKE

Almost a two-syllables word of a nation  
persistently versed in the contradiction  
                of human life  
especially when the relativity  
                of the perishable  
is measured against the absolute proportion  
                of eternity.

Certainly there is no shortest word  
                compound in its bodily articulation  
                structured like dicotyledonous plant  
and yet self-refuting  
                palindrome  
                of both its conflicting components  
monument of Anglo-Saxon perspicacity  
example of philosophic irony.

Is there any sarcasm more bitter  
than admitting in one word  
that in every failure  
                you take losses  
and lose precisely to the degree you take?

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 26 June 1996*

## ΠΑΝΩ ΑΠ' ΤΟ DARWIN

Λευκοί σωροί ἐδῶ κι ἐκεῖ τὰ σύννεφα  
σάν τό ξασμένο μαλλί τῶν προβάτων  
μά ἡ σκιά τους στό πρόσωπο τῆς γῆς  
κηλίδες ἀποτρόπαιες πηγμένου αἵματος  
θυμίζουν θύματα κυκλώνων καί κροκοδείλων  
πού, ὅπως τά σκέπασε ἡ σύγχρονη τεχνολογία,  
δέν θά τά μνημονεύσει καμιά ἐλεγεία  
μήτε θά τά ὑπολογίσει ἔστω κατά προσέγγιση  
ἡ πληρέστερη στατιστική.

*Darwin-Brisbane, 26 April 1996*

## OVER DARWIN

White bundles these clouds here and there  
like carded sheep wool  
but their shadow on the face of the earth  
horrible spots of thickened blood  
reminding victims of cyclones and crocodiles  
that, being covered by modern technology,  
won't be memorised in an elegy  
or even be calculated  
approximately  
by the completest of statistics.

*Darwin-Brisbane, 26 April 1996*



TRINITY BEACH

Παίρνοντας τήν ἀπόφαση νά ῥθεις στή  
θάλασσα  
νά καταποντίσεις ἀσήκωτα βάρη  
δέν φανταζόσουν τήν τροπική ἀκτή  
ἀκουμπισμένη σέ τόσες πράσινες ἀποφύσεις  
μήτε περίμενες νά λιποθυμήσουν τά  
λόγια σου  
στήν πρώτη ἐπαφή τοῦ νεροῦ μέ τό σῶμα.  
Σέ λίγο δίπλα σου κολυμποῦσε ἀπρόβλεπτα  
κι' ἓνα ἀδέσποτο σκυλί  
ἀγνοώντας τήν ἀπαγόρευση τῆς πινακίδας·  
τό νομιμοποιοῦσε ἡ ἴδια ἀμηχανία  
τῆς κουρασμένης σάρκας  
μπροστά στίς δωρεάν θωπεῖες  
τῆς ὑγρῆς ἀνωνυμίας.

*Cairns, 26 January 1996*



## SYDNEY CENTREPOINT

Τί κρύβεις τήν κορφή σου μέσ  
στά σύννεφα  
λές κι' εἶναι λίγοι αὐτοί πού παρακο-  
λουθοῦν  
τήν ἐπηρμένη ὀφρύ σου!  
"Ὅποιο κι ἄν εἶναι τό δικό σου  
δίδαγμα  
ἐμεῖς γνωρίζουμε:  
πορεία πρὸς τόν οὐρανό δέν  
εὐοδοῦται  
χωρίς ταπείνωση.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 5 January 1996*

## SYDNEY CENTREPOINT

Why are you hiding your top up in  
the clouds  
as if few could watch  
your proud eye-brows!  
Whatever may your moral be  
we know:  
not any march towards heaven is  
motivated  
by humility.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 5 January 1996*

## ΜΕΤΑΦΥΣΙΚΟΣ ΕΦΙΑΛΤΗΣ

Σφύριζε-σφύριζε  
κουλουριασμένο στή ρίζα τοῦ δέντρου  
τό φίδι καί σφύριζε  
στή ρίζα τοῦ δέντρου καί στόν πάτο τῆς  
θάλασσας  
ἦταν μονάχα τό φίδι κουλουριασμένο  
καί πονοῦσε καί σφύριζε.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 12 December 1995*

## METAPHYSICAL NIGHTMARE

It was hissing and hissing  
coiled around the root of the tree  
the snake and was hissing  
in the root of the tree and at the bottom of  
the sea  
it was only a snake coiled  
in pain and was hissing.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 12 December 1995*

ATOMIKOTHTA

Ἡ ἀναπνοή τοῦ καθενός μας  
 ρυθμός ἀσυντόνιστος  
 ἄνεμος ξεκομμένος ἀπ' τήν κοινή  
 ἐστία πυρός ἀειζώου  
 ἀρχίζει καί τελειώνει χωρίς συντελεστές  
 ἐξαρτήσεως  
 ἀκανόνιστος ἕως ἀναρχικός  
 σάν τό φίδι πού βλέπουν  
 οἱ Aborigines  
 νά κινεῖται σέ κυματισμούς ὀριζόντιους  
 ὅμως πάντοτε  
 ἐν εἴδει πυρίνων γλωσσῶν.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 7 June 1995*

## INDIVIDUALITY

The breath in each one of us  
                    an irregular rhythm  
a wind cut off from the common  
                    hearth of ever-living fire;  
it begins and ends without factors  
                    of dependence  
irregular to anarchic  
like the snake which the Aborigines  
                    see  
moving in horizontal undulations  
                    but always  
                    like tongues of fire.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 7 June 1995*



## ΙΣΟΛΟΓΙΣΜΟΙ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΤΑΝΑΣΤΗ

Διαλέξτε ἓνα σταυρό  
ἀνάλογο μέ τό φιλοτιμό σας.  
Μοναχός Παῖσιος

Κάθε φορά πού γυρνᾷ τούς βρίσκει  
 λιγότερους  
 κάθε φορά πού φεύγει τούς ἀφήνει  
 πιά λυπημένους.  
 Μιά δύναμη κακόβουλη θαρεῖς  
 καιροφυλακτεῖ  
 νά γυρίσει τήν πλάτη του  
 Για νά τοῦ ξηλώσει τό κέντημα.  
 “Ὁμως σέ τοῦτο τό ἐργόχειρο  
 ὁ ἱστός  
 εἶναι τελείως ἀσώματος  
 στήν ἀυξομειούμενη ἐπιφάνειά του  
 οἱ τρύπες  
 ἀντί νά ὑπονομεύουν τήν ἀντοχή  
 βαθαίνουν τήν μνήμη.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 11 May 1995*



## ΣΤΑ ΠΛΑΙΣΙΑ ΤΟΥ DREAMTIME

”Εγραψε τό ὄνομά του στόν κορμό  
τοῦ δέντρου  
ὕστερα πῆρε νά παίξει τήν  
παραδοσιακή Didgeridoo  
βγάζοντας ἀπ' τό στήθος του τήν  
πίκρα μιᾶς φυλῆς  
πού δέν καταδέχτηκε νά ἐγκαταλείψει  
τ' ὄνειρο  
γιά νά ὑπερασπίσει κουκιά μετρημένα  
πού ἀνέκαθεν τά θεωροῦσε  
χυμένα γάλατα.

*Great Keppel Island, 21 November 1994*

## WITHIN DREAMTIME

He carved his name on the trunk  
    of a tree;  
then he started playing  
    his ancestral Didgeridoo  
taking out of his chest the bitterness  
                    of a race  
which didn't condescend to abandon  
    dreaming  
simply to defend birds in the hands  
    which always thought as wasted  
    milk.

*Great Keppel Island, 21 November 1994*

## ΟΠΤΙΚΗ ΑΥΣΤΡΑΛΙΑ (B)

Αὐτές οἱ θεόρατες ρυτίδες πού αὐλακώνουν  
σχεδόν ἀνέπαφο ἀκόμη ἀπ' τό ἀνθρώπινο χέρι  
τό ἄχραντο σῶμα σου  
δέν εἶναι φίδια παλαιοντολογικά  
μήτε σκιές ἀνυπόστατες  
φαντασιώσεις τοῦ θεατῆ καθὼς πετᾶ  
πάνω ἀπ' τή σιωπῇ τῆς Ἑρήμου.  
Ποτάμια εἶναι καί χαράδρες καί  
πτυχώσεις ἀναρίθμητες  
πού ἐνῶ συμπλέκονται μέ λίμνες ἐν  
ἀδρανείᾳ  
μέ ξεχασμένες ἀλυκές  
ἄπειρα σχήματα καί χρώματα  
στήν ἀπέραντη ἔκταση  
μοιάζουν σάν κάποιος ν' ἄνοιξε αἰφνιδίως  
τό κρανίο τῆς γῆς  
ἀφήνοντας νά θαυμάσουμε μιὰ στιγμή  
μονάχα  
τίς προαιώνιες ἀναλογίες τοῦ ἔξω κόσμου  
μέ τόν ἀνθρώπινο ἐγκέφαλο  
κι ὕστερα ὅλα τά σχόλια περιττεύουν.

*Sydney-Perth, 20 May 1994*

## VISUAL AUSTRALIA (B)

These immense wrinkles which carve  
your almost intact from human hand  
                    and yet immaculate body  
are not paleontological snakes  
are not insubstantial shadows  
illusions of a spectator flying  
                    over the silent desert.  
They are rivers and ravines and innumerable  
                    furrows  
which albeit intertwined with dormant  
                    lakes  
            and forgotten salt-mines  
            infinite shapes and colours  
                    of this vast space  
they look as if someone has opened unexpectedly  
                    the skull of the earth  
and allowed to admire for a fleeting moment  
the eternal analogies of the outside world  
                    with human brain;  
after this all comments are redundant.

*Sydney-Perth, 20 May 1994*

## ΑΙΜΑ ΕΠΩΝΥΜΟ

”Ας ἔχουμε ὅλοι τήν σάρκα κοινή  
ποτέ τό αἷμα δέν εἶναι ἀνώνυμο.  
’Ακόμη κι ὅταν συγγενεύει μέ  
κάποιου ἄλλου τήν ὑγρή φυσιογνωμία  
κατατάσσεται στήν ἴδια ομάδα  
ἀλλά δέν εἶναι ταυτότητα.  
’Η ἐπωνυμία τοῦ αἵματος συγκρο-  
τεῖται  
ἀπό θεμελιώδεις καί δευτερεύουσες  
ιδιότητες·  
μά τελικά αὐτές οἱ δεύτερες  
πού ἔχουν σχέση μέ πυκνότητα  
χρῶμα γεύση ὀσμή πηκτικότητα  
καί μάλιστα πυρετό  
εἶναι πού δίνουν τήν ἀνεπανάληπτη  
ἐτερότητα.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 13 April 1994*

## EPONYMOUS BLOOD

Although we all share a common flesh  
our blood is never anonymous.  
Even when it is related to  
someone else's liquid physiognomy  
is classified in the same group  
    which however is not identity.  
The naming of our blood originates  
from qualities both fundamental and secondary  
although finally these secondary features  
which are related to thickness  
color taste smell coagulation  
    and especially fever  
are those which form the unrepeatable  
    otherness.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 13 April 1994*



## ΞΑΝΘΟ ΠΑΡΑΜΥΘΙ

Δυό χρονῶν δέν ἔγινε ἀκόμη  
'Αλέξανδρος ὁ μικρός  
κι ἔχει γεμίσει φῶς ὅλους τοὺς χώρους  
πού γνώρισαν τὰ βήματά του.  
'Ανοίγει ἔκπληκτος τὰ γαλανὰ μάτια  
καί νομίζεις πῶς ἔκλεψε γιὰ πάντα  
ἓνα κομμάτι ἀνέφελο οὐρανό.  
Τραυλίζει λέξεις ἀνύπαρκτες  
δικῆς του μελωδίας  
καί σέ κάνει νά σκέφτεσαι  
μήπως ἐσύ δέν διδάχθηκες σωστά  
τό πλήρες 'Αλφάβητο.  
Κι ὅταν ἀπλώνει τό ξανθό κεφάλι  
πάνω στοῦ σκύλου τή ραχοκοκαλιά  
τό ξέρεις πῶς ἓνας 'Αρχάγγελος  
διδάσκει τήν ἄκρα ταπείνωση  
χωρίς λόγια.

