

Modernism in Modern Greek theatre (1895-1922)*

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Modernism in modern Greek prose and drama is closely linked with two *termini technici*: *βορειομανία* ("mania for the North") and *ιψενογερμανισμός* ("Ibseno-germanism"). The two terms appeared in the vocabulary of Greek critics in the last decade of the nineteenth century, at a time when, in reaction to the aesthetic impasse of "ethography" (ηθογραφισμός), literary circles in Athens were welcoming with open arms all the "-isms" of fin-de-siècle Europe (Puchner 1995). The web of issues surrounding these terms is a complex one, and relates to modern Greek civilisation's search for a new identity. The generation of 1880 had just succeeded in locating such an identity in folk culture, folk literature and the demotic language with its thematic scope and stylistic pluralism, when it seemed to come under the threat of dilution through foreign trends – trends which introduced new kinds of problems and manners of behaviour which were seen as irrelevant to the modern Greek reality. Nevertheless, Greece consisted of more than the villages of the "ethographic" novella; in order to analyse and depict the social problems and the psychology of a bourgeois culture which was only just being formed in Greece, new literary and stylistic tools and means were needed, and these had to be borrowed from a Europe where the arts were in the process of being revolutionised. Added to this need was the all-powerful imperative to imitate European literary successes, a process which had been formed and reinforced throughout the nine-

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teenth century, when the few bourgeois authors would await the post from Paris to see what and how they would write.¹

At the end of the century it is no longer Paris, but the Scandinavian countries, Germany, and Russia which are fashionable. The ideological struggles around the conceptual axes "foreign" and "indigenous" reach the scale of open hostilities even within the camp of the demoticists, since *Romiosini* – the term is an expression of the *new* national identity as opposed to the archaizing and romantic "Ελλάδα" and "ελληνικός" (Mantouvalou 1983) – was in danger of being made foreign and of losing its uniqueness in the whirlwind of international "-isms" which, like unruly hordes of wolves, had suddenly and violently invaded Greece, leaping over the strongly-built and well-kept garden wall of "ethography" with its picturesque types and its "couleur locale", the everyday events of the farming community and the closed world-view of the village, which had until then functioned as the guarantee of "Greekness" in language, themes and mentality (Tziovas 1986; Jusdanis 1991). There were a number of writers and intellectuals at the end of the century, grouped around certain progressive periodicals like *Τέχνη* and *Διώνυσος* (Gounelas 1981), who resisted the calls of the leaders of the extreme demoticist movement, Eftaliotis and Psicharis,² as they sensed strongly that the content of a modern Greek identity could not be so

¹ For the role and function of success in "Europe" as a criterion for positive reception in Greece see Puchner 1992: 181-221.

² Cf. the article by Eftaliotis "Αληθινή και ψεύτικη τέχνη" in *Το Άστυ* 21.7.1899, where "ιψενογερμανισμός" is ridiculed: "Μερικοί μας νέοι... βρέθηκαν ξάφνω στα δάσια της γερμανικής της τέχνης και σκιάχτηκαν, ξαφνίστηκαν και πήγαν..."; this is a dig at Kambysis's column "Γερμανικά Γράμματα". But the main target is *Τέχνη*: "Μεγάλο κι ασυγχώρητο κρίμα, ν' αρχίζει ένα περιοδικό με την εθνική τη γλώσσα, κι αντίς να μας γενή περιβόλι ρωμαίικο, να κάθεται και να 'ρμηνεύει ξένες Βαβυλωνίες." The danger of the loss of national identity is also touched upon: "Δίχως ... τον εθνικό το χρωματισμό, δίχως το *προζύμι* που μας την κάμνει την τέχνη ψωμί και μας θρέφει, ... σωστό καλλιτέχνημα μήτε στάθηκε μήτε θα σταθή ... Σε κάθε του βήμα πρέπει το μικρό το έθνος να λογαριάζει και να προσέχει μην τσαλαπατηθή από το μεγαλύτερο, αφού μάλιστα ύστερ' από το χρωματισμό του μπορεί να χάσει και το *είναι* του κιάλας" (Papandreou 1983: 92ff). On Psicharis's polemic see Puchner 1994.

narrowly confined.³ It is symptomatic that the thematic guidelines of the periodical *Εστία*, which laid the foundations for the "ethographic" novella (Papakostas 1982: 80; Politou-Marmarinou 1985), were closely tied to the language question. In 1901 Dimitrios Chatzopoulos (Μποέμ), writing on Karkavitsas's *Παλιές Αγάπες*, argued: "You can be Greeks (Έλληνες), you can have a Greek soul with or without the *fustanella*, you can be Greeks (Ρωμιοί) without writing in the language of Mr Psicharis."⁴ And elsewhere: "Gone are the gunpowder and the talismans, the epitaphs, the slender maidens and the witches, the *fustanellas* and the pomponed shoes – it has all evaporated like superficial smoke" (cf. Tziouvas 1986: 193ff). And he adds in another article in a more polemical tone: "Autonomous Greek literature with its lowly inclination towards descriptions of master Dimitrios or the lovely slender Vasso! We can do without your autonomy for Greeks and for foreigners."⁵ And the ever dialectical and conciliatory Palamas, who gave us the masterpiece of the genre with his "Θάνατος παλληκαριού"⁶ – which of course in some respects already surpassed the limits of "ethography" – proclaims with sensitivity and perspicacity as early as 1895: "Ibseo-germanism should be praised highly indeed, if its life-bringing currents might possibly reach as far as the contemporary Greek soul." This is said in surprise at the exaggerated reactions against the so-called "βορειομανία", and with a sense of the impasses of "ethography" which he can already perceive.

Σήμερα ο νατουραλισμός, και αύριο ο συμβολισμός! Ακούω γύρω μου ψιθύρους χλευασμού και ανησυχίας και θλίψεως. Κι' εγώ ανακράζω: καλώς ήλθατε, καλώς να έλθετε, νατουραλισμοί, συμβολισμοί, ιψενογερμανισμοί, και από βορρά και μεσημβρία,

³ The polemic was answered by N. Episkopopoulos (*Το Άστυ*, 22.8.1899), who shared Kostis Palamas's view: "Αι φιλολογίαι όλα ακολουθούν τους νόμους της μιμήσεως, της εξελίξεως και της ανταλλαγής· δανείζονται αλλήλας· διαδέχονται και μιμούνται τας προηγουμένας των και αναγεννώνται και από της τέφρας των." Cf. Papandreou 1983: 96ff.

⁴ *Ο Διόνυσος* 1 (1901) 74. Cf. Apostolidou 1993: 379.

⁵ *Ο Διόνυσος* 1 (1901) 87. Cf. also the article "Ημείς και μερικοί ξένοι", *ibid.*, 83ff.

⁶ For a bibliography and reviews see Puchner 1995: 238ff.

από ανατολής και δύσεως, όλοι οι εις ισμοί σεισμοί, από τους οποίους αν ανατινάσσονται και συντρίβονται ή εξαφανίζονται τα παλαιά εδάφη, νέαι νήσοι και νέαι στερεαί του πνεύματος αναδύονται και θάλλουσιν.⁷

Today naturalism, and tomorrow symbolism! I hear around me whispers of derision and unease and sadness. And I call out: welcome, always be welcome, naturalisms, symbolisms, Ibsenogermanisms, from the north and the south, from the east and from the west, all the tremors in the -isms, and if they make the old lands shake and crumble and disappear, new islands and new mainlands of the spirit will surface and flourish.

