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Διδακτορική διατριβή

GREEK-CYPRIOT HISTORICAL PLAYS AND CONTEMPORARY IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Ελλάδα Ευαγγέλου

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Greek-Cypriot Historical Plays and Contemporary Culture and Identity

Παρουσιάστηκε από

Ελλάδα Ευαγγέλου

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Πνευματικά δικαιώματα

Η έγκριση της διδακτορικής διατριβής από το Τμήμα Πολυμέσων και Γραφικών Τεχνών του Τεχνολογικού Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου δεν υποδηλώνει απαραιτήτως και αποδοχή των απόψεων του συγγραφέα εκ μέρους του Τμήματος.

Θα ήθελα να ευχαριστήσω ιδιαίτερα τους Κυριάκο Παχουλίδη, Karen Emmerick, Άντρεα Πετράνυι, Τίνα Χριστοδούλου, Γιάννη Παπαδάκη, Μάριο Επαμεινώνδα, Κωνσταντίνα Ζάνου, Αντώνη Χατζήκυριακο, Δέσπω Πασιά, Νικολέττα Δημητρίου, Μάμα Πίπη, Leslie Frost, Νικόλα Παπαχρυσοστόμου, Κώστα Κωνσταντινίδη, Νάτια Καραγιάννη, Μιχάλη Ολύμπιο, Γιώργο Γεωργίου, Άγγελο Παπαδόπουλο, Μιράντα Χρίστου, Σταυρούλα Τσιπλάκου, Δάφνη Λάππα, Γιώργη Ρεγγίνο, Μαρία Κάσινου, Γιώργο Φλώρο, Μαρία Πετρίδου, Λοΐζο Λουκαΐδη και (φυσικά) τον Αντώνη Αντωνίου για την αγάπη, φιλία και συμπαράστασή τους. Στις βιβλιοθηκονόμους των βιβλιοθηκών του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου, Κυπριακής Βιβλιοθήκης, Σεβερείου, Φανερωμένης, Λεμεσού και New York Public για την πολύτιμή τους βοήθεια. Στον Αντώνη Δανό, το Σάββα Πατσαλίδη και το Τμήμα Πολυμέσων και Γραφικών Τεχνών του ΤΕΠΑΚ που πίστεψαν στην έρευνά μου και με στήριξαν ουσιαστικά, καθώς και την Κική Γουναρίδου. Στο Γιάννη Κατσούρη, πατέρα της Κυπριακής θεατρολογίας. Στους γονείς και την οικογένειά μου, με ιδιαίτερη μνεία στη γιαγιά μου Ελλάδα και θεία μου Ελένη που δεν είναι πια εδώ, αποτελούν λόγο που είμαι όμως εγώ.

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ABSTRACT

A multi-disciplinary critical analysis of Greek-Cypriot historical plays, of the 1878-2004 period, as indicators of collective identity trends in Cyprus, at the time of their production. Through Political Theory, History/Historiography and Theatre Studies, the study explores identity in modernity at a time when the formation of a national identity was the major socio-political development. It also takes into account the dramatic production of communities in continental Europe, Greece, Malta and Crete, as well as the corresponding literary and aesthetic movements. Furthermore, through the structuralist textual analysis of Roland Barthes, the figure of the hero/heroine is central in the examination of the texts. Drawing, also, on intertextuality and its mechanisms, it is revealed that the plays' protagonists, with their actions and inter-connections, are indications of the identity the author is associating with the community. The focus is on plays whose themes emerge from three distinct historical periods and deal with specific historical personae: Antiquity – the Axiothea/Nikokles plays; Byzantium – the Justinian/Theodora/Belisarius plays; and French Medieval Colonization – the Peter I Lusignan plays. A comparative analysis of the plays, within and between each thematic category, exposes two ideological frameworks: on the one hand, the over-arching presence of Helleno-centric nationalism on the island and the construction of an "imagined community"; and on the other, the importance of the colonial legacy in Greek-Cypriot ideological discourses, in parallel to other communities around the Mediterranean.

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

In order to simplify the translation of names from theatre plays in Greek into English, I have chosen to use the Latin name for dramatic characters where one is used consistently (e.g. Belisarius), or a phonetic transcription where it does not exist or there appear to be various versions of it in English (e.g. Nikoklis). For the titles of the plays and other literary works, I provide a phonetic transcription of the plays, with the original language title and translation of the title in English in [brackets]. Moreover, for reference purposes I have used the notation for acts and scenes as those are used in the plays, regardless if they are mostly inconsistent with the norm. Also, I have used "*italics"* to indicate when stage directions were quoted, in relation with "lines spoken". Finally, note that I have used American English.

INTRODUCTION

Memory, as well as fruit,
is being saved from the corruption of the clocks.
From *Midnight's Children*, by Salman Rushdie (37)

To write the story of the nation demands that we articulate
that archaic ambivalence that informs modernity
From *Nation and Narration*, by Homi Bhabha (294)

Foreword

In 2007, as an independent theatre artist, I was faced with a public outcry against one of my plays: a piece I had worked on as text dramaturge and director for the Rooftop Theatre Group. The play, "Performing the Experience", was what we call "bicommunal" in Cyprus; it reflected the experiences of both Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots, and was produced by individuals from both communities. The play was presented to general audiences, public and private schools, as well as to the Greek-Cypriot community school in Rizokarpaso (Gr.) /Dipkarpaz (Tr.) village, in the Turkish-occupied north of the island. After the presentation at the school, a defamation campaign started by groups and individuals in the Greek-Cypriot community in the Republic of Cyprus who had considered the play "unpatriotic". A blunt distortion of its content became part of an issue, which was discussed in newspapers, and on the evening news, generating threats to Rooftop members by extreme right wing organizations, and even raising it as a topic for discussion in the parliamentary Committee for Education.

When the play text was uploaded to the Rooftop Theatre Group website, and the media and politicians realized that it was actually far from threatening to the patriotic principles of public education, the fuss quieted down and the matter was soon forgotten. The play was actually about tolerance and overcoming the crippling fear of the 'Other'. And as this unpleasant experience around the play's performance had triggered different discussions, it occurred to me that there was a large and vacant space which had not yet provoked contestation in how to talk about and/or perform national trauma. That was when I started thinking about pursuing doctoral work. I was eager to find answers to the questions, which sprang from this episode: Why? Why the fuss? Why did so many people feel the need to make statements of hatred? Why had Cypriot society, in the forty-seven years since its

independence, created an environment within which a cultural product that stirs conversation in relation to identity and 'Otherness' was seen as threatening? What are the tools with which we evaluate cultural products in our society of educated and cultured individuals, theatregoers and art-lovers? Why do we differ to such a great degree from other similarly complex communities with challenging pasts and even more challenging futures?

Thus, the seed for my doctoral work was planted. Initial research was conducted and visits were made to similar socio-political environments, such as Israel, Malta and Quebec, countries and regions which shared elements and trends of their history with Cyprus. Moreover, the way they dealt with their past had informed the way they spoke in the present. This was connected to their cultural production, and more specifically to their dramatic texts. This first comparative approach led me to realize that Cyprus is actually not a notable exception in regards to the connection of cultural production and identity, but it, in fact, presents many similar features that have produced dialogue in various societies since the Enlightenment.

A search into the existing body of dramatic works in the Greek-Cypriot community in Cyprus was the next step. It has produced a great amount of dramatic literature since the 1860s, with a more systematic production after the change of administration from the Ottomans to the British in 1878. Hundreds of plays were written by Greek-Cypriots, of which about 140 are historical plays. Like the proliferation of plays in the Western world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Greek-Cypriot community in Cyprus produced a large number of plays dealing with historical themes, but, (in a phenomenon this study will address in due course) with a notable delay.

In this respect, lays a paradox: the development presented in the writing of the historical plays, in terms of theme, stylistics and character presentation has remained, for the most part, unaltered during this time. This is a departure from the development of historical plays in other areas of the world, at least those located, selected and studied in the context of the present study. This discrepancy from the 'norm' raises a new set of questions, which constitutes another aspect of this thesis: namely to examine the conditions and implications of both the changes in the dramaturgy of Greek-Cypriot historical plays, as well as those aspects which have remained unaltered. Central to the present research are the socio-political conditions on the island, which changed the course of development for our cultural production.

0.1 Theoretical Framework

This research study is part of a broader scholarly study that connects various aspects of cultural production and representation (spanning from education to psychology, to artistic production) to socio-political identity. The discussion happening globally since the 1970s resulted in the birth of a new discipline, Cultural Studies.[1] Its aim was to understand the world through its cultural manifestations. Among others, a number of theatre scholars have embraced the approach, and incorporated the study of dramatic texts and performances within the broader discussion of cultural production. They have opened up the scope of their analysis to explore the reality of a text beyond its relationship to the author,[2] approaching their work through issues related to the environment, gender, social space, politics, and economics.

This examination involves the study of historical plays as a process through which playwrights actively engage in rewriting history. This is a practice to which theatre scholars have even attributed ghostly dimensions (Rokem, "Narratives of Armed Conflict and Terrorism in the Theatre" 6). Therefore, the present analysis has an interdisciplinary character, engaging analytical tools from the study of theatre, history/historiography, and political theory. The need for this approach emerged with the realization that historical plays are directly linked to history and historical perceptions, and, therefore, issues of identity – a relation to be discussed at length throughout the study. The term, 'historical play', 'historical drama' or 'history play'[3], is, itself, defined as drama that derives its plotline and characters from historical events. It developed from the 'chronicle play' or 'chronicle history', which was "a play with a theme from history, consisting usually of loosely connected episodes chronologically arranged. Chronicle plays often point to the past as a lesson for the present" (Encyclopedia of Literature, 1995). In the western world, one notices a connection between

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[1] The first department of Cultural Studies was established in Birmingham, UK in 1964. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) was established by Richard Hoggart at the University of Birmingham.

[2] This new relationship is best described by Roland Barthes and his provocative statement about "The Death of the Author", first published as an article in 1967 in the American journal *Aspen* and then published in *Image-Music-Text* in 1977, advocating for a break in the traditional relationship between an author and his/her text after it has been written, freeing the text for other interpretations.

[3] Leonidas Galazis (2012) distinguishes between a historical tragedy and a historical drama, with the former relating more to the feats of an individual, and the latter concerning mostly the collective expressions of heroism, such as those of an entire people (65). In the context of the present study, this distinction will not be employed as it is assessed as limiting and exclusionist: the historical plays investigated are too many and too varied in form, content, and in the nature of the protagonist. Such a distinction would be ineffective.

the term and history plays written in the Elizabethan era, when the genre was quite popular.[4] Theatre historian, Martha Fletcher Bellinger (1927), mentions that "for the first time the English history play was pulled up into the tenseness of true drama" with Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*, thus establishing the equal weight of history and theatre in the dramatic type.

The relationship between theatre and historical events in the context of historical plays is a practice that dates back several hundred years in the western world and around 150 years in Cyprus, yet scholarship around modern Greek-Cypriot playwrights is, nonetheless, limited to several important studies covering modern theatre history in the Greek-Cypriot community. In addition, commissioned analyses by amateur researchers, as well as scholars, have been published, focusing thematically on various periods of the island's history. The latter group of studies mentioned carry a strong scent of ideology from various nationalist and left-wing agendas.

0.2 Statement of the Problem or 'Gap' in the Research

A preliminary overview of the existing investigation into the connection between historical plays and identity around the world produces interesting and diverse results.[5] These are based mainly on the assumption that cultural production, as other manifestations of identity in societies, is a multi-layered and inter-connected structure, influenced by factors relating to space (from within and without the communities) and time (spanning through periods and eras).

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge that my bibliographical inspiration for setting this research in motion was "Staging Nationalism: Essays on Theatre and National Identity"

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[4] In "The Cambridge Guide to Theatre" (1992), we find that the definition of 'history plays' is connected to Shakespeare, since (according to the authors) this 'invented term' is used in order for critics to distinguish between works with subjects drawn from English history, and other histories (e.g. Roman) or myth (448).

[5] The approach to contemporary cultural theory will be explored at length in Chapter One. However, just for a general understanding, Stephen Greenblatt (2009) connects modern societies with the various forces and mechanisms which come into play in the following manner: "We need to understand colonization, exile, emigration, wandering, contamination, and unintended consequences, along with the fierce compulsions of greed, longing, and restlessness, for it is these disruptive forces, that principally shape the history and diffusion of identity and language, and not a rooted sense of cultural legitimacy. At the same time, we need to account for the resistance, over very long time periods and in the face of radical disruption, of cultural identities of which substantial numbers of people are willing to make extreme sacrifices, including life itself." (Greenblatt 2)

(2005) edited by Kiki Gounaridou. The essays collected therein offered a well-rounded and thought-provoking stepping stone, both in terms of their span in time and place, as well as their theoretical scope. The volume starts with the eighteenth-century German preoccupation with Romanticism and ends with the Mexicans performing episodes of their 'perceived' historical past, staged in archeological spaces.

Fredrik Jameson's seminal article, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" (1986) places cultural production in an ideological framework and distinguishes literary production in the third world from that of the first world.[6] Trends emerge in, what has been termed as, the western world, in post-colonial communities and the third world (Africa and Asia). The author makes a general argument for the existence of 'national allegories' and suggests that the ratio between political and personal is different in the third world than elsewhere. Whereas in the western world the split between the public and the private is substantial, in the third world it is distinguished by "libidinal investment, [which] is to be read in primarily political and social terms" (72), a result of what Antonio Gramsci calls 'subalternity'.[7] Therefore the 'national allegory' informing the literature of third-world countries has been well-versed in the viewpoint of their national identity as influenced by their colonial past.

Using the same theoretical framework as Jameson, Juan Villegas (1989) in his exploration of Latin American theatre, proposes a historicizing[8] of theatre in order for a better understand of cultural production to emerge. Villegas proposes that the specificities of Latin America should be allowed to surface in the context of the research, instead of being suppressed by the dominant western culture. In his exploration of plays from Mexico and Puerto Rico, he stresses the importance of taking for granted the significance of inter-textuality[9] between the social and the literary text.

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[6] In the article, Jameson clarifies that his use of the term "third world" is a choice of necessity (for lack of a better term) and that he is aware of the ideological implications behind that choice.

[7] Jameson (1986) defines the term as "the feelings of mental inferiority and habits of subservience and obedience which necessarily and structurally develop in situations of domination – most dramatically in the experience of colonized peoples" (76).

[8] Villegas (1989) mentions that "the term 'historicizing' theatrical discourse refers to the interpretation of texts as produced and performed within a specific social and political context" (506). Historicizing is a practice to be explored further on in this study.

[9] Intertextuality is a term coined by Julia Kristeva that went on to acquire wide meanings and connotations. In its broader sense, intertextuality "insists that a text […] cannot exist as a hermeneutic or self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system." (Worton & Still 1). They go on to attribute this to two main

India, Nepal, Trinidad and Brazil also present interesting examples of national allegories in their own productions. In their article, '"Theatre of Roots": Encounter with Tradition' (1989), Suresh Awasthi and Richard Schechner introduce the term 'theatre of roots' to describe a specific group of theatre productions in India at the second half of the twentieth century. The plays were the "result of modern theatre's encounter with tradition" (48), involving linguistic and structural elements from traditional Indian drama and western dramatic practices. Various practices created new forms, which claimed to preserve a sense of history (55) through the use of such texts as Sanskrit classics and languages from different parts of the vast Indian subcontinent.

Historical theatre in pre- and post independence India has become a subject of investigation for scholars, among them, Nandi Bhatia (1999), who writes on a 1973 play entitled, *The Great Rebellion 1857 (Mahavidroh)* by Utpal Dutt. The play comes from a long line of historical plays originating in India during the 1880s and depicting glorious moments of that country's history. The essence of an Indian nationalist feeling presented in these plays shifted after independence in 1947, from its connection to anti-colonial solidarity to a focus on the challenge of creating an Indian unity. This changing trend is reflected strongly in the play examined by Bhatia, where the historical situation in 1857 presents parallels between the anti-colonial struggle at the time the play was written and the Naxalite movement (a class-centered struggle for social equality among Indians) of that period. Bhatia comments on the promotion of the idea of self-analysis in the play, rather than simplistic binaries (177), and on the existence of female characters outside the private sphere. Both elements reflect twentieth-century trends in terms of character analysis focusing on psychological profiles and gender sensitivities.

Aparna Dharwadker (1995) examines a specific Indian historical play entitled *Tughlaq*, written by Girish Karnad in 1964. It deals with the life of a fourteenth-century Islamic sultan from Delhi and is based on a chronicle of the time. Dharwadker argues that the colonial and post-colonial contexts legitimize the coexistence and collision between historical and fictional narratives in a story, as happens with the specific play. There are many elements that lead to this conclusion, most important of which is the unlocking of the narrative through

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reasons: firstly, the author, being a reader him/herself, brings influences from those readings into the writing; and, secondly, the reader brings into the reading his/her own literary, social and other extensions.

the Muslim and Hindu political leaders of the time, by the evocation of various political leaders in the play (such as Ghandi, Nehru etc).

Carol Davis (2003) in her article entitled "*Dreams of Peach Blossoms*: *Cultural Memory in a Nepali Play*" talks about the three layers of history in the play. The play *Dreams of Peach Blossoms* (staged in Kathmandu in 2001) takes place in the Nepali city of Bhaktapur, in an undetermined historical time, but where three different historical times are intertwined into one single narrative. According to the researcher, the play deals with the "cultural memory and conscience of a community" (180). The assumption Lewis makes is that the way the three layers of history are dealt with in the play, suggests to the audience the possibilities of their future.

In the next two examples, the post-colonial character of societies is evidently a predominant characteristic. Documenting the theatrical manifestations of identity in post-colonial societies, Trinidad presents an interesting annual performance/ritual, presented by the Hindus (of Indian origin) of Trinidad entitled "Ramleela". Milla Cozard Riggio (2010) comments on the annual practice and presents its new character as a telling of the history of Indian Trinidadians in a performance that incorporates mythical, metaphysical and historical elements. This, according to the author, gives an intense sensation that this population group is living in between different realities (spaces and times). For the second example (although the article's focus is not historical plays, but, in general, theatre and identity in Brazil), Fernando Peixoto, Susana Epstein and Richard Schechner (1990) give us a rare glimpse into the Latin American country and its challenging political and cultural circumstances. According to the authors, "the Brazilian theatre grew out of a dialectic between its own values and those brought in by colonizers and invaders" (60). They walk the reader through the European-dominated nineteenth century, with the eruption of Romanticism and the slow insurgence of realism. In spite of the slow progress towards political independence in the nineteenth century and national emancipation in the twentieth century, the authors support the belief that theatre practices are a combination of both the western and the local.

The western world, and more specifically Europe, and the United States, present a kind of production with a smaller (but still discernable) split between the public and the private, with regards to the emergence of identity. An interesting example is the United Kingdom, an island nation off the coast of Europe struggling with self-definition for centuries. It has certainly not followed the classic example of central European societies. The two examples

presented below establish an ambivalence about identity as an issue active in the British psyche for centuries.

Documenting the evolution of British drama pre- and post-French Revolution, Jeffrey N. Cox (1991) supports that the drama produced after 1790 in England actually constituted an effort to "rewrite the pro-revolutionary drama" (582) produced before 1792. The author writes that the new anti-revolutionary drama did not adhere to the romantic ideals, but rather was "part of a broader reactionary literature and culture" (579) which was relevant to the literature and socio-politics of 1790s England. Therefore, Cox supports that the new drama, whose themes were related to the French Revolution, actually reflected the inner workings of the British themselves, as well as their viewpoint on Napoleon and his policies, rather than the actual events of the revolution.