*Sydney, Redfern, 15 February 1994*

## BLOND FAIRY-TALE

He hasn't been two years old  
the young Alexander  
and flooded with light everything  
his footsteps have touched.  
He opened his blue eyes in astonishment  
    and you think that he had snatched in eternity  
a shred of unclouded sky.  
He stutters inexistant words  
    of his own melody  
and makes you think  
that you haven't been taught correctly  
    the complete Alphabet.  
And as he rests his blond head  
on the back of his dog  
you realise: he is an Archangel  
preaching utter humility  
    without words.

*Sydney, Redfern, 15 February 1994*

## ΤΕΦΡΗ ΑΚΤΗ

*"Οποιος ἐδῶ γελάει, νά ξέρει  
ὅτι τό χῶμα τόν κρατάει στό χέρι*

Günter Grass

Τήν εἶχα φαντασθεῖ κάπως ἀλλιώτικη  
τὴν ἄκρη τῆς θάλασσας.  
Βλέποντας πόση τέφρα σωπαίνει  
κάτω ἀπ' τὰ βότσαλα καί τὴν ἄμμο  
κάνω σινιάλο στούς πελαργούς  
πού πηγαινόρχονται ἀνίδεοι  
νά κλίνουν ἐλαφρῶς τὰ φτερά  
ἐκεῖ πού σπάζει τό κῦμα  
ἐλάχιστο φόρο τιμῆς  
στά ἀγνοούμενα ὀλοκαυτώματα  
πού στήριξαν ἀπό καταβολῆς  
τό ὑγρό γιοφύρι.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 17 February 1994*

## THE COAST OF ASHES

*Whoever laughs in here, must know  
that the soil holds him in its hand.*

Günter Grass

Slightly different, I had imagined  
the edge to the sea.  
Seeing how much ash remains silent  
under the pebbles and the sand.  
I wave to the storks  
that strut unsuspecting  
and slightly sliding their wings  
where waves splatter  
a minimal tribute  
to the unknown holocausts  
that sustained from the beginning  
the liquid bridge.

*Sydney, Brighton Le Sands, 17 February 1994*

## ΑΜΟΙΒΑΙΟΤΗΤΑ

Τό μαῦρο εἶναι τοῦ ἄσπρου  
ὁ στεναγμός·  
τό ἄσπρο εἶν' ἡ μετάνοια  
τοῦ μαύρου.

*Sydney Airport, 2 March 1994*

## MUTUALITY

Black is white's  
grief;  
Black's repentance is  
white.

*Sydney Airport, 2 March 1994*

## ΨΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΑ

Όταν βραδιάζει  
όλα τὰ μισά γίνονται όλόκληρα,  
ό φόβος ή θλίψη ή νοσταλγία.  
Ποιός κρύβεται μέσα στό δειλινό  
καί συνεχώς ανεβάζει τούς δείχτες;

*Sydney, Ashfield, 25 April 1993*

## PSYCHOLOGY

When it gets dark  
everything half becomes complete,  
fear, sadness, nostalgia.  
Who is hidden within dusk  
and constantly moves the clock hands?

*Sydney, Ashfield, 25 April 1993*



## ΚΑΤΑΝΥΚΤΙΚΟ

Ἀκινητοῦσαν τὰ δέντρα  
ὁ δρόμος μέ τό πλακόστρωτο σιωποῦσε  
κι ἡ μνήμη βυθιζόταν στό γνωστό ἡμίφως  
τοῦ χώρου τῶν σκιῶν.  
Εἶναι οἱ ὥρες πού δέν ξέρεις νά πεῖς  
ποῦ εἶναι τό στίγμα σου  
μήτε περίπου ποιὰ θά 'ναι ἡ ἐπόμενη ἔκπληξη  
πού θά διασπάσει βιαίως  
τό αἶσθημα τῆς συνοχῆς  
ἀκόμη καί στήν ἀτομική σου συνείδηση.  
Θά 'ταν λοιπόν καλύτερα νά βροῦμε  
μιάν ἄλλη λέξη πού νά ἐκφράζει πληρέστερα  
αὐτό τό ἀπρόοπτο κενό  
ἓνα ὄνομα πού ν' ἀποφεύγει ἐξίσου  
μνήμη καί σύγχυση  
καί μιά πού πρόκειται γιά αὔξουσα νύχτα  
θά τό ποῦμε κατάνυξη.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 21 March 1992*

## CONTRITIONAL

The trees were still  
the street and the footpath was silent  
memory was plunging into the familiar twilight  
in the territory of shadows.  
These moments you can't say  
where is your location  
or what will probably be the coming surprise  
that will violently disperse  
the sense of cohesion  
even within your individual conscience.  
Therefore it's better to coin  
another word which will express completely  
that unpredicted void  
a name that would equally avoid  
memory and confusion  
and since it's about the falling night  
we shall call it contrition.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 21 March 1992*

## FREMANTLE

Σέ τούτη τήν άκτή ή πρώτη κρίση  
καί ή πρώτη σύγκριση  
ανάμεσα στήν πρώτη καί τήν δεύτερη πατρίδα  
καθώς τά καράβια είχαν αναλάβει  
άποστολή πελαργού.  
Τά κτίσματα άρχιτεκτονημένα  
στό χείλος τής θάλασσας  
έκαναν σχεδόν όλόσωμη χειραψία  
μ' ανθρώπους πού είχαν χάσει  
τή γεύση τής στεριάς  
γι' αυτό λικνίσθηκαν έδω τά πρώτα όνειρα  
άλλά κι ή πιό πικρή νοσταλγία  
του Μετανάστη.

*Perth, 3 April 1992*

## FREMANTLE

On this shore the initial judgement  
and initial comparison  
between the first and the second motherland  
as the ships had undertaken  
missions of storks.  
The buildings architected  
along the edge of the sea  
stretched almost a whole-hearted handshake  
to people who had lost  
the taste of dry land;  
because here the first dreams were cradled  
together with the bitterest nostalgia  
of the Immigrant.

Perth, 3 April 1992

## ΤΟ ΑΕΙΘΑΛΕΣ ΑΛΦΑΒΗΤΟ

”Όσο κι ἂν ψάχνει γιὰ καινούργιο θέμα  
κάθε φορά ἐπιστρέφει ἀσυναισθήτως  
ἀλλὰ σταθερά  
– σάν ἀρρώστια πού ὑποτροπιάζει –  
στόν ἄνθρωπο μονάχα καί τά πάθη του  
ιδίως ὅταν ἔχουν χάσει τήν αἰχμή τῆς ἀμεσότητος  
κι ἀρχίζουν ν’ ἀποκαθίστανται  
στό ἀρχαῖον κάλλος  
ήττημένοι κι αἰχμάλωτοι  
ἐνδυνόμενοι ὡς πορφύρα βυζαντινή  
τήν ἄσπιλη ἀχλύ τῶν ἀναμνήσεων.  
”Ετσι ἡ πραγματικότητα συνδιαλλάσσεται  
ὡς ἐκ θαύματος  
μέ τίς ἐξαπατημένες παιδικές ἐπιθυμίες  
σέ κορυφώσεις ἄβατες γιά ἀγεωμέτρητους  
κι ἡ μόνη γλώσσα πού ἰσχύει διεθνῶς  
εἶναι τό ἀειθαλές ἀλφάβητο τοῦ μύθου  
στίς παρυφές οὐδαίῳ ἀνεκπλήρωτου.

*Great Keppel Island, 19 November 1992*

## THE EVERGREEN ALPHABET

The more he searches for a new theme  
the more he returns imperceptibly  
but steadily  
—like a relapsing disease—  
to man alone and his passions  
especially when they have lost the spearhead of immediacy  
and begin to be reconstituted  
in their pristine beauty  
defeated and captive  
dressed like Byzantine purple  
in the immaculate haze of recollections.  
Thus reality is reconciled  
miraculously  
with the deceived child desires  
in climaxes unapproachable to the uninitiated;  
the only language that internationally stands  
is the evergreen alphabet of myth  
against the slopes of dreams unfulfilled.

*Great Keppel Island, 19 November 1992*

## ΜΕΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΝΥΧΤΑ

Ἡ μέρα εἶναι μιά σύντομη περιπέτεια  
πού τήν περνᾷς ἀκόμη καί χαζεύοντας  
ἔξω ἀπό τά τζάμια,  
καθώς ἔχεις τό φυσικό φῶς συμπαραστάτη  
νά σέ παρηγορεῖ ἀκόμη κι ἂν δέν ἔχεις  
νερό στή στάμνα,  
μήτ' ἓνα ξεροκόμματο στό τραπέζι.  
Ἐκεῖ πού οἱ στερήσεις μεταβάλλονται σέ τελώνια  
κάνοντας μή κατοικήσιμο τό σπίτι  
καί τίς ὥρες ἀβίωτες  
εἶναι ἡ δυναστεία τῆς νύχτας  
πού μεγαλώνει τίς σκιές  
ἀγριεύοντας καί μέ τούς πιό ἀνεπαίσθητους ἤχους·  
ἡ νύχτα πού δέν τήν ἀλλοιώνουν τά φῶτα  
γιατ' εἶναι συνώνυμη μέ τό μαῦρο  
διά παντός.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 5 January 1991*

## DAY AND NIGHT

Each day is a brief adventure  
that you spend even by gazing idly  
    out the window;  
sunlight then is your ally  
it consoles you even if there is no  
    water to drink  
or dry bread on your table.  
But yearnings are transformed into evil spirits  
making your home uninhabitable  
    every hour unbearable  
only during the domination of night  
which augments shadows everywhere  
aggravating even the slightest noises;  
night is untouched by light  
synonymous to the absolute blackness  
    for ever.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 5 January 1991*



## ΠΟΛΛΑΠΛΑΣΙΑΣΤΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΟΔΥΝΗΣ

Ἐμπρός, νά καταργήσουμε τό φῶς  
πού μᾶς πληγώνει  
τά μάτια μας δέν ἀντέχουν ἄλλο  
κομμένα χέρια, ρημαγμένα μαλλιά  
μήτε τά ἀδιέξοδα βλέμματα  
γυναικῶν ὀλοφυρομένων.  
Τό φῶς ἐκφυλίσθηκε  
σέ πολλαπλασιαστή τῆς ὀδύνης  
καθώς ἀναπαράγει μέ τά ἠλεκτρονικά μέσα  
εἰς τό διηνεκές καί ἐπ' ἄπειρον  
ἐγκλήματα ὅλων τῶν εἰδῶν  
σοφίσματα ὅλων τῶν προθέσεων  
σκηνές πού θέλουμε νά ξεχάσουμε  
καί πιά δέν μπορούμε.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 12 January 1991*

## MULTIPLIER OF PAIN

Let us abolish the light  
which is hurting us;  
our eyes can endure no more  
broken limbs fallen hair  
or desperate glances  
of women in grief.  
Light degenerated  
to a multiplier of pain  
as it reproduces with electronic means  
continually and ad infinitum  
crimes of all kinds  
sophistries of all persuasions  
scenes we long to forget  
but no longer can.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 12 January 1991*

## ZEITGEIST

*Ἡ στειρότητα τῶν καιρῶν δέν ἀφορᾷ ὅποιον ἔχει  
νά πεῖ ὅσα ταραίζουν τόν ὕπνο καί τόν ξύπνιο του.*

*Φ. Δρακονταειδής*

”Αν εἴμαστε παιδιά μιᾶς ἐποχῆς  
σημαίνει πῶς δέν γεννηθήκαμε ἀκόμῃ.  
”Οποῖος εἶχε τή μοίρα νά γεννηθεῖ μιά φορά  
γεννήθηκε ἄνθρωπος εἰς αἰῶνα τόν ἅπαντα.  
”Ὅπως τό μάτι προσαρμόζεται στό φῶς  
ἤ τό αὐξομειούμενο σκοτάδι,  
ἔτσι ἡ ψυχή καί ὁ λόγος  
κινοῦνται στήν ἀπέραντη κλίμακα  
τοῦ ἀνθρώπινου πεπρωμένου  
ἀνεξαρτήτως ἄλλων προσδιορισμῶν.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 15 January 1991*

## ZEITGEIST

*The sterility of our time does not concern  
whomever can say what disturbs his sleep and awake.*

F. Drakontaidis

If we are children of one era  
it means that we are not born yet.  
Whoever had the fate to be born once  
was born human for all ages.  
Like the eye adjusts to light  
                or to undulating darkness  
thus soul and word  
move onwards the endless ladder  
                of human destiny  
irrespective of any other designations.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 15 January 1991*

## ΤΟ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΠΕΤΡΑΣ

Τό πρόσωπο τῆς πέτρα εἶναι ἱερό  
ἔτσι καθὼς δέν συσπᾶται,  
ἐνῶ δέν φθείρεται λιγότερο ἀπ' τό δικό μας  
κάτω ἀπ' τόν ἴδιο ἥλιο καί τόν ἴδιο ἄνεμο.  
Τό πρόσωπο τῆς πέτρας δέν θηλάζει  
λιγότερο φῶς,  
ἀκόμη κι ὅταν εἶναι λεῖο καί ὑγρό  
σάν τούς βολβούς τῶν ματιῶν μας.  
'Αντανακλᾷ τίς ακτίνες τοῦ ἡλίου  
ὄχι γιατί δέν τίς θέλει,  
ἀλλά γιά νά τίς πολλαπλασιάσει  
κατά δύναμη,  
ἀναχαιτίζοντας τό ἄπειρο ἔρεβος.