Palamas's weighty words form a strong contrast to the manifesto of "ethography" formulated by Karkavitsas in 1892 in the prologue to his *Stories*.⁸

In Greek drama the term *βορειομανία* clearly comes from the camp of local patriotism, and in 1894 it invaded the realm of the comic idyll (Hatzipantazis 1981) and the dramatic idyll with the renowned production of Ibsen's *Ghosts*. The performance was introduced by the very young Xenopoulos (Papandreou 1983: 21-32), who published two works in the vein of Ibsen in 1895, *Ο τρίτος* and *Ψυχοπατέρας*, and initiated the "Theatre of Ideas", the term he coined in 1920 for serious Greek drama of that period.⁹ The linguistic purists reacted immediately (Athens was

⁷ Palamas, "Εξ αφορμής μιας λέξεως" (1895), *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, p. 388.

⁸ "Ο σημερινός Έλλην καλλιτέχνης, σε όποιον κλάδο και αν ανήκη, βρίσκεται πάντα μέσα σε θησαυρό ατελείωτο και δεν χρειάζεται παρά να σκύψη για να γεμίση τους κόρφους του. Είναι λοιπόν δίκαιο αντί ν' αδράχνη διαμάντια και μπριλάντια να προσέχη 'ς τα ψωροχάλικα; Είναι δίκαιο αφού και ιστορία και θρησκεία και ηρωισμοί άπίστευτοι, αφού πρωτόπλαστοι ακόμα παραδόσεις κ' εθίμων πολύμορφοι σωροί και τύποι και όψεις σκληροκάμωτοι κ' εκφράσεις σχεδόν πέτρινοι και φερσίματα χιλιάδες και φύση από τον Παράδεισο παρμένη, όλα κατά σωρούς σε περιτριγυρίζουν, σε προκαλούν, πετούν σχεδόν σαν χιλιόπλουμες πεταλούδες ολόγυρά σου και φωτοβολούν 'ς το νου και 'ς τα νεύρα σου και σου γλυκοτραγουδούν πίσω 'ς τ' άσκοπα γραψίματα του παρελθόντος και μ' εκείνα να προβάλλουμε 'ς τους αναγνώστας; Όχι, χίλιες φορές όχι!..." (Α. Karkavitsas, *Διηγήματα* (Athens 1892), xff; cf. Vitti 1980: 72ff).

⁹ In an article on the dramatic oeuvre of Dimitris Tangopoulos, "Το θέατρο των ιδεών κι ο κ. Δ. Π. Ταγκόπουλος", *Ο Νουμάς* 711-713, Nov. 1920.

still resounding with the double success of Vernardakis's *Φαύστα* in 1893), as did the demoticists: Eftaliotis responded to Ibsen's *Ghosts* with an "ethographic" *Βουρκόλακας*¹⁰ and issued repeated warnings about the harmful influences and dangerous side-effects of the imported "-isms". Writing from Paris in 1900, Psicharis derided the "long-haired imbeciles" who regarded themselves as "Nietzsches, Ibsens and countless other things" and read Nietzsche in the streets of Athens, and fulminated against Yiannis Kambysis, who stoked up "Germanolatry" in the "Γερμανικά Γράμματα", and against Yiorgos Drosinis, who had called Germany his "second fatherland" (Psicharis 1901: 4ff). In a letter about Palamas's *Τρισεύγενη* (1903) he praised Palamas for not using foreign "symbolisms", but indigenous ones; later, of course, he would claim that Palamas, too, wrote in the shadow of Ibsen.¹¹

The defenders of "Greekness" focused their critique mainly on the enthusiastic, uncritical, and idiosyncratic reception of Nietzsche, whose philosophy had at that time been reduced to a misunderstood version of the "superman" (Veloudis 1983: 262ff and passim; Lamm 1970). Konstantinos Chatzopoulos wrote a satire entitled *Ο υπεράνθρωπος* in 1911, and in the same year

¹⁰ It was published in serial form in *Εστία* in 1894 and as a book in 1900 together with the novella "Μαζώχτρα" (*Άπαντα*, ed. G. Valetas (Athens 1952), vol. 1, 592-627).

¹¹ In 1903 he wrote: "Αγαπητέ μου, Είναι ωραίο δράμα η Τρισεύγενη, και πρωτότυπο. Ίσως γι' αυτό άκουσες τόσα και θ' ακούσης ακόμη πολλά. Είναι πρωτότυπο, γιατί δε χρωστάς τίποτις κανενός. Έχει μέσα συμβολισμό [sic], μα ο συμβολισμός σου εσένα μήτε ξενίλα μυρίζει μήτε ιπενισμούς. Είναι ρωμαίικος" ("Ο κ. Ψυχάρης για την «Τρισεύγενη»", *Ο Νουμάς* 1 (1 Oct. 1903) no. 65, 1 (cf. *Ρόδα και μήλα* vol. 4, Athens 1907, 245-8) The demand for indigenous symbolisms is formulated more explicitly in the manifesto "Για το Ρωμαίικο θέατρο" (Psicharis 1901: 58-61). In 1927 Psicharis has changed his mind; in his pamphlet against Palamas he writes: "Ποιος στην Ελλάδα δεν έσκυψε το λαιμό του από κάτω από του Ίψεν το ζυγό; Ποιος δε σκοτεινίασε το φαινότο το ρωμαίικο τόνον με τα σύννεφα της Σκανδιναβίας; Ο Καμπύσης και ο Ταγκόπουλος πρώτα θύματά της. Η Τρισεύγενη του Παλαμά όμορφο δράμα και γενναίο. Έλα δα που μας τα χαλνά όλα η μίμηση της Δύσης. Εγώ προτιμώ ν' αφήσουμε το θέμα το άχαρο και το αχάριστο. Με βγάξει έξω από την κριτική μου την αμεροληψία. Μ' ερεθίζει κιόλας" (Psicharis 1927: 20ff; cf. Tziouvas 1986: 163ff).

Pavlos Nirvanas wrote an article summing up the damage done to Greek thought by the superficial reception of Nietzsche,¹² even though it was largely through his own analyses and presentations that admiration for Nietzsche was first transmitted to Greek intellectuals (Veloudis 1983: 262ff). In drama, it was Ibsen, Strindberg, Tolstoi, Hauptmann and Sudermann who were the greatest influences on young writers at the threshold of the new century, having become known through performances, translations, presentations of their work and reviews of their successes on the European stages.¹³ As early as 1894, Babis Anninos parodied the "Germanisation" of Greece in his comedy *Η νίκη του Λεωνίδα* (Hesseling 1924: 145; Veloudis 1983: 245), and in 1903 Periklis Yiannopoulos vilified Sudermann's play *Honour* for eroding the morals and customs of the Greeks,¹⁴ while as early as 1899 a charming parody of this work was published under the title *Η τιμή του Σούντερμαν*, which was recently staged at the Ethniko Theatro (1993/4). In other articles, such as "Ξενομανία" and "Όχι Ξένα",¹⁵ Yiannopoulos prepared the way for the dogma of hellenocentrism propounded by Ion Dragoumis and others. In the latter article he takes Palamas to task for defending the staging of Hauptmann's *Coachman Henschel* in the Vasilikon Theatron against the criticisms of Dimitrios Vernardakis, who had complained that such a work could only provoke nausea.¹⁶ His own *Νικηφόρος Φωκάς*, meanwhile, had to wait until 1905 before it was performed in the same court theatre (Sideris 1990: 94).