Janelle Reinelt explores British identity in relation to another (primarily) continental affair, the European Union. Reinelt explores the idea of Europe and the new identity various national groups were adopting, through the analysis of three productions, out of which the play *Mnemonic* (1999, Théâtre de Complicité) is of most interest to the present argument. *Mnemonic* explores the discovery of Iceman in the Austrian Alps in 1991 and through the use of this (perceived) ancient European, Reinelt claims that the play explores the identity of the (perceived) modern Europeans.

Spain's investigation of identity through theatre was multifaceted in the twentieth century. The socio-political changes in the country generated many historical plays, examined by scholars with great interest. During the Franco era, some historical plays were used as allegories for the Spanish administration of the time. Eric Pennington (2007) writes about the play *El sueño de la razón* (1970) by Antonio Buero Vallejo claiming that "Buero's review of the historical context contains an additional comment on the traditional functions of regal power" (650). His critical reference is Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and the European penal history, thus establishing a continuum in the use of violence and force in western societies, extending through the historical time of Goya and King Fernando VII (his torturer) to Franco, and his era of torture and violence. Pennington analyzes the various ways Buero Vallejo creates a parallel between the two eras through the dramaturgy, and his allusions to practices of the historical time of the play or the contemporary time of Franco.

Examining three plays from the post-Franco era in Spain, Martha T. Hasley argues that playwrights of the time had a preference for historical themes from the nineteenth century. The reason, she claims, is that they perceive the challenges of modern Spain as

emerging from that time, rather than as a continuation of the glorious Spanish empire. The three plays represent history in various forms, namely tragedy, festival and popular chronicle, in order to extract information. An aspect that joins the three plays is the critical character of the present condition, but also a feeling of hope, which is the outcome of each play.

Former Yugoslavia is also another area of interest, and scholars such as Naum Panovski and Jarka M. Burian offer diverse perspectives. Panovski (1996) in his article entitled, "Prelude to a War" explores how theatre contributed to the exploration of the period of Yugoslavian unity (1945-1991), as well as to the post-Tito era of nation building of the emerging states. Panovski makes an argument for the use of theatre (dramaturgy, but also various institutions) as a tool in the construction of nationalism in the emerging states, stemming from their Balkanization (deconstruction and disintegration of a unified state/region). Jarka M. Burian (1989) writes about Czech theatre from the mid-1980s, in his article, "Czech Theatre, 1988: Neo-Glasnost and Perestroika", and claims that the simple most consistent element of the dramaturgy produced was the "underlying need to explore the peculiar realities of Czech character and Czech history" (394). With the change in the political and cultural climate, the historical plays of the time dramatize, according to Burian, "personalities and points of view" rather than historical events and personae.

The United States is also a space for investigation,[10] albeit limited by its short history of theatre and the unorthodox way it has developed, which also reflects on the small number of historical plays written, in relation to the European space. Ronald Ayling and Charles Davidson (1990) write on the life and work of American playwright, Barrie Stavis, in their article. "Barrie Stavis: Making History, Staging History". Stavis, a contemporary of Miller and Clifford Odets, lived and worked in the United States and wrote a number of historical plays dealing with narratives from the past of other western societies through his own contemporary viewpoint. His plays seek to establish history as a "felt presence" (231) within contemporary reality and empower the common person through the on-stage creation of a twentieth-century romantic hero with leftist sensibilities.

Loren Kruger (1992), in her book, "The National Stage: Theatre and Cultural Legitimation in England, France and America", examines another interesting aspect in the relationship between drama and identity, which is how "theatrical nationhood manifests itself

[10] For further reading on the changing identity of American theatre, please refer to "Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theatre" (2001) edited by Jeffrey Mason and J. Ellen Gainor, and, "Theatre, Society, and the Nation: Staging American Identities" (2002) edited by S.E. Wilmer.

[…] with the rise of mass national politics" (3). Through this book, she looks into case studies of national theatres and other establishments of 'invented tradition' in England, France and America during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She engages in a comparative process between the three case studies, reflecting on mechanists (among others) of the ideological implications of nationalizing, institutionalizing and legitimizing theatre. The scope of her study is broad and presents a comprehensive understanding of the nationalization of theatre in the western world, through text, institutionalization and other mechanisms: theatrical, dramaturgical and socio-political.

The case of Israel has been left last due to its exceptional conditions, the parameters of both space and time need to be re-defined in this case. Jews as a race were scattered around the world until 1948 when they acquired their own space and a nation-state was established.[11] The work of theatre scholar Freddie Rokem (2000) on contemporary Israeli theatre and drama sheds light on one of the most interesting political and cultural situations of the twentieth century. Rokem's book *Performing History: Theatrical Representations of the Past in Contemporary Theatre* deals primarily with the western and Israeli theatre and drama of recent European and Jewish history, and suggests that "theatre performing history […] can become such an image, connecting the past with the present […] constantly 'quoting' from the past, but erasing the exact traces in order to gain full meaning in the present" (xiii). His exploration of the way with which dramatic and performance practices have presented the French Revolution (e.g. Georg Büchner's *Danton's Death* and Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade*) and the Shoah (e.g. Yehoshua Shobol's *Ghetto* and Hanoch Leniv's *The Boy Dreams*) sheds light on the formation of identity in the western world and the state of Israel, in relation to these events. Moreover, from the onset, Rokem recognizes the hybrid nature of his investigation and the openness to interpretation of the history embedded within the performance. In another work, Rokem (2002) also deals with the representations of violence and terror in Israeli drama, focusing on Levin's *Murder*. The scholar establishes a link between the history as terror and the narrative itself as a tragedy. The interplay between form and content establishes terror as a dominant force in the theatrical realm.

[11] The process for the establishment of the state of Israel started a few years before, with the Balfour declaration in 1917 which confirmed the support from UK's foreign secretary giving the Jews the right to establish a "Jewish" homeland in Palestine. Leading up to 1948 when World Zionist Organizations president David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the state of Israel.

Finally, it must be noted that the area of investigation of the current study is focused on the island of Cyprus, but it also covers Hellenism/Greece (predominantly, and for reasons of ideological affiliation that will become apparent in the course of the investigation) and other island communities in the Mediterranean, namely, Malta and Crete. Specifically, in regards to historical drama, the work of Thodoros Hadjipandazis (2006) is the most in-depth work in Greece, with more focused studies by Dionysis Mousmoutis (1999), Ioanna Papageorgiou (2010), Georgios Pefanis (2008), Kiriaki Petraki (1999), Walter Puchner (1991, 2001), Anna Tabaki (1993, 2005) and others. However, as Leonidas Galazis (2012) says, "we do not pursue the systematic joint examination of the Cypriot theatrical texts with the rest of the same type of texts of the other areas of Hellenism" (35). From this point on, my methodological approach diverges from Galazis as expressed in *Poetics and Ideology in Cypriot Theatre (1869-1925)* [*Ποιητική και ιδεολογία στο κυπριακό θέατρο (1869-1925)*] continues by stating that his purpose is to examine the [Greek-]Cypriot texts "based on the data and findings of the philological and theatre studies research around the evolution of neo-Hellenic theatre" (35), whereas this study will examine Hellenic/Greek production as being of equal standing to other theatre productions, albeit through the prism of the ideological affiliation of the Greek-Cypriot community with the notion of Hellenism. But the general methodological approach of this study is to remain open to establishing connections (historical, dramaturgical, structural, social) between the Greek-Cypriot historical plays and those of various communities, not solely Hellenic/Greek productions.

Therefore, in the main body of the study, historical drama from various areas will be discussed at length in terms of their similarities to Cyprus, and the relationship between historical plays and identity. Moreover, as will become apparent in the forthcoming analysis, a number of historical plays from the European continent, Malta, Crete and the Hellenic world are heavily intertextualized in two ways: they draw upon each other, mainly in terms of the socio-political and literary milieu of the communities and eras they originate from, but also in many varied and thought-provoking ways.The variety of the inter-connectedness of the Cypriot production with the writing communities mentioned is fascinating. This analysis on Hellenism/Greece will be extensively discussed in Chapter Two, and the cases of Malta and Crete in Chapter Four, whereas the connection with continental writing is explored in each chapter.

0.3 Aims of the Project

Theatre scholarship in Cyprus started to acquire a true scholarly character after 2000. The founding of the two state universities (University of Cyprus was established in 1991 and Cyprus University of Technology in 2007) and private universities (European University, University of Nicosia and Frederic University) gave scholars the legitimacy and environment to begin their research and to publish their works. However, there are few published books and articles, as research into culture is rather neglected and undermined, whereas the positive and applied sciences, and economics excel in academia.

The two most important books on Greek-Cypriot theatre history are: *To Theatro stin Kipro* (Volumes A & B) [*Theatre in Cyprus*/*Το Θέατρο στην Κύπρο*], by Yiannis Katsouris, published in Nicosia in 2005, which covers the period between 1860-1939 (Volume A) and 1940-1959 (Volume B), and Andri Constantinou's *To Theatro stin Kipro (1960-1974) [Theatre in Cyprus (1960-1974)*/*Το Θέατρο στην Κύπρο (1960-1974)]*, published in Athens in 2006. Katsouris has long been an important figure in the cultural life of the island and the first to research theatre from a scholarly perspective. In his rich and active life, beyond his research and books on the history of Cypriot theatre (from 1860-1974), he was also a force behind the cultural journal, *Anev* [*Άνευ*], edited by Dina Katsouri.

Andri Constantinou can be considered the protégé of Katsouris, one of the first to study Cypriot theatre at a doctoral level. Her dissertation at the University of Athens and the subsequent publication of her material, by Kastaniotis Publications, covers the period between 1960-1974 and the events, which led up to the founding of the National Theatre of Cyprus (THOC). Her study is, in the same way as Katsouris, an excellent historical basis for further analytical study of Cypriot playwrights, performance and institutional history.

The second generation of theatre scholarship is represented by Leonidas Galazis, whose doctoral dissertation at University of Cyprus, in 2010 is entitled *Piitiki ke Ideologia sto Kipriako Theatro (1869-1925)* [*Poetics and ideology in Cypriot Theatre (1869-1925)* /*Ποιητική και ιδεολογία στο κυπριακό θέατρο (1869-1925)*], and was published as a book in 2012. The study is, to my knowledge, the first critical scholarly study of Cypriot playwrights, and it establishes the position of dramatic literature within the sphere of Greek-Cypriot literature. Galazis, an educator, poet and researcher of the literary production on the island, offers interesting insights, mostly into the poets and, to a less extent, the ideology of Cypriot

drama in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and indeed sets the basis for future research, such as this dissertation.

In addition to the abovementioned scholarly studies, one can find quite a few examples of amateur critical analysis.[12] These were written both by playwrights themselves (e.g. Kipros Chrisanthis, 1978), amateur literary critics (articles and critiques in literary magazines such as 'Kipriaka Grammata' ['Κυπριακά Γράμματα'], etc) as well as foreign theatre scholars. An interesting example is the book *I EOKA sti Theatriki Logotechnia tis Kiprou* [*EOKA in the Theatrical Literature of Cyprus*/*Η ΕΟΚΑ στη Θεατρική Λογοτεχνία της Κύπρου*] written by Greek theatre scholar Chara Mbakonikola and published by the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture and the Council for Historical Memory of EOKA 1955-59 (Nicosia, 1998). The book analyzes the historical plays written in Cyprus about the EOKA struggle against the British; the language and analysis are notably in line with the hegemonic nationalist rhetoric and patriotic narrative of the organizations funding the publication. Therefore, the book presents little to no scholarly interest to researchers.

In a more general framework, the most important book published in the last few years regarding modern Greek-Cypriot literature is *Istoria tis Neoteris Kipriakis Logotechnias* [*History of Modern Cypriot Literature* / *Ιστορία της Νεότερης Κυπριακής Λογοτεχνίας*] *by* Giorgos Kechagioglou and Lefteris Papaleontiou (Nicosia, 2010). This exploration of the literature produced by Greek-Cypriots on the island and the Cypriot diaspora in the past two hundred years constitutes perhaps the most well researched study on this corpus of work, to this day. Even though the book caused controversy among conservative right-wing circles, its analysis, in my view, still lacks the edge and historicizing practices discussed above. In spite of its shortcomings, the publication is a joyous event for scholars, since prior to its publication, efforts to analyze the literary production in Cyprus had been noteworthy but sporadic: they were limited to non-scholarly and ideologically partisan studies, such as the book by Klitos Ioannides (1986), Lefkios Zafiriou (1991), and others. Further discussion of Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010) will follow later in this study.

Therefore, the need for further critical study of Cypriot literature is long overdue. The present study is part of a new wave of scholarship being conducted in institutions in Cyprus, Greece, the United Kingdom and the United States, whose aim it is to investigate the cultural

[12] For a complete list of these studies, refer to Galazis, 28-34.

production on the island and its implications on the identity of contemporary Greek-Cypriots. Rather than engage with the literary merits of examined works based on preconceived notions of artistic quality, this research focuses on their role within hegemonic political ideology and rhetoric.

0.4 Description of Methodology/ Research

The research conducted on the historical plays published or staged in Cyprus from the period between 1878-2004 has identified approximately 140 plays.[13] According to a thematic categorization of these works, they can be placed into the following groups:

- Mythical/classical times
- Byzantine rule
- French/Venetian rule (medieval colonization)
- Ottoman rule and Greek Revolution
- EOKA (armed movement against the British for union with Greece)
- Religious
- History of the 20th century
- Undetermined (concerns plays referenced but not found)

A first impression upon examining the historical plays written since the 1860s is that most of them present narratives and characters from Cyprus and the Hellenic space, with stories that unfold in both geographic areas, in addition to Asia Minor and other neighboring areas. Therefore, the plays present themes that establish a link between Cyprus and Hellenism, claiming bonds that can be traced back to mythical times.[14] One of the most significant challenges of this research, is, therefore, to see that this first-level superficial evaluation is examined as such, leaving space for an in-depth and open critical research into this group of plays. The tie of this literary production with Hellenism is undisputed; however, I will argue that it is only one of the strands which define it.

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[13] Complete list of plays found in Appendix 1.1.

[14] Pachoulides (2007) talks of an entire cultural system that functioned as a mechanism to generate a feeling of homogeneity and compactness in relation to Cyprus and its Hellenic character: "Ενα ολόκληρο πολιτιστικό σύστημα (λογοτεχνία, θέατρο, κινηματογράφος, λαϊκή κουλτούρα) παράγει και αναπαραγάγει ιστορίες και μύθους, μνήμες και αναμνήσεις, όπου η εθνική ταυτότητα παρουσιάζεται αρχέγονη, αναγκαία, ενιαία, ομοιογενής και παράλληλα συμπαγής και συνεχής στο χώρο και στο χρόνο." (98).

Other first impressions of the archival findings in Cyprus testify that historical plays have been written there continually since Georgios Sivitanides' first attempt at playwright in 1878. Cypriots have continued to produce historical plays until the 2004 end-date of this investigation, and beyond. Indeed, their number seems to be increasing with time. Twelve plays were published and/or staged in the period between 1878-1919, twenty-seven between 1919-1960 and, finally, more than one hundred between 1960-2004. One must take into account the accessible means at the disposal of playwrights today who wish to publish their works (access to information, financial means, etc). Nonetheless, the number of historical plays published and/or staged has quadrupled since 1960, leaving researchers to ponder the underlying reasons for this substantial rise.

Furthermore, one notices that a large number of the plays were written by a few people. The main playwrights are:

- Kipros Chrisanthis: Eighteen plays published and/or presented between 1950 and the mid-1970s. The author had written plays belonging to many thematic categories, but half of his plays deal with stories from mythical times/antiquity.
- Anastasios Mouskos: Seven plays published in the 1950s and 1960s. The plays span thematically, but most border between historical and patriotic. They often depart from time history into imaginary events and symbolic characters.
- M. P. Mousteris: Seven plays published between 1996 and 2000. Thematically they present a rather wide span, but they are very long and dramaturgically uninteresting and naïve, at times.

Prominent figures of Cypriot literature of the end of the 19th and entire 20th century had written at least three historical plays each. Among them: Ioannis Karageorgiades, Tefkros Anthrias, Michalis Pitsillides, Rina Katselli and Panos Ioannides.

Finally, one can observe recurrent themes. The stories seem to be repeating themselves, at different eras, under the pen of different authors. It is a common phenomenon for a story or historical personae to have known two, three or maybe more versions by different authors over the years. The most popular stories and characters are:

- Myth/antiquity: Socrates, Kimon, Axiothea.
- Byzantine rule: Justinian and Theodora, Eleni Paleologou.

- French/Venetian rule: Peter the 1st Lusignan, Maria Singlitiki.
- Ottoman rule/Greek Revolution: July 9th, 1821.
- EOKA: Gregoris Afxendiou, executions of EOKA fighters.
- Religious: Barnabas the Apostle.
- History of the 20th century: the resistance of the Greeks against the Germans in WWII, communism-related incidents.

It is worth noting that the most popular theme over the past century has been the occasion of the execution of Archbishop Kiprianos, and other priests, by the Ottomans in Nicosia in 1821. The events were recorded first by Theodoulos Constantinides in his play, *O Kutsuk Mehemet* or *To 1821 en Kipro* [*Koutsouk Mehmet* or *1821 in Cyprus* / *Ο Κουτσούκ Μεχεμέτ* ή *Το 1821 εν Κύπρω*] published in 1888, but the most successful depiction was by Vasilis Michaelides in his metric poem *Ennati Iouliou* [*9th of July* / *Εννάτη Ιουλίου*].[15] Subsequently, the theme was repeated in nine new plays, most of which stem from the poem by Michaelides, but take on new perspectives, bringing in new historical sources and experimenting with the format or narrative of the play.

This research study is based on an investigation of the recurrence of the characters and stories. For each of the three chapters of analysis (Chapters Two, Three and Four), I will be examining how the same story and the same characters have been presented by playwrights in different plays, while taking into account the changes of Cypriot history. Chapter Two presents characters from antiquity; Chapter Three from Byzantium; and, Chapter Four from the Lusignan rule of the island. Through an analysis of the protagonists of each play and a comparison of that analysis at the end of each chapter, I shall attempt to establish links between cultural production and the development of national identity among Greek-Cypriots, taking into account the socio-political conditions in Cyprus at the time.

[15] According to Galazis (2012), the play was first recited before an audience in Limassol by the poet himself, in 1895, the year of its completion (200), and was subsequently published in 1911.

0.5 Outline of Chapters - Thesis Plan

In "Nation and Narration", Homi Bhabha (2000) addresses the ambivalence of most contemporary societies, struggling to define themselves through, at times, the dark corridors of history:

> "If the ambivalent figure of the nation is a problem of its transitional history, its conceptual indeterminacy, its wavering between vocabularies, then what effect does this have on narratives and discourses that signify a sense of 'nationness'?"
>
> (2)

The sheer variety of the expressions of identity, accompanied by its fluid nature, constitutes the subject matter for a study, such as this. As established earlier, Cyprus and the cultural production of the Greek-Cypriot population present a void in the study of the versions and aspects of national identity in the past 150 years.

In order for this exploration to take place, a model of interpretation has been composed. The character and usability of this interdisciplinary study is presented in Chapter One, exploring the methodology and the analytical model developed for the purposes of the investigation. Chapter One explains the need for an interdisciplinary approach, and continues to present the theoretical framework for each of the three disciplines. Firstly, there is an exploration of the notions and practices of history, historiography and historical fact, establishing their value through the passing of time and their place in the study. Secondly, Chapter One deals with textual analysis, employing Barthes and his structuralist analysis of dramatic writing. Thirdly, an approach to nationalism is taken, exploring the main theories of nationalism and the ways in which Cyprus fits into that equation, while, at the same time remaining engaged with the many other identity trends involved in the discussion. Finally, Chapter One brings together the three disciplines, explaining how this approach will become the analytical tool for the group of historical plays written by the Greek-Cypriot community in Cyprus between 1878 and 2004.