*Sydney, Carss Park, 25/26 January 1991*

## THE FACE OF STONE

The face of stone is sacred  
                    uncontracted as it remains  
although decays as much as ours  
under the same sun, the same wind.  
The face of stone suckles not  
                    any light less  
even when smooth and wet  
                    like the iris in our eyes.  
It reflects sun-rays  
not because it dislikes them  
but in order to proliferate them  
                    at its power  
restraining the infinite nether darkness.

*Sydney, Carss Park, 25/26 January 1991*

## ΔΙΑΒΑΖΟΝΤΑΣ

Εἶπαν πολλά οἱ ποιητές, μά πιά πολλά  
ἦταν αὐτά πού νιώσανε καί δέν τά εἶπαν  
μήπως βαττολογήσουν ἐν ματαιότητι  
καθώς ἐφόβισε ὁ Χριστός  
τούς προσευχομένους.

Γι' αὐτό ἄς δοῦμε στόν κάθε στίχο  
ένα συγκρατημένο ὑπαινιγμό,  
προεκτείνοντας τά δεδομένα φωνήματα  
ὥς τούς ἀπώτερους κραδασμούς  
τῆς συλλογικῆς συνειδήσεως.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 16 March 1991*

## READING

Poets have spoken a lot, but more  
were those unspoken emotions they felt  
afraid of babbling in vanity  
as Christ frightened  
those who pray.

Thus in any verse let us see  
a reserved insinuation  
which extends the given phonemes  
to the ulterior vibrations  
of the collective psyche.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 16 March 1991*



## ERGO

Μονάχα ' Αμερικανοί μπορούσαν νά τό ποῦν  
πώς “ὅ,τι δέν μπορεῖς νά κάμεις, τό διδάσκεις”,  
γιατί οἱ ἔφηβοι εἶν' ἄγουροι νά καταλάβουν  
πόσο ἀνυπόφορα ὑστερεῖ  
τό *πείραμα* μπροστά στήν *πίστη* καί τό *ὄραμα*.  
Τό ἔργο εἶναι συν-πέραςμα πού κλείνει τήν ψυχή  
σέ συρματοπλεγμα δούλου,  
γιατί ὅταν ἀθροίζονται τά πέρατα  
δηλώνουν μόνο πολλαπλό ἀδιέξοδο.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 4 May 1991*

## ERGO

Only Americans could say  
*you teach what can't do*,  
since youths are unripe to realise  
                    how unbearably inferior  
*experiment* is to *vision* and *faith*.  
*Deed* is a con/clusion enclosing soul  
in the wire fence of slavery,  
since boundaries summed up  
simply denote a manifold dead-end.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 4 May 1991*

## ΛΕΠΤΟΜΕΡΕΙΕΣ

*Ο διάβολος κάθεται στη λεπτομέρεια.*

## Montesquieu

Συνηθίσαμε νά ὀνομάζουμε λεπτομέρειες  
τά δεδομένα ἥσσοнос σημασίας·  
ἀλλ' ἂν ἤμασταν προσεκτικότεροι  
μέ τίς λέξεις,  
θά βλέπαμε πῶς ἐπιβάλουν  
μεγαλύτερη προσοχή  
τά μέρη τά λεπτότερα,  
ὥς πλέον εὐθραστα.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 7 May 1991*

## DETAILS

*The devil rests in the detail.*

Montesquieu

Usually we call details  
all givens of minor importance;  
but a little more precision  
with words  
would make us see that greater attention  
deserve  
the finer parts  
the most fragile.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 7 May 1991*

## Ο ΚΙΝΗΜΑΤΟΓΡΑΦΟΣ

Μελετᾶ τή ζωή σέ κινήσεις καί μορφασμούς·  
ὅμως θά 'ταν ἀκόμη ὑψηλότερη τέχνη  
ἂν μποροῦσε ν' ἀπομαντεύσει τήν ἀλήθεια  
στήν ἀκίνησία τήν ἔνθεη,  
ὅταν ἔχει καταλαγιάσει τό βέβηλο μένος  
τοῦ αὐτονομημένου κτιστοῦ  
καί τίς πρωτοβουλίες δέν ἔχει πιά τό ἐνθάδε,  
παρά μονάχα δανερίζει τήν ἐπιφάνεια  
γιά νά φανερωθεῖ ἀμεσότερα τό ἐπέκεινα.

*Singapore-Athens, 16 May 1991*

## CINEMA

It studies life through motions and gesticulations;  
but it would be an art more sublime  
if it could divine truth  
                    in God-possessed immobility,  
when the profane rage of the separated creation  
                    settles down  
and when initiatives are not taken by the Here-being  
which loans a surface only  
more directly to be seen that There-beyond.

*Singapore-Athens, 16 May 1991*

## Η ΛΙΜΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΝΕΜΙ

“Όταν άκούω τίς ιστορίες τών πνιγμένων  
πού έμπιστευθήκαν σάν άνύποπτα παιδιά  
νά κολυμπήσουν στά ήφαιστειογενή νερά σου,  
δέν είσαι πιά ό καθρέφτης τοῦ δειλινοῦ  
πού φιλοδόξησε νά πολλαπλασιάσει τό φῶς  
άντανακλώντας το στόν λόφο  
τοῦ Castelgandolfo.

‘Ο βίαιος θάνατος εἶναι πάντα ένα ἔγκλημα,  
έπεκτεινόμενο άσιγήτως  
στήν κάθε μέρα πού ξανάρχεται ό ἥλιος,  
άναζητώντας τά μάτια τοῦ θύματος  
γιά τή διακοπεῖσα δοκιμή τοῦ φέγγους,  
καθώς κάποια στιγμή στρεφόταν  
προσευχόμενο στόν οὐρανό.

*Arricia (Roma), 13 June 1991*

## THE LAKE OF NEMI

When I listen to stories of the drowned  
who trusted you like unsuspected children  
and swam in your volcanic waters,  
you are not any more the mirror of dusk  
which aspired to multiply the light  
reflecting it against the hill  
                    of Castelgandolfo.  
Violent death is always a crime,  
                    ceaselessly prolonged  
each day with the sun's return  
searching the eyes of the victim  
for the interrupted taste of glimmer,  
as they turned momentarily  
                    praying towards heaven.

*Arricia (Roma), 13 June 1991*



## Η ΑΛΛΗ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΙΑ

Εἶναι ἀλήθεια πῶς ὁ δεσμός σου μέ τά πράγματα  
ἦτανε πάντα βιαστικός,  
ἀπεγνωσμένη ἐπαφή ποῦ μᾶλλον ἔμοιαζε  
ἀποχαιρετισμός μελλοθανάτου.  
Γι' αὐτό ἴσως δέν μπορέσουνε ποτέ  
νά σέ κατηγορήσουν  
πῶς κάπου ἔκαμες κατοχή,  
πῶς κάτι ἐξουσίασες σάν δικό σου,  
ἔστω κ' ἐκείνη τήν πέννα πού κουβάλαγες  
σάν φυλακτό,  
ἐνῶ συνήθως τήν χάριζες στόν πρῶτο τυχόντα.  
Αὐτήν τουλάχιστον τήν ἄλλη παρθενία  
ἴσως δέν τολμήσουν ν' ἀρνηθοῦν οἱ φιλισταῖοι,  
κεῖνοι πού φρόντισαν ἐπιμελῶς νά δυσφημίσουν  
ἀκόμη καί τό δάκρυ σου.  
Μήν πεῖς λοιπόν κι αὐτό δέν εἶναι κέρδος  
σέ τούτη τήν πανούργα ἐποχή!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 14 July 1991*

## THE OTHER VIRGINITY

True that your bond with things  
                    was always hasty,  
a desperate contact which looked like  
                    the farewell of a death-sentenced.  
For that maybe no one could  
                    accuse you  
of possessing something  
of dominating something as your property  
although there was a pen which you carried  
                    like a talisman, itself  
to be usually granted to the first acquaintance.  
That at least other virginity  
philistines will never dare to deny perhaps,  
those who tried meticulously to vilify  
                    your very tears.  
And that is something of a profit  
                    in an epoch so wicked!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 14 July 1991*

## ΔΕΙΓΜΑ ΓΡΑΦΗΣ

Οί κουρασμένοι συνήθως δέν τραγουδοῦν  
    ἀλλά διαμαρτύρονται·  
κι ἂν δέν φοβοῦνται τόν Θεό  
    βλαστημοῦνε.  
‘Ο ποιητής πού ξέχασε τά κοινά μέτρα  
τά κλείνει ὅλα στήν ἴδια κραυγή  
    σάν πληγωμένο ἀηδόνι.

*Sydney, Redfern, 9 July 1991*

## SAMPLE OF WRITING

Tired people don't usually sing—

they only protest;

or they swear

if not afraid of God.

However, the poet who forgot common standards

epitomises everything in one cry

like a wounded nightingale.

*Sydney, Redfern, 9 July 1991*

## ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΜΟΡΦΙΣΜΟΣ

Ὁ ἀρχαιολόγος ἔδειχνε φωτεινές διαφάνειες  
κατασκευές ἀρχαίων τειχῶν  
ἀποκρυπτογραφημένες λεπτομέρειες  
ρημαγμένων χώρων·  
κι ὅμως ἡ πιά βαθειά συγκίνηση  
κρυβόταν θαμμένη  
πέρ' ἀπό τά ὀρώμενα καθ' ἑαυτά  
σέ μιά ἐπιπολάζουσα γενική ὁμοιότητα  
πού ἔχουν συνήθως οἱ πέτρες  
μέ τ' ἀνθρώπινα ὀστά.  
Βλέποντας τοίχους μέ ἐξέχοντες  
ὀγκόλιθους,  
ἐμεῖς θυμούμαστε ἀνάλογη συνέχεια  
σέ σπονδυλική στήλη·  
ἀνακαλύπτοντας ἐλλείποντα μέλη  
σέ κτίσματα κυκλικά,  
ἀναγόμεστε μέ τήν καρδιά σφιγμένη  
σέ ξεδοντιασμένο κρανίο.

*Greta Keppel Island, 10 November 1991*

## ANTHROPOMORPHISM

The archaeologist showed us slides  
                    constructions of ancient fortifications  
decipherable details  
                    of devastated places;  
the deepest emotion however  
lay buried hidden  
beyond all visible in themselves  
in a veneer of general similarity  
which usually exists between stones  
                    and human bones.  
Watching walls of protruding  
                    monoliths  
we remember a corresponding extension  
                    in the vertebral column;  
by discovering missing limbs  
                    of cyclic buildings,  
with embittered heart we are transferred  
                    to a toothless skull.