¹² "Ο Ελληνικός νιτσεισμός", in *Άπαντα*, ed. G. Valetas, vol. 3, (Athens 1968), 317ff.

¹³ The mass of information about "northern" literatures collected at the turn of the century in the short-lived periodicals *Η Τέχνη* (1898-1899), *Ο Διόνυσος* (1901-1902) and *Το Περιδικόν μας* (1900-1901) is astonishing: among German authors, the focus is on Nietzsche, Hauptmann, George, Hofmannsthal, but also Goethe, Schiller, Novalis, von Platen, Uhland, Heine etc.; and among Scandinavian authors Ibsen, Strindberg, Björnson, Brandes, Hamsun, Jakobson etc. (Veloudis 1983: 251). Cf. Tomadakis 1969/70 and 1970/71.

¹⁴ "Εργά και ημέραι. Το καθήκον μας", *Ο Νουμάς* 1 (4) (12.1.1903), 4.

¹⁵ *Ο Νουμάς*, 16.1. and 30.1.1903.

¹⁶ "Φιλολογικά αναθέματα", *Ο Νουμάς*, 19.1.1903.

The semantic content of the term *βορειομανία* is exceptionally disparate, polemical and emotionally charged, while that of *ιψενογερμανισμός* is more clear-cut: *βορειομανία* brings together in one term geographical, climatological, thematological, stylistic and psychological parameters which already indicate the confusion in the adaptation of foreign trends so characteristic of the "Θέατρο των Ιδεών". The term was coined by Yiorgos Tsokopoulos in 1895 following the "invasion" of Greece by Ibsen.¹⁷ "Ἐξ αφορμῆς μίας λέξεως" is the title of the article with which Palamas responded, where, as we have seen above, he uncompromisingly affirms the beneficial opening up of Greek literature to the "North". Palamas includes under this heading much older figures of English and German literature than we would perhaps expect: Shakespeare and Marlowe, Goethe and Schiller, and the Romantics Heine, Lenau, Shelley and others; alongside the contemporary authors Hauptmann and Sudermann, he places Russian literature with Tolstoi and Dostoevskii and Scandinavian literature with G. Brandes and H. Drach, Ibsen and Strindberg.¹⁸ After first declaring his inability to understand the term, since it should logically include the older English and German authors as well, Palamas goes on, with his unfailing instinct for historical and cultural interrelations, to give the above out-of-hand catalogue of "northern" authors, thereby broadening the concept of *βορειομανία*, which had initially been nothing but the expression of an emotional reaction against the modern European movements, and giving it real substance (on Palamas as critic see Sachinis 1994). It is immediately clear that: 1) he does not restrict the term to the "modern" authors, but also includes the Romantics (as well as Shakespeare's and Marlowe's reception in German romanticism); and 2) the writers in question stand outside the Italian and French tradition of classicism and classicising drama that was so strong in Greece at the time. During certain phases of the Greek nineteenth century, Shakespeare had become the principal model for non-Aristotelian drama. Palamas broadens the concept of "northern literatures", dates it back to around 1800, and tries to give it some solid content.

¹⁷ *Τα Ολύμπια*, 9.12.1895.

¹⁸ "Ἐφημερίδα" 14.12.1895, in *Ἄπαντα*, vol. 2, 374-8.

Of course, the Romantic poetic figures of Byron and Shelley are more closely linked to Greece because of their philhellenism (Puchner 1995a: 269ff) and their reception was significant throughout the nineteenth century (Sideris 1990: 31ff). The authors of Weimar classicism, Goethe and Schiller, enjoyed renewed interest between 1890 and 1920, although the former's *Faust* and several dramatic works of the latter had already been translated and performed during the second half of the nineteenth century (Puchner 1992: 195ff). Furthermore, in Palamas's time Heine was the most translated German poet in Greece. As far as Shakespeare is concerned, it must be noted that the beginnings of his reception, in the Heptanese as well as in Athens, are not unrelated to German romanticism's enthusiasm for Shakespeare (Sideris 1964/65). Palamas insisted that Lessing in his *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, and the German translations by Schlegel, Tieck and others, reestablished the reputation of the English playwright after the damage and disfigurement caused by shallow and sentimental renderings of his works (Puchner 1995b: 708). Vernardakis declared him at one point to be the new aesthetic model for Greek drama (in the prologue of *Μαρία Δοξαπατρή*, 1858). Even before the generation of the 1880s, then, "northernness" was already associated with an iconoclastic tendency which to some extent balanced out the archaeolatry and classicism of the time, even though the authors in question tended to employ ancient, classical themes. The case of Franz Grillparzer, who was made known in Greece by Thomas Oikonomou almost 100 years after his heyday in Vienna, is both unusual and enlightening. First it was his romantic tragedy of fate, *The great-grandmother* or *The ghost in the castle*, which attracted the belated interest of the Vasilikon Theatron, but immediately thereafter attention was turned to the plays with classical themes, *Hero and Leander* and *Medea* (Puchner 1992: 268ff; 1995b: 86f and 764f). The success of Hofmannsthal's *Electra* followed a similar route (Mygdalis 1988: 25).

With the invasion of Ibsen in 1894, the vaguely iconoclastic element was enhanced by the "foreign". The translation of Zola's *Nana* in 1880 and the more general acquaintance of the Greek reading public with the "naturalist" school had already

prepared the ground for the reception of naturalism,¹⁹ and this led to Ibsen's being construed mainly as a naturalist and an iconoclast of the bourgeois world-view (Papandreou 1983: 16). The process of reception which followed can be characterised as confused, spasmodic and prone to misconstruction. There was already a confusion between French naturalism and realism with the "ethographic" story being pronounced "naturalist", despite the fact that it clearly possessed idyllic and beautifying traits (Puchner 1984: 317ff). "Ζολαδικός" is a stylistic and thematic adjective which was greatly over-used, and for a wide variety of purposes, by the critics of the time. Both the naturalist and the symbolist tendencies, which flooded into Greek intellectual life almost simultaneously, were slotted into the "ethographic" framework of the Greek countryside, and into the thematics of Greek folk tradition (an extreme example is the Aegean fisherman who is fairy-tale hero and superman rolled into one, in Spiros Melas's *Γυιος του ίσκιου* of 1907). Alternatively, the themes and conflicts of bourgeois literature were reproduced in an imaginary "bourgeois" world of fin-de-siècle Athens, which did not exist in that form, at least not yet (see, for example, the bourgeois problematics in Xenopoulos's *Ο τρίτος* and *Ψυχοπατέρας* of 1895, which do not correspond to any wider, objective social reality, but are conventional patterns with roots in the dramas of Dumas fils and other French playwrights, which were widely performed in Athens; cf. Delveroudi 1994: 241f). The situation was confounded still further both by the pressure of the language struggles on the demoticists and by the desire to create a national corpus of dramatic works and to raise the profile of the Greek travelling theatres and revues. Finally, the confusion was heightened by the ideological instability surrounding these artistic tendencies, which was given various expression in the dramatology of the "Theatre of Ideas", ranging from nationalism to socialism, from an undigested Nietzscheism to the eschatological Hellenocentrism which grew up in the gap between the national humiliations of 1897 and 1922 (Gounelas 1984).