The next three chapters present case studies of the analytical model presented in Chapter One, based on the textual analysis of the plays. This purely textual approach disengages the theatrical analysis from other potential approaches, such as the study of the

stage productions or the dissemination of the plays, as these entail the use of analytical tools such as audience reception theory (based on reviews, articles on the press etc) and performance analysis (based on the analysis of the productions of the plays) which do not concern the present study. Moreover, the circulation and canonization of the plays are aspects which will not be touched upon in this examination, as they engage with issues of cultural and educational policy on the state level, the commercial mechanisms which facilitate such processes and other factors which would sidetrack the present analysis. Finally, and as mentioned extensively in Chapter One, the study makes a point of its departure from the hegemony of the author over the text and declares its independence from it; therefore, and in terms of methodology, my preoccupation with their own reflections on the literature will be minimal, and not based on anthropological evidence (such as interviews). Moreover, the authors' ideological affiliations, gender and their life in general, will be marginally connected to the analysis of the plays. The abovementioned choices, create a specific theoretical environment through which it is the literary works alone which engage in a discourse with society and its ideological mechanisms, thus allowing for a focused analysis on the socio-political tendencies reflected in playwright.

Chapter Two addresses three plays dealing with antiquity, and tells the story of Axiothea and Nikoklis: kings of Paphos in the third century BC. Special attention is paid to establishing the connection between antiquity and nationalism, as developed in social and literary movements on the continent and the Hellenic space, eventually making their way to Cyprus. Chapter Three examines plays related to Byzantium, and more specifically, the characters of Belisarius, Theodora and Justinian, who lived in the sixth century and about whom three plays were written. This chapter focuses mostly on the connection of Cyprus to Byzantium, and what the empire means to the Greek-Cypriot community in modernity, taking into account how other societies in the Balkans have dealt with their Byzantine past. Finally, Chapter Four analyzes the medieval colonization of the island and the characters of Peter I Lusignan, Joanna L'Aleman and other relevant characters in six plays related to the reign in the fourteenth century of Peter I Lusignan in Cyprus. The investigation is concerned with examples of post-colonial societies (predominantly Malta and Crete) within the Mediterranean geographical area, culminating in an analysis of the plays and an exploration of their post-colonial character. A post-modern reading of the works leads to conclusions as to the nature of medieval colonialism in Cyprus and its implications on the Greek-Cypriot community and their perceptions of identity in the period between 1878-2004.

In its Conclusion, the dissertation offers further food for thought about the continuation of this line of investigation on Greek-Cypriot drama and theatre, and on cultural production in general.

CHAPTER ONE
METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Το σλάλομ. Το αίμα κατεβαίνει από την άκρη του βουνού κάνοντας
θεαματικά ζικ ζακ στο κεφάλι μου κι εγώ ήξερα ότι
η Κύπρος ήταν το ιδανικό μέρος για να συμφιλιωθώ
με τις συλλογικές / ατομικές μου ενοχές και να μάθω,
να ερμηνεύσω τον καθημερινό συλλογικό/ατομικό μου θάνατο.
Η θανατηφόρα, πεισιθάνατη, θανάσιμη Κύπρος.
From *Ρέκβιεμ για τους Απόντες*, by Yorgos Margaritis (35)[16]

Sometimes legends make reality, and become more useful than the facts.
From *Midnight's Children*, by Salman Rushdie, (47)

1.0 Introduction

The methodology developed for the analysis of the works is based on a multidisciplinary study of the dramatic works at hand. Three main theoretical pillars are utilized, each reflecting distinct disciplines: history (specifically, historiographical accounts); theatre (a structural analysis of the text); and, political theory (the development of nations in modernity).

In each of the three thematic units (chapters) in the study, a triptych of analysis is carried out: a) an exploration of the historical era of the plays through the available historiography in order to establish a connection between those plays and their source materials, b) an examination of the plays themselves through the analysis of their protagonist(s), and, c) a placement of the plays in the socio-political context of the time when they were written. This process of synthesis allows for the establishment of connections

[16] "The slalom. The blood descends from the side of the mountain making impressive zig-zag configurations in my head, and I knew that Cyprus was the ideal place to make peace with my collective/individual guilt, and to learn, to interpret my daily collective/individual death. The fatal, πεισιθάνατη, mortal Cyprus." This excerpt is from the novel, *Requiem for the Absent*, by the young Cypriot novelist Yorgos Margaritis, who lives in Athens, Greece. It is a sample of the most progressive feature (thematically and philosophically) of Cypriot literature after 2000.

between the cultural product at hand, in this case the plays, and the tendencies that appear in the development of nationalism and other identity trends in the Greek-Cypriot community in Cyprus, between 1878 and 2004.

The general framework for this analysis is provided by the critical viewpoint of New Historicism.[17] Stephen Greenblatt (2009) notes the "urgent need to rethink fundamental assumptions about the fate of culture in an age of global mobility, a need to formulate, both for scholars and for the larger public, new ways to understand the vitally important dialectic of cultural resistance and change" (1-2). The statement reflects New Historicist practices since the early 1980s, entailing an examination of cultural output within its contemporary societal context. Greenblatt strongly urges for this reconfiguration of both the scholarly community and society at large, as a means of understanding the changing character of societies, and subsequently, for engaging actively in the processes occurring within society and culture. The underlying disapproval of idleness on behalf of any citizen or scholar in regards to social change is detectable in Greenblatt's comment, and it is also embedded within the framework of New Historicist thought.

In an effort to formulate its basic principles, H. Aram Veeser (1994) suggests the five principles[18] of New Historicism, which unravel the socially engaged approach to text proposed by the theory. Veeser claims that New Historicism differs as a critical theory, in that "the hollowness of the self (...) now inspires respect and study, not discrimination and calls for revolution. (...) [New Historicism] accepts the inevitability of emptiness" (19). The last comment refers to the death of the subject (be that the author or the self), making peace with the tensions associated with both these losses, in the mid-twentieth century. The space created allows for the freedom to process and analyze the cultural product, in terms of the environment which has given rise to it. The analysis of society and cultural production will constitute a driving force for improvement through a better understanding of who we are and

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[17] "[…] New Historicism is not a coherent, close-knit school in which one might be enrolled or from which one might be expelled. The term has been applied to an extraordinary assortment of critical practices […]" (Gallagher and Greenblatt, 2).

[18] According to H. Aram Veeser (1994), the principles are: "1) that every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices; 2) that every act of unmasking, critique, and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practices it exposes; 3) that literary and non-literary 'texts' circulate inseparably; 4) that no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths or expresses unalterable human nature; and 5) that a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism participate in the economy they describe." (2). The principles will not be analyzed further, since New Historicism offers a general philosophical framework for this study rather than being part of a rigid and prescriptive approach.

what we represent, both in the present and the past. Finally, New Historicism embraces remarks on the potential for embracing and exploiting emptiness as a dynamic entity to be anticipated. Emptiness is full of potential, a departure point rather than a hindrance.

With this general theoretical framework in mind, and an unarguable dynamic of New Historicist thought, an engagement in dialogue with the three predominant aspects of analysis are developed here below.

1.1 History, Historical Fact and Historiographical Material

By definition, the connection between historical plays and identity carries a direct link to history as a discipline and historical fact as sought-after information. This need for a historical framework is owed to the link between the literary genre and its specific historical times and characters. Most playwrights of historical plays aim to present to their audience a factual piece, seeking validation for their own interpretation of the past, to such an extent that some even include in their editions, the sources of information for their story. The distinction, however, between history, historical fact and historiographical material, is relatively recent, and the difference between them is rarely noted in these plays.

The reasons for this lack of distinction lie in the literary heritage of the playwrights. With the emergence of education as one of the virtues of humanism and humanist philosophy during the Renaissance, history began to escape its connection with religion[19] and established itself as a legitimate discipline. History no longer linked eras solely for the sake of Christianity (before and after Christ, before and after the enlightenment of people with the word of God); instead, it started to become an analytical tool for the representation of the changes in people and places. Eugene Rice (1970) talks of the beginning of the modern historical investigation as a phenomenon that materialized through socially provocative criticism: "Textual Criticism *of this kind* is the concrete embodiment of an historical sense and represents the beginning of modern 'scientific' history" (71).[20] Rice talks about two specific examples of textual criticism: one is Lorenzo Valla (1406-1457) commenting on a

[19] According to Eugene Rice (1970), "Medieval scholars had divided history into an age of darkness and error and an age of light and truth. Between the two ages stood the Cross of Christ" (68). The use of history all the way through to the Renaissance was, therefore, associated with utilitarian religious purposes.

[20] My emphasis.

religious document by emperor Constantine, and the second is Erasmus speaking critically of a publication of the Bible (71). Public discussion of 'factual' information about the past, and, even 'holy' texts signal the beginning, for Rice, of opening up history as a legitimate repository of information, incorporating rather than excluding discussion and debate. This begins the historical discussion that distinguishes historical fact perceived through specific texts (in many cases produced by administrative or religious authorities) from interpretations of history.

As we move into modernity, historians also evaluate history as opposed to historiography, at different levels. The disconnectedness between the two starts to become apparent as the science of history begins to become self-referential. Eric Hobsbawm (1987) calls historical time before personal memory as "remote periods", time that we "confront [...] essentially as strangers and outsiders" (*Age of Empire,* 4). Therefore, the relative nature of historiography becomes apparent, since memory does not serve as a stable and objective point of reference. These are mostly the periods of the past in which historical plays take place. For the vast majority of these plays, neither the author nor the reader/audience lived through the times in which the play was set. Hobsbawm claims that "such periods may survive exclusively through the inanimate relics of the dead: words and symbols, written, printed or engraved, material objects, images." (*Age of Empire,* 4). There is no connection between the playwright and the historical era through memory; they have not lived through the experience, so they are unable to reproduce it from memory. They do so using the cultural remnants of those periods, fragments whose part of the whole are inherently open to interpretation.

In order to write plays and credit them with historical authenticity, authors extract information from various sources: historiographical accounts, archaeological findings, folk tradition and other cultural remnants of that period. As we shall see in the analysis, they use these sources in the assumption that they are credible sources of information, lacking the awareness of the ambivalent nature of any kind of presentation of history. From the information in the sources, some is presented in the literature unadulterated, while the author processes other parts through various social and literary mechanisms. Moreover, much of the playwrights' understanding of the historical period about which they write rests in the acquired memory passed down to them through means, such as popular belief, tourist propaganda, education, and even, academic publications. An excellent example of the last

mentioned can be detected in the *History of Cyprus* (2000), published by the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation (Office of Cypriot History). In an effort to establish the continuity of the Hellenocentric nationalist rhetoric on the island in the latter part of the twentieth century, this study undertakes the task of interpreting the historiography of ancient sources, specifically Herodotus' histories In his discussion of the Ionian Revolt and Athens' deployment of twenty ships to aid the Ionians in 498 BC, Herodotus writes that this "is the beginning of evils for Hellenes and barbarians",[21] grouping together Hellenes and barbarians towards their common fate, inflicted by the Ionian revolt. The historian analysing the text in the aforementioned publication of the year 2000, evaluates this comment as a "misrepresentation of history" (531). Moving along to the discussion of the character of the contribution of Evagoras – king of Salamis – the author commenting on the history, speaks of a "modern trend to treat the actions of the Greeks of Cyprus as stemming from narrow personal interests", and that "their participation in the Greek *national* struggle against the Persians and the Phoenicians was nothing more than self-referential or random, than [the contribution] of the other Greek cities" (601). This criticism was dismissed by the researcher commenting on the history, evaluating it as non-patriotic. Most interestingly, the footnote to the word *national* (author's italics) declares: "[W]hoever doubts the validity of the use of this word in its association with the ancient Greek world should refer to Herodotus and the other relevant texts." (601). The double standard used by the analyst to evaluate the accuracy of the work of Herodotus, although mildly amusing, speaks volumes about the nationalist inclinations promoted by the official ecclesiastical rhetoric of the Christian Orthodox Church of Cyprus. The above writer effectively superimposes his ideological framework on the historical text, thus reproducing the hegemonic rhetoric.

However, this bias can be countered, at least partially, by an approach that understands a text as an open subject of examination based on critical dialogic examination, and which produces new interpretation and viewpoints that are enormously important in our understanding of the literature.[22]

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[21] «η αρχή κακών για τους Έλληνες και τους βαρβάρους» (5.97.3)

[22] Charitini Christodoulou (2012) argues in her book, *Dialogic Openness in Nikos Kazantzakis*, for a "dialogic openness" of a text; an escape from the confines of socially or critically imposed limits on analyses, and in favor of a critical approach. Her subject matter is Nikos Kazantzakis' novel, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, and the restriction imposed by researchers in its analysis, due to the intense preoccupation with the relationship of this literature with the Bible and religion in general.

The second reason for the engagement with history in the present discussion lies in the awareness that the plays themselves were written in modern times, embellishing them with an additional layer of historical understanding. Given the specific time they were written, in the post-1878 period, these literary works constitute signifiers of trends and tendencies relating to the identity of the author and the perceived identity of the Greek-Cypriot community at the time. A number of significant socio-political, economic and cultural changes have taken place between the periods of 1878-2004, therefore, the works carry the weight of these references. The dialogue between these two perceptions of history (current and historical) is one of the most fascinating aspects of this study. The different ways in which the authors deal with historiographical material is an important aspect of the analysis, which in turn offers information about each playwright's viewpoint towards Cypriot society during the period that the plays were written. These aspects will be dealt with in greater detail in the case-study chapters.

Several historians and political scientists have tried to determine the relationship between individuals and their understanding of history, diachronically and synchronically, prescriptively and descriptively. Antonis Liakos (2011) articulates the quality of this connection in *Apokalipsi, Utopia ke Istoria: i Metamorfosis tis Istorikis Sinidisis* [*Αποκάλυψη, Ουτοπία και Ιστορία: οι μεταμορφώσεις της ιστορικής συνείδησης*/*Apocalypse, Utopia and History: metamorphoses of historical consciousness*], where he writes that "we should not deal with history merely as knowledge, but also as a framework where our thoughts are developed, our understanding of time, where we place ourselves" (17). Liakos implies that we can place ourselves as part of history and historical development, as long as we remember that history is simply a framework, not a set of unalterable facts. The fluidity of history and historical time is determined by the assumption that "historical time is not experiential time. […] It is time which is constructed mentally and culturally" (Liakos, 45). When the literary subject deals with history (in this case, historical plays), the reworking of a historical episode or personae represents, on one level, this type of understanding of history. The reproduced historical fact is not experiential and does not rely on the workings of physical or emotional memory, but has undergone a process of construction through mental and cultural filters. The playwrights provide a subjective framework and a new context where interpretation of the historical time lies within cultural boundaries.

The acknowledgement of the relative nature of history and historical time, and the almost inevitable processes through which events and characters are reworked by authors, in turn demands a methodical approach towards the historical references of the plays. Sourcing the information about the historical eras the plays refer to (and which had, for the most part, been taken up by the playwrights themselves), is a careful process. Firstly, one needs a good grasp of the trends in the twentieth-century historiography on Cyprus. Due to the conflicting ideological trends between and within the communities on the island (Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots), and the eventual establishment of Greek nationalism as hegemonic in the Greek-Cypriot community, the writing of history has been a controversial field. Scholars argue that the way Greek-Cypriots perceive certain periods of their past directly informs how they interpret their present.[23]

The main sources of historical information for this study have been the historiography of the era in question, which are often also the sources for the plays themselves. Within the context of this examination, the interpretation of the historiographers themselves will also be acknowledged and commented upon, since it adds a level of significance, rich in information and extensions. It should be noted that the playwrights themselves rarely engage in critical discussion. The main historical eras examined in this research are antiquity (focusing on the fourth century BC in Cyprus, and the kings of Paphos, Nikoklis and Axiothea), the Byzantine era (focusing on the sixth century in Constantinople, and the kings of Byzantium, Justinian and Theodora), and, finally, the Lusignan (French) rule of Cyprus (focusing on the twelfth century, the king of Cyprus Peter Lusignan I, his wife Eleonora, his mistress Joanna L'Aleman, and other related historical and mythical characters).

Historiography has become a more integral part of the writing of many historical plays. In many cases it constitutes the source of the plot and characters of the plays and offers an additional level of investigation, based on the authors' adoption or departure from the source material. Historical information has also been drawn from particular archaeological findings by Cypriot and foreign missions during their expeditions to the island. The use of primary materials for the understanding of historical events and personae, such as

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[23] When talking about the examination of the period of Ottoman rule on the island, Marios Hadjianastasis (2009) states that, "The Cyprus Question and the overall tension between Greece and Turkey have influenced historians in their examinations of the Ottoman period, i.e. through a lens tinted with modern political passions." (63)

archaeological findings, minimizes, insofar as is possible, the negotiation between various historical analyses, as they are written in the twentieth century. Thus, the primary historical evidence is essential along with the interpretation of the findings, establishing a limited distance between the historical time and the present. This is inevitably embellished by the ideology of the archaeologist and through the workings of a science that itself originates from elitism[24] and nationalism,[25] and into the twentieth century remains biased in many of its expressions (museums, curating of collections, etc).

To a great extent, the result generated from the way in which various authors deal with the same set of initial material is what Eric Hobsbawm (1997) calls "fabricated history". He adds that "we ought to distinguish between those uses of it which are rhetorical or analytic and those which imply some genuine concrete 'restoration'." (*On History,* 21). He distinguishes the practice of fabricating history into two types: the rhetorical/analytic being the more interesting ideologically, by way of transforming restored historical events and personae into elements in the creative process of a new cultural product. The plays analyzed in this study present an array of fabricated history, with authors taking creative liberties with characters and events they interpret. Lastly, it is important to note that playwrights' inclusions of, or alterations to, the historiographical source material are just as important as the elements they choose to omit or invent, in composing their own story. The inclusion or omission of elements such as plotlines, characters and locales, informs the researcher as to the author's intentions in relation to the new world s/he was in the process of constructing for the play.

A final point in this theoretical exploration of history/historic fact/historiography is the overall placement of Cyprus within a specific geographical area, the Mediterranean. Scholarship in the twentieth century has analyzed the 'great sea' from two distinct vantage points: Fernand Braudel (1973; orig. French, 1949) perceived it as a place defined by the ports and the populations around it, while David Abulafia (2012) writes that "the emphasis is always on their links across the Mediterranean Sea" (xix). For the purposes of the present

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[24] Archeology scholar and curator, Nikolas Papadimitriou (2012) reports the class origins of archeology as "two rather elitist, 'pre-national' traditions, the aristocratic habit of antiquarianism and Classical scholarship." (40)

[25] In speaking of the use of archeology by nation-states, with actions such as the creation of museums and the declaration of 'National Heritage' as the set of characteristics of a people, Papadimitriou (2012) adds: "This inevitably moulded research within the framework of nation-states, and channeled archaeological thought towards the creation of master narratives, which contextualized excavation finds in geographical settings largely defined by modern territorial borders." (41)

study, Cyprus is placed within a space characterized by connections, rather than destinations. These links are utilized for the trade of goods and ideas, establishing many centuries of fluid communication between the Cypriots and other peoples on the shores of the Mediterranean. Inherently, within this geographical placement, we find a constant exchange, which connects the island and its people with many different developments and creates an intense dynamic in relation to other communities, financial and cultural in nature.