*Greta Keppel Island, 10 November 1991*

ΜΑΧΑΪΡΙ ΔΙΚΟΠΟ

*Ἐκστατική, μεγάλη ὀρφάνεια – ἐλευθερία.*

Γιάννης Ρίτσος

Τό νά μὴ πορνεῖς ἀπὸ μιὰ ἐποχὴ καί πέρα  
νά παίρνεις ἀνεξελέγκτα τό κορμί  
                πού σοῦ χάρισαν  
γιά νά τό δαπανήσεις ὅπου κι ὅπως θέλεις  
                ἐσύ μονάχα,  
εἶναι μιὰ εὐθύνη δυσανάλογη μέ τήν ψυχὴ σου,  
γιατί οἱ μάχες στή ζωὴ δυστυχῶς δέν δίνονται  
                ἕνα πρὸς ἕνα.  
Γι' αὐτό μὴν ὀνομάσεις ἐπιπόλαια  
αὐτό τό ἀμφίβολο ἀντεξούσιο *ἐλευθερία*  
καί νά θυμᾷσαι,  
πὼς ὅσο ἀπέραντος ὁ ὠκεανός πού σέ τυλίγει  
                τόσο ἀπέραντη κ' ἡ ὀρφάνεια πού σ' ἀπειλεῖ.

*Great Keppel Island, 18 November 1991*

## DOUBLE-EDGED KNIFE

*Ecstatic, great orphancy – Freedom.*

Yannis Ritsos

After a certain moment the ability  
irrepressibly to accept the body  
                    that was given you  
and spend it as you wish and in any way—  
                    you alone only—  
is a responsibility disproportionate to your soul  
because all battles in life are not one to one  
                    unfortunately.  
Thus do not superficially call *freedom*  
such ambiguous self-reliance.  
Remember always  
that the vast ocean overshadowing you  
                    equals the orphancy which threatens  
                                    your existence.

*Great Keppel Island, 18 November 1991*



## ΕΝΔΟΣΤΡΕΦΕΙΑ

Ψάχνω μιά γλῶσσα πού νά ξεπερνᾷ τή φωνή μου  
ὄχι γιά νά ἐντυπωσιάσω τούς συνανθρώπους  
ἀλλά γιά νά δώσω διέξοδο  
σ' ὅσα μέ πνίγουν ἄρρητα  
μέ κίνδυνο νά μείνουν διά παντός  
οἱ δράστες ἀσύλληπτοι.

*Athens, 14 February 1990*

## INTROVERSION

I search for a language beyond my voice  
not to impress the fellow people  
only to relieve  
the ineffable things suffocating me  
risking that the culprits will stay  
for ever unarrested.

*Athens, 14 February 1990*

## ΣΤΟ ΚΙΤΡΙΝΟ

Πόσες φορές έπαιξες μέ τό κίτρο  
για νά τοῦ κλέψεις τό χρώμα;  
τοῦ πῆρες κάτι ἀπό τό φῶς καί τή λάμψη  
μά θά σοῦ λείπει πάντα  
ὁ χυμός καί τό ἄρωμα!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 27 April 1990*

## TO THE YELLOW

How many times did you play with citrons  
and steal their colour?  
You took something off their light and shine  
but for ever you'll miss  
their sap their smell!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 27 April 1990*

## ΦΥΛΛΑ ΦΘΙΝΟΠΩΡΙΝΑ

Γραφή ποικίλων αποχρώσεων  
σέ ἐπιφάνεια ἐξαντλημένη  
μήνυμα χρησμικό:  
Ὁ ἀποχαιρετισμός δέν ἀπέχει  
ἀπ' τήν ἐπιστροφή  
ὁ μεταβαλλόμενος κόσμος ἀγάλλεται  
σχεδόν ἀναλλοίωτος.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 28 April 1990*

## AUTUMN LEAVES

Scripture of various nuances  
on a worn out surface  
an oracular message:  
Farewell is not far  
                    from home-coming  
the changing world enraptures  
                    almost unalterable.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 28 April 1990*

## ΝΙΚΟΛΑΣ Ο ΚΑΣΤΕΛΟΡΙΖΙΟΣ

Στό παραλήρημα ό μεθυσμένος λέει  
κουβέντες σημαδιακές για την ψυχή του  
κι όταν χαροπαλεύει πάλι μοναχός  
κάνει χειρονομίες πού μαρτυρούν  
ό,τί αγάπησε καθυπερβολήν στόν άπάνω κόσμο.  
‘Ο καπετάνιος πού πεθαίνει στή στεριά  
μέ την ψυχή λησμονημένη στό καϊκι  
ήξερε καί νά μεθᾶ καί νά κινδυνεύει  
πίνοντας άπ' την ίδια κούπα κρασί καί θάνατο.  
Μά καταποντισμό σέ κρεβάτι δέν ήξερε  
όπως δέν ξέρει τό λιοντάρι λαιμητόμο  
γι' αυτό πεθαίνοντας τραβᾶ τά σεντόνια για σχοινιά  
καί φωνάζει στό γιό του: *Σταμάτη, πνιγόμαστε . . .*

*Sydney, Carss Park, 27 May 1990*

## NICHOLAS THE CASTELORIZIAN

Delirious any drunkard says  
words of premonition about his soul  
and in his death-agony alone again  
makes gestures which reveal  
what he excessively loved on earth.  
The captain who dies on land  
with his soul left away in his boat  
knew to get drunk and fall in danger  
drinking from the same cup wine and death.  
Yet, he knew no sinking in bed  
as a lion knows no guillotine  
so as he is dying, he grabs the linen like ropes  
and shouts to his son: *Stamáti, we get drowned...*

Sydney, Carss Park, 27 May 1990



## Η ΓΛΩΣΣΑ

Συναυλία χρωμοσωμάτων  
πού άντανεκλᾶται σέ θαυμαστικά  
δάκρυα, έρωτηματικά  
πάθη φθόγγων καί ρημάτων!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 22 July 1990*

## LANGUAGE

Concert of chromosomes  
reflected on tears of admiration  
question marks  
passions of sounds and verbs.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 22 July 1990*

## ALTER EGO

Μήν περιφρονήσεις ρακένδυτο  
ἔστω κι ἂν νομίζεις ὅτι σέ θίγει  
ἂν τύχει νά 'ναι γνωστός ἢ συγγενής.  
Ἔχει κι αὐτός τή δική του ἀξιοπρέπεια  
τήν ἀντοχή καί τά ὄραματά του  
κι ἔχει ἀκόμη τήν ἀθάνα φιλοδοξία  
νά βραδιάσει ὅσο γίνεται πió γρήγορα  
γιά νά μπορέσει νά κρυφτεῖ.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 3 October 1990*

## ALTER EGO

Never disregard a man in rags  
even with the thought that he offends you  
being accidentally your relative or acquaintance.  
He has his own personal dignity  
endurance and visions  
he even has the innocent ambition  
the night to come as quickly as possible  
enabling him to be hidden.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 3 October 1990*

## ΧΡΟΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΝΟΣ

Χρόνος, μονάχα ὁ ρυθμός τοῦ πόνου  
καθώς τόν ὑφίστανται τά ζωντανά  
ὁδεύοντας πρὸς τό τέλος.

Πόνος, τό βιωμένο χρονικό  
στὶς ὀριστικές συναρτήσεις  
ἄσπρου καὶ μαύρου.

*Adelaide-Sydney, 31 December 1990*

## TIME AND PAIN

Time, only the rhythm of pain  
suffered by all living  
                    facing the end.

Pain, the lived chronicle  
                    in the definite connections  
of black and white.

*Adelaide-Sydney, 31 December 1990*

## Η ΤΙΜΗ ΤΩΝ ΣΧΗΜΑΤΩΝ

”Αν ἡ εὐθεῖα εἶναι ἡ εἰλικρίνεια  
ἡ καμπύλη δέν εἶναι ὑποκρισία.  
Τίς πιά πολλές φορές ἡ ζωὴ παρακάμπτει  
γιά νά μή βρεθεῖ μπροστά σ' ἀδιέξοδο·  
κι αὐτή ἡ σοφία τῆς ὑπομονῆς  
σχηματίζει τεθλασμένες καί καμπύλες.  
”Ετσι ἄλλωστε ἐκφράζεται καί τό εὖρος τῆς ἀγκάλης  
ὅταν οἱ βραχίονες εἶναι χλοεροί καί ρευστοί  
ἐκτεινόμενοι χωρίς προκατάληψη  
καί χωρίς ἐντροπή νά κινηθοῦν  
τά μπρός-πίσω  
σάν τά ποτάμια γύρω ἀπ' τήν Mildura  
πού τά εἶδες ὑπεριπτάμενος  
νά ἐλίσσονται ὡς βόες ὑπερμεγέθεις.





## ΟΛΟΙ ΖΗΤΟΥΜΕ ΜΙΑ ΣΤΕΓΗ

“Ολοι ζητούμε μιά στέγη, μή ρωτᾶτε γιατί.  
”Ίσως γιατί μᾶς τρομάζει ὁ οὐρανός ἀπροκάλυπτος  
ἴσως γιατί εἶναι ἀσήκωτες στή μοναξιά  
    ἡ μέρα κι ἡ νύχτα  
ἴσως γιατί στό μονόλογο φοβούμαστε  
    νά δοῦμε ὀλόκληρη  
δηλαδή χωρίς κανείς νά μᾶς διακόπτει  
τήν ἀντιφατική ἀλήθεια τοῦ προσώπου μας.

*Sydney-Ashfield, 15 April 1989*

## WE ALL LOOK FOR SHELTER

We all look for shelter — don't ask why.  
We are terrified perhaps by the naked heaven  
perhaps why unbearable are in solitude  
both day and night  
perhaps why in the soliloquy afraid we are  
to see the complete  
that means uninterrupted by anyone  
the contradictory truth of our face.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 15 April 1989*

## Η ΛΕΞΗ

Γλυκιά ή πατρίδα  
καί τό σπίτι  
καί τό πρόσωπο  
γλυκιά ή αγάπη  
μά άπ' όλα τοῦτα άκόμη πιό γλυκιά  
ή λέξη  
πού τά φωτίζει  
καί τά μεγαλύνει  
καί τά συντηρεῖ.

*Sydney, Redfern, 18 April 1989*

## THE WORD

Sweet is the motherland  
the home  
the face  
sweet is love—  
sweeter than all these  
the word is  
which illuminates  
and magnifies  
which perpetuates them.

*Sydney, Redfern, 18 April 1989*

## “NEWCASTLE ROCK”

Νύχτα Χριστουγεννιάτικη τοῦ 1924  
χάθηκε αὐτανδρο μέ 35 ναυτικούς  
160 μίλια ἀνοιχτά τῆς Μασσαλίας  
μεταφέροντας θησαυρό ἀμύθητο  
τῆς δυναστείας Ρομανώφ,  
ἤδη καταποντισμένης στήν ἴδια της τήν πατρίδα.  
“Ὅσες φορές δύτες δοκίμασαν νά πλησιάσουν  
τραπήκανε σέ ἄτακτη φυγή  
μή τολμώντας νά ξαναντικρίσουν τήν ἴδια φρίκη  
στήν ὑγρή ἀδιαπέραστη ἄβυσσο.  
Θεόρατοι καρχαρίες πεισματωμένοι  
φρουροῦν τό κομμένο στά δύο καράβι  
ἔχοντας κάμει ζήτημα τιμῆς  
νά μήν παραβιάσουν ἄνθρωποι τό ἄδυτό τους·  
ὅμως ποτέ δέν σταμάτησαν ἀκταιωροί  
νά κυνηγοῦν καρχαρίες.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 15/16 June 1989*

## “NEWCASTLE ROCK”

On Christmas Day of 1924  
it sunk with 35 sailors crew  
160 miles away from Marseilles  
carrying the invaluable treasure  
                                of the Romanoff dynasty,  
already sunken in their homeland.  
Whenever divers tried to go close  
                                but unconditionally gave up  
terrified by the spectacle of horror  
                                in that watery, impenetrable abyss.  
Huge sharks spiteful sharks  
guard the broken vessel  
rendering a matter of honour  
humans never to violate their sanctuary;  
however boats never stopped patrolling  
                                or ceased hunting sharks.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 15/16 June 1989*

## NOMEN EST OMEN

Τό δειλινό εἶναι ἡ δόξα τοῦ ἥλιου·  
βασιλεύει ἀποχαιρετώντας σάν βασιλιάς!  
Γιά τούς θνητούς εἶναι ὦρα ἐτασμοῦ  
μελαγχολία πού μεγαλώνει τούς φόβους  
    ἀνάλογα μέ τίς σκιές  
κι ἡ δειλία χρωμάτισε τή διάρκεια  
μέ ὄνομα γεμάτο ἀποσιωπητικά...