This intellectual restlessness, the heterogeneous and spasmodic way in which theories were embraced and

¹⁹ Cf. the manifesto of Ayisilaos Yiannopoulos in 1880, now reprinted in Mastrodimitris 1996: 271-97.

proclamations made, the spontaneous reactions, both positive and negative,²⁰ to the chaotic invasion of all the "-isms" from Europe, are what make the exploration of this period so fascinating and exciting. It is the period we conventionally call the "Theatre of Ideas", without necessarily meaning committed theatre or plays with an obvious ideological baggage. The use of "northern" literature in Greek theatres was opposed by the linguistic purists, who preferred the patriotic tragedy of the drama competitions (Delveroudi 1988), but also by the Hellenocentric demoticists with their local patriotism, who saw it as a profanation of the vision of a modern Greece built on folk traditions and the language of the people. It was also opposed by the travelling theatre troupes, whose amateur actors preferred to stick with their well-tryed repertoire of successes, including the picaresque, the comic idyll and the dramatic idyll.²¹ Finally, it was resisted by a large proportion of theatre-goers, who flocked to the revue and vaudeville theatres (Hatzi-pantazis and Maraka 1977) and to the Karagiozis shows, which had the most numerous audiences of all forms of theatre (Puchner 1988: 409ff). The "Theatre of Ideas" was a matter for a few intellectuals, and at first only for the Vasilikon Theatron and Christomanos's Nea Skini (Mavrikou-Anagnostou 1964), until the better roles and European success and fame began to attract the prestigious troupes of Kyveli and Kotopouli. Thus the reception of the modern European writers was usually restricted to the following four theatres: Vasilikon Theatron, Nea Skini, Kyveli and Kotopouli (for her repertoire see Anemoyiannis 1994: 335-43). After his resignation from the court theatre Thomas Oikonomou staged plays by modern European dramatists with various private troupes.

The terms "northern" literatures and *βορειομανία* are of course to some extent misleading, since the assimilation processes at the beginning of this century also included dramatists of the French and Italian traditions: the French-writing Belgian

²⁰ On different kinds of reception in Greek literature and theatre see Puchner 1988; Veloudis 1994: 283-6; Vitti 1995.

²¹ The role of theatre directors, producers and actors in the development of the repertoire and the translations of dramatology was mainly a conservative one (Puchner 1992: 181ff).

symbolists Verhaeren and Maeterlinck, and D'Annunzio. But as the term *ιψενογερμανισμός* suggests, in the initial phases at least, the "difficult", "gloomy" and "foreign" new trends were received as something "northern", non-Mediterranean, and identified with Scandinavia, Russia and Germany. The reception of the "far northerners" mainly took the following three forms: 1) performance and translation – it was very rare for a play to be translated without being performed (an example is Strindberg's *Η δεσποινίς Τζούλια* translated by Yiannis Kambysis in 1899), and slightly less rare for a play to be performed in the original (cf. the tours of Agnes Sorma, Adelaide Ristori, Eleonora Duse etc.); 2) articles and reports about theatrical developments in Europe in the daily press and periodicals; and 3) as a consequence of the first two, the direct or mediated influences on indigenous dramatic production. This third phase is more difficult to document, but the most interesting. Only rarely was the reception based on the reading of a work in the original (this only happened with German literature); usually French translations were used. Yiannis Kambysis and Konstantinos Chatzopoulos are an exception to this rule: their articles for the Greek press during their extended stays in Germany were a substantial contribution to the reception of "northern literatures" by the modern Greek theatre. Interestingly, Ibsen and Strindberg, as well as Tolstoi, first became known in Greece via the productions of their works on the stages of Germany.

The reception process which culminated in the last decade of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century was marked by a few significant performances in the Greek theatres: Ibsen's *Ghost* was staged in 1894, Tolstoi's *The power of darkness* in 1895, Sudermann's *Honour* in 1898, Bjørnsen's *Impoverishment* and Hauptmann's *Coachman Henschel* in 1902. If we consider the small number of these works in proportion to the rest of the repertoire, even of progressive theatres like the Vasilikon and the Nea Skini, it becomes clear that the ideological opposition of the demoticists was based, initially at least, on only a handful of performances. Another phenomenon should also be taken into account; not all the dramatic output of these countries is automatically considered to have a "northern" feel; there are some works, for example Gogol's *The Inspector* (staged in 1893) or

Chekov's *The Bear* (staged in 1902 by the Nea Skini), and also the Viennese boulevard and operetta, which escaped the stigma of the "far North" entirely. The "northern" works seem to have had to fulfil certain stylistic criteria, and to belong to the modernist currents of naturalism, symbolism, neo-romanticism etc., in order to be labelled "foreign", "difficult", "gloomy" and "subversive". There were very specific conditions of reception, then, which defined the "northernness" of the *βορειομανία*.

Let us now look more closely at the reception of individual dramatists who were seen to pose a threat to the "Greekness" of modern Greek theatre. We will limit ourselves to Ibsen, Strindberg, Tolstoi, Hauptmann und Sudermann.

Ibsen's works were staged in Greece in the following years: *Ghosts* in 1894; *Hedda Gabler* in 1899 with Eleonora Duse; *A doll's house* or *Nora* in 1899 by the Panellinios Dramatikos Thiasos; *The wild duck* in 1901 by the Nea Skini; *An enemy of the people* by the Nea Skini, *The pillars of society* by the Vasilikon, *Hedda Gabler* by the Nea Skini and *The lady of the sea* by the Thiasos Oikonomou, all in 1902; *Rosmersholm* in 1910 by the Thiasos Oikonomou; *Little Eyolf* in 1919 by the Thiasos Oikonomou; and in 1925 *Architect Solnes* by the Thiasos Oikonomou (this is not an exhaustive list). The greatest contribution to the reception of Ibsen in Greece was made by two men of the theatre who had close ties with Germany and with Vienna: Konstantinos Christomanos and Thomas Oikonomou (Puchner 1992: 251ff). Theoretical discussion of Ibsen was usually triggered by a particular performance (Papandreou 1983), but is not entirely restricted to reviews: in the work of Kostis Palamas, Ibsen is one of the most frequently mentioned modern foreign authors (Puchner 1995b, *passim*). Ibsen's influence does not end after the interwar period, but continues after the Second World War; even today it cannot be said with certainty that his reception in Greece has ended.²²

This is even more true of Strindberg, whose plays are now enjoying an unexpected revival in the Greek theatre. He was introduced into Greece by Yiannis Kambysis, who translated

²² Cf. the play *Στη χώρα Ίψεν* by Yakovos Kambanellis (*Θέατρο*, vol. 6, 91-140), based on *Ghosts*, or the translation of George Bernard Shaw's, *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891, 1913) published by Dodone in 1993.