1.2 Theatre/Textual Analysis

The discussion of the plays themselves is the second strand of my methodological approach. The discussion is limited to the dramatic texts, allowing for the minimal involvement of external factors, such as the life and character of its author, the anticipation and reception of the text and/or performance, its life on stage (if it had one) and other para-textual factors. These elements are omitted quite purposefully, since this process of trying to listen and truly comprehend the selected parameters of the text might be compared to trying to isolate an individual instrument in an orchestra. Unless all other instruments are muted, occasionally using them for comparative purposes, cacophonous confusion is the most likely outcome. In Barthes' article, "The Death of the Author" (1977), he claims that "it is language which speaks, not the author; [...] to write [...] is to reach that point where only language acts, 'performs', not me" (*Image, Music, Text* 143). Although the words 'acts' and 'performs' are serendipitous translations from the French original, they make an eloquent point in this case: the case of the dramatic text is allowed to 'act' and 'perform' as a self-sufficient entity, without needing the author's presence. Further along in the same text, Barthes speaks of a change in the temporality of the text (145) when the author is removed, stressing how a text can be opened up by decoupling it from its various bindings to linear time and space. Herein lies my own assumption and subsequent practice: analyses of historical plays as purely literary vehicles of information are served well by disassociation of the texts from the lives and practices of their authors, and from the contemporary social expectations and critical reception of the plays, and, their possible performance on the stage, with all the commensurate theatrical identity that entails.

As such, vehicles composed of words, phrases and sentences compile an expressive tool, and the analysis of the plays will be twofold. The first part deals with the contextualization of the plays and the characters in the critical literary framework from which

they derive. The second concerns an examination of the protagonists of the plays, based on Roland Barthes' structuralist analysis of narratives.

The major movements and schools of thought relevant to this examination are the Enlightenment, Romanticism, neo-classicism and post-colonialism. Emerging as a philosophical and socio-aesthetic framework from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, the Enlightenment is described as the age of reason, of "secular or scientific humanism" (Marsak 3), and a time when "man's future state [was] described as the increase of reason and freedom"[26] (Marsak 4). As a philosophical movement its doctrines instigated revolutions, among them the French (1789) and the Greek (1821). It used reason and a scientific approach to humanism in order to establish the rights of people for freedom. For the hero of the Enlightenment, the path of action is predetermined by *vraisemblance*, the ethical and patriotic virtues incorporated within his/her position (*National Thought in Europe*).

Romanticism from the late eighteenth century onwards is a rather polymorphous concept in spite of its short reign over the arts in Western Europe. It is perhaps best delineated by Rene Wellek's famous reply to Lovejoy in 1949, which "proposes three traits or 'norms'" shared by Romantic authors: "imagination for the view of poetry, nature for the view of the world, and symbol and myth for poetic style" (Ferber 5). Through this aesthetic and stylistic framework is born a new character type, the Romantic hero/heroine, a character who sought new principles in social behavior by creating a distance from the absolute Enlightenment value of reason. One of the various facets of Romanticism in Europe relevant to our discussion is the German school, and the figure of G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831), whose seminal book *The Philosophy of History* (first published in 1837) "tries to reconcile individual freedom and obedience to the state" ("The Development of Civilization", 18). Socially, this accomplishes a fervent attachment to the idea of the nation-state (otherwise termed as nationalism) and the transformation of private virtue into public. German Romanticism has the type of influence on national theatres in and around Germany, so that, according to S.E. Wilmer, "[they] looked to mythical, historical and rural characters in order to provide national protagonists who would help to define the character of the 'awakened' nation" (Herder and European Theatre, 78).

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[26] In terms of freedom, Marsak (1972) distinguished between Locke's politically flavored "freedom from restraint" and Rousseau's morally charged "implying constraint" (4-5). Moreover, he distinguished between Cartesian reason and Humean reasonableness, which led to Kant's rational ethic, following Hume, (5).

Another cultural schema is neo-classicism, which emerges as an ideal from the Renaissance onwards. The neo-classical is characterized by an aesthetic and structural admiration and imitation of the themes and forms of the perceived classical periods of ancient Greece and Rome. Sharon Ruston (2007) mentions that ultimately "art's purpose was to hold a mirror up to life and emphasis was placed on man as a social being and on his limits" (135). Although at the outset of Romanticism the two were considered to be conceptually incompatible,[27] many authors have combined them in their work. Moreover, Gounaridou comments on the many ways in which nations "create a neo-classical culture in order to construct a new version of their national cultural identity" (2005, 1), establishing the multiplicity in the adaptation of the neo-classical ideals to various national communities.

Finally, post-colonial theory is described in general terms as "the intellectual engagement with the consequences of colonization", which carries "attendant features such as race, language, resistance and representation" (Ashcroft and Kadhim, x). Although the work and significance of Franz Fanon and Edward Said[28] are acknowledged and referenced in the context of the present study, it is the work of Homi Bhabha (1994, 2000) and his post-modern investigation into the relationship between colonizers and colonized that has been developed, mostly in the relevant discussion in Chapter 4.

The framework established by the above literary and philosophical systems is primarily used to place the plays themselves in a context, and, secondly, to categorize the characters of the plays. This is crucial for the analysis of the protagonists, but it is equally relevant for secondary characters who are mostly one- or two-dimensional, something that keeps a potential analysis quite limited. Therefore, additional information on the functionality of characters in the play is provided, by analyzing them through their literary framework, and stereotypical characteristics they may have or allusions they may carry of other personae (literary, mythical and other). Moreover, an understanding of the literary movements establishes connections to other elements found in the plays, such as the use of language

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[27] It is interesting to note Ferber (2005), who writes that "In 1798, among the Schlegel circle in Jena, the word 'romantic' (German *romantisch*) was definitively attached to a kind of literature and distinguished from another kind, 'classic' (*klassisch*) […]" (1).

[28] In an effort to acknowledge Edward Said's seminal role in post-colonialist theory, while at the same time, place him on the post-colonialism timeline with Frantz Fanon, editors, Bill Ashcroft and Hussein Kadhim (2001) declare that "Said's 'Orientalism' stands as a reference point, a marker at an imagined junction of the many tributaries that had been feeding the growing awareness of post-colonial cultural production since World War II" (x).

(metric, poetic, use of literary allusions, etc), the dramatic structure of the texts (in relation to classical, neoclassical, romantic or modernist narrative models) among others.

The second, and most important part of the textual analysis is based on Roland Barthes' (1977) structuralist analysis of narratives and is used as the analytical tool for the examination of the protagonists in the plays. The methodology adopted here belongs to an early work by Barthes, *On Racine* (1964), in which he evaluates Racine as the "greatest French author" (ix), claiming that his work remains accessible to readers through the generations.[29] After making this value judgment, Barthes, suggests, nonetheless, that authors are in a disadvantaged position. He insists that readers approach texts by considering the authors' questions (unchanged through time), whereas the answers (or interpretations) given by the reader(s) are more fluid, since all systems of language can only be, by definition, open signifiers. This gives dynamic attributes to the text itself and its potential for interpretation through time, which explains why "literature has a transhistoric being" (ix).[30] The viewpoints expressed in *On Racine* recognize the transient nature of the analysis of literary works in a clear tension with the contribution of the authors to this conversation. The potential for this analysis is not connected to the individual and subjective lens, but rather to a time-specific 'space' for analysis (Belsey 21). This approach seems to constitute an early reflection of Barthes' announcement in 1968 that "the author is dead", a sample of his (later) post-structuralist work. Although in, *On Racine*, he admits to an attraction to the work of a neo-classical author, quite contrary to the analyses, which reflected the spirit of his own time, he later engaged in, he then positively retains his distance from the author and his attachment with the openness of the text.

The extension of this line of thought in semiology is expressed by Aston & Savona (1991), who use simple expressions to describe it: a shift from the *what* of a text to the *how* (3). The general theoretical framework that allows for the methodological approach can be described as follows:

> The structuralist focus on the "parts" of a work that make up a "whole" and the semiotic inquiry into how meaning is created and communicated through systems of encodable and decodable signs have changed the nature and function

[29] Barthes describes this as Racine's "sovereign art of accessibility" (ix).

[30] The entire quote reads "[…] literature has a transhistoric being: this being is a functional system of which one term is constant (the work), and the other is variable (the world), the age that consumes this work" (On Racine, ix).

> of literary criticism. […] In the case of drama, this has involved both the development of new ways of interrogating the text and the generation of a methodology or 'language' with which to tackle the complexity of the theatrical sign-system.
>
> (Aston & Savona 3)

Roland Barthes embraces the new vantage point on literary texts and in *Image-Music-Text*, he comments on the relationship between structuralism and narrative, in the following way: "[it] is not structuralism's constant aim to master the infinity of utterances (*paroles*)[31] by describing the 'language' (*langue*)[32] of which they are the products and from which they can be generated" (80). This constitutes a contextualization of the narrative, since it shifts the attention from the detailed description of the language itself, focusing rather on the framework within which the utterances have been produced. This syllogism can be completed by the following:

> "Narration can only receive its meaning from the world which makes use of it: beyond the narrational level begins the world, other systems (social, economic, ideological) whose terms are no longer simply narratives but elements of a different substance (historical facts, determinations, behaviors, etc)."
>
> (*Image-Music-Text,* 115).

Barthes' analytical tool for the restructuring of meaning is the use of semiology, which has also transformed the character within the context of a narrative, defining the character, "not as a 'being' but as a '*participant"*" ("Image-Music-Text" 106). This places the characters in the action of the plays as active forces that determine (among other factors) the ideology shaped by the literary text.

Barthes borrows heavily from the work of three important linguists in order to place the literary character in the narrative schema. He borrows from the French linguist Claude Brémond's notion that "every character (even secondary) can be the agent of sequences of actions which belong to him", adding that "every character (even secondary) is the hero of his own sequence" ("Image-Music-Text" 106). This places all characters as organic elements

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[31] In *Elements of Semiology*, Barthes (1977) defines utterance/speech (Fr. *parole*) as "essentially an individual act of selection and actualization" (14).

[32] In *Elements of Semiology*, Barthes (1977) defines language (Fr. *langue*) as "language without speech: it is at the same time a social constitution and a system of values" (14).

within a narrative. In addition, and enforcing the centrality of the importance of actions, Barthes, borrows the language from French semiotician, Algirdas J. Greimas, and refers to characters as *actants*.[33] The term is central in structural semantics, as is the *actantial model*, otherwise known as the *actantial narrative schema*.[34] Taking one step back in chronology and the history of semantics, Russian linguist, Vladimir Propp (1928) opens the Formalist examination of characters, the *dramatis personae,* as he refers to them, as part of his thorough study of Russian folk stories. In "Morphology of the Folk Tale", Propp separates all characters into eight categories,[35] and all actions they are likely to perform within their *sphere of action* into thirty-one loose categories. Propp's work has been the basis for much of the debate of structural linguistics,[36] and provides an excellent basis for linguists and critical theorists to examine other literary genres, much in the same way as Greimas and Barthes have.

On analyzing the nature of sequences and the character they tend to acquire, Barthes states that a sequence "always involves moments of risk and it is this which justifies analyzing them" (*Image-Music-Text*, 102). This loads sentences with meaning and intention, rendering them important in the life and development of the play. Furthermore, he quotes Brémond who theorizes for 'energetic logic' and for the ability to "grasp the characters at the moment when they choose to act" (*Image-Music-Text,* 99). Such 'moments of risk' within the narratives serve to evaluate and analyze "the major articulations of praxis" (*Image-Music-Text,* 107) as fluid but targeted sequences of actions. The nature of these articulations has been proposed by Greimas by "[…] propos[ing] to describe and classify the characters of

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[33] *Actants* fall under three distinct binaries: subject/object, sender/receiver, aide/adversary (Greimas 313-318). Greimas then goes on to formulate a model of mutual dependency between these six entities within a single narrative; a model, too, however, technical to be used in the context of the present study.

[34] The model is a tool used to analyze the action that takes place in a story, whether real of fictional. It was developed in 1965 by A.J. Greimas and published in "Sémantique structurale. Recherche de méthode", published in France in 1966. The actantial model reveals the structural roles typically performed in storytelling. Among others are the hero, the villain (opponent of hero), the object (of quest), the helper (of hero) and the sender (initiator of the quest). Each of these roles fulfills an integral component of the story or narrative. Without the contribution of each actant, the story would be incomplete.

[35] Greimas (2005) names these in his book as: "1. the villain, 2. the donor, 3. the helper, 4. the sought-for person (and her father), 5. the dispatcher, 6. the hero, 7. the false hero." (311). The difference in the number of character types is that in some accounts the *sought-for person* and *her father* are seen as two separate categories, whereas in Greimas' account, cited here, they are seen as a unit.

[36] David Herman (1997) argues that one of the limitations of the Propp model is that its relationship with narratives is restricted to the form of the folk tale, whereas "a sequence can be processed as a narrative not just because it has a certain form but because its form cues readers, in structured, non-random ways" (1050).

narratives, not according to what they are, but according to what they do (hence, *actants*), inasmuch as they participate in the three main semantic axes […] which are communication, desire (or quest) and ordeal" (*Image-Music-Text,* 106). Moreover, Franco-Bulgarian philosopher, Tzvetlan Todorov, focuses on the same points when analyzing a novel saying: "start not from the character-person, but from the three major relationships in which they can engage and which he calls base predicates (love, communication, help)" (*Image-Music-Text*, 106).

Therefore, for the purposes of the present investigation, I shall not be examining the articulations of praxis in ways that categorize characters, the way Propp or Greimas have prescribed. Rather, this methodology will be engaging with that of Barthes, for whom the relationships between the *actants* are brought under two sorts of rules: rules of *derivation* (a question of accounting for other relationships) and rules of *action* (a question of describing the transformation of the major relationships in the course of the story).

In order to outline the exact nature of these rules, the three main aspects of intended actions mentioned above will be used to analyze the narrative of each play. Barthes (1964) used this model, what he refers to as "a system of units ('figures') and functions" (*On Racine*, vii) to explore Racine's tragedies. The Racine plays he examines are neo-classical tragedies, with historical dimensions, and heroes and heroines as protagonists,[37] which create a natural connection to the corpus of works in my own examination of plays from the same general literary trends, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Their formats and themes are connected often with neo-classicism and their protagonists are, just as in Racine, heroes and heroines, men and women of the higher classes, molded by the authors so as to be compatible with the narrative environment of the plays.

The terms used for the analysis, as they have been articulated by Barthes, will be:

- love/desire
- communication
- help/struggle

The presence of the protagonists in the world of the play will be defined by their actions and intended actions, which are oriented towards these three themes. The choices of the

[37] Among others, the plays included *Phédre*, *Alexandre*, *Andromaque*, *Brittanicus* and *Bérénice*.

protagonists' actions and intended actions will serve to characterize them and to define the essence of their presence in the play. A question asked when describing one of these protagonists, is "what did a hero look like at that point in time", since the characteristics of these protagonists, chosen to represent leadership of the people, reflect the social trends of the time.

The reoccurrence of specific characters in several plays, in each chapter, gives the opportunity for a comparative reading of these heroes/heroines. The associations these characters make, with whom their actions, intended ones too, in love/desire-communication-help/struggle are associated, will serve to define them in relation to parallel personae in the other plays examined in this chapter. This will allow for a sketching of the characters throughout a substantial amount of time, at the same time allowing for an understanding of the shifts that take place. In the first chapter, Nikoklis and Axiothea appear in three plays; in the second chapter, Justinian, Theodora and Belisarius appear in three plays also; and, in the final chapter, dealing with the Lusignan rule of Cyprus, Peter Lusignan, Eleonora D' Aragon and Joanna L'Aleman feature in a total of seven plays. The changing nature of the depiction of these protagonists will be deduced from the change observed in the action of the (same) leading character(s) in the (same) storyline across time. This is the starting point of the conversation on identity, which will be further presented in the next section.

1.3 Political Thought and the Location of Identity

The final stage of the examination focuses on the mirroring of the socio-politics of modern times on the examined plays. When studying the protagonists of these plays, it is important to pay close attention to the information discovered in the time at which they were written, performed or published. Furthermore, the comparison between the same historical personae at different times offers interesting perspectives on Greek-Cypriot identity throughout the twentieth century.

In terms of political theory, the approach to identity building through the mechanisms of the nation-state is based on an understanding of history presented most effectively by Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson. Essentially a Marxist/materialist analysis, this established a break of the present study with older understandings of the idea of the nation, such as Ernest Gellner's (1983) perception that the formation of nations is an inevitable

consequence of industrialization (1) or Elie Kedourie (1993) and his claim of the natural separation of humanity into nations based on certain traits. In their understanding of the nation, Hobsbawm (1987, 1992, 1997) and Anderson (1991), although firmly Marxist in their approach, they move beyond political and economic concerns into culture. Hobsbawm negotiates the concept of history as part of modernity rather than a constant value in the flow of time. Therefore, the appropriation of the place of history within culture takes place for ideologically utilitarian reasons. This occurs by extracting various cultural manifestations in order to align themselves with the nation-building or other predominant narratives in the community. In the case of the present study, the cultural manifestations are the plays, and the ideological framework is Greek-Cypriot identity, with its many trends. Benedict Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' is central to this line of thought. It informs the manner through which, for example, the imaginary Greek-Cypriot was constructed, with nationalism being a stronger element. Although Anderson does not attribute positive or negative qualities to nationalism, he clearly supports the constructed (rather than innate) nature of it, through various cultural mechanisms, such as "print-capitalism" (224), which allows for peoples to read common books in a common generic language, inevitably denoting a sense of community.

In order for the nation to be constructed, certain mechanisms need to be activated. Hobsbawm and Ranger introduce the term "invented traditions",[38] referring to the creation/appropriation of cultural constructs by nations in an effort to provide the necessary element for the nation and the people to unite on one level, and eventually, to construct the 'other'. The construction of the 'other', will allow for the nation to attain even greater unity. The term 'invented tradition' is one of the keys to our understanding of the perceptions of antiquity, Byzantium and western colonization of Cyprus in the examined plays. The very existence of the plays is a manifestation of the construction of history and identity. The term can also be used to comment on the structural models used in the plays, as well as on their relationship to literary and philosophical traditions of Europe and the Mediterranean (such as Romanticism and Neoclassicism).

[38] Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) define the term as "a set of principles, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetitions, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (1).

An exemplary analyst of cultural production and nationalism is Dutch scholar, Joep Leerssen (2006). He describes nationalism in the nineteenth century as having eighteenth-century roots: "Herder's belief in the individuality of nations,[39] Rousseau's belief in the sovereignty of a nation, a general discourse of national peculiarities and 'characters'" ("Nationalist Thought in Europe" 125). In the same line of thinking as Hobsbawm and Anderson, but reversing the departure point, Leerssen embraces cultural production as one of the predominant manifestations of nationalism in newly emerging European states. In his article, "The Cultivation of Culture: Towards a Definition of Romantic Nationalism in Europe", Leerssen (2005) adopts the use of the term *cultural nationalism*[40], finding the union between the two entities as "plausible and straightforward enough" (5).[41] In setting a framework for the term, he develops five points as prerequisites for cultural analysis within the context of cultural nationalism.[42] The essence of these prerequisites is the direct link between cultural nationalism with nationalism in general, and cultural history, as well as its independence from specific nations.

In his above-mentioned book *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (2006) Leerssen walks us through cultural thought in Europe by associating character representations in European cultural production, mostly literature, to national identity in Europe from the

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[39] S.E. Wilmer (2005) supports that Herder's ideas had promoted the creation of national theatres in various European communities.

[40] The term is used extensively by John Hutchinson (1987, 1999), who places it as an antipode to the 'invention of tradition' perspectives, claiming that "In evoking historical models, cultural nationalists act primarily as moral and social innovators not as reactionaries, in seeking to formulate an indigenous basis of collective progress" (*Re-Interpreting Cultural Nationalism*, 393). In my view, the tension created in these articles by Hutchinson are a result of a closed reading of the 'invention of tradition' perspective; I am using a more open reading by Leerssen as a way to incorporate both socio-cultural mechanisms ('invention of tradition' and 'cultural nationalism') in my analysis.