*Sydney, Ashfield, 18 September 1989*

## NOMEN EST OMEN

Dusk is the sun's glory;  
it sets like a farewelling king!  
For mortals it is a moment of vigilance  
of melancholy which intensifies fears  
along with shadows  
and cowardice coloured duration  
with a name full of concealment...

*Sydney, Ashfield, 18 September 1989*



## Η ΛΥΔΙΑ ΛΙΘΟΣ

*Τά ἔργα ἃ ἐγὼ ποιῶ κακεῖνος ποιήσει  
καί μείζονα τούτων ποιήσει.*

*Ἰωάννης, 14, 12*

Μέ τήν ποίηση δέν ἀναβάλλεις τό θάνατο  
αὐτό θά ἦταν ψευδαίσθηση  
μιά ἀκόμη πύρρειος νίκη.  
Κάθε σου ποίημα ὁμολογία ἀπιστίας  
ἄν δέν ἰσοδυναμεῖ μέ τήν ἀνάσταση  
ένός νεκροῦ.

*Κωνσταντινούπολις, 18 December 1989*

## THE TOUCHSTONE

*The works that I do shall he do also;  
and greater works than these shall he do*  
John, 14, 12

You don't postpone death with poetry;  
that would be an illusion  
one more pyrrhic victory.  
Each of your poems is a confession of unfaithfulness  
if it does not correspond to the resurrection  
of a dead.

*Constantinople, 18 December 1989*

## ΤΑΞΙΔΙ

Ταξίδι δέν εἶναι ἀπλῶς νά φύγεις  
καί νά ἐπιστρέψεις  
εἶναι μιά νέα τάξη πραγμάτων  
καί θρυμματίζει κατεστημένες βεβαιότητες  
ἐκθέτοντας τήν ψυχή καί τό σῶμα  
στόν ἄπιαστο ἀέρα τοῦ παρθενικοῦ.  
Ταξίδι εἶναι τάξιμο πού δέν ἐκπληρώθηκε  
ὥς τήν στιγμή πού ἀποφάσισες νά στερηθεῖς  
καί νά κακοπαθήσεις.  
Ταξίδι εἶναι πυρετός καί δίψα  
νά δεῖς ἀνεστραμμένη τη ζωή...

*Athens, 21 December 1989*

## TRAVELLING

Travelling doesn't simply mean leaving  
and returning—  
it is a new order of things  
breaking established certainties  
exposing soul and body  
to the wild wind of pristinity.  
Travelling is an unfulfilled promise  
until the moment you accepted deprivation  
and mistreatment.  
Travelling is fever and thirst  
for seeing life turned upside down...

*Athens, 21 December 1989*

## ΣΤΟΝ ΑΣΤΕΡΙΣΜΟ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΥ

Ποίηση δέν εἶναι φαντασιώσεις  
μήτε ἀνεύθυνο λογοκόπημα σέ ὥρες  
ὕπερβάλλοντος ζήλου.

Ποίηση εἶναι τό νά λές τά πράγματα  
κάθε φορά μ' ἓνα ὄνομα καινούργιο  
ἀκόμη κι' ὅταν ἀναγκάζεσαι νά χαράξεις  
παιδικούς ὀρίζοντες σέ δάσος παρθένο  
ὅπου οἱ ἐνήλικες χάνουν εὐκόλα τήν ὑπομονή  
καί τήν φαντασία τους  
ἐπιστρατεύοντας ἐπιχειρήματα λογικῆς  
γιά νά λοιδωρήσουν τόν ἀστερισμό τῆς Παρθένου.  
Ποίηση εἶναι τό νά καταθέτεις χωρίς ὑπεροψία  
μέ ἀνιδιοτέλεια πλήρη  
ἢ μᾶλλον ἐν ἀμηχανίᾳ πολλῇ  
ὅτι ὁ κόσμος εἶναι ἄρρητος  
ἄβατο τοῦ Ναοῦ τό κιγκλίδωμα  
κι' ἡ πίστη ἱερή παραφροσύνη.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 18 August 1987*

## IN THE CONSTELLATION OF VIRGO

Poetry is not hallucinations  
nor irresponsible garrulity in moments  
of extreme ardour.

Poetry is talking about things  
each time with a new name  
even when you are forced to draw  
child-like horizons in a virginal forest  
where adults lose their patience easily  
lose their imagination

mobilising arguments of logic  
ridiculing the constellation of Virgo.

Poetry is to testify without insolence  
in complete disinterestedness  
or better in utter embarrassment  
that the world is ineffable  
impregnable is the gate to the Temple  
and faith holy insanity.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 18 August 1987*

## ΕΤΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΤΙ

*Οί ανάπηροι μέ τά καρότσια τους  
κυλοῦν τήν ἱστορία.*

Γ. Ρίτσος

Δέν θά κουρασθῶ, ἀδελφέ, νά σοῦ λέω  
πόσο ἱερός ὁ κόσμος  
πόσο ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπικίνδυνος...  
"Ὅμως γι' αὐτό μήν νομίσῃς πῶς θέλω  
νά σοῦ κάνω τόν δάσκαλο  
ὑποτιμῶντας τήν δική σου κρίση.  
"Αν τολμῶ νά μιλῶ γιά τά ὑπερώνυμα  
εἶναι ἐπειδή τό πραγματικό μέτρο ἀγιότητος  
τό ἐμπιστεύθηκε ὁ Θεός στόν μετανοοῦντα  
δηλαδή στόν ἐν συνειδήσει ἁμαρτωλό.  
Κι' ὅσο γιά τούς κινδύνους τοῦ βίου  
κανείς δέν ἀμφιβάλλει πῶς μπορεῖ νά μιλήσῃ ἔγκυρα  
μονάχα ὁ ἐν συνειδήσει ναυαγημένος....

*Sydney, Ashfield, 28 August 1987*

## AGAIN AND AGAIN

*Disabled people with their wheel-chairs  
move history on.*

Yannis Ritsos

I shall never get tired, my brother, saying  
how sacred this world is  
how dangerous human life.  
But don't believe that I want  
to preach  
underrating your own judgement.  
If I dare to talk about the beyond-name-things  
it is because God trusted the true measure of sanctity  
to the repentant, that is, the conscious sinner.  
Regarding now the dangers of life  
no one doubts that reliably can talk  
only the consciously shipwrecked....

*Sydney, Ashfield, 28 August 1987*



## Η ΓΕΝΝΗΣΗ ΤΟΥ ΠΟΙΗΤΗ

Πύκνωναν οἱ σκιές στά μάτια τῶν παρθένων  
ὅπως ἀκριβῶς τό κατάγγειλε ὁ Ungaretti  
ὁ ἥλιος στέγωνε δάκρυα περιττά  
καί τό ἀλάτι στή θάλασσα μονολογοῦσε.  
Τέτοια ὥρα γεννήθηκε ὁ ποιητής  
οὐχί ἐκ θελήματος σαρκός  
οὐδέ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρός  
ἀλλά γιά λόγους ἀστρικῆς ἰσορροπίας!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 1 October 1987*

## THE POET'S BIRTH

Shadows multiplied in virginal eyes  
precisely as Ungaretti announced  
the sun dried useless tears  
the sea-salt soliloquised.

The poet was born at such a moment  
not out of the volition of the flesh  
not out of the volition of the human  
but for reasons of astral balance!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 1 October 1987*

## ΔΙΑΨΕΥΣΕΙΣ

Νομίζαμε πώς φεύγοντας ό ήλιος  
θα΄παιρνε μαζί του τίς σκιές.  
Μά κεῖνες ένωθήκαν σάν βασίλεψε  
καί κάμανε τήν νύχτα....

*Sydney, Ashfield, 11 December 1987*

## REFUTATIONS

We thought that the departing sun  
would take shadows away.  
But they were all fused as the sun set  
and so night was born...

*Sydney, Ashfield, 11 December 1987*

## ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ

“Ένα σπασμένο χτένι μιά φλούδα πορτοκαλιού  
κι' οί' άσβηστες άκόμη πατημασιές  
πάνω στην άμμο  
είναι άρκετά για νά χαιρετήσεις τόν άγνωστο  
πού πέρασε πρίν από σένα....

*Great Keppel Island, 13 November 1987*

## COMMUNICATION

A broken comb an orange skin  
and some fresh footprints  
on the sand  
are enough to salute the stranger  
who passed by before you...

*Great Keppel Island, 13 November 1987*

## ΓΛΩΣΣΑ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΑΓΜΑΤΙΚΟΤΗΤΑ

*Τὴν φύσιν τῶν ὄντων ἐτράνωσας*  
*Ἄπολυτ. Ἀγ. Βασιλείου*

”Αν ξεκινώντας από κάποια δεδομένα  
ὀδηγηθεῖς σε χώρους ὀνειρικούς  
καί μιλήσεις γλώσσα συμβολική γιά τούς ἀμύητους  
μήν ἐπιτρέψεις νά ὀνομάσουν αὐτό πού ἔζησες  
φαντασία!

”Αν ἡ πραγματικότητα ἐμεγαλύνθηκε μέ σένα  
κανεῖς δέν ἔχει τό δικαίωμα ν’ ἀμφισβητήσει  
τό νέο χτύπημα στό ὑπογάστριο τῆς οὐτοπίας·  
εἶναι ἀπλῶς ὑπόθεση λεξιλογίου γιά τούς πολλούς  
τό πῶς θά συννενοηθοῦν μαζί σου παραπέρα! . . . .

*Adelaide-Sydney, 11 May 1986*

## LANGUAGE AND REALITY

*You extolled the nature of beings.*

Hymn to St Basil

If, starting from what is at hand,  
you were transported to imaginary places  
and spoke a language arcane to the profane,  
never allow what you lived to be called  
imagination!

If reality was extolled with you  
nobody has the right to question  
the new smite under the belt of utopia;  
and it is simply a matter of vocabulary for the many  
how to communicate with you thereafter!...

*Adelaide-Sydney, 11 May 1986*



## ΕΝ ΟΛΙΓΟΙΣ

*Δέν ὑπάρχει ἄλλη ποίηση ἀπό κείνη τοῦ ἀδύνατου.*

Yves Bonnefoy

Φαίνεται τελικά πώς ἡ ποίηση  
εἶναι ἡ εὐγενέστερη μορφή ἀποτυχίας  
πού μᾶς ματαθέτει σχεδόν μεροληπτικά  
σ' ἐκείνη τήν ἀπέραντη ἐλευθερία  
τοῦ ἐν ζωῇ ναυαγημένου!

*Sydney, Carss Park, 23 August 1986*

## IN BRIEF

*There is no other poetry than that of the impossible.*

Yves Bonnefoy

Finally it seems that poetry  
is the noblest form of failure  
that transfers us almost wilfully  
to that infinite freedom  
of the shipwrecked-in-life!