Miss Julie together with its programmatic prologue which functioned as a manifesto of naturalism.²³ In his own short prologue Kambysis develops his idea of a *θέατρο συναναστροφής* ("the theatre as gathering"):

Θαν το ήθελα σε μια σάλα χωρίς σκηνές και σκηνικά, χωρίς ηθοποιούς, μόνον εκεί σε μια γωνία της σάλας, ένας, δύο, όσα είναι τα πρόσωπα, καθισμένοι σε καθίσματα να μιλούν το διάλογο. Το θέατρο θα το ήθελα συναναστροφή που τη δίνει ο ποιητής ή οι πνευματικοί συντρόφοι του ποιητή με προσκαλεσμένους που εκείνοι θέλουν.²⁴

I would like it to be in a room without any stage or scenery, without actors, just one or two people, as many as the play needs, sitting over in a corner of the room on chairs and speaking the dialogue. I would like the theatre to be a gathering organised by the author or by the author's intellectual friends, who would invite the people they wanted to be there.

What he proposes is not a dramatic performance at all, but a role-play in front of an invited audience. Kambysis and his enthusiastic "Γερμανικά Γράμματα" ("German letters") played a decisive part in the intensification of the phenomenon of *βορειομανία* (Fteris 1951; Grammatas 1984: 38ff). It is characteristic that the "naturalist" Strindberg received far greater attention than the "expressionist" Strindberg. *Miss Julie* was not staged until 1908 by the group of Kyveli. A long prologue was read by Grigorios Xenopoulos, as he had done in 1894 for Ibsen's *Ghosts*, in which he stresses that

η τραγωδία αυτή δεν είναι δια να παίζεται εις τα θέατρά μας. Είναι καμωμένη επίτηδες, ως πρότυπον δια το θέατρον του Μέλλοντος το οποίον ωνειρεύθη ο Στρίντμπεργκ κι επραγματοποίησεν εν μέρει εις το Παρίσι ο Αντουάν.

this tragedy is not meant to be played in our theatres. It is designed specifically as a model for the theatre of the Future that

²³ *Η Τέχνη* 10/11 (Aug.-Sept. 1899), 243-50, 251-70 (the text). Cf. Grammatas 1990.

²⁴ *Η Τέχνη* 10/11 (Aug.-Sept. 1899), 241ff, *Άπαντα*, ed. G. Valetas (Athens 1972), 629ff; cf. Gounelas 1977: 168.

Strindberg dreamed of and that Antoine has, to some extent, put into practice in Paris.

It does, however, have an attraction even when played in conventional theatres:

Αλλά και ούτω παιζομένη – όπως άλλως τε επιείχθη και παντού κατά τον παλαιόν τρόπον – πάλιν θα σας κάμη την βαθυτάτην εκείνην εντύπωσιν που κάμνουν τ' αριστουργήματα, δια τα οποία τα σκηνικά μέσα ίσως να περιττεύουν.²⁵

But even played like this – for it has after all been played in the old style everywhere – it will still impress you as deeply as other masterpieces, for which props and scenery are perhaps superfluous.

There has as yet been no comprehensive study of the reception of Strindberg's dramatic work. But the first work to be performed after *Ghosts* in 1894 and after the historic prologue by Xenopoulos with its famous formulation: "philologically we are a province of France", was Tolstoi's *The power of darkness*, which was played at the Menandros on 6 January 1895. The production used the translation by A. Konstantinidis²⁶ and was "concerned, above all, with the 'novelistic aspects' of the play" (Sideris 1990: 165). But the hour of naturalism had not yet come, and the play received little attention. Christomanos's production of the same play on 24 January 1902, in the Nea Skini, made a much greater impression. The director used one of his naturalist devices, namely to have real dung on the stage.²⁷ The performance, which lasted until two in the morning (because of the changes of scenery) was received enthusiastically by Xenopoulos, Tangopoulos and others (Mavrikou-Anagnostou 1964: 126ff). It was one of the works which earned the unrestrained admiration of Palamas (Puchner 1995b: 84, 151, 451, 462, 751, 754).

Of the German "northern" dramatists, the easier Sudermann ("naturalist of the salon") overshadowed the more extreme

²⁵ "Ο Αύγουστος Στρίντμπεργκ και η Δεσποινίς Τζούλια", *Παναθήναια* 17 (15-31 Dec. 1908), 140-6, pp. 144f.

²⁶ Konstantinidis is also the author of a comedy (Sideris 1990: 112) and another translation listed in Ladoyianni-Tzoufi 1982, nos. 186 and 330.

²⁷ Sideris 1990: 247. On the stylistic question see Puchner 1988: 396ff.

Hauptmann. The latter was first presented to the Greek public by Kambysis in the columns of *Τέχνη*: in his column "Γερμανικά Γράμματα" he commented on the production of *Coachman Henschel* in Germany (*Άπαντα*, 520ff), and in 1899 he published an extensive study of Hauptmann's entire dramatic work (*ibid.*, 445-51). In *Παναθήναια* he reviewed theatrical productions in Berlin: *Coachman Henschel* in 1901, *Poor Erich* in 1902/3, *Rose Bernd* in 1903, and so on (Veloudis 1983: 357 and 638). It was Thomas Oikonomou who introduced Hauptmann to the Greek stage, with the production of the naturalist play *Coachman Henschel* in the Vasilikon Theatron in 1902 and the symbolist play *The sunken bell* in the same theatre in 1906. The former enjoyed further productions on the Greek stage.²⁸ The unpublished translations of the plays are by Konstantinos Chatzopoulos. As we have already seen, Palamas defended *Coachman Henschel* against the attacks by Vernardakis. The young Spiros Melas in his 1909 play *Χαλασμένο σπίτι* reproduced the milieu of the coachmen and the morbid atmosphere which is so characteristic of naturalist depictions of bourgeois society (Kambanis 1934: 349; Kordatos 1962: II 521). Hauptmann's revolutionary play *The weavers*, which Kambysis presented in the pages of *Τέχνη* in 1899, was not staged until 1911 (Veloudis 1983: 366).

There was greater interest in the less difficult Sudermann, whose commercial success almost makes him ineligible for the label of a "northern" dramatist. His *Homeland* was translated as *Μάγδα* by M. Athinaios and published in 1899 (Veloudis 1983: 355). In the same year, *Honour* was staged in a translation by Babis Anninos, *Sodom*, in the theatre Tsocha, and *Homeland*, translated as *Η πατρική στέγη* by S. Markellou, was played in the same theatre. *Honour* and *Homeland* (*Μάγδα*) were also played on tour in 1901. The performance of *Happiness in the corner* (*Das Glück im Winkel*), translated by K. Chatzopoulos as *Κλεμμένη ευτυχία*, in the Vasilikon Theatron in 1903, was crowned with the success that could be expected of an easily digestible social problematic (Sideris 1990: 172ff, 253; Veloudis 1983: 351ff). In Constantinople, *Honour* was staged in 1898 and again in 1904,

²⁸ For example in Constantinople 1909. Cf. And 1977: 56.

1905 and 1907,²⁹ and *Μάγδα* was staged there in 1904 (Veloudis 1983: 353). Kambysis presents *Honour* in his column "Γερμανικά Γράμματα" for the first time in 1898/99, and a year after its production in Athens the parody *Η τιμή του Σούντερμαν* ("Sudermann's Honour") was published. This is enough evidence that Sudermann was the most popular German naturalist dramatist in Greece. This was not reflected, however, in the measure of his influence on the "angry youth" of 1900, on Kambysis, Horn, Melas etc. It seems that the criteria of reception were not dependent on actual performances of works. Hauptmann's *Hannele's ascension*, for example, was never staged but nevertheless clearly influenced Kambysis in his writing of *Το δαχτυλίδι της μάνας*, while specific influences of Sudermann were less common. This is connected with the fact that his most successful works are very similar to the well-written, socially critical dramas of a writer like Dumas fils which were very fashionable in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and that he did not therefore contribute anything substantially new to fin-de-siècle Athenian theatre.

