

Στέση ΑΘΗΝΗ, *Οψεις της νεοελληνικής αφηγηματικής πεζογραφίας 1700–1830*, *Ινστιτούτο Νεοελληνικών Ερευνών, Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών, Βιβλιοθήκη της Ιστορίας των ιδεών* [Stesi Athini, *Aspects of the modern Greek narrative prose*], Institute for Modern Greek Research, The Greek National Foundation for Research, Library for the History of Ideas, Athens, 2010, 573 p.

The present book comes freighted with high expectations and it is pretty much as advertised. In the last decade of the 20th century thanks to professor G. Kehaioglou of the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki and his team a great many new entries were added to the already known pieces of prose written in Greek in the long 18th cent.

Translations into Greek as such were catalogued and well-known long before and mainly studied for their ideological contents and purposes. It was high time someone realized their more insightful texture and put them all together with the half-translations and with the creative writings of the same period roughly speaking uniting the creative narrative discourse of pre-Enlightenment, Enlightenment and Romanticism. It is exactly what Stesi Athini did in this impressive monograph which had it not been for her initiative, should have been commissioned. The study obviates firm answers as to the origins and beginnings of modern Greek prose-writing and in tune with Itamar Even-Zohar's, *Polysystem Theory*, considers the literary phenomenon as a comprehensive whole of mutually determining systems, whence the storytelling discourse is a whole without segregations and exceptions.

The main thesis of the book under review is the dialogue between what the author calls the Greek literary system with the local and foreign traditions which enables the author to compare either the mobility or the stagnation of the modern Greek literature, its continuity or conflict with tradition, its torpor or its synchronism with the Western European or neighbouring cultures prose systems.

The book has three parts out of which the first one is the bulkiest (233 p.). It has eight chapters based on a mixture of intra-textual (ideological, structural, formal and thematic characteristics) and meta-textual criteria (subtitles, prefacing notes, ads and book reviews, letter-writing etc.). In each chapter the items are presented chronologically, technically bringing together newer and older items, popular and learned, original prose and products of diagglossic transfer (adaptations and translations). The thing eases the identification within the texts of genealogies and relationships as well as of mutual experiences and expectations among the readers and writers. The second part (made up of six chapters) of the book is dedicated to the opinions and theories for the creative prose and to a revision of the terms which eased its ever larger presence. The object of the first chapter are the wrong opinions on prose-writing sourced in the circle of the first Mavrocordato princes or in Caesarios Dapontes. The second chapter concentrates on Demeter Katartsis' opinions on education sourced mainly in the French Encyclopaedia. The third one is dedicated to Adamantios Korais who introduced the word 'μυθιστορία' (a term for the novel) and formulated a concentrated text on the origins and theory of prose. Another chapter examines the presence of creative prose in the handbooks of poetics and rhetoric. While these four chapters focus on the dialogue with the foreign, mainly Western literatures, and the Greek tradition of poetics and rhetoric, the following ones consider the prose readership. The third part of the book under review is dedicated to the practice of translation seen as the main form of the modern Greek dialogue with the other narrative traditions. The five chapters are dedicated to the specific problems of translation, its incentives, the questions of truthfulness or unfaithfulness.

At the same time a work of interpretation and a working instrument *Aspects...* is provided with useful appendices. The first one, the alphabetical list of the pieces of prose-writing starting from the name of the authors, translators (in case the author was unknown) or the title, has three units namely: The originals (Modern Greek works and free adaptations), translations and ancient Greek and Byzantine works. Each alphabetical entry comprises the editions, the manuscripts as well as the incorrect editions of a certain author. The second annex is a chronological picture of the printed

editions of the period. This kind of exposure aims to provide an image of the coexistence, survival and even conflicts arising among the different traditions of the time.

A juxtaposition with a similar corpus in Romanian and a selection from Mrs Athinis' stuff in the sense that some of the translations and adaptations were performed on Romanian ground (where they are sure to have left sound traces) would reveal extremely interesting things, let's hope such a research is going to be performed before long.

Lia Brad Chisacof

СИМЕОН РАДЕВ, *Лица и събития от моето време*, Т.1, София, Издателство „Захари Стоянов”, 2014, 538 p.

For many years, the unpublished manuscripts of Simeon Radev (1879–1967) have given birth to various legends within the Bulgarian academic community. Publicist, revolutionary and diplomat, Radev witnessed and was involved in some major events that occurred in the modern history of Bulgaria, but also in South-Eastern Europe. Born in Ottoman Macedonia, Gotse Delchev recommended him as a presumptive member of the highly influent Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (VMORO) when he was only 16 of age. He also established close ties with Boris Sarafov, president of the equally influent Supreme Macedonian-Adrianopole Committee (VMOK). While a student in Geneva and Paris, Delchev and Sarafov financed the editing of two propaganda publications whereby Radev supported the cause of the Christians inhabiting the European territories of the Ottoman Empire. In Geneva he also came into contact with the Bulgarian anarchists involved in the Salonika attacks that happened in April 1903. He was a supporter of Ottoman Macedonia's autonomy, a solution he found “more achievable and more moral” (342–343), given the historical conditions at the dawn of the last century. Once settled in Sofia, Simeon Radev became a famed journalist who collaborated both with the organ of VMOK and the French daily “Le Temps”. He also won reputation by publishing the first two volumes of “Строителите на съвременна България” (*The Builders of Nowadays Bulgaria*), one of the fundamental works of modern Bulgarian historiography. He was a volunteer in the Balkan Wars. In the summer of 1913 he was appointed member of the Bulgarian delegation who signed the Bucharest Peace Treaty. As plenipotentiary minister of Bulgaria, he stopped in the capital of the Romanian Kingdom until August 1916. Being close to some Conservative leaders, Radev was regarded with suspicion by the Liberals, because of his revolutionary past and the country he represented. The only exception was the widow of the former Liberal premier Dimitrie A. Sturdza, Zoe Cantacuzino who “taught me a lot about Romania, politics and people” (489). Radev's diplomatic career spread along three decades. Meanwhile, he was chief of the diplomatic missions to Berne (1916–1917), Hague (1920–1921), Ankara (1923–1925), Washington (1925–1933), London (1935–1938) and Brussels (1938–1940). Simeon Radev was appointed in the delegation who signed the Armistice of Salonika (September 1918) when Bulgaria was defeated in the First World War. However, Radev refused to belong to the delegation who signed the Treaty of Neuilly, as “I remembered how dismaying it was for a defeated people to face the cruel conquerors” (p. 328).

Under the communist regime, Simeon Radev was dismissed from the Bulgarian diplomatic corps and condemned to a dire existence. His chance was a project initiated by Todor Pavlov, the president of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. It offered to former statesmen and diplomats who survived the communist camps the possibility to write their memoirs. With the help of his only son, Traian, Simeon Radev wrote a few thousand pages he did not live to see published. The first volume came out months after his death. It was only after 1989 that five others were published, each of them being a real editorial event. After Traian Radev died in 2010, an impressive amount of manuscripts and correspondence (over 50 boxes) came into possession of the National Archives of Sofia. The Simeon Radev fund has not yet been completely inventoried and classified.

Almost 4,000 pages from this archive fund are expected to be published in an impressive collection entitled “*Лица и събития от моето време*” (*Persons and Events of My Time*). The first