*Sydney, Carss Park, 23 August 1986*

## ΑΝΗΚΟΥΣΤΟ ΑΙΤΗΜΑ

Φοβοῦμαι πώς δέν θά 'μουν ποιητής  
ἄν δέν Σοῦ γύρευα τήν πιό ἀνήκουστη χάρη:  
Ξέρω πώς ὁ καθένας ἀπό μᾶς ἔρχεται  
μόνο μιά φορά σέ τοῦτο τόν τετραπέρατο κόσμο  
κι ἴσως γι' αὐτό –εἰρήσθω ἐν παρόδῳ–  
τόν ἀγαποῦμε τόσο παράφορα.  
Θά 'θελα ὅμως ἄν μοῦ 'κανες τή χάρη  
νά σαρκωθῶ ξανά τόσες φορές  
ὅσες ἐπέτρεψες νά γίνουν ἀνθρώπινες γλῶσσες  
γιά νά γευθῶ στής κάθε γλώσσας τή μαγεία  
τά ὀνόματα πού φέρουν τά κτιστά  
ὅσα Σέ δόξασαν τήν ἑβδομη ἡμέρα  
καί τότε μόνο θά πιστέψω πώς γεννήθηκα  
μιά φορά ὁλόκληρος ἄνθρωπος!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 19 September 1986*

## UNHEARD REQUEST

I am afraid that I wouldn't be a poet  
if I didn't ask You for the most unheard of requests:  
I know that each one of us comes  
only once to this boundless world  
and probably this is why —by the way—  
                    we love it so frantically.  
But I would ask the grace to be granted  
and be incarnated again as many times  
as You allowed human languages to be created  
and taste thus the magic of each tongue  
the names bestowed on everything created  
everything that glorified You in the seventh day  
and only then I'll believe that I was born  
only once a complete human!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 19 September 1986*

## ΥΣΤΕΡΟΦΗΜΙΑ

Κείνοι πού θά διαβάσουν στό προσωπικό σου ήμερολόγιο  
εἰς ἄμουςες λεπτομέρειες πού τυράννησαν κάθε μέρα  
τόν ὑπεύθυνο χρόνο σου  
ὥς ἐκτιμήσουν τουλάχιστον τό γεγονός  
ὥς δέν ἀντιπαρήλθες ποτέ μιά ρομβία  
τοῦ ἥξερε νά συντηρεῖ στή βαρβαρότητα τῆς ἀγορᾶς  
τό ἄχρονο ρίγος ἀνιδιοτέλειας παρωχημένης.

*Rockhampton, 12 November 1986*

## POSTHUMOUS FAME

Those who will read in your personal diary  
the coarse details that tortured every day  
                    your conscious time  
will probably appreciate at least the fact  
that you never passed indifferent by a street organ  
which knew to preserve in the barbarity of the marketplace  
the timeless shivering of an old-fashioned selflessness.

*Rockhampton, 12 November 1986*

## ΓΝΩΡΙΖΩ

Γνωρίζω πώς ή ευτυχία δεν εξαντλείται  
στούς τέσσερις τοίχους τοῦ δωματίου.  
Γνωρίζω πώς ὅσο θά πεθαίνουν παιδιά  
καί θά ἀσχημονοῦν οἱ γέροι  
δέν εἶναι ζωή ή ζωή μου.  
'Εν τούτοις περ' ἀπ' τούς τέσσερις τοίχους  
πού μήτε αὐτούς τούς ὀρίζω  
δέν ἔχω δύναμη νά ἐπιβληθῶ  
παρά νά γράφω νά προσεύχομαι νά γνωρίζω...

*Sydney, Ashfield, 21 March 1985*

## I KNOW

I know that happiness is not exhausted  
in the four walls of this room.

I know that as long as children die  
and old people behave indecently  
my life won't be true life.

However beyond these four walls  
which also I don't command

I have no other authority to impose  
except to write and pray and learn...

*Sydney, Ashfield, 21 March 1985*



## ΑΞΙΩΜΑ

Στό τέλος θά νικήσουν ὄχι οἱ σάρκες  
ἀλλὰ τὰ λουλούδια·  
ὅσο συχνότερα πεθαίνεις  
τόσο βαθύτερα ζεῖς!

*Vienna, 22 April 1985*

## AXIOM

In the end, flesh won't be victorious  
but only flowers;  
the most often you die  
the deepest you live!

*Vienna, 22 April 1985*

## Η ΑΜΥΝΑ ΤΩΝ ΝΗΠΙΩΝ

Στόν Πολωνό 'Εθνομάρτυρα π. G. Popielusko

Ο δολοφονημένος τριανταεφτάχρονος λειτουργός  
δέν εἶναι δυνατόν νά διαμαρτυρηθεῖ πιά  
μήτε νά καταγγεῖλει.

Εν τούτοις, ἀπό τήν ὥρα πού σώπασε  
ὀριζοντιωμένος ὀριστικά κάτω ἀπ' τό χῶμα  
ἔγινε πιό ἐπικίνδυνος γιά τούς δολοφόνους  
διδακτικότερος γιά τούς πιστούς.

Ενα σιωπηλό πλῆθος παρελαύνει διαρκῶς  
μέ κεριά καί λουλούδια

θαρρεῖς καί θά τόν χαιρετίσουν προσωπικά ὁ καθένας  
γι' αὐτό δέν βιάζονται στή νύχτα μήτε στή βροχή.

Γονατίζουν στόν τάφο κι ἀνάβουν κανδήλια στή σειρά  
γράφοντας τό σχῆμα τοῦ Σταυροῦ καί τῆς νίκης  
κι ὕστερα δίχως δάκρυα κι ἀναφιλητά  
δίχως κατάρες γιά ἐκδίκηση

μπαίνουν καί προσεύχονται στό Ναό πού λειτουργοῦσε  
βλέποντάς τον ὑψωμένο 'Αρχάγγελο τώρα  
πάνω ἀπ' ὅλα τ' ἀγάλματα τῆς 'Αγίας Τραπέζης  
ἔτοιμο νά καθίσει μέ τόν Χριστό  
νά κρίνει μέ τήν ἐπιείκεια τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου 'Αρνίου  
τίς Δώδεκα Φυλές τοῦ 'Ισραήλ....

*Opole, 8 June 1985*

## THE DEFENSE OF INFANTS

To the National Martyr of Poland Fr G. Popielusko

The thirty seven years old murdered Minister  
was unable to protest any more  
unable to denounce.

However from the first moment of his silence  
when horizontally he fell for ever under the ground  
more dangerous he became for the murderers  
more instructive for the believers.

A silent crowd marches endlessly  
holding candles and flowers  
as each one of them wants to farewell him in person  
indifferent completely whether it is dark or rains.

They kneel before the grave and light votive candles  
drawing the shape of the Cross and victory  
and then without tears or sighs

without curses of revenge  
go and pray into the Temple where he ministered  
seeing him now, an ascending Archangel,  
above all statues of the Holy Altar  
ready to be enthroned next to Christ  
ready to judge with the leniency of the Sacrificed Lamb  
the Twelve Tribes of Israel...

*Opole, 8 June 1985*

## Ο ΕΝ ΣΤΟΛΗ ΔΟΛΟΦΟΝΟΣ

Στόν δολοφονημένο' Ανδρέα Σινιώρο

Ο αστυνομικός σκότωσε τόν νεαρό κλέφτη  
-ἄσε πού τό ποσό ἦταν εὐτελές-  
μέ τήν ὑποκριτική δικαιολογία πώς όπλισμένος αὐτός  
κινδύνευε ἀπ' τόν εἰκοσάχρονο διαρρήκτη  
πού δέν κρατοῦσε παρά ἓνα κομμάτι τζάμι.  
Δέν εἶναι ἀνάγκη νά 'σαι φίλος ἢ συγγενής  
γιά νά ρωτήσεις  
τόν ἐν στολῇ δολοφόνο  
ποῦ βρῆκε τόση σκληρότητα γιά παραστρατημένα πουλιά.  
Δέν πέρασε στιγμή ἀπ' τό νοῦ τοῦ φονιᾶ  
πώς τά δύο χέρια τοῦ κυνηγημένου ἀλήτη  
δέν ἤξεραν μονάχα νά κλέβουν  
ἀφοῦ κι αὐτά ἔκαναν καθημερινά  
κοινές ἀνθρώπινες χειρονομίες  
ἀληθινές σάν τήν πείνα καί τήν δίψα  
ἀνυστερόβουλες σάν τήν ἀγάπη;

*Sydney, Ashfield, 6 September 1985*

## A MURDERER IN UNIFORM

To the murdered Andreas Sinioros

The policeman killed the young thief  
—it was a petty amount indeed—  
with the hypocritical excuse that himself armed  
felt in danger by the twenty year old thief  
who kept only a piece of glass.  
You don't need to be a friend or relative  
so to ask the murderer in uniform  
why he was so cruel to birds gone astray.  
Didn't for a moment even occur in the mind of the killer  
that those two hands of the persecuted thief  
knew not only to steal  
but they also made every day  
common human gestures  
true like hunger and thirst  
selfless like love?

*Sydney, Ashfield, 6 September 1985*

## ΑΛΛΗΛΕΞΑΡΤΗΣΗ

Κάθε καινούργιο πρόσωπο  
φέρει μαζί του κι ένα μῦθο.  
Εἶναι τόσο βαθιά δεμένα μεταξύ των  
πού δέν γνωρίζουμε ποιός γεννᾷ τόν ἄλλο  
μήτε στό τέλος  
ποιός θά πρωτολησμονηθεῖ!

*Sydney, Redfern, 13 September 1985*

## INTERDEPENDENCE

Every new face  
brings a new myth with it.  
They are both so tightly intertwined  
that we don't know which generates the other  
neither finally  
who will fall into oblivion first.

*Sydney, Redfern, 13 September 1985*



## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Στό ξαπλωμένο ανάσκελα κορμί σου  
ἐπαληθεύονται θριαμβικά  
ὅλα τὰ σχήματα καί ὁράματα τῶν Aborigines  
ὅπως τὰ ζωγραφίζανε προχθές ἀκόμα  
στούς τοίχους τοῦ σιδηροδρομικοῦ σταθμοῦ στό Redfern:  
Κροκόδειλοι ἀκίνητοι σέ ἀνθισμένες ἀλυκές  
διασκορπισμένα ὅσά ἀπό σκελετούς δεινοσαύρων  
πατημασιές θεόρατες γιγάντων καί τεράτων  
καί πάνω ἀπ' ὅλα οὐρανομήκεις χαρακιές Εὐρωπαίων  
γιά τραῖνα κι αὐτοκίνητα!

*Perth-Melbourne, 30 January 1984*

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

On your supine lying body  
triumphantly are verified  
all shapes and visions of the Aborigines  
as they painted them several days ago  
on the walls of the Redfern train station:  
crocodiles immobilised in blooming salt-mines  
scattered bones of dinosaur skeletons  
enormous footprints of giants and monsters  
and above all sky-piercing lines of Europeans  
for trains and cars!

*Perth-Melbourne, 30 January 1984*

## ΑΠΛΩΣ ΕΤΣΙ

*Κάθε συγγραφέας δημιουργεί τούς προδρόμους του.*

*Χ.Λ. Μπόρχες*

”Επρεπε νά ’ρθεις’ Εσύ  
για νά γεννηθοῦν ὅσα εἶχα δεῖ καί δέν εἶχα προσέξει  
νά δώσεις ἐρμηνεία σέ γρίφους πού τρόμαζα  
νά μέ οἰκειώσεις μέ τίς ἀντιθέσεις τῆς λογικῆς  
τά αἰνίγματα τοῦ ἐκάστοτε περιβάλλοντος.  
”Ετσι λοιπόν κυφορεῖται τό παρελθόν  
σ’ ἓνα γνωστό ἀγέννητο μέλλον  
ἔτσι ἀποκρυπτογραφοῦνται τά σύμβολα  
μεσ’ ἀπ’ τά κρυπτογραφικά πού στέλνει ὁ Θεός  
κάθε λεπτό μέ ἄπειρους τρόπους  
φιλοδοξώντας νά καθρεφτισθεῖ μιὰ μονάχα στιγμή  
στήν διερχόμενη εὐαισθησία μας!

*Sydney-Adelaide, 11 April 1984*

## SIMPLY THUS

*Every writer creates his forerunners.*

J.L. Borges

It was you to come  
and give birth to all I have seen and didn't notice  
to solve all riddles which terrified me  
to familiarise me with the contradictions of logic  
the enigmas of any ambience.

Thus the past is incubated  
in a known yet unborn future  
and thus symbols are deciphered  
through hieroglyphs sent by God  
every moment in infinite ways  
aspiring for one minute only to be mirrored  
on our fleeting sensitivity!