To trace the paths of influence of these authors is not a straightforward task; it requires in-depth dramatological study and can only be touched upon briefly here. The findings of the research undertaken by Papandreou and Veloudis need to be examined carefully, for while it is true that the general intellectual atmosphere meant that the modern European dramatists of "the North" were a presence throughout the modern Greek "Theatre of Ideas", they were not necessarily assimilated in the same way or to the same degree by every author. The best example of very indirect and unspecific influence is Palamas's *Τρισεύγενη*: although Palamas clearly demonstrates an awareness of the Nietzschean doctrine of strength, the strong women of Ibsen's plays, the feminist movement and D'Annunzio's "poetics", none of these factors offers sufficient explanation of the enigmatic nymph-woman of his poem. The strong filter of his poetic personality and the synthetic processes of his creativity did not allow him to make direct borrowings, and this makes it difficult for us to identify

²⁹ And 1977: 51. The play was staged six times between 1898 and 1899 by three different ensembles. Cf. Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou 1990: 857.

demonstrable influences. While foreign influences *are* present in Palamas, his unsociable only daughter belongs first and foremost to the web of female figures in his own poetic work.³⁰

The most prominent figures in the play-writing of this period are, of course, Ibsen and Hauptmann. But we cannot assume that their prominence means they had the greatest actual effect on Greek drama, since the latter has not yet been studied systematically and in its entirety from the point of view of "influences". The task is somewhat facilitated by the fact that the influences seem to be mainly on the thematical level, at least as far as research has shown up to now. The themes in question are conventional marriage and the ideology of the bourgeois family, with key terms like honour, property, social obligation, name, reputation, etc.; the escape from the suffocating grip of a tired bourgeois world-view through feminism, free love, creative work, and social equality; the rejection of moral hypocrisy; the overcoming of capitalist ideology which is seen to regulate behaviour, values and individual "philosophies", and so on.

The revolution of the arts is followed in Europe by the collapse of the bourgeois regimes after the First World War. The peculiarity of the corresponding developments in Greece comes from the fact that, just when the numerically slender bourgeois class of the cities had succeeded in imposing its authority and creating a literature of its own, it was required by its Western models to question its fundamental values; to concern itself with and to reproduce problems which were still foreign to it, such as the contradictions between the theory of liberal individualism and its distorted realisation in practice, or the transformation of progressive bourgeois values into a façade for social and familial oppression. The Greek authors therefore saw themselves obliged to resort to a whole range of compromises and fusions with the indigenous thematic traditions and social realities. These relations point to the existence of a certain distance between the preoccupations of the intellectual playwrights and the social reality, revealing a degree of thematic conventionalism in the "Theatre of Ideas". It applied itself to the critique of an advanced bourgeois society which did not yet exist in that form

³⁰ Puchner 1995b. For a Nietzschean interpretation see Grammatas 1987.

in Greece. Perhaps this is why the realistic style is combined and enriched with various additional symbolisms or with psychological melodrama. The properly naturalist themes of extreme rural and urban poverty are rare; the "ethographic" approach is still predominant in this area.

The social criticism of people like Dumas fils was directed against a cosmopolitan culture which in the Athens of 1900 had not yet reached the same stage of development and decay. The closed, backward, petit-bourgeois world of Norway was closer to the Greek reality. Yet the reception of Ibsen in Greece occurred after French naturalism had already been assimilated, and did not leave immediately perceptible traces beyond the simple adoption of themes. Thus Xenopoulos's *Ψυχοπατέρας* of 1895 can be seen as much more Zolaesque than Ibsenesque, and the "Ibsenesque triangle" in *Ο τρίτος* cannot conceal the fact that the whole dramatic structure of the play is based on the French boulevard theatre. Of course, the play's central theme of conventional marriage indicates a connection with the Norwegian playwright. But we find nothing of the psychological quality of Ibsen's cryptic dialogues; such ambivalence will not be achieved in Greek drama until the young Kazantzakis's *Ξημερώνει* of 1906. But contemporary criticism tended to apply the label *ιψενο-γερμανισμός* everywhere, as a way of questioning the originality of new plays.³¹ It is interesting that Greek writers, deprived of a social reality against which to apply the kind of critique they found in foreign literature, were sometimes bolder than their models in their dramatic solutions: we can see this in the young Xenopoulos, in Avyeris, Melas, and Kazantzakis. Papandreou connects *Κωμωδία του θανάτου*, which thematises the conventions

³¹ *Ο τρίτος* was played by N. Lekatsas in the Dimotikon Theatron Athinon on 3 December 1895, for one evening only and without remarkable reactions. Only G.B. Tsokopoulos bemoans "με λύπη" the traces of "ιψενισμός", specifically *Ghosts* (*Τα Ολύμπια*, 5 and 9 Dec. 1895, 39ff). The play was staged by Christomanos's Nea Skini in 1903. *Ο Νουμάς* (1, no. 55, 10 Aug. 1903, p. 3) states: "Ουδεμία πρωτοτυπία, ούτε στην πλοκή, ούτε στην υπόθεση, ούτε στους χαρακτήρας, ούτε στις ιδέας" (Papandreou 1983: 105). This sort of limited critical ability made Palamas furious (Puchner 1995b: passim).

of mourning, with Ibsen's *Ghosts* (Papandreou 1983: 106).³² But there are not many concrete elements of similarity beyond that of theme. It is the sparse and austere dramatic economy of *Μυστικό της Κοντέσας Βαλέρινας* that relates it more generally to Ibsen's drama (ibid., 106ff). Palamas also noted this.³³ Critics have discerned modified Ibsenesque influences in *Φωτεινή Σάντρη* (1908), *Στέλλα Βιολάντη* (1909) and *Ψυχοσάββατο* (performed in 1911). After 1910, the inheritance of the French boulevard theatre displaced the "pull of the North" in Xenopoulos's drama, and he submitted to popular taste and to the attraction of box-office success.

Nevertheless, the case of Xenopoulos is indicative of the general phenomenon: the impression of dependence on the Norwegian playwright is widespread, but apart from a few thematic similarities, it is quite difficult to demonstrate any concrete borrowings. Completeness of dramatic form was familiar to Xenopoulos from the French tradition of committed drama; Ibsen's dramatic motifs are equally present in French socially critical drama and in naturalist prose. There was also the tendency of critics (whose unfounded pronouncements have unfortunately been repeated throughout the twentieth century) to put labels on indigenous playwrights and to represent all of their plays as imitations of one kind of foreign model or another; this kind of diagnosis also had the effect of crediting the critic with being in the know. The genuinely characteristic elements in Ibsen, the severe form of analytic drama, are rarely found in Xenopoulos, who usually merely reproduced the formulaic structures of light-hearted French drama; the psychological quality of Ibsen's dialogues, with their cryptic expression, the ambiguity of what is said and the unexpected developments and revelations, were beyond Xenopoulos's scope.

³² The lost play has recently been discovered among the manuscripts of the Lassanios drama competition in the National Library in Athens with the title *Ο Μακαρίτης Μάυσωλος*. The first part is published by Evangelia Petrakou, "Ένα (σχεδόν) ξεχασμένο θεατρικό έργο του Ξενοπούλου", *Παράβασις* 1 (1995) 193-226; the second and third parts will be published in the following issue.