[41] He uses this term in opposition to terms such as cultural liberalism or cultural socialism, which have failed to become established in scholarship. Leerssen (2005) further explains: "the very concept at the heart of nationalism, that of the nation, refers to an aggregate of people whose 'peculiar character' referred to in the famous definitions of both Smith and Breuilly is at least in part constituted by cultural factors such as language or historical awareness – factors that belong to the realm of reflection, discourse, arts and scholarship, rather than to that of political decision-making or social action." ("The Cultivation of Culture" 5)

[42] "1. All nationalism is cultural nationalism; 2. Cultural nationalism is a topic for cultural history; 3. Cultural nationalism requires a cross-national comparative approach; 4. Nationalism begins as a 'cultivation of culture'; 5. The 'cultivation of culture' can be mapped as a specific array of concerns." ("The Cultivation of Culture" 4) In the context of the present study, the first four of the five conditions can be safely applied and used as prerequisites of examining the core of culture and its relation to nationalism. In the process of the analysis, all of the above act as prerequisites to the examination of the literary works and their connection to nationalism. In regards to the final point, the processes of a 'cultivation of culture' include parameters such as cultural politics and policies which are outside the present scope of investigation.

seventeenth century onwards. In his account of the transitioning of European societies to the Enlightenment,[43] Leerssen stresses the change in the social classes and how nobility shifted from the old ruling aristocracy to the new carrier of bravery: the humble and morally sound patriot. Traits of the old hero are passed onto the new, in a creative process of supplanting nationalist pride from one social structure (feudalism) to another (capitalism). In his cultural analysis, Stephen Greenblatt (2009) completes the framework by suggesting that the post-modern perspective in the critical analysis of literature is a road with no return. It is set by the new political thought expressed in post-Enlightenment era: "There is no going back to the fantasy that once upon a time there were settled, coherent and perfectly integrated national or ethnic communities" (2). Researchers of culture and its manifestations have reached an understanding of the inevitability of the omnipresence of cultural nationalism, therefore negotiating its presence as fabricated.

The study will also seek aspects of cultural nationalism through associations with other communities and trends outside the hegemonic rhetoric, which has been in tact, even in literary scholarship in the Greek-Cypriot community. These developments shall be explored in Chapters Two, Three and Four, associated with the subject matter of the plays in question, but also through a comparative process with dramatic production in other Mediterranean communities. Therefore, through the three different case studies of groups of plays dealing with antiquity, Byzantium and the French rule of the island, I shall attempt to place the characters in the sociopolitical framework of Cyprus and draw conclusions from patterns of the development of identity there.

Finally, it must be clarified that for the purposes of the present study, this investigation is limited to the Greek-Cypriot community. This acknowledges that the study does not reflect the identity tendencies of all the communities on the island, since the literary production at hand speaks of only one of the communities. Linguistic restrictions and

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[43] Leerssen (2006) describes the societal changes: "It was against this all-pervasive noble code of honor that the Enlightenment was to formulate, and bring into currency, the moral code of virtue. […] virtue was seen in classicist (rather than Christian) terms: in terms of a nostalgically remembered Roman republic. Against the arrogantly asserted honor of the nobleman came dignity, against outward bravado came inner courage. Against elegance and pomp came simplicity and modesty: against pride in one's descent came the merit of one's deeds. And where the main aristocratic virtue lay in a duty to one's class (the liege lord and one's own *noblesse oblige*), the new morality of virtue stressed a sense of responsibility towards one's fellow man. *Amor patriae*, or 'love of the fatherland' must be seen, then, as yet another virtue (not the only one) wherein a good patriot differs from a depraved aristocrat." (80)

difficulty in accessing materials has made the study of cultural production in the Turkish-Cypriot, Maronite and Armenian communities distant to this study.[44]

1.3.1. The Development of National Identity in the Greek-Cypriot Community

Between the continental and the Cypriot geographical space, the development of national identity presents significant changes and divergences. For a better understanding of the case of Cyprus, it is necessary to travel back two centuries to the end of the Ottoman period, a period of transition for the island. The identity of the linguistically and religiously mixed population of Cyprus was "defined in terms of religion and class, not ethnicity" (Pollis, 70), which was substantially adapted to a different framework in the post-Ottoman era.[45] Furthermore, Faustmann (1999) reports on the administrative organization of the island during Ottoman rule and mentions that "in Ottoman times the people were organised and administered according to their religious affiliation. These self-governed religious communities (millets) were guided by the respective clergy" (19). This affirms the strong religious attachment of the various communities in Cyprus, as sanctioned by the Ottoman system of administration. These were communities of Christians, Muslims, Armenians, Jews and others.

As we take a closer look at the Christian community, certain figures such as Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios (1750-1809) and Archbishop Kyprianos (1756-1821) were especially prominent among the leaders of the period. Kornesios has passed into the hegemonic rhetoric as a Christian put to death by the Ottomans for his revolutionary actions in favor of the Greek revolution. According to historian, Antonis Hadjikyriakos (2011), however, this is far from the truth, since the dragoman, who "was at the centre of the political, social, and economic life of the island from the late eighteenth century until his

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[44] Critical studies of literature and other artistic production, rarely acknowledge the presence of other communities on the island. An example is the reference Leonidas Galazis makes to the term 'Cypriot theatre': he supports that the definition which refers to the "works produced by Cypriots living in Cyprus, written in Greek, either in standard Greek or the Cypriot idiom" (attributed to K.P. Savvides) is problematic because it excludes Cypriot authors who have not lived in Cyprus (Galazis 27-28). One is led to believe that Galazis acknowledges as authors of Cypriot literature only those who write in Greek/Cypriot Greek (irrespective of where they live), but not those who live on the island and write in other languages, such as members of ethnic and linguistic groups such as Turkish-Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians, Jews and others.

[45] Pollis (1996) acknowledges the difficulty of "ascertaining individuals' self-identity in past centuries", since "the writing of history is selective" (72), although a general evaluation can be made.

death in 1809" (261), engaged in many actions during his service as dragoman in an effort to use the system in order to obtain more power and influence, which ultimately led to his killing in Constantinople in 1809 by the Ottomans. Similarly, the figure of Kyprianos is also perceived, on two levels, in terms of his personality and contribution to the nationalist narrative. Ottoman studies scholar, Michalis K. Michael (2009) characterizes him as "a Phanariote ruler" (216), because of his exposure to the Phanariote rulers of Moldavia and Wallachia in the 1790s and their ideas for the instigation of a revolution for the founding of a Greek state. His educational policies[46] in Cyprus, and his dramatic death in 1821 have elevated him to the status of 'ethnomartyr' (εθνομάρτυρ/martyr for one's nation). However, this is an idea, disputed at its root, since there is evidence of an inconsistent relationship between Kyprianos with the Filiki Eteria [*Society of Friends*] (Michael, Michalis N., Kappler, Matthias and Gavriel, Eftihios, 222-223). This opposes the idea of the dedicated attachment of Kyprianos to the Filiki Eteria cause, as stated by the predominant nationalist rhetoric.

On entering the period of British colonial rule (1878-1960), the administration system underwent a defining shift. The British stripped the Orthodox Church off its administrative role within the Christian community of the island and in its place established a Legislative Council of elected Christian and Muslim officials. This inevitably limited the importance of the church,[47] and created a Christian (soon to be named Greek-Cypriot) elite, which "allowed for the emergence of a Greek-Cypriot public sphere" (Pachoulides, 105). In spite of the limited official role of the church, researchers (Pachoulides 2007 and Faustmann 1999) commonly agree that the Archbishop of Cyprus was still considered to be the *Ethnarch*, "political and religious leader of Orthodox Cypriots" (Faustmann, 18). The title was inherited by the first elected president of the Republic of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, who retained his role as the head of the church of Cyprus, as well as being head of the state from 1960 until his death in 1977.

The emergence of Greek nationalism on the island has its roots in various factors, most importantly, in "the nineteenth-century process of Greek intellectual expansion" (Kitromilides, "Greek irredentism in Asia Minor and Cyprus" 4), a phenomenon which had

[46] For example, the inauguration in 1812 of the first public Greek-speaking school in Nicosia and subsequently in other cities.

[47] According to Katsiaounis, as quoted in Faustmann (1999), "The Church, formerly the loyal servant of the Ottoman rulers, became the leading institution in nationalist opposition to colonial rule. It was supported by parts of the educated upper and middle class at the end of the nineteenth century" (20).

spread through many areas of the periphery of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. With British colonial rule in 1878, the educational system was reshaped in ways that allowed education to become Hellenocentric (in the Greek-Cypriot community) and for many more teachers to be brought in from Greece to staff the schools. The British maintained the system of separate education for Christians and Muslims, and in 1895 reshaped the administrative system of the schools, with the creation of regional and local educational committees. On all levels, the representation of the church in these committees was de jure, and the members of the community (usually of the new, more *Enosis*-oriented elite)[48] were elected. The role of the elites is noteworthy, since they became the issuers of nationalist rhetoric and began to change the orientation of education. Faustmann (1999) reports how "Education, particularly through those secondary school teachers who were trained in Greece or were mainland Greeks, transmitted the nationalist ideals to the ordinary people" (34). This system of dependency between the elite, the educators and ideology is sustained in the educational system until the declaration of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, and even after that there is ample evidence that it has become part of the state-run educational system, especially in the subject of history.[49]

The conflicting trends that emerged in Cypriot society throughout the nineteenth century eventually materialized fully in the 1910s, with the opposing forces that came to play regarding the election of the new archbishop. The opponents were the moderate conciliatory Bishop of Kyrenia, Kyrillos Vasiliou, and the intransigent nationalist Bishop of Kition,

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[48] Faustmann (1999) reports that "The Greek demand for *Enosis* became politically significant in 1895. It all started with a statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir W. Harcourt, in the House of Commons, on the 8th of March 1895, in which he indicated that Cyprus would be returned to the Ottoman Empire if Britain ever left. This statement stirred up rallies all over the island demanding that Cyprus must be given to Greece, if it should be abandoned by Britain. [...] Two years later, more than 1,000 young Cypriots volunteered and 682 fought in the Greek-Turkish war of 1897, many of whom originated from the lower social and economic strata. This is a strong indication of the dissemination of Greek nationalism within all parts of Orthodox society. After their return, they formed, according to Katsiaounis, "something of a nationalist bloc within the Greek community."[48] In the 1896 elections for the Legislative Council, four candidates (two young Athens-educated lawyers and two older nationalists) formed a loose alliance on the basis of being *ethniki* (national). For the first time, nationalism was used as a means to gain political support in elections. And it paid off: all of them were elected." (21)

[49] Miranda Christou (2007) explains how "the existing history curriculum in Greek-Cypriot high schools represents many of the tensions and pressures that have agitated the island in the past 50 years" (712), meaning the negative view of Greek-Cypriots towards Turkish-Cypriots, since the ideological drive for union of Greece was not abolished until after the war in 1974.

Kyrillos Papadopoulos.[50] The two religious leaders represented opposing trends within the Greek-Cypriot community at the time. Although this historical occurrence carries little weight in the general development of the history of the island (compared to later armed conflicts and manifestations of the moderate versus the militant), its value in terms of symbolic and transitory significance is great. The eventual election of Papadopoulos was the culmination of the intense nationalist climate pushing for 'union and only union' with Greece ["Ένωσις και μόνον Ένωσις"], which according to Pachoulides (2007) was the dominant inclination until 1974 (108), creating an inevitable schism between the two main ethnic[51] communities on the island.

Another aspect of the distinct character of nationalism on the island is its relation to mainland Europe. The development of nationalism locally can be associated with the general European model: old nationalism "had been identified with liberal and radical movements" (Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* 143) such as revolutions and uprisings (placed in the nineteenth century), whereas new nationalism was right-wing and emerged with the establishment of states which "called it 'patriotism'" (Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* 143). Old nationalism in Cyprus can be identified in the period 1878 till the declaration of the republic in 1960, and it had taken the form of uprisings, culminating in the EOKA uprising for the overthrow of the British colonial rule and for union with Greece, from 1955 till 1959. There are, however, a multitude of other determining factors, which had influenced the nature of nationalism in Cyprus during that period. The most important ones are: the 1912-1913 Balkan wars (Greek-Cypriots had volunteered to fight on the side of the Greeks); during World War I, Cypriots from all communities fought on the side of the allied forces; the founding of the leftist party AKEL in 1926; during World War II Greek-Cypriots fought on the side of the British for the promise of union with Greece; and, the 1950 referendum for a union with Greece. New nationalism is predominant in the post-1960 era. The establishment of the state of Cyprus was not in itself a desired outcome for the Greek-Cypriots, who had

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[50] Pachoulides (2007) supports that "the intense juxtaposition between the two sides, […] on the one hand reflects the creak in the interior of the community caused by the dynamics of its shaping from a traditional religious-national community to a quasi secular national community with the transformation of its members from religious to national subjects (Rebecca Bryant 2004, Andreas Panayiotou 2005), while on the other hand is the first inner-ideological conflict focused on the feeling of Hellenic irredentism in Cyprus centred around the ideological debates of moderation/tolerance Vs militancy/intransigence" (107).

[51] Leerssen (2006) defines *ethnic* as "a subjective community established by shared culture and historical memories ("National Thought in Europe" 17).

wanted union with Greece. Therefore, the patriotism born out of the declaration of the republic was not geared towards Cypriot national pride but towards Greek national pride. The patriotic duty of Greek-Cypriots was towards the state of Greece, and not Cyprus. As a consequence, the history of the island after 1960 became laden with a yearning for something other than what was in place. Political and social strife started as early as 1963 and peaked in 1967, with popular and governmental instability. The gradual segregation of Turkish-Cypriot populations from Greek-Cypriot or Armenian neighborhoods and the creation of Turkish-Cypriot enclaves, mostly in the north of the island, were the beginning of what culminated in 1974 with a military coup by Greek and Cypriot nationalists to overthrow Makarios, then president of the Republic. After five days of chaos, Turkey duly invaded under the pretext of defending Turkish-Cypriots and restoring the constitution. The next important stop is the 1981 declaration of the illegal, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in the military occupied area of North Cyprus, a puppet pseudo-state supported financially by Turkey and not recognized by the international community, rendering the Turkish-Cypriots ghost citizens. The most recent developments, which have widened the gap even further, are the Anan Plan referendum in April 2004 for a solution of the Cyprus problem based on a co-federation (rejected by the Greek-Cypriots and accepted by the Turkish-Cypriots), and, finally, the accession of the Republic of Cyprus into the EU in May 2004, essentially benefiting only the island's Greek-Cypriot inhabitants.

Another important factor in the development of nationalism on the island is the issue of language. Anderson advocates for the importance of the creation of a unifying language under which the imagined community can develop one more aspect of its identity, based on its linguistic uniformity. However, the claim for linguistic uniformity constitutes a paradox on an island, which until 1974 consisted of linguistically and religiously mixed communities, not only Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, but also Maronites, Armenians, Jews and others. Hobsbawm (1987) characterizes these mechanisms as mutations undertaken in the context of nationalism (144). The language mutation takes place in Cyprus as a systematic practice and not a manifestation of elitism associated with the privilege to education, as the constitution of 1960 recognizes standard Greek and standard Turkish as the official languages of the republic, ignoring the local languages spoken by the people.

Moreover, the continued presence of a left-wing party since 1926, and its participation in various governments' decisions since 1960, is another aspect that needs to be taken into

account. The role of the left-wing party, however, which was founded as Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Κύπρου (K.K.K.) (Cyprus Communist Party) and was renamed in 1941 to Ανορθωτικό Κόμμα Εργαζόμενου Λαού (Α.Κ.Ε.Λ.) (Progressive Party of the Working People) has proven to be quite paradoxical in relation to many other leftist parties in Europe. Although the party had members from various religious and ethno-linguistic groups on the island, and was the frontrunner for many labor movements that defended the rights of workers, regardless of their background, at an early stage it also defended the idea of union with Greece as the aim of Cypriots. Contrary to communist ideology, which put class over nation, the official Cypriot left defended the nationalist rhetoric which aimed for union with Greece. By the 1950s, in order to retain power within the nationalist rhetoric presented by Makarios and other political powers, it retained its attachment to Cypriot identity (and a type of Cypriot nationalism) at the level of the leftist subculture (Pachoulides, 216). Therefore, AKEL failed to provide an alternative voice to the hegemonic nationalist rhetoric, as the left had done in many other European nations. The attachment of the left to Cypriot-ness remains at a lower level of importance and influence compared to the impact of the official party line, which has inherited the hegemonic rhetoric.

1.4 Adapting the Analysis Model to the Greek-Cypriot Community

As with every interdisciplinary study, establishing links among the various disciplines presents a challenge. On the relationship between literature and political theory, Roland Barthes, in *Mythologies* (1972; original in Fr. 1957),[52] examines language in the context of cultural production and its relationship with interpretation on the social level. Barthes finds that the relationship between the two is characterized by the existence of 'myth', which he defines as "a type of speech […] a system of communication, […] a message." (107). He suggests that anything can be a myth, "provided it is conveyed by a discourse" (107), and he establishes a tie to semiology in relation to the analysis of the text – this has been examined in a previous section of this chapter. Barthes opens a world of potential for interpretation,

[52] Barthes' (1972) explains why he wrote *Mythologies*, a series of articles inspired by various cultural occurrences he had witnessed. He says, "I resented seeing Nature and History confused at every turn, and I wanted to track down, in the decorative display of *what-goes-without-saying*, the ideological abuse which, in my view, is hidden there." (10)

which lies within each cultural product or phenomenon, and which is the ideological backbone of this study.

The task of adapting the model of analysis to the case study of Cyprus and its cultural production is the next challenging step. Researcher Adamandia Pollis (2006) warns us of the complex nature of mapping identity, in relation to ethnicity and nationalism, and especially when it involves conflict.[53] In the case of Cyprus, the Greek-Cypriot community associates itself with an identity (Christian Greeks of Cyprus) but also defines itself in juxtaposition with another community living on the island, the Muslim Turkish-Cypriots. This and other particularities of the development of identity in Cyprus, in relation to historiography, theatre (historical plays) and the development of identity there, will be discussed in this section.

As mentioned in section 1.1, the aspect of historiography presents certain challenges in its application, including keeping an awareness of the multiple layers of significance in the historical sources themselves, as well as in the writing of the official historical narrative by various agents. The source materials used in the present investigation are the following: for Chapter Two (antiquity), the historiographers Polienos and Diodorus Siculus[54]; for Chapter Three (Byzantium) Prokopius and his anecdotes of the rule of Justinian and Theodora, entitled *Apokrifi Istoria* [*Απόκρυφη Ιστορία/The Secret Story*]; for Chapter Four (French colonization) Leontios Macheras and his chronicle of medieval Cyprus entitled *Eksigisis tis glikias horas Kiprou i opia legete Kronaka toutestin Hroniko* [*Εξήγησις της γλυκείας χώρας Κύπρου η οποία λέγεται Κρόνακα τουτέστιν Χρονικόν*]. The historiographers narrate in their own personal style smaller or larger bits of the lives and dramatic endings of the characters under investigation. The vantage points of the historiographers are also quite distinct: Polienos was an author of military tactics and Diodoros an historian; Prokopius was a commissioned historian for the Justinian rule (cataloguing his military and architectural feats) who also wrote an unauthorized account of the time; and finally, Leontios Macheras was a self-proclaimed historian of a lengthy period of Cypriot history, with a focus on the story of Peter I Lusignan.

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[53] Pollis (1996) writes that "[E]thnicity, ethnic conflict and nationalism are multi-dimensional phenomena that evolved over time under particular historical contingencies" (69).

[54] These two historiographers had not written specifically about the events around the death of Axiothea and Nikoklis. Both had written more lengthy works about the political and military events at the time, and the episode in Paphos was a minor part in the narration. For Diodorus it can be found in XX.21,1-3 of his forty-volume work *Bibliotheca Historica [The Library of History]*, and for Polienos it is found in VIII, 48,1 of *Stratigimata [Strategems in War/Στρατηγήματα]*.