*Sydney-Adelaide, 11 April 1984*

## ΕΠΙΤΡΕΠΟΜΕΝΗ ΕΥΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ

Εἶχε μεταναστεύσει σ' ἄλλη ἥπειρο πρὶν χρόνια.  
Ποῦ νὰ τὸ ὑποψιασθεῖ αὐτός καί οἱ δικοί του  
πῶς ἓνας θάνατος λευκός θά ὑπονόμευε τίς σχέσεις τους  
ρίχνοντας κάθε μέρα στάχτες καί καπνούς  
στοῦ πατρικοῦ σπιτιοῦ τίς ἀναμνήσεις!  
Τώρα ἡ Μάνα γερασμένη ἀγνοεῖ  
πῶς ἔπεσε μέ τὸ μικρὸ ἀεροπλάνο  
ἓνα πρωῒ πού δυστροποῦσαν τὰ σύννεφα  
ὁ νέος πού εἶχε φύγει μέ ὄνειρα μεγάλα.  
Τί νόημα θά 'χε νὰ τῆς ποῦν αὐτόν τόν θάνατο  
ἀφοῦ ἔμαθε ν' ἀρκεῖται σέ κάρτα ἢ τηλεφώνημα  
κι ἀφοῦ μποροῦν νὰ ἐπικαλεσθοῦν  
ἀπεργίες ταχυδρομικῶν  
γραμμές φορτωμένες τίς Γιορτές  
κι ἄλλες παρόμοιες προφάσεις ἐν ἀμαρτίαις;  
Γιὰ τὸ ἀτύχημα λοιπόν δέν θά τῆς ποῦν  
ἄλλωστε αὐτό δέν ἔγινε προχθές  
πού ἔπεσε  
ἀλλὰ πρὶν χρόνια  
πού πέταξε τὸ ἀεροπλάνο!

*Sydney-Ashfield, 16 January 1983*

## TOLERATED EUTHANASIA

He immigrated to another continent years ago.  
Neither he nor his family ever suspected  
that a white death would undermine their relations  
throwing ashes and smoke daily  
to memories of the paternal home.  
Now an aged Mother ignores  
that with a small airplane he fell  
a morning of misbehaving clouds  
the youth who left home in great expectations.  
It would be meaningless to know that death  
since a post card or a phonecall were enough for her  
and excuses can be found  
                    post offices on strike  
                    overloaded lines during Holidays  
and other similar evasive excuses.  
She will never be informed about the accident  
which didn't happen the day before  
                    when it crashed  
but years ago  
                    when it flew over, that first aeroplane!

*Sydney-Ashfield, 16 January 1983*

## ΦΙΛΟΔΟΞΙΑ

*Διδάσκομαι τή σιωπή, ἐπιζητώντας νά ὁμιλήσω.*

*A. Κοσματόπουλος*

”Αν γράφω, δέν εἶναι γιατί ἔχω νά πῶ κάτι καινούργιο.

‘Ο κόσμος εἶχε πάντα τόν ἴδιο κλῆρο

τίς ἴδιες πίκρες καί τίς ἴδιες χαρές

αὐτό πού σήμερα λέμε ἴσες εὐκαιρίες.

”Αν γράφω, εἶναι γιατί ἀγωνίζομαι νά βρῶ

τήν συντομότερη γραφική παράσταση τῶν δακρύων!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 29 January 1983*

## AMBITION

*In trying to speak, I learn silence.*

A. Kosmatopoulos

I write not because I have something new to say.  
World had always the same lot  
the same pains and the same joys  
what is called *equal opportunities* today.  
I write because I struggle to find  
the briefest way to draw a graph of tears!

*Sydney, Ashfield, 29 January 1983*



## ΟΠΤΙΚΗ ΑΥΣΤΡΑΛΙΑ

Πρέπει νά δείς τό σῶμα της στήν ἔρημο  
ἀπό ἀπόσταση ἀεροπορική  
καί θά ὁμολογήσεις νέο θρίαμβο στό ὁμοούσιο:  
ὁπάλιο πολύχρωμο μεγεθυμένο!

*Perth-Sydney, 5 April 1983*

## VISUAL AUSTRALIA

You must see her body in the desert  
from a distance on a plane;  
then you will admit a new triumph to the consubstantial:  
a colourful opal magnified.

*Perth-Sydney, 5 April 1983*

## ΓΥΝΑΙΚΕΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΑΪΛΑΝΔΗΣ

Ἄδελφές μου, μικρόσωμες αεικίνητες νυχτερίδες  
πῶς μπόρεσε νά σᾶς ἐμπνεύσει ὁ Βούδας  
μέ βλέμμα τόσο ἀδιάφορο κι ἄδειο  
μέ κοιλιά τόσο γεμάτη καί πλαδαρή;  
Ἄδελφές μου, φλεγόμενες ἐστιάδες  
ποῦ διδαχθήκατε τίς ἀσώματες κινήσεις  
τῆς ἱλαρότητας τήν δύναμη  
τήν εὐγλωττία τῆς σιωπῆς;  
Σέ σᾶς ὁ ἱππότης δέν ἀρκεῖ νά ὑποκλιθεῖ  
μήτε μονάχα νά φιλήσει τό χέρι  
ὁ θαυμασμός γιά σᾶς πρέπει νά ᾿ναι πράξη ὁλόσωμη  
ἄναυδη στάση προσοχῆς  
σάν ν' ἀνακρούεται Ἐθνικός Ὕμνος!

*Melbourne-Bangkok, 30 May 1983*

## WOMEN OF THAILAND

My sisters, short ever-moving bats  
how did Buddha succeed to inspire you  
with such an indifferent and empty gaze  
and a belly so big and flabby?  
My sisters, burning Vestal maidens  
who taught you the bodiless motions  
the force of cheerfulness  
the eloquence of silence?  
A knight is not enough to bow in front of you  
not even to simply kiss your hand-  
admiration for you should be an act of the whole body  
silent stand of reverence  
as in the sound of the national anthem!

*Melbourne-Bangkok, 30 May 1983*

## ΑΡΧΑΙΟΥ ΚΑΛΛΟΥΣ ΑΝΑΜΟΡΦΩΣΗ

Οἱ ἄνθρωποι στό χορό χάνουν τήν ἡλικία τους  
ὅπως τά σώματα τό βάρος τους μέσ στό νερό.  
Μιά μουσική πού χάθηκε στό χρόνο  
ἦτανε, φαίνεται, οἱ ἀρχέγονες κινήσεις μας  
γι' αὐτό νικᾷ τήν ἀδράνεια τοῦ θανάτου  
μόνο τραγούδι πού ἀθετεῖ τό λογισμό.

*Sydney, Redfern, 28 March 1982*

## RESTITUTION OF PRIMEVAL PULCHRITUDE

Humans, while dancing, lose their age  
like physical bodies submerged into water.  
A music lost in time  
was, it seems, our pristine movements  
consequently the inertia of death is defeated  
only by a song contravening reason.

*Sydney, Redfern, 28 March 1982*

## Ο ΠΟΙΗΤΗΣ

‘Ο ποιητής μήτε κλαίει μήτε γελά  
ἀπλῶς ἀγρυπνεῖ καί καταγράφει  
μέ αἴσθημα εὐθύνης φαρμακοποιοῦ  
κραδασμούς κί ἀλλοιώσεις  
στήν ἐπιφάνεια καί τόν πυρήνα τῶν ὄντων.  
Γι’ αὐτό ὁ ἔσχατος ἀπολογισμός  
τῶν πεπραγμένων σέ ὁρατά καί ἀόρατα  
εἶναι δικός του κλῆρος  
ἀπ’ τόν ὁποῖο τελικά θά κριθεῖ  
ἡ ἰσορροπία τοῦ κόσμου!

*Rockhampton, 1 May 1982*

## THE POET

The poet neither weeps nor laughs  
but stays simply vigilant and records  
with the punctuality of a pharmacist  
vibrations and alterations  
on the surface and nucleus of beings.  
Thus, the ultimate account  
of things done visibly and invisibly  
is his own lot  
by which will be finally judged  
the balance of the world!

*Rockhampton, 1 May 1982*



## ΑΠΟ ΤΗ ΒΟΜΒΑΗ ΜΕ ΟΔΥΝΗ

Κάτω από τίς ψηλές πολυκατοικίες  
πλήθος χαμόσπιτα – σπασμένα πιάτα  
πού αλόγιστα σκόρπισε γύρου του  
ἄνομος χαροκόπος.  
Οἱ στέγες τους κατά κανόνα βουλιαγμένες  
ὄχι βέβαια ἀπό τό βάρος τῶν ὑλικῶν  
– πισόχαρτα συνήθως καί λαμαρίνες –  
ἀλλά θαρρεῖς γιά νά προστατέψουν ἐξ ἐπαφῆς  
τήν ἔκθετη σάρκα τῶν ὀδυνωμένων.  
Αὐτή ἡ ἀεροφωτογραφία δέν θέλει σχόλια  
μνημονεύσεις μονάχα Μαχάτμα Γκάντι  
κι ὑποκλίνεσαι καθῶς περνοῦν μέ τή φόρμα τῆς δουλειᾶς  
οἱ σκελετωμένοι ἄνδρες πού ἀνέβηκαν νά καθαρίσουν  
τό ἀεροπλάνο πού στάθμευσε.

*Bombay, 9 August 1982*

## FROM BOMBAY WITH AFFLICTION

Under tall sky-scrappers  
countless slums — broken plates  
scattered mindlessly around  
by a depraved drinker.  
Their roofs have usually collapsed  
not under the weight of materials  
— tarpaper mostly and sheet iron —  
but you think so to protect the closest possible  
the naked flesh of sufferers.  
This aerial photography needs no comment:  
you simply commemorate Mahatma Gandhi  
and you bow down as in their work forms pass by  
the emaciated men who moved in to clean  
the landed airplane.

*Bombay, 9 August 1982*

## ΣΑΠΦΙΚΟ

Ἡ νύχτα ὕστερ' ἀπ' τὰ τελευταῖα τερτίπια της  
πρίν ξημερώσει  
πῆγε νά φύγει ἀδιάφορη  
σάν ὁδηγός ἀσυνείδητος πού χτύπησε πεζό  
καί τόν ἄφησε ἀφρόντιστο στό χῶμα.  
Ὅμως ὁ ἥλιος πρόλαβε τό ἔγκλημα νωπό  
τράβηξε δύο χαστούκια στό φεγγάρι  
γιά ἠθική αὐτουργία καί συνενοχή  
ἔστειλε στό διάβολο τ' ἀστέρια  
κι ὅλη τή μέρα φρόντισε νά γλυκαίνει  
λαβωματιές κι ἐρείπια ἀναμνήσεων.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 4 August 1981*

## SAPPHIC SONG

After its final ploys night  
                  just before dawn  
was about to depart indifferent  
like a cruel driver who ran over a pedestrian  
and abandoned him unattended on the ground.  
But the sun saw the crime still fresh  
slapped the moon twice  
for moral perpetration and complicity  
sent all stars to hell  
and all day long tried to alleviate  
the wounds and ruins of remembrances.

*Sydney, Ashfield, 4 August 1981*

## ΟΡΙΣΜΟΣ

‘ Η ποίηση θεῖος ύπαινιγμός  
ὅταν ἡ ζωὴ εὐτελίζεται  
σέ ἀπαρέμφατες καταμετρήσεις.  
‘ Αποκαλυπτήριος χρησμός  
ὅταν ὁ ἄνθρωπος χάνοντας τό μέτρο  
ἀθροίζει τίς ἀπώλειες  
σέ κατακτήσεις.

*Sydney, Carss Park, 26 December 1981*

## DEFINITION

Poetry, divine insinuation  
when life is denigrated  
to imperceptible measurements.  
Poetry, apocalyptic oracle  
when man loses measure,  
and sums up losses  
in profits.

*Sydney, Carss Park, 26 December 1981*

## ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΕΣ ΑΝΩΝΥΜΙΕΣ

Αὐτός ὁ Ἰνδιάνος τῆς Ἀμερικῆς μέ τήν κιθάρα  
πρέπει νά 'χει παράξενο φαρμάκι στήν καρδιά  
γιά νά χαϊδεύει μέ τόση προφύλαξη τίς χορδές  
γιά νά μήν τολμά μήτε κάν νά σιγομουρμουρίζει.  
Αὐτόν τόν Ἰνδιάνο τῆς Ἀμερικῆς μέ τήν κιθάρα  
πού θά 'θελα νά τόν παρηγορήσω καί δέν μπορῶ  
ποιός τόν γνωρίζει;

*Sydney, Ashfield, 9 January 1980*

## EVERYDAY ANONYMITIES

That American Indian with the guitar  
must feel a strange poison in his heart;  
with such caution he caresses the chords  
unable for the slightest murmuring.  
That American Indian with the guitar  
whom I would like to console but I can't  
does anyone know him?