³³ "Γρηγόριος Ξενοπούλος", *Παναθήναια* 13 (15.1.1907), 210; *Άπαντα* vol. 6, p. 467.

Ibsen belongs to the general intellectual atmosphere just as Hauptmann does. In the case of Kambysis one should also add Strindberg and D'Annunzio. Kambysis's close friend Dimitris Tangopoulos talks of the "tyrannical influence of Ibsen which is dimly visible in his early works".³⁴ But all we find is the naturalist element of clinical observation, heredity, the theme of science, and unhappy marriages. Only in *Φάρσα της ζωής* does one encounter direct reference to Ibsen, while in *Μις Άννα Κούξλεϋ* (1897) there is an accumulation of extensive stage directions and in *Κούρδοι* (1897) there are clear formulations of socialist ideas. There are specific references to *Nora* in *Λεκαπηνοί* (1900), and perhaps also to *Rosmersholm*. Kambysis greatly admired *Hedda Gabler*, and used its "child" motif (the manuscript) in his poem *Το πέρασμα της Μάρθας* (1897) (Papandreou 1983: 112, 167f), also used by Kazantzakis in *Φασγά*. The strong women of Ibsen's plays are encountered everywhere in Kambysis.

The influence of Hauptmann on Kambysis's writing has been asserted for the plays *Φάρσα της ζωής*, *Μις Άννα Κούξλεϋ*, *Κούρδοι* and *Το δαχτυλίδι της μάνας*, by Konstantinos Chatzopoulos, Dieterich, Sideris and Valsa.³⁵ The problem only becomes apparent, however, when Chatzopoulos cites *The sunken bell* and Sideris *Hannele's ascension*, as sources for *Το δαχτυλίδι της μάνας*. Yiorgos Veloudis recently added Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *The death of Titian* to that list, a play about which Kambysis wrote long before its première in 1901 (Veloudis 1983: 358f). Everything depends on the criteria by which the assimilation process is analysed, the definition of what kind of borrowing it is (whether subconscious, unconscious, conscious, the use of a work in a reference, a motto, etc.). It is also clear that compared to previous periods, e.g. Cretan theatre, this is a time of multiple influences, and also of conscious, oblique references for

³⁴ *Ο Νουμάς* 20/2 (771) (1923), 85 and 88.

³⁵ Petros Vasilikos (K. Chatzopoulos), "Γιάνης Α. Καμπύσης", *Ο Διόνυσος* 2 (1902) 65-73; K. Dieterich, *Geschichte der byzantinischen und neugriechischen Litteratur* (Leipzig 1902), pp. 208ff; M. Valsa, *Le théâtre grec moderne de 1453 à 1900* (Berlin 1960), p. 357 (and the Greek translation by Chara Bakonikola-Yeorgopoulou: M. Βάλσα, *Το νεοελληνικό θέατρο από το 1453 έως το 1900* (Athens 1994), pp. 463ff).

the benefit of the knowledgeable readers of Athenian literary circles. This situation requires its own methodological tools of analysis and synthesis. The fairy-tale drama about the death of the poet Krystallis is connected with *Hannele's ascension* and *The death of Titian* through the visions of dying, and with *The sunken bell* through the motif of climbing the bewitched mountain.

The complexity of the problems surrounding the question of "influences" is immediately apparent when one looks at the case of the young Kazantzakis: the thematisation of the artist and his work (as in *The sunken bell*), the artist who leaves his wife (with the ubiquitous name "Magda") and child to ascend the heights of creation as a demigod while his work sinks in the lake; all this is present in the work *Φασγά* written by Kazantzakis in 1907 while he was a law student in Athens. But this symbolist, expressionist, autobiographical play with the Biblical title also includes other works in its imagery and themes: it shares the themes of Palamas's *Δωδεκάλογος του γύφτου* (1907); it echoes the motifs of Nietzsche; it has a similar dramatic structure of "stations" as Strindberg's *To Damascus*; Eleni resembles Hedda Gabler (there is even the motif of a "child" – the manuscript of the drama "Ιουλιανός"; cf. Papandreou 1983: 125ff); the vision of educational reform draws a parallel with *An enemy of the people*, while a more specific reference to that work is the scene where stones are thrown at the window of Stockmann; there is the motif of the *Loreley* from Heine; the scene where the hero sees his theatre burning on the evening of the première of his new play is a reference to Wagner's Bayreuth and also draws its symbolism from the parallel scene in Ibsen's *Ghosts*, where the asylum is burning; and finally, the end of the play with the dance of fairies representing pangs of conscience again recalls Strindberg (Puchner 1993: 98-124).

Only a detailed analysis of each work can recreate the mosaic of borrowed themes and images, which is assembled and functions differently in each author. The young Kazantzakis reworked the experiences, images, emotions, ideas and motifs which he had assimilated both from books and from the performances he saw during his time in Athens. His play *Ξημερώνει* of 1906 has many links with the works of Ibsen

(possibly also with Hofmannsthal; Puchner 1993: 69-80): the doctor who is an idealogue and a visionary (such doctor figures are also encountered in Chekov, Schnitzler and Shaw), the theme of conventional marriage and the fear of social scandal (as in *Nora* and *Hedda Gabler*), the symbolism of the final scene with the death of the heroine and the sunrise, which is a replica of the final scene of *Ghosts*. Above all, the ambiguousness of the dialogue and the secretive depth to what is being said bears the mark of the Scandinavian playwright. However, in its themes and the issues it addresses, as well as in the symmetry of the love triangle, the play is based on Xenopoulos's *Ο τρίτος*, even though the young Cretan chooses a different outcome, is much more intelligent in his handling of the psychological aspects, and less theoretical as far as the ideological debates are concerned (it is only the doctor who holds forth on his ideas) (Puchner 1994a).

We should add that Kazantzakis's language, with its hidden and explicit eroticism, was pronounced by the critics evaluating the entries to the drama competitions of the time to be imitative of D'Annunzio ("δαννουντσιζει" is the verb used to stereotype such language). This was especially true of *Θυσία*. But this play, based on the Bridge of Arta story (it was written in 1908 and later called *Ο Πρωτομάστορας*),³⁶ also achieves an original synthesis of Nietzschean inspiration with the desperado hero, who is, typically, a gypsy (cf. *Δωδεκάλογος του γύφτου*). At the same time it borrows some motifs, and even some of the wording, from Palamas's *Τρισεύγενη* (1903), such as the singer and the scene of Smaragda's public revelation of her love affair (Puchner 1994a). The board of judges declared this to be a "symbolic play of the Maeterlinck school" (Katsimbali 1958: 1566). It would be more accurate, however, to ascribe influences of the Belgian symbolist to Kazantzakis's one-act play *Κωμωδία: Τραγωδία μονόπρακτη* of 1908, which reproduces many of the motifs of *The blind* and *The intruder* (Puchner 1993: 145ff), although critics have so far pointed only to similarities with

³⁶ The same ballad motif was dramatized by Ilias Voutieridis, *Το Γιοφύρι της Άρτας* (1905) and by Pantelis Horn, *Το Ανεχτίμητο* (1906). For a comparison see Puchner 1992: 318ff.