In Chapter Two, which deals with antiquity, historical information was also drawn from archaeological findings. The use of primary materials for the understanding of historical events and personae, such as archaeological findings, minimizes, to some extent, the negotiation between various historical analyses, as they are written in the twentieth century. Information on Cyprus in the fourth century BC comes from the analysis of archaeological findings, objects discovered in the areas where the plays take place, allowing for fewer levels of interpretation to intervene between the historical time and its interpretation.

The second element mentioned in Section 1.1 and which will be adapted to Cyprus is its location within the Mediterranean basin. The multiplicity embedded within the Mediterranean and the many different influences Cyprus has been exposed to will surface, despite its many connections manifested within the hegemonic rhetoric, as deriving from the Hellenic space. This geographical placement of Cyprus serves as a reminder of the location of the island in historical narratives outside the hegemonic narrative of the continuity of Hellenism on the island. This dynamic and fluid exchange during different eras, as part of various administrative and organizations systems (empires, colonizing systems, etc) of Cyprus with a great many communities in the Mediterranean (outside the Hellenes/Greeks) opens up space for the examination and case studies that follow, on a literary and political level.

Section 1.2 had dealt with the theatrical analysis of the texts. How this model adapts to Cyprus is one of the most daring leaps this study will make, since a direct line is drawn between the literary production of the Greek-Cypriot community and that of continental Europe. The vast majority of critical theory, as mentioned before, draws primary connections between Greek-Cypriot literary production in modernity with Hellenism/Greece, whereas this study has associated the historical plays directly with the production on the continent. Therefore, although Racine wrote in the eighteenth century, and is quite distinct from the twentieth century, when the Cypriot plays were written, these works belong in parallel literary and ideological frameworks, in which a connection is established between the culture of the time with the perceived connection to the history and identity affiliated with the western world, showcasing, though not restricted to, the classical Hellenic world. This was a means to determine the boundaries of their identity, at a time when respective nations were being formulated. An extensive analysis about the connection between the Romantic,

Enlightenment, neo-classical and post-colonial literary ideals and their correlation with the formation of identity will take place in the following three chapters.

The post-Enlightenment period for Cyprus arrived in the second part of the nineteenth century, albeit, significantly later than it did for Europe,. The strong link established between culture and identity, and especially the development of nationalism, can be seen in the transition from one system to another, from British colonialism to independence. This enforces the predominant assumption made in the context of the present study, whereby cultural manifestations on the island during the period of the development of nationalist sentiment were in most cases appropriated to envelop the ideal of Greek nationalism. The idea which became the focal point of the Greek-Cypriot perception of their culture was its unbroken link to Hellenism. Nationalism on many levels of culture became intricately linked with that of the ethnos of Hellas.[55]

Moreover, and in the scope of the character analysis proposed by Barthes, one notices that the construction of national identity on the island of Cyprus in the period between 1878 and 2004 through its leaders/heroes has been the subject matter of many studies and books, but seldom has this been looked at through the lens of cultural analysis. Political analysts, social anthropologists and others have written on such powerful male figures as, Archbishop Makarios, Georgios Grivas Digenis, Gregoris Afxendiou and, female figures such as, Ourania Kokkinou, but the scope of an actual structural analysis of the texts themselves is missing, thus depriving us of a broader understanding of the nature of cultural production and its connection with socio-politics.

In Sections 1.3 and 1.3.1, the development of identity within the era of nationalism was explored, as well as the historical parameters that defined the rise of nationalism within the Greek-Cypriot community. In the context of adapting the described methodology to

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[55] Examples linking cultural production in Cyprus with the Hellenic Ethnos are truly numerous. The following excerpt is taken from the introduction to the book *Εξέχουσες Μορφές της Κυπριακής Ιστορίας* (1988) [*Predominant Figures in Cypriot History]*, a collection of speeches by educator and literary figure Achilleas Limbourides: "[…] from our own homeland, this distant corner of Hellenism, came people who have had a prominent position in the history of our Nation and generally of the civilized world" / "[...] από την ιδιαίτερή μας πατρίδα, την απομεμακρυσμένη αυτή γωνιά του Ελληνισμού, προήλθαν άνθρωποι που έχουν εξέχουσα θέση μέσα στην ιστορία του Έθνους μας και γενικά του πεπολιτισμένου κόσμου" (3). Please note that this book contained portraits of Cypriots from antiquity up to the nineteenth century. Some involved political, religious, military and mythical figures (such as Arodafnousa, the character in the folk song, which will be examined in Chapter Four of the present study). His appropriation of these characters as part of the historical continuum of the Hellenic ethnos is universal.

Cyprus, one firstly notices the need to identify the practice of 'invented tradition' on the island. An example of this is the way in which Cyprus was connected with the Greek Revolution in 1821, with the 'invented tradition' assigning selfless acts of sacrifice to heroic individuals already mentioned in 1.3.1., such as dragoman Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios and Archbishop Kipriakos, the 'martyr of the nation'. The investigation into such constructs, allows for a more academic analysis into the characters of the plays.

Moreover, when adapting the model to Cyprus, a space with multiple communities, languages and historical narratives, one recognizes that the nationalism developed on the island carries a dual nature, as described by Joep Leerssen (2006). On the one hand, 'unification nationalism' which is met in "cultural communities dispersed over different states" and which manifests itself as "an urge toward unification [in order to] make itself felt, the need to group together into a common state" ("National Thought in Europe" 135). Groups of Greek-Cypriots perceived themselves as members of the larger Greek community, and expressed their need to be united with the body of the ethnos. This is an inclination encompassed by the Greek irredentism, which allowed Greek-Cypriots to feel they were part of the Hellenic nation until 1974, when the war in Cyprus shifted attention to the new political issue, the "Cyprus Problem".

On the other hand, Cyprus presents the phenomenon of 'separatist nationalism', which presents itself in "the case of multi-ethnic states or empires [where] cultural and ethnic differentiations may become so important as rallying factors for political disaffections, that the state cannot hold its minorities together" (Leerssen, "National Thought in Europe" 136). The Republic of Cyprus, within which many different communities are found, presents ample examples of this tendency for separatism. The tendencies of the two major ethnic communities for union with their motherlands (Greece and Turkey) simultaneously meant the end of the (linguistically and religiously) mixed communities on the island. This is exemplified in the creation of such groups as EOKA (1950s) and EOKA B (1960s and 1970s) in the Greek-Cypriot community fighting for union with Greece, and TMT (1958) in the Turkish-Cypriot community supporting 'taksim', the division of two major ethnic communities and opposing the ideal of union with Greece.

Finally, and in addition to the awareness of the duality of nationalist practices, one must remain aware of the researcher's obligation to maintain an open scope in the study on identity by looking at, for example: characteristics of the colonial past of Cyprus are found in

the Greek-Cypriot community, for which we do not have the tools to analyze; the relationship to the folk elements of Cyprus; and, why some features are adopted as tradition while others are not. All the above-mentioned dynamics are investigated in the context of the present study, in the chapters that follow and in the context of the Methodology set forth in the present chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

ANTIQUITY

What appears to be important in the reading of the classical text
is the ability to historicize the dust,
instead of ignoring it or covering it up.
From "Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture" by Patrice Pavis (53)

J'ai trouvé la definition du Beau, de mon Beau.
C'est quelque chose d'ardent et de triste.
From *Journaux Intimes* by Baudelaire (X)[56]

2.0 Introduction

Conversation about Cyprus usually includes the most popular stereotypes and clichés: in terms of weather, its dry climate and frequent droughts,[57] and in terms of its socio-political history its attractiveness to outsiders due to its key position at the crossroads of three continents. The local population was under the rule of various conquerors, some of whom were especially harsh. The central message is that Cyprus and its weather were never favorable, therefore, hardship was a part of the lives of Cypriots. What I found interesting was sitting in on presentations about Malta or about Italy, and hearing the same introduction. A sweeping generalization about the nature of life in various Mediterranean regions seems to present shockingly similar tendencies.

The local hegemonic rhetoric therefore enforces the myth of the continuity of history tracing trends back to antiquity not only in Cyprus, but in other Mediterranean communities. The following is an example of the Colonial narrative, later becoming the narrative of Greek-

[56] "I have found the definition of Beauty, my Beauty / It is a thing fiery and sad."

[57] In his discussion of the economy of Cyprus during the French and Venetian conquest of Cyprus, Antonis Hadjikyriacou (2011) problematizes the myth of Cyprus and its consistently dry weather. As an example, he mentions that "It is simple enough to be taken for granted that water was scarce, as is today. Yet, this basic fact was never scrutinized against the main agricultural goods produced on the island. While water was scarce, one may wonder how it was then possible to have centuries of water-intensive agriculture, whereby some of the most thirsty crops were at the centre of production." (55)

Cypriots in relation to their origins. According to archeologists, first evidence for the presence of human beings on the island refers to seasonal hunters *circa*. 10,000 B.C., whereas the first permanent settlers may have arrived from southern Anatolia or the Syro-Palestinian coast. In his book, "Cyprus: Its History, its resources and its future prospects" (published in 1878), R. Hamilton Lang supports that there were "settlers of Aryan origin coming from Lycia" (13). In a further analysis he states that, "There is no means of judging how this Aryan settlement was accomplished, whether by the overwhelming brute force of a swarming invasion, or, as is more likely, by the gradual submission to a superiority based upon higher intelligence." (13-14). Interestingly, the use of the term Aryan has acquired new meaning since World War II and its use by Nazi Germany.[58] However, even when this history was written in 1878 the term was used to distinguish between population groups with different qualities and attributes, positive and negative. The Aryans[59] came to represent racial superiority, affiliated racially with the European tribes, excluding the Jews and other 'lesser' races. Under this lens, one realizes the departure point of our colonial author, who basically categorizes the first wave coming from the Middle East as inferior to the second movement coming in from Asia Minor, in light of the perceived racial superiority of the Aryan (Indo-European) Lycians. Although his conclusion is based on a directive assumption, he shamelessly guides his reader into imagining the Aryans as noble and kind conquerors, in comparison to the primitives of the first wave of settlement.

Let us return to modern dramatic production in the Greek-Cypriot community. The attitude of Greek-Cypriot playwrights about Antiquity does not diverge greatly from the pattern seen in the above example. In the post 1878 period, the perceptions of Antiquity as presented through plays referring back to historical personae and episodes repeat this distinction between the 'noble West' and the 'savage East', making the assumption that Cyprus belongs to the West, in virtue of its Hellenic/Greek identity. The super-imposition of this belief on the socio-politics of the time, with the recent Ottoman rule and the rise in Greek

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[58] In *Mein Kampf* (first published in 1943), Adolf Hitler exemplifies his belief in different qualities in races when he writes: "[…] the völkisch concept of the world recognizes that the primordial racial elements are of the greatest significance for mankind. In principle, the State is looked upon only as a means to an end and this end is the conservation of the racial characteristics of mankind." He goes on to add that, "On this planet of ours human culture and civilization are indissolubly bound up with the presence of the Aryan. If he should be exterminated or subjugated, then the dark shroud of a new barbarian era would enfold the earth." http://www.hitler.org/writings/Mein_Kampf/mkv2ch01.html

[59] Originally in the nineteenth century, they were the speakers of Indo-European languages.

and Turkish nationalisms on the island, has come to enforce the dichotomy even further. What makes for an interesting mix is the colonization of Cyprus by the "Western" British Empire, but this issue will be examined at length in Chapter Four.

In this chapter, the attention is focused on Antiquity and the ways in which it was portrayed in Greek-Cypriot dramatic literature from 1878 to present times. As a literary basis for this examination, the continental and Hellenic/Greek corpuses will be examined, focusing on the links between them and the Greek-Cypriot authors examined. The Enlightenment, Romanticism and other aesthetic and literary movements will be analyzed at length, in an effort to create a framework of the role of Antiquity as a depository of stories and literary structures, in other words, the carrier of the ideological construct of the Neoclassical ideal. The associations and disconnects between the continental and Hellenic/Greek literary productions will be tackled, in an effort to determine the development of the Greek-Cypriot writing model. This chapter will reveal the findings of the archival work into Greek language historical plays written in Cyprus during the period in question, together with an attempt at a first analysis of the findings.

Finally, and this constitutes the largest and most important part of the chapter, a selection of three plays will be analyzed. The plays share their storyline and characters, but were written by different authors at different times and constitute distinct perceptions of identity for each author. For the purposes of this research, the three plays examined were written and published over the span of the second half of the 20th century: *Nikoklis–Axiothea* by K. Nikolaides (1952)[60], *Axiothea*, by Kipros Chrisanthis (1968), and *Axiothea* by Mona Savvidou-Theodoulou (1982). An analysis of their similarities and differences, filtered through the lens of the socio-politics active on the island at the time, offers a glimpse into the tendencies of cultural production in regards to nationalism and its evolution in the Greek-Cypriot community in Cyprus.

[60] The dates mentioned are the dates of publication of the plays.

2.1 Antiquity in Historical Plays

2.1.1. Europe

Antiquity appears as a historical time of great interest in major literary and artistic movements in the European territory from the Renaissance onwards. The Middle Ages, marked from the time of the collapse of the Eastern Roman Empire in the fifth century to the emergence of the Renaissance in the fifteenth century,[61] constituted a time of close connection between religious and political rule. Moreover, the mass illiteracy and feudal system of rule meant that the population of the time, in its vast majority, was blindly subjected to its political or religious master.

The emergence of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century signaled the "age of secular or scientific humanism" (Marsak, 3) and a time when "man's future state [was] described as the increase of reason and freedom"[62] (Marsak, 4). This new philosophical approach became one of the prominent cultural movements which transformed European cultural history, and which embraced Antiquity in various ways. In terms of European Enlightenment, according to Constantinos T. Demaras (1977) this had taken two main standpoints towards antiquity: "either compared to the accomplishments of the younger generation[63] [Antiquity] was condemned along with the past; or it was used as a model for free thought and dignity for human beings, in opposition to the 'dark' Middle Ages" ("Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός" 6). In describing the development of these tendencies, Demaras points out that new ideas did indeed prevail initially, but at a later stage the disciplines of archeology and classical studies rose to embrace the "political ideals of the ancient politeia" ("Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός" 6) and led to neo-classicism and the imitation of antiquity.

Therefore, in the narrower cultural sense, the influence of neo-classical ideals in European literature from the early seventeenth century onwards, creates a concrete

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[61] According to Leonard M. Marsak (1972), "the Enlightenment was perhaps the end of the Renaissance or of the Middle Ages, or else the beginning of modern times." (3)

[62] In terms of Freedom, Marsak (1972) distinguished between Locke's politically-flavored "freedom from restraint" and Rousseau's morally-charged "implying constraint" (4-5). Moreover, Marsak distinguished between Cartesian reason and Humean reasonableness, which led to Kant's rational ethic, following Hume (5).

[63] The author is referring to the young generation of the time, young intellectuals and artists.

relationship between cultural production and the forms of Greek and Roman 'classical' works: tragedies, comedies, the epic, satire and pastoral. This occurs in spite of Ruston's belief that (2007), "[the] forms were strictly adhered to and innovation and originality were less prized than imitation" (135), stressing the practice of dry imitation of the classical form rather than a fertile use of the classical model. Vangelis Calotychos (2003), in his account of the interest of Europe in 'Greece', quotes Wilhelm von Humboldt, one of the spiritual architects of the Prussian Gymnasium in the late eighteenth century, who, reflecting on the impact of classical values on Prussian education at the time, wrote: "from the Greeks we take something more than earthly – almost godlike" (32). In the early seventeenth century in France, the neoclassical ideal is translated into a set of dramaturgical rules,[64] which dictate to authors how a piece of dramatic writing (tragedy or comedy) should look in terms of structure and content. Prominent French authors who adhere to these rules are Jean Racine[65] and Moliere.

By the late eighteenth century, a new movement was also embracing Classical Greek, Hellenistic and Roman antiquity: Romanticism. It has been argued that "Romanticism did not diverge as strongly from Enlightenment philosophy as has sometimes been suggested" (Ruston, 26), but that in the case of literary production it is rather a natural continuum in their development. Romanticism redefines the stylistics of the use of antiquity in literature, since the literary artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth century in Europe used the existing mythologies and literatures of the Greeks and Romans and adapted them to new forms: sonnets, odes, historical plays and others. Their new approach to antiquity, most specifically classical Greece, which was popular in England, is termed *Romantic Hellenism*. It is defined by "the belief that the Greek age was a 'Golden age' of artistic achievement. For the Britons especially, ancient Greece was seen as a time of unparalleled freedom and liberty." (Ruston, 56).[66]

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[64] The rules of French neoclassical writing include decorum, verisimilitude, the unities of time/place/action, the distinction between genres, and others.

[65] Racine's play *Phaedra*/*Phèdre (*first performed in 1667*)*, based on Euripides' *Hippolytus*, is one of the best examples of a neoclassical tragedy.

[66] Romantic Hellenism also included a "particular topicality after the Greeks' bid for independence and subsequent war with the Turks" (Ruston, 133), which is what had pushed philhellenes such as Lord Byron to partake in the Greek Revolution.

In terms of the literary works themselves, the influence of Greek antiquity manifests itself in the British Romantic tradition with such works as Percy Bysshe Shelley's elegy, *Adonais* (1811)[67] and the 'lyrical drama', *Prometheus Unbound* (1820)[68], John Keats' *Endymion* (1818)[69], *Lamia* (1820)[70] and *Ode to Psyche* (1819)[71], Lord Alfred Tennyson's poem *Tithonus*[72] and the translation of Homer's epic poems by the three eminent English poets, George Chapman, Alexander Pope and William Cowper. Naturally, the case of Lord George Gordon Byron is the best example of the influence of antiquity on Romantic literature. Lord Byron's own life (especially its latter part) was defined by his fascination with Hellenism, both in the Classical era, as well as in the political developments during his own time, centering on the Greek Revolution of 1821, which he supported fervently and even visited Greece to offer his help. Lord Byron wrote a number of works related to antiquity: the poem *Prometheus* (1816), the tragedy *Sardanapalus*[73] (1821) and the drama *The Deformed Transformed*[74] (1824), in addition to several poems.

Across the Channel, within the French literary production, various literary characters emerge from antiquity, such as the archetype of the 'Fatal Woman' ('Femme Fatale') in the second half of the 19th century. They are embodied by such characters, as Théophile Gautier's Cleopatra in *One Night with Cleopatra* [*Une Nuit de Cléopâtre,*1845], *Hérodias*, one of the

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[67] Based on the poem *Lament of Adonis* by the Sicilian-Greek poet Bion (1st century B.C).

[68] According to *Romantic Literature*, the play is "written to correspond to the final lost play of the Promethean trilogy of the Greek poet Aeschylus. (…) The style is elaborately abstract, and the play is to be read rather than acted." (Williams, 196)

[69] A poem based on an ancient Greek myth about the moon goddess who fell in love with a shepherd.

[70] A poem in pentameter couplets, tells a story based on the ancient Greek mythic figure of Lamia, a female demon.

[71] This poem tells the story of Psyche, the personification of the human soul for ancient Greeks.

[72] The poem was originally written in 1833, and completed in 1859. It is a dramatic monologue of the ancient Greek mythical figure of Tithonus and his struggle with eternal old age.

[73] The play is based on the Greek myth of the story of the Assyrian king Sardanapalus. It is interesting to note that at the beginning of the publication in 1823, Lord Byron writes a dedication to "The Illustrious Goëthe", calling him "the first of existing writers, who has created the literature of his own country and illustrated that of Europe".

[74] In the play, the deformed Arnold is met in the forest with a Mephistopheles-like Stranger, who offers him the option of shedding his own form to take on another. Arnold finally agrees and the Stranger calls a series of ancient Greek and Roman heroes (Julius Ceasar, Alcibiades, Socrates, Anthony, Demetrius Poliorcetes and Achilles, out of which Arnold chooses the latter and 'wears' his form. The Stranger takes on Arnold's old form and according to Charles Robinson (1997), "consequently became the 'shadow' (I. i. 449) or second half or Arnold, and chose to be called Ceasar" (322). In the development of the drama, the two characters rush to experience the world and "where there is War / and Women in activity" (I. i. 496-97).