*Sydney, Ashfield, 9 January 1980*



## ABORIGINES

Aborigines, ἐσεῖς οἱ πηγαῖοι  
εἶστε τά γνησιότερα τέκνα τῆς γῆς·  
κρατᾶτε ἐμφανέστερα τό χρῶμα καί τό χῶμα της  
κι ἀφίνετε ἐμᾶς τοὺς ὑπολοίπους  
εἴτε ἄσπρους, πανί ἀπό ντροπή  
εἴτε κίτρινους στό κλίμα τοῦ μίσους!

*Sydney-Brisbane, 2 October 1979*

## ABORIGINES

Aborigines, you are the original  
the most authentic children of the earth;  
you palpably preserve its colour and soil  
leaving us all  
either white in colourless shame  
or yellow in the climate of hatred!

*Sydney-Brisbane, 2 October 1979*

## TZAKAPANTA

*Τίς πυρκαγιές στά δάση μᾶς ἄναψε  
κι ὅμως δέν κατακάηκαν, ἀνθίσαν φλόγες.  
Τάκης Παπατσώνης*

Τῆς τζακαράντας τό μαβί τουρμπάνι  
πόνος βουβός, πένθος βαθύ  
πού ὁ νοῦς σου δέν τό βάνει.  
Αὐτό τό διάχυτο μαβί  
νεῦμα πρὸς τούς ὀρίζοντες τοῦ πεπρωμένου  
σημαῖα θλιβερή ναυαγοῦ  
σφιγμένα χεῖλη γενναίου.  
Αὐτό τό μαβί πένθος σιωπηλό  
καθόλου κραυγαλέο ὅπως τό μαῦρο  
μετεωρίζεται ὀριστικά ἀνέλπιδο  
γι' αὐτό δέν καταδέχεται συνύπαρξη  
μήτε μέ κουκίδα πράσινου!

*Sydney, Redfern, 13 November 1979*

## JACARANDA

*He blazed our forests but they weren't burnt out;  
they bloomed with flames.*

Tákis Papatzonis

The purple turban of jacaranda  
    silent pain, fathomless grief  
    inconceivable.  
That diffused purple  
a waving to the horizons of destiny  
    pitiable flag of a shipwrecked  
    tight lips of the brave.  
That silent purple grief  
not as vocal as the black  
hovers indubitably hopeless  
and so it doesn't condescend to coexist  
not even with a stain of green!

*Sydney, Redfern, 13 November 1979*

## ΜΥΗΣΗ

*Τότε γάρ ἡ ἀληθινὴ γαλήνη, ὅταν μὴ μόνον  
αἱ ἐνέργειαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ αὐτῶν μνημαὶ  
σχολάζουσαι, καιρόν παρέχωσι τῇ ψυχῇ.*

Νεῖλος ὁ ἀσκητής

Στὴ σιωπὴ τοῦ δωματίου  
ὑπάρχει κάτι ὑπουλο·  
δέν τολμᾶς νὰ τ' ὀνομάσεις ἀπάτη  
κι ὅμως αἰσθάνεσαι πὼς κάποιος σ' ἐξαπατᾷ  
συμπράττοντας μ' ὅλα τὰ γύρω  
δίχως ὅμως χαιρεκακία.

Πάντως ὅσο ἀφίνεσαι ἀνεπιφύλακτα  
σ' αὐτὴ τὴν ἀκαθόριστη συμπαιγνία  
χωρὶς νὰ ψάχνεις γιὰ τὸν ὑπεύθυνο  
χαράζει βαθμιαῖα μέσ' στοῦ δωματίου  
κρουστό τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἀλήθειας  
ὅπως τ' ἀντικείμενα πού φωτογράφησες  
μέ μηχανή Polaroid.

Καί τότε βλέπεις πὼς ἡ σιωπὴ  
δέν εἶναι ἀφαίρεση  
ἐπειδὴ ἔφυγες μακριὰ ἀπ' τοὺς θορύβους  
τῶν πραγμάτων.

“Ὅσο μακρύτερα ἄφισες  
αὐτοὺς τοὺς θορύβους  
τόσο πυκνότερα μπῆκαν στὴ στιγμή σου  
τὰ πράγματα  
τόσο ἡ σιωπὴ μεταμορφώθηκε  
σέ ἐκκωφαντικὴ παρουσία.

*Sydney, Carss Park, 31 December 1979*

## INITIATION

*Real peace comes not only when passions  
but their memories are asleep too,  
giving relief to the soul.*

Neilos the Ascetic

There is something sly  
in the silence of the room;  
you don't dare call it deceit  
although you feel deceived by someone  
colluding with the ambience—  
without malevolence, however.  
Nevertheless as you surrender yourself  
unreservedly to the indeterminate collusion,  
without looking for anyone to blame  
gradually in your room is carved  
palpable the body of truth,  
like objects photographed  
by Polaroid.  
And then you see that silence  
                    is not withdrawal  
because you escaped the noises  
                    of things.  
As far as you forsook  
                    that commotion  
as frequently things crept into your  
                    single moments  
and into a thunderous presence  
                    silence was transformed.

*Sydney, Carss Park, 31 December 1979*

## ΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ

Ἐσὺ δὲν εἶσαι ἀπλῶς μιὰ συνείδηση  
μ' ἓνα συγκεκριμένο ὄνομα καὶ σχῆμα  
μήτε σύνθεση ἀπὸ περίπου ἰσοδύναμες ἀρετές  
κι ἀδυναμίες,  
ὅπως ὁ καθένας ἀπὸ μᾶς.  
Εἶσαι ἡ γενναία ἀξιοπρέπεια  
ποὺ ἀναλίσκεται καὶ σωπαίνει  
ἡ ὑψωμένη σὲ μέτρο τρυφερότητα  
ἡ ἀπὸ ἄμετρη ὀρφάνια ὀρχούμενη μοναξιά.  
Κι ὅλ' αὐτὰ  
καὶ τόσα ἄλλα ταυτόσημα  
μέ μόνο περιορισμό τὸ ὄνομά σου!

Melbourne, 27 July 1979

## PORTRAIT

You are not simply conscience  
with a concrete name and shape;  
nor even a combination of virtues almost equivalent  
virtues and weaknesses  
as everyone of us.  
You are the brave dignity  
self-consumed and silent;  
the tenderness, elevated to measure  
the solitude dancing in measureless orphancy.  
All these things you are  
and many other identical  
your own name being your only limitation.

*Melbourne, 27 July 1979*



## ΧΑΙ-ΚΑΙ

Ἡ νύχτα ἐλλοχεύει μέσ  
τῇ θύμῃ  
ὅπως ἡ θλίψη στήν ἀποτυχία.

*Sydney, Hurstville 20 September 1979*

## HAIKU

Night lurks in remembrance  
like sadness  
in failure.

*Sydney, Hurstville 20 September 1979*

## ΟΙ ΔΥΟ

Σκιές παράλληλες πού ανάσηκώθηκαν  
γιά νά φωτίσουν καί νά σβήσουνε  
ή μιá τήν ἄλλη,  
ὅσο μπορέσουν καί προλάβουνε  
ν' ἀγαπηθοῦν!

*Θεσσαλονίκη, 30 October 1973*

## THE TWO

Parallel shadows that arose  
to illumine and efface  
                    one another  
time to be found  
to love each other.

*Thessalonica, 30 October 1973*

## ΑΦΟΡΙΣΜΟΙ

*Οὐαί ὅταν καλῶς ὑμᾶς εἴπωσιν  
πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι.*

*Λουκᾶς, 6,26*

Ἐλλοίμονο σ' αὐτούς  
πού δέν ἀμφισβητήθηκαν,  
γιατί θά πεῖ πῶς ταυτιστήκαν  
μ' ὅλους τοὺς ἀνθρώπους.

Ἐλλοίμονο σ' αὐτούς  
πού δέν διώχτηκαν,  
γιατί θά πεῖ πῶς δέν πολέμησαν  
μήτε μέ σκιές.

Ἐλλοίμονο σ' αὐτούς  
πού δέν ἐθανατώθηκαν,  
γιατί θά πεῖ πῶς δέν ἐπλήρωσαν  
τό φόρο τῆς ζωῆς ἀκέραιο.

*Θεσσαλονίκη, 17 October 1969*

## APHORISMS

*Woe unto you, when all men  
shall speak well of you!*

Luke, 6,26

Alas for those  
    who were never questioned,  
because this means that they were identified  
    with everyone.

Alas for those  
    who were not persecuted  
because this means that they fought not  
    even against shadows.

Alas for those  
    who were not murdered  
because this means that they didn't pay  
    life's levy in full.

*Thessalonica, 17 October 1969*

## ΕΞΟΡΙΑ

Ἐγὼ πού διάβασα ὅλους τούς τόμους τῆς σιωπῆς  
κι εἶδα τόν ἥλιο νά νοθεύει τό φῶς του,  
ἀναγκάστηκα νά ζητήσω καταφύγιο  
σ' ἓνα ὑπόστεγο τ' ἀγέρα.

Ἐγὼ πού φώναξα εὐχαριστῶ στ' ἀστέρια  
καί ζήτησα συχώρεση ἀπ' τό χιόνι,  
ἔπρεπε νά φύγω ἀσυντρόφευτος  
πορεύομενος τό μονόδρομο τοῦ στήθους μου.

Τί ἀφροσύνη νά γυρέψω τ' ἀνάλογα  
– Ἕλληνας ἀμετανόητος κι ἀθεράπευτος –  
ἦταν πολύ τό χιόνι, ἄμετρα τ' ἀστέρια  
καί τ' ἀντιλήφθηκα ὥρα περασμένη.

Τώρα ἡ τύψη δυό φορές θρεμμένη  
θά κάμει κατοχή καί τή μέσα Πατρίδα,  
θά διώξει τά περιστέρια, ὁ πόνος θά μένει,  
τώρα ἡ τύψη δυό φορές θρεμμένη.

*Θεσσαλονίκη, 9 December 1966*

## EXILE

I who read all volumes of silence  
who saw the sun falsifying its light,  
I was forced to ask for refuge  
under the shelter of the air.

I who shouted thanksgiving to the stars  
and asked forgiveness from the snow  
alone had I to depart  
following the one-way road of my body.

What madness it was to ask for things equivalent  
—a Greek unrepented and incurable—  
endless was the snow, countless were the stars  
so very late to realise.

A twice-born remorse now  
will conquer the inner Motherland indeed,  
doves will be expelled, pain will remain,  
a twice-born remorse, now.

*Thessalonica, 9 December 1966*





**STYLIANOS S. CHARKIANAKIS** was born in Rethymnon, Crete, 29 December 1935. He studied theology in Constantinople and received his doctorate in Divinity from the University of Athens. In 1975 he was elected as the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia. Charkianakis published 25 collections of poetry in Greek. In 1973 he was awarded the prestigious Herder Prize for his contribution to European culture. In 1980 he received the Academy of Athens Prize for Poetry. Many of his poems have appeared in international magazines. In 1994 his first Australian poetry collection *Fireworks and Sparrows* was published. In 2000 he established the Romanos Melodist religious poetry award. He lives in Sydney.

**VRASIDAS KARALIS** teaches Greek at the University of Sydney and has translated S.S. Charkianakis' *Fireworks and Sparrows* into English. He is also the translator of Patrick White's novels *Voss* and *The Vivisector* into Greek.

## ΠΟΙΗΣΗ

Ἡ διὰ πασῶν τῶν τεχνῶν ἄρρητη ἀλήθεια.

Ἡ μουσική τῶν λόγων.

Ὁ λόγος τῆς σιωπῆς.

Τό φῶς τῶν χρωμάτων.

Τοῦ φωτός ἡ πολυώνυμη δόξα.

Ἡ ἀνατροπή τῶν σχημάτων.

Ἡ ἀποκατάσταση ἐνιαίου σχήματος.

## POETRY

The ineffable truth through all arts.

The music of words.

The word of silence.

The light of colours.

The polyonymic glory of light.

The reversal of shapes.

Restitution of the integral shape.

*Stylios S. Charkianakis*

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