the much later plays *Huis clos* by Sartre and *Waiting for Godot* by Beckett.³⁷

Another example of how carefully one must tread on the slippery ground of "influence" is the case of the young Melas. Even though he himself denied any Nietzschean influence on his 1907 play *Γυιος του ίσκιου* (as well as any influence of D'Annunzio on his language; cf. Melas 1960: 32ff), and the characterisation of the work by some critics as a dramatisation of the superman-fisherman of the Aegean is a reductive misinterpretation (e.g. Liyizos 1980: 176ff; Thrylos 1966), there are nevertheless some didactic passages which clearly reproduce the clichés of the Greek version of Nietzsche's "superman". The fact that Melas did not read German is no obstacle to such an influence: he knew French, and in any case these themes were by 1907 common property among Greek intellectuals (Veloudis 1983: 362). But all this does not mean very much, because the "superman" motif is only one of many echoes and references which can be found in the play: there is the Greek folk wisdom of the life-giving force of the wind, Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* (especially the last scene), Ibsen's *The lady of the sea* with which there is even a similarity of names (Wangel-Vangos); certain motifs like the violin with which Vangos expresses his pain recall Palamas's *Τρισεύγενη* and *Δωδεκάλογος του γύφτου*, and the spiteful neighbour is called kyra-Kali, which is a reference to the traditional lament of the Panayia (as a bad neighbour also in *Τρισεύγενη*; cf. Puchner 1995b: 225f; Bouvier 1976). In *Κόκκινο πουκάμισο* (1908), Ibsenesque psychological states are interwoven with Nietzschean atheism and with the traditional personification of Fate and Fortune; added to this is a Shakespearean "fool" in the dockers' taverna, and a Charos figure, the captain of a fishing boat. In *Χαλασμένο σπίτι* (1909), Papandreou has seen the influence of Ibsen on the play's form (Papandreou 1983: 127), and Veloudis has pointed out the similarities with Hauptmann's *Coachman Henschel* and *Before sunset* (Veloudis 1983: 362), to which we must also add

³⁷ First remarked upon by Pantelis Prevelakis, *Καζαντζάκης. Ο ποιητής και το ποίημα της Οδύσσειας* (Athens 1958), p. 286, and then by Karl Kerényi, *Streifzüge eines Hellenisten* (Zurich 1960) (the passages about Kazantzakis also in Greek in *Νέα Εστία*, Christmas 1959, 33-59).

Friedensfest. Liyizos also sees Hauptmann's influence in *To άσπρο και το μαύρο* (1913) and *Μία νύχτα μία ζωή* (1924) (Liyizos 1980: 125, 150), without however specifying where exactly he locates the influence. Such late echoes of Hauptmann have also been claimed for Kazantzakis's *Οδυσσέας* of 1922, which is perhaps related to the former's *Odysseus's bow* (1914) (Papachatzaki-Katsaraki 1985: 56), and for Pantelis Horn's *Φιντανάκι* of 1921, which has parallels with some elements of *Rose Bernd* (1903) (Liyizos 1980: 128ff; Veloudis 1983: 363f and 640). But these issues need to be clarified in much greater detail.

Tangopoulos's works have also been said to contain specific references to Ibsen: in *Ζωντανοί και πεθαμένοι* (1905) there is the heroine's abandonment of her home (as in *Nora*), and the child motif (from *Hedda Gabler*); the beginning of *Αλυσίδες* (1907) vaguely resembles the beginning of the second act of *The wild duck*; the presence of the deceased in *Καινούργιο σπίτι* (1908) recalls *Rosmersholm*, and so on (Papandreou 1983: 114ff). But the similarities are mainly ideological ones; Tangopoulos's theoretical positions are developed on stage in lengthy discussions by the characters of his plays; this is a basic element of Ibsen's social dramas. Palamas, who distinguishes two tendencies in the "Theatre of Ideas", an ideological and a symbolist one, locates Tangopoulos in the former,³⁸ on the grounds that his characters are vehicles for ideals, stiff and one-dimensional, "πιο πολύ σπαρτιάτες παρά Αθηναίοι, πιο πολύ αλφιερικοί παρά ιψενικοί" (more like Spartans than like Athenians, more Alfieresque than Ibsenesque) (Papandreou 1983: 118). Markos Avyeris uses a few lines of Ibsen as the motto to his *Μπροστά στους ανθρώπους* (1904), but this rural drama of honour is much closer to the atmosphere of Tolstoi's *The power of darkness*, although there are some differences (Papandreou 1983: 120ff). Nirvanas's early play *Ο αρχιτέκτων Μάρθας* (1907) refers by its very title to *Architect Solnes*, and the protagonist's wife has some of the traits of

³⁸ "Σκέψεις αθεάτριστου", epilogue to the second volume of *Θέατρο* by Pavlos Nirvanas (Athens 1922).

Ibsen's Nora, even though the ideological message is no longer Ibsenesque.³⁹

These are the results of the research that has been carried out in this area so far, and they of course require further verification. This research should be extended to include a greater range of dramatic works (Delveroudi 1982) and to cover other aspects of the subject beyond the direct thematic and ideological links. It remains to be explored how these influences relate to the two major developments of modern Greek theatre after 1905: on the one hand, how aestheticism was taken over by the socially critical function of drama (taking its cue from the same authors, Ibsen, Strindberg, Hauptmann etc., who move on to a symbolist and expressionist phase), and on the other hand, how the organised socialist movement and the development of the labour question led to a much greater ideological charging of the plays than had been the case in the last two decades of the nineteenth century (Grammatas 1987: 116-29, 130-43).

The particular functioning of the term *βορειομανία* was, however, specific to the "Theatre of Ideas". The Viennese boulevard and operetta of the interwar period no longer functioned in this way, and with Pirandello, who was brought to Athens in 1925 by Melas's short-lived *Theatro Technis*, with Paul Claudel and García Lorca, Greece was visited by eminently Mediterranean authors. They were succeeded by the psychological and poetic realism of American authors like Eugene O'Neill, which became part of a new context where the distinction between "north" and "south" no longer held much meaning. The next northern dramatist who was to have a catalytic effect in Greece, Bertold Brecht,⁴⁰ no longer had the characteristics of a "national" author or of a specific geographical location; his political theory, adapted for the stage, is based on conditions in all the corners of the world. The "dark forests" of his birthplace no longer give off the mists of Hauptmann's Silesian landscapes

³⁹ The observation was made by Konstantinos Chatzopoulos: see Petros Vasilikos, "Για ένα κοινό και για ένα δράμα", *Ο Νουμάς* 6 (278) (13.1.1907), 7 (also in Papandreou 1983:123).

⁴⁰ First mentioned in the *Ιστορία της γερμανικής λογοτεχνίας* by Thomas Walter (Athens 1931), p. 256. Cf. L. Mygdalis, *Ελληνική βιβλιογραφία Μπέρτολτ Μπρεχτ* (Thessaloniki 1977), p. 44.

or Ibsen's fjords. With the generation of the thirties, Greek cultural identity discovered indigenous foundations (Makriyannis, Theofilos, Karagiozis, *rebetika*), and the political polarisation drew exclusively on the ideological aspects of Brecht; his aesthetic theories had little practical consequence for the drama of the post-war period. The new internationalism in literary exchange (with the performance of theatrical works from South America, Africa, etc.) neutralised the concept of "northern literature" by making "the North" refer now to the whole of the northern hemisphere.

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