Three Tales [*Trois contes,* 1877] by Gustave Flaubert, and Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* (1891). In *The Romantic Agony*, Mario Paz supports that the framework created by such characters (especially Cleopatra) "were destined to become permanent characteristics[75] of the type of 'Fatal Woman' of whom we are speaking" (215). The visual representation is naturally transferred to the cinema in the twentieth century, where the 'Fatal Woman' character type is transplanted into heroines such as Brigid O'Shaughnessy, portrayed by Mary Astor in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), Rita Hayworth in *Gilda* (1946) and many others.[76]

A final point, important for the present study, to be made in relation to the thematic preferences of the Romantics, is the close relation between beauty and death. Mario Paz (1970) thoroughly explores this relationship, which is evident in such authors as Keats, Shelley, Flaubert and Baudelaire, and even Victor Hugo.[77] In discussing this relation, Paz says that "to such an extent were Beauty and Death looked upon as sisters by the Romantics that they became fused into a sort of two-faced herm" (31). The Christian fear of dying and the unknown is re-evaluated by the romantics who attribute beauty to death, therefore neutralizing, to some extent, its terrifying effect. This relation will be examined further in the analysis of the plays, since the way by which heroes and heroines die, in many cases has an intense effect on the entire play and is relevant to the overall analysis.

Finally, the 'Romantic Artist' sketched in Raymond Williams' (1993) *Culture and Society* must be revealed, as he is a complex literary being with multiple influences, among them that of antiquity. He mentions the existence of a "multitude of classical texts" (36) as part of the composition of "the 'superior quality' of art" (36). According to Williams, classical elements in Romantic art can be perceived not as polemic to the core philosophy, but as utilitarian. On the other hand, sociopolitical change was also under way in Europe and early nationalism was in its early stages on the continent in the early eighteenth century.

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[75] Mario Paz (1970) refers to such elements as being "unattainable; Cleopatra is suffering from *ennui*; she is a 'reine sidérale' of irresistible charm […] and the knowledge of her body is an end in itself, beyond which life has nothing to offer; Cleopatra, like the praying mantis, kills the male whom she loves" (215).

[76] A turn-of-the-century Femme Fatale, whose unconventional life and dramatic death by a German firing squad became the seed for the imagination of many, was the exotic dancer/spy Mata Hari (actual name Margaretha Geertruida Zelle, 1876–1917).

[77] Hugo in an 1871 sonnet, says, "Death and Beauty are two deep things […]/ two sisters equally terrible and fertile / having the same enigma and the same secret" /"La Mort et la Beauté sont deux choses profondes […]/ Deux sœurs également terribles et fécondes / Ayant la même énigme et la même secret" (Paz, 31). *Toute la Lyre*, 1893, v.xxvi: *Ave, Dea; moriturus te satutat*.

European authors were searching for their new national identity, and not only through the classical or neoclassical models. According to Hadjipandazis (2006), they were also searching "in their particular history […] in order to discover their uniqueness through their popular language and their folk tradition" (21). The search for a common language and the dipping into the wealth of folk is termed as early nationalism[78]. Joep Leerssen (2006) describes it as a perspective which "sees nations as natural human categories, each defined in its individual identity by a transcendent essence" ("National Thought in Europe" 21), a perspective aided by the anti-revolutionary climate created by German intellectuals after the Napoleonic wars and the tyranny of Napoleon. This resulted in turning a large part of European Romantic literature towards introspection, a return to their perceived ethnic roots, rather than an embrace of classicism. The focus turned to the folk elements within the imagined nations of Europe, a more localized perception of origins, contrary to the concentrated Greco-Roman origin of the west emerging through neo-classicism.

2.1.2. Greece

The exploration of the role of Antiquity in the pre-1821 Hellenic region and the new State of Greece in the post revolution era is a next step that will be dealt with cautiously. Modern Greeks adopted their newly-discovered classical past as a vital part of their national history, rather than a model adopted into the community. Therefore, all the more intensely, neo-classicism claims a dynamic role in the production of Greece and the Hellenic area, at large.

Beginning this discussion with the Greek Enlightenment,[79] one must first acknowledge the era as the introduction of the "secular civilization of modernity" originating

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[78] He also refers to early nationalism as *political romanticism*.

[79] *Greek Enlightenment* is defined chronologically by the middle of the eighteenth century up until the Greek Revolution in 1821. The way we refer to the Hellenic space in modern times as 'Greek', is exemplified by Andrekos Varnava (2012), who says that: "Throughout the Enlightenment, when the West turned to ancient Greece (and Rome) for inspiration, Orthodox Christians educated in the West gradually moved from being seen as Romans (*Romiee* was a word adopted when Christianity was introduced in the Roman Empire and continued during the Byzantine period when the Orthodox Church disapproved of the word "Hellene" because it denoted paganism) to becoming "Greeks"." (221).

from Western Europe into "Greek thought and education" (Kitromilides, 2008, 126). The way with which the modern Greek nation was shaped is an interesting conversation taking place among scholars have taken up. There are, (among others,) two interesting trends attempting to explain how that came about: on the one hand, Greek Enlightenment inspired Greeks to embrace the idea of their new nation, based on Classical Hellenism rather than their Christian religion (Kitromilides, 2008, 128), while, on the other, some scholars support that the new 'Greece' and the 'Greeks' were "a Western concept and creation" (Varnavas, 220), downplaying the involvement of the Greeks themselves. In both approaches, the perspective is determined by an evaluation between the Greeks' involvement in relation to the westerners.

Many peoples in the area experienced processes of defining a distinct historical lineage connecting them with a past. In the case of the Christian peoples in the Hellenic region, before and after the revolution of 1821, they looked towards classical Hellenism through their newly founded state of Greece. During the nineteenth century, communities started an uprising against the Ottoman empire (Serbs, Romanians, Bosniaks, and others) slowly moving away from their religious identities (predominant under the Ottomans) and into a new self-determination based on their perceived historic past and its grandeur.

This socio-political context leads us to a better understanding of the development of the literary production of Greeks who were permanent inhabitants of communities on the continent. The literature produced in various parts of Europe, as well as in the heart of the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople/Istanbul, is also important for the period in question. Anna Tabaki (2005) in her book entitled, *To Neoelliniko Theatro (18os – 19os eonas): Ermineftikes Proseggisis [Το Νεοελληνικό Θέατρο (18ος – 19ος αι.): Ερμηνευτικές προσεγγίσεις/Neo-Hellenic Theatre (18th and 19th centuries): Hermeneutic approaches]* distinguishes between various distinct geographical locales and draws a map of the theatre activities of the Hellenes in the areas of Smyrna/Izmir, Constantinople/Istanbul, Danubian principalities, Odessa, Ambelakia (Thessaly), Ioannina and Heptanisa, as well as the theatre activity of the Phanariotes[80] living in the specific quarter of Istanbul. The author also mentions the leading part of Smyrna/Izmir and Constantinople/Istanbul as the "great centers of communication with the West" (121) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

[80]In describing them, Demaras (1977) mentions that "The class of Phanariotes is shaped and becomes an economic power; around the end of the [18th] century they enter the administration of the Ottoman state" (7).

Furthermore, the relationship between the Enlightenment and Romanticism in the Greek state, as well as for communities of expatriate Greeks, does not have the same type of influence as in Europe. Alexis Politis (1993) suggests that the Enlightenment was never truly lost in Greece, rather it remained present in certain areas of public life (technology, political economy and education). This limited Romanticism to the role of an "alibi, a painful effort to somehow reason with the shortcomings of logic" (Politis, 12). Eventually though, both ideological systems were 'appropriated' by the national cause, and both emotion and logic found their place in the construction of the grand idea of neo-Hellenism and Greek irredentism (this term will be discussed later in the chapter).

The pioneers of literary production in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, worked primarily outside the Greek mainland. According to Demaras (1977), one group is the privileged class of Phanariotes who occupy the space between the Ottoman world and the West (7), thus taking precedence in the development of neo-Hellenic Enlightenment. Their educational and social status, as crucial members of various governments in the metropolises they lived, created opportunity for them to be exposed to the cultural and ideological waves of the eighteenth century. Their activities take place in areas such as western and central Europe, the Balkans and the Danubian principalities. Demaras (1977) also points to the close connections between the neo-Hellenic Enlightenment and French education and philosophy, created largely due to the chronological and philosophical proximity of the two revolutions. It was due to the tidal wave of the French revolution that the "new Hellenism emerges benefited in the western conscience" (57), imposing glorious perspectives to the Greeks themselves about Antiquity. Lastly, Demaras mentions the great importance of an area of the Greek world, the *Eptanisa*,[81] and their access to Italian, English and French influences, which created yet another wave of exposure to European Enlightenment for the Greeks. In her description of Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment, Anna Tabaki (2003) mentions its "very strong pedagogical and popularizing character" ("Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment" 1), stressing the important role of the movement in the development of national consciousness in the larger area of the Balkans. Touching on the literary

[81] The *Eptanisa* are a group of islands in the Ionian Sea and were under British rule till 1864. Their proximity to Italy (and continental Europe in general) was a determining factor in the character of the islands.

implications of the relationship between antiquity and Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment,[82] Demaras returns to his European model, correlating it to the Greek world:

> "[…] in relation to the first stance, it was possible that a spirit of latitudinarianism and renewal of set doctrines could emerge; the other [stance] which coincides chronologically with the local causes for the national rebirth, would give the new Hellenism new arguments in order to insist on the tradition of Antiquity".
>
> ("Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment" 6)

And indeed, the geographically scattered nature of the neo-Hellenic Enlightenment created the conditions for the rejection of the Classical in view of a modern doctrine. However, finally it was the connection made between the glorious ancient past of the Classical Hellenes and the potential for a glorious present and future, through the Revolution against the Ottomans, which became for the modern Greeks the constituent holding their new identity together. Theatre historian, Hadjipandazis (2006) notes that "*The Graikoi*[83] of the time of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars […] are unwilling to search for their national roots in the painful years of the decay of the Byzantine Empire and the *Alosis* (Fall of Constantinople), they search for them two thousand years earlier, in the glorious time of the Marathonomachoi and Salaminomachoi."(21).[84] Moreover, Demaras (1977) comments on the situation at the end of the eighteenth century, saying that "at the time, pride in the ancestors is on the rise, the word 'race' acquires an increasing emotional weight and is used extremely frequently" (19). Moreover, according to Kitromilides (2008), in the end even the Orthodox Church, whose relationship with Classical learning was "evidently a complex one" (130) could not afford to reject classicism, since it had become so integrated within the tradition of the church through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The connection to the church occurred even though the greatest figure, perhaps, of the neo-Hellenic Enlightenment, Adamandios Korais,[85] "excluded from his view of the national state such a vital element of Greek society as the Church" (Blinkhorn & Veremis, 6). This was a consequence of Korais's

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[82] Hadjipandazis (2006) specifies Antiquity for the Hellenes of the Enlightenment as being "the folk tradition related with the Homeric era, the mythology of the pre-classical and classical antiquity" (21).

[83] *Graikoi* was a name for the Greeks during Ottoman times. Another name was *Romioi*.

[84] These terms literally refer to those who fought (and won) in the battles of the ancient Hellenes in Salamina and Marathonas against the Persians. The reference infers times of greatness for the Greeks.

[85] Veremis (1990) characterizes Korais as "genuine product of western Enlightenment" (6).

adopting "the French model as the direct descendant of an ancient Greek democratic polity" (Blinkhorn & Veremis, 7), a secular socio-political condition. Lastly, within the communities of Greeks throughout Central and Eastern Europe, the general promotion of history and historical writing is widespread through the teaching of Ancient Greek; the publication of several 'histories' of the Hellenes in the last three decades of the eighteenth century; the change in main names to sound more 'ancient', and other features.

By 1830, a new wave was now influencing the literary production in the Greek world: romanticism. In this general spirit of 'invented traditions', to borrow the famous term from Hobsbawm (1991), through the rediscovery of aspects of the identity of the modern Hellenes drawn from the Ancient Greeks, Greek authors on the mainland and the diasporas dove into Romanticism in an intense interest for reproducing stories from Antiquity. Politis (1993) call this "the ancient [Hellenes] leading the modern [Greeks] to modernization" (108). Although Peter Mackridge (2008) seems to insinuate an antithesis between neoclassicism and romanticism in this period of Greek literary history, in my view their relationship is one of interconnectedness, as can be observed in literary products repeatedly. In his *Greek Romanticism*, Demaras (1982) talks at length of the importance of the literary figure of Andreas Kalvos (1792 - 1869), who was born in Zakynthos[86] but spent most of his life on continental Europe (Italy, England and Switzerland shortly). Demaras (1982) describes him as a "liberal destroyer of kings and at the same time an archaist, both in his imagery and in his language" (85), whose literary language was a "strange blend of demotic and ancient" (100), pointing out the duality inherent in Kalvos' writing and the multiple levels of influence he was exposed to which reflect in his work. But even Mackridge (2008) himself acknowledges the existence of these tendencies, neo-classicism and romanticism, in authors such as, Georgios Sakellarios and Ioannis Vilaras.

In terms of dramaturgical production, the Greek world presents many examples of plays inspired by Antiquity, but whose production starts rather later than continental Europe. The plays written and staged by Greek authors in the early 1800s[87] are intensely didactic, thus

[86] Zakynthos or Zante (name given by the British) is one of islands in the Eptanisa.

[87] In 1805, Athanasios Christopoulos, a Phanariot, had published in Vienna the first play indicating influences from Antiquity. It was entitled *Heroic Drama* [*Δράμα Ηρωικόν*] and thematically referred to Achilles and Patroclos, as they appear in the *Iliad*.

constituting the idea that the theatre is a way to convey messages to audiences in communities of the Mediterranean, as well as Central and Eastern Europe. Pre-revolutionary theatre (before 1821) aimed specifically to inspire and "stimulate in the soul of the spectator feelings of love for one's country and love for freedom" (Tabaki, 2005, 165), through the principles of democracy and social justice. Plays like *O Leonidas en Thermopiles* [*O Λεωνίδας εν Θερμοπύλαις/Leonidas in Thermopilae]* (1816) by an anonymous author, or *O Thanatos tou Dimosthenous* [*O Θάνατος του Δημοσθένους/The Death of Demosthenes]* (1818) by Nikolaos Piccolos demonstrate this. They both describe feats by noble heroes, a king-general and an orator, against evil forces. Tabaki (2005) also mentions the tragedy *Teramene* – written in Italy, in 1813, by Andreas Kalvos – which deals with the historical era of the Thirty Tyrants of Athens in the 4th century B.C., concentrating its plot on the "hatred escalating gradually against the suppressors of the people" (199). She also mentions *Timoleon [Τιμολέων]*, published in Vienna, in 1818 by Heptanese author, Ioannis Zambelios. Both plays have a didactic agenda and send a clear message about their vision for a just society. Theatre historian, Thodoros Hadjipandazis (2006) claims that *Timoleon*, along with the tyrant-slayers of the 5th century B.C., *Armodios ke Aristogiton* [*Αρμόδιος και Αριστογείτων/ Harmodius and Aristogeiton*] – performed in Odessa, Russia in 1819, by Georgios Lassanis – "derived directly their ideas from the aggressive democratic spirit of the French revolution" (257). However they were not yet aware of the direct connection between the ideas of the plays and the eminent Greek uprising. In his study on Georgios Lassanis, Walter Puchner (2001) disagrees with this view and evaluates the political reflections of the work as "a political manifesto of the imminent Revolution and historical documents of an important turning point of Modern Hellenism" (220).

Disagreements among scholars as to the intentions of the playwrights of historical plays before the revolution seem to decrease substantially in the post-revolution era and with the establishment of the Greek state. The use of antiquity acquires a specific character in the post-1829 era. Politis (1993) makes an interesting point in how antiquity acted as a tool to comment on concepts such as democracy in the modern state of Greece itself, after it was established. He reports on the private staging of a play in 1835 dealing with the same historical figures of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, as a commentary by a youth group[88] on the

[88] The group was called «Φιλελεύθερος Νεολαία» [Liberal Youth].

politics of the time (108). From 1833 when King Othon (Otto) of Greece was declared king till 1835 when he came of age, the country was ruled by a council of advisors, appointed by Othon's father. What is reflected in the plays is the widespread resentment of the public towards this council. It seems like the decade of the revolution granted Greek authors a synchronous perspective on history and developed the skills in order to create literary parallels between historical narratives and current events. One need only add that during the next decade the figures of the tyrant slayers became an inspiration for two more plays: Alexandros Soutsos wrote *Periplanomenos* [*Περιπλανώμενος* /*The Wanderer*] in the 1830s and Constantinos Kyriakou Aristia published a tragedy entitled *Armodios ke Aristogiton i Panathinea*[89] in 1840 in Athens. Hadjipandazis (2006) raises the recurring Enlightenment theme of legitimizing (and glorifying) the killing of an unworthy ruler/tyrant to the status of a thematic motif in historical plays in Greece in the production of the post 1830s, naming it "heroic Tyrannicide"[90] (36).

Furthermore, in the post 1830s period, and with the emergence of Romanticism, the "Greek Romantics never reached a complete breach with Antiquity as a source of inspiration" ("Neo-hellenic Theatre", 325), as was the case in certain European traditions. Tabaki (2005) quotes Greek theatre scholar, Dimitris Spathis, who describes this Greek literary phenomenon as "enlightenment classicism[91]" ("Neo-hellenic Theatre", 98) describing this new and multi-layered literary trend, adapted to the development of the Greek nation. Therefore, post-revolutionary Greece and its cultural production recreate ancient history through the Romantic view of classicism. Certain thematic motifs emerge in the production of historical plays, referring to antiquity in this era:

a. Tyrannicide: This popular trend stretches in time between the pre-revolutionary era, with the aforementioned plays on the tyrant-slayers of Athens, until much later into the 1880s. The first wave of plays include characters whose actions are led solely by political motives, such as the Harmodius and Aristogeiton-inspired plays already mentioned, and other dramatic works such as, *I megalofilia Findiou ke Damonos* or *Dionisios o tirannos*

[89] *Αρμόδιος και Αριστογείτων ή Παναθήναια* / *Harmodius and Aristogeiton or Panatheneae*

[90] «Ηρωική Τυρρανοκτονία»

[91] «διαφωτισμικός κλασσικισμός».

ton Sirakuson,[92] by Demetrios Gouzelis. In the era of post-1840, we notice the emergence of the importance of a personal, subjective consciousness of the hero or the tyrant (anti-hero). This dichotomy is met with in several plays such as *I Loukritia*[93] by Leonidas Kapelou; *Pittakos o Mitilineos*[94] by Theodoros Alkeou; *Alexandros o Fereos*[95] by Iakovos Rizos Ragavis; *I apeleftherosis ton Athenon*[96] by Spyridonas St. Vlachou; *I triakonda*[97] by Alexandros Rizos Ragavis; *Neron*[98] by Timoleon D. Ambela; *Petronios Maximos*[99] by Antonios Io; Antoniades; and, finally *Thrasivoulos o Eleftherotis ton Athinon*[100] by the same author. Hadjipandazis (2006) evaluates this new direction of the plays as a "caution" on behalf of the playwrights so that their "goals would not be connected with the current local political events" (64), namely the negative emotions of the people both around the first ruler, Kapodistrias, and the Bavarian regime which succeeded him. Arriving much later in chronology in relation to the ones just mentioned, are the last plays dealing with this theme: *Melissa*[101] by Nikos Kazantzakis, which differs a great deal stylistically from the previous plays and alludes to the figure of tyrant as patriarch. The

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[92] *Η μεγαλοφιλία Φιντίου και Δάμωνος* ή *Διονύσιος ο τύραννος των Συρακουσών*/*The great friendship between Phintias and Damon* or *Dionysus the tyrant of Syracuse*. Printed in Nafplio in 1835.

[93] *Η Λουκριτία*/ *Lucretia*. Published in Constantinople in 1848. The conflict lies in the tragic hero, who is torn between emotion and duty.

[94] *Πιττακός ο Μιτυληναίος*/Pittakos of Mytilene. Published in Athens in 1849. Hadjipandazis (2006) reports that the general structure of the play (good leader gone bad after rising to power, which leads to popular discontent and a subsequent murder of the tyrant) is intensely reminiscent of the story of Kapodistrias (280).

[95] *Αλέξανδρος ο Φεραίος*/*Alexander of Feres*. Published in Athens in 1851. Hadjipandazis (2006) again assumes a direct link between the plot and the historical events in the transition period between Kapodistrias and Otto (286).

[96] *Η Απελευθέρωσις των Αθηνών*/*The Liberation of Athens*. Published in Athens in 1859. The dichotomy lies in the hero, who is torn between his duty as a brother (his sister is in love with the tyrant) and his patriotic duty.

[97] *Οι τριάκοντα*/*The group of thirty*. Published in Athens in 1866. Ragavis' own history as a politician, leads us to assume that perhaps the personal aspect of the doubts of the heroes is a reflection of his own career and decisions in relation to the political milieu of the time.

[98] *Νέρων*/*Nero*. Published in Syros in 1870. This play also reflects, through the character of the tyrant, Nero, this time, the dichotomy between the world of politics and individual consciousness.

[99] *Πετρώνιος Μάξιμος*/*Petronius Maxim*. Published in Athens in 1879. Hadjipandazis (2006) comments on the lack of orientation in the play, and stresses how this results in the killing of the tyrant as a purely private, not public affair (334)

[100] *Θρασύβουλος ο ελευθερωτής των Αθηνών*/*Thrasivoulos, the liberator of Athens*. Published in Athens in 1885. Hadjipandazis (2006) contextualizes the play in terms of the political developments of the time and says that the play "found no meeting points with the Megali Idea-related uplift of 1885" (353).

[101] *Μέλισσα*/*Melissa*. Published in Athens in 1955.

author writes in the context of his Cretan heritage, rather than relating it in any way to the political setting.

b. Sparta: As the modern Greek state is shaping, discontented playwrights look back to the nation-state of Sparta in order to find a model of society and governance they admire. A number of plays present the virtues and benefits of such a society through their plotline and characters. It is interesting to note that the ideal society these plays are modeled after is not fifth century B.C. Athens, the metropolis of letters for the ancient world, but rather Sparta, the military metropolis. The plays offer interesting insight into the values attributed to the Spartan principles of military order and social austerity, and their projection onto the contemporary Greek: *I triakosi, iti O haraktir tu arxeou Ellinos,*[102] by Alexandros Zoiros; *Pafsanias o Lakedemonios,*[103] by Antonios Io. Antoniades; *Kleomenis o telefteos Iraklidis,*[104] by Konstantinos X. Versis.

c. Commentary on contemporary politics: a number of plays present historical narratives from certain episodes in Antiquity when political and social life were deteriorating. In this case, the play may have functioned as an allusion to the historical times and the contemporary times of the playwright, as a means to reflect on their own concerns. Examples of such plays are: *Kodros,*[105] by Ioannis Zambelios of Lefkada; *O thanatos tu ritoros*[106] by Alexandros Zoiros; *Filipos o Makedon*[107] by Antonios Io. Antoniades;

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[102] *Οι τριακόσιοι, ήτοι Ο Χαρακτήρ του αρχαίου Έλληνος/The [group of] three hundred, that is The Character of the ancient Greek*. Published in Ermoupoli in 1861.

[103] *Παυσανίας ο Λακεδαιμόνιος/Pafsanias of Lacedaemonia*. Published in Athens in 1877.

[104] *Κλεομένης ο τελευταίος Ηρακλείδης/Kleomenes, the last of the Heraclides line*. Published in Athens in 1878. Although, for the most part, this play does not take place in Sparta, and it is closely connected to the prospect of the empire of Alexander, the basis remains the great value of Spartan virtues.

[105] *Κόδρος/Kodros*. Published in Athens in 1844. The play presents the worthy reign of the Athenian king Kodros, who had led his people through hard times to victory and freedom. Researcher, Ioanna Papageorgiou (2010) supports that "in this tragedy are clearly imprinted the political positions of the mature Zambelios" (27). Hadjipandazis (2006) specifies this as the author trying to appeal to the young king Otto, in an effort to "send [him] messages in regards to the true meaning of royal authority" (276).

[106] *Ο θάνατος του ρήτορος/The death of the orator*. Published in Athens in 1862. The play deals with the circumstances which lead to the suicide of Demosthenes, the Athenian orator. Hadjipandazis (2006) supports that the "anti-Russian and anti-Otto content of the play" (296) had forced the author to publish it under initials, rather than his full name.

[107] *Φίλιππος ο Μακεδών/Philip of Macedonia*. Published in Athens in 1866. This was awarded during the Voutsineos Dramatic competition in May of 1985. The story again reflects the struggle of power, this time making Philip into a king torn between duty and personal weakness.

Meropi[108] by D.N. Vernardakis; the Roman-themed *Koriolanos*[109] by Ioannis Mavromichalis; *Dimitrios o Makedon*[110] by Antonios Io. Antoniades; *Filippos ke Olimbias*[111] by Antonios Io. Antoniades; *Themistoclis o Athineos*[112] by Antonios Io. Antoniades.

Accompanying these thematic structures, are also additional thematic elements in these plays, such as the idea of 'voluntary self-sacrifice'.[113] We have already come across this inclination in Romantic heroes of the continent, through the interconnectedness between beauty and death. The practice of sacrificing oneself in the service, and, for the validation of an idea, is, according to Hadjipandazis (2006), "the vision of 'voluntary self-sacrifice' which presented straight growth under any new circumstances" (63), stressing the diachronic dramatic value of the practice as a patriotic act by the characters. And indeed, this phenomenon is repeated in many plays. For the purposes of this chapter, I will briefly elaborate on those incidents when the willing self-sacrifice was carried out by women. The reason for this focus will become clear in the latter part of this chapter, as the Greek-Cypriot plays evaluated, present this thematic feature quite intensely. This willing self-sacrifice presents itself in Chapter Three also, but in a different form.

The first example is *Lukritia*, by Leonidas Kapelou, a play telling the story of a mythical Roman woman, who is married to a nobleman, and raped by the king's son, so in order to salvage her honor, she commits suicide. The play, in addition to making a statement against tyranny, also strongly suggests that the virtues of Lucretia and her choice to take her

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[108] *Μερόπη*/*Merope*. Published in Athens in 1866. The focus of the idea of civic duty takes an intensely personal twist, as the main characters of the play are led by their own principles and priorities (motherly duty, loyalty to the bloodline, etc).

[109] *Κοριολάνος*/*Coriolanus*. Published in Athens in 1868. The prevailing idea is the unbroken bond between an individual and his home country (*patris*).

[110] *Δημήτριος ο Μακεδών*/*Demetrius of Macedonia*. Published in Athens in1880. Hadjipandazis (2006) argues for the metaphorical nature of the skeptical attitude of the Macedonians in the play towards the Romans, as alluding to the mistrust of a portion of the western-educated Greek intellectuals towards the West (340).

[111] *Φίλιππος και Ολυμπιάς*/*Philip and Olympia*. Published in Athens in 1889. This play reflects the perplexed attitude of the author in regards to the true nature of heroism and patriotism, as reflected in the characters of Philip and Demosthenes (his enemy) in the play.

[112] *Θεμιστοκλής ο Αθηναίος*/*Themistocles the Athenian*. Published in Athens in 1893. This play reflects the intensity of a true patriot, even when he happens to be away from his motherland. The implications for the political figures of the time are apparent.

[113] Εθελοθυσία.

own life are noble. The second example is the play by Alexandros Zoiris entitled, *Is apogonos Timoleondos iti Patris, Mitir, Eros*,[114] published in Ermoupoli in 1861. The action of the play is also set in mythical times, in the eleventh century B.C., when the Peloponnese was under the rule of barbarians from the island of Scythes. As the young patriot, Patroclus, returns to liberate his country, he finds his former fiancé Constantia in the process of marrying, against her will, the son of an ally of the tyrant. During the wedding party, Patroclus storms into the palace and kills the tyrant, and is fatally wounded. Constantia commits suicide with poison, but the homeland is saved and now free, which validates both their choice, as their death was not in vain. The next example also tells the story of a mythical woman, *Merope*,[115] in a play written by D. N. Vernardakis. In the Greek kingdom of Messine, queen Merope's first husband, king Cresphontes has been slain and his brother Polyphontis succeeds him to the throne and takes the queen as his wife. In an effort to avenge the death of her first husband, Merope almost kills her own son (who has returned to take revenge for the death of his father) and finally kills Polyphontis, who has turned into a tyrant. Finally, for stability to continue in the kingdom, Merope takes her own life, urging her people to be united and help her son, the new king, in his new role. The next similar play is entitled *Cleopatra*, written by Timoleon Ambelas, and was published in Athens in 1916 – the first version of the play appears in print in 1876. Telling the famous history of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, the author presents the Egyptian queen as both an intensely erotic being, but also as a patriot and loving mother. At the end of the play, after her children have been arrested by the Romans, in spite of her fervent efforts to help them escape to safety, she commits suicide through the bite of a poisonous snake and to burn down the palace so that her treasures will not fall into the hands of enemies.

From this brief exploration of 'willing self-sacrifice' in Greek historical plays which portray the suicides of female characters, certain conclusions can be drawn. Fundamental virtues among them include the interconnectedness between honor and women, manifested mostly by the imposition of the will of men on women, either through rape or by being forced into marriage. This is true of all plays mentioned here, except for Cleopatra, but even in this case, one might argue that she was encouraged by societal restrictions on her sex to seduce

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[114] *Είς απόγονος του Τιμολέοντος ήτοι Πατρίς, Μήτηρ, Έρως/Towards becoming descendants of Timoleon are the Homeland, Mother, Eros*.

[115] Researchers report that Sophocles based the story of his tragedy, *Cresphontes* [Κρεσφόντης] on this myth.

these men in order to protect her children. The second point is that it seems that only through sacrificing themselves can women be sanctified. Self-sacrifice elevates them to a higher level in the socio-political context, even though in life they were all noble women and social status was not something they needed to aspire for, let only sacrifice themselves for. One could even extend this point into an anthropological context, whereby the sacrifice of a woman "fertilizes" a city or state and regenerates it. Finally, the voices of the women and their actions are 'heard' loudly at the end of the plays. Their presence is manifested through their act of self-sacrifice, and in some cases through their final monologues as they are dying, which are the last didactic words towards the audience.

2.2 Antiquity in modern Greek-Cypriot Literature

The influence of antiquity on Greek-Cypriot literature in the nineteenth and twentieth century is also associated with a late development of modern written literature on the island (an addition to the local oral traditions). This in turn delayed the adaptation of literary trends, such as the Enlightenment, Neoclassicism and Romanticism, which, as we have seen, carry antiquity as one of their organic features, into the socio-political and literary conditions of the Greek-Cypriot community at the time. As the analysis of the movements and the plays will demonstrate, the features influencing the character of Greek-Cypriot literature and its relation to antiquity are varied and correlated according to the conditions in Cyprus, and the literary and geographic periphery.

In setting the context for the development of modern literature among the Greek-Cypriot community in Cyprus, it is important to start with the acknowledgement of two major religious communities on the island during the Ottoman period. The literature produced during the late Ottoman period by the two communities, the Christians (Greek-Cypriots) and the Muslims (Turkish-Cypriots)[116] of Cyprus, present interestingly common characteristics. Mattias Kappler's (2009) comparative article between Turkish- and Greek-Cypriot literatures during the Ottoman era claims the creation of a relationship of periphery-center as a common

[116] The terms to describe the two communities essentially change after 1878. Christians define themselves as *Greek-Cypriot*, thus stating their affiliation to Greece. For the Muslims of Cyprus, *Turkish-Cypriot* is adopted after the early 1920s and the declaration of the Republic of Turkey.

point for both literatures.[117] He specifies that literature by Greek-Cypriots was perceived as being in the periphery of the Hellenic center (which was Constantinople, and then Athens), rather than being part of the diaspora of Hellenism (285-286), alluding to the organic relation the Greek-Cypriots perceived themselves as having with Greece. However, for reasons mentioned in the Introduction, this study will limit itself to the Greek-Cypriot community, therefore, it will not be engaging with the literary production of other communities on the island.

In his well researched, *Theatre in Cyprus*, theatre historian, Yiannis Katsouris (2005) discusses the widespread illiteracy on the island, and the important role that education began to have. Katsouris mentions that in the first half of the nineteenth century, illiteracy and poverty were widespread, thus, in 1812, Archbishop Kyprianos made the establishment a secondary school, calling it the *Elliniki Scholi* [Ελληνική Σχολή/Hellenic School]. This was an event of great importance and the first of its kind. The School was closed during the period between 1821-1930 due to its interconnectedness with the Greek revolution, but when it reopened it "became the basic center for education, cultivation of the national visions and the spiritual and cultural development of the place" (17; vol. A), setting the standard for education for Greek-Cypriots. These educational standards included the study and staging of the classic Greek authors (mainly the three tragedians: Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides), which were considered basic in the context of a nationally conscious education.

In *History of Modern Cypriot Literature*, Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010), give a detailed account of the development of Cypriot literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and raise the interesting question of language and its implications. According to their research, lyrical and narrative poetry can be seen in Cyprus from the mid nineteenth century, with the production of works by Greek-Cypriot authors who are deeply torn on the issue of which language to write in. In setting the framework of this period, the literary historians mention that the trends in the first two decades of the nineteenth century are dominated by an:

[117] Kappler considers his work "an attempt to consider the literary expression in the two languages during the Ottoman supremacy on the island as one and the same expression from a peripheral context towards the center(s)" (2009, p. 286).

> "ideological battle by authors amongst the archaists, the supporters of the neo-hellenic 'koene' and the idioms (the "natural" language) and the theoreticians or the supporters of various types of linguistic 'compromise' or 'settlement' […] [among which] Cyprus (and parts of the Cypriot diaspora) seems to be more attracted by the more *intellectual*[118] approaches […]"
>
> ("History of Modern Cypriot Literature", 180)

Therefore, we find literature written in the full linguistic array offered at the time, from a rigid katharevousa[119] to the Greek-Cypriot variety,[120] and everything in between. Kehagiolou and Papaleontiou (2010) associate this inclination of authors with the emerging nationalism[121] on the island from the mid nineteenth century onwards, but also with the enhancement of the Enlightenment value of democracy (180). Both these elements create a clear link with the developments on the continent, albeit about 80 years overdue. This phenomenon is also clearly associated with the framework of the 'imagined community', as described by Anderson (1991), and its need for a single, unifying language for a nation. In the case of literature, the language of the literary work was also a 'printed language', since it was published, therefore laying the foundation for national consciousness by creating unified fields of exchange and communication (39-48). This powerful tool of identity building is still an issue of debate, continuing from the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth.[122] Generally speaking, until the end of World War I, "the Greek Revolution of 1821 (…), the perceived 'irredentism' and the vision of the *Megali Idea* ['Great Idea', Greek Irredentism] are some of the basic 'political' topics" ("History of Modern Cypriot Literature", 214), which will appear in literature throughout the period being studied.

Neoclassicism is evident in the first book published in Paris in 1836 by Cypriot writer, Markos Andreadis, entitled, *Nea Kipriaka Epi [New Cypriot Epics/Νέα Κυπριακά*

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[118] Translated from the word *λόγια, λογιοσύνη*. Emphasis mine.

[119] This was considered a high variety of Greek, proposed by Greek enlightenment intellectual, Adamandios Korais, as cleansed of all 'foreign' elements and establishing a linguistic connection to Ancient Greek. It was used as the official language of the Greek state until 1976.

[120] The variety is the language spoken by the Greek-Cypriot community.

[121] The authors make an interesting commentary regarding the reference in relation to the emergence of *nationalism*, rather than *helleno-centrism*, "as is interpreted by some single-mindedly" ("History of Modern Cypriot Literature", 180), thus contextualizing the ideological basis for these literary practices in a less restricted frame, not limited to Helleno-centrism, but encompassing other elements as well.

[122] For more on the issue of language and identity in Cyprus, refer to Newton (1972), Tsiplakou & Ioannidou (2012), Hadjioannou, Tsiplakou & Kappler (2011), and others.

Έπη]. The title itself suggests that the book has "a clear connection attempted to antiquity" ("History of Modern Cypriot Literature", 214), clearly referring to the Cypriot Epics by the Cypriot poet of antiquity, Stasinos. Moreover, many other authors' works "are prominent [in] the stereotypical elements of archeolatry" ("History of Modern Cypriot Literature", 218). For example: Nikolaos Saripolos, the renowned expatriate[123] produced most of his poetry in the period between 1839-49;[124] Georgios Kipiadis, whose "weak collection of verses" ("History of Modern Cypriot Literature", 218) entitled *Thermopylae* [*Αι Θερμοπύλαι*] was published in 1854; Ioannis Karageorgiadis, an author who presents a clear "'cyprio-centric' turn" ("History of Modern Cypriot Literature", 220), but whose translations of 'classical' authors, as well as his historical theatre plays, are still oriented towards antiquity; [125] Onoufrios Iasonidis whose poetry collection entitled "*I Mousa, I niriis ke I magemeni nisos*" [*Η μούσα, η νηρηίς και η μαγεμένη νήσος/The muse, the nereid and the enchanted island*] was published in 1893.

The beginning of the 20th century sees the growth of a variety of publications, most prominent being the literary magazines,[126] which are published in the towns and large rural communities of Cyprus, hosting new writings by Greek-Cypriot authors (living in Cyprus and abroad) but also many new translations, often of tragedies or other classical texts. The journals are an expression for many new Greek-Cypriot literary figures, who, according to Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010), often try to align themselves with the Greek world and literary figures, as, for example, Kostis Palamas, and with literary and aesthetic trends, such as modernism and symbolism.[127] At the same time, others "join socialist ideology", in some cases following Greek literary figures, such as Kostas Varnalis ("History of Modern Cypriot

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[123] Saripolos (original last name was Saripoglou) was born in Larnaca in 1817. His family was forced out of the island by the Ottoman authorities and so they moved to Trieste and then Paris, finally settling in Athens where he became a professor of law at the University of Athens from 1844-1875. In addition to being a lawyer, Saripolos was also a poet and a playwright. He died in 1887.

[124] These are poetic works through which, according to Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010) he seems "saddened by the inglorious present, enraged by the "sacrilege" by Lord Elgin […] or invokes the glorious ancient Greek past in order to praise the patris and the Revolution of 1821" (217).

[125] Karageorgiades and his work will be discussed later on in the chapter and in Chapter 3. His historical plays present great interest, both linguistically and thematically.

[126] Information on literary magazines can be found in Papaleontiou (2001) *Κυπριακά Λογοτεχνικά Περιοδικά κατά τα χρόνια της Αγγλοκρατίας*.

[127] The 1930s are a period of literary rebirth for Greek literature and art, in general. Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010) use the term *κοσμογονία* (birth of a world) to describe this era (345).

Literature", 288). The literary magazines are a representation of the identity advancements on the island, but an evaluation will not be a focus of the present study, as their content is significantly different from the plays, both in terms of form and content. The articles published in the magazines include many authors, representing various literary genres and viewpoints; in addition, the commercial part of advertisements is another interesting aspect, which requires further attention.

Finally, in spite of the publication of ten new dramatic works, of which, eight are historical plays, during the period between the mid-nineteenth century until 1914, we find that the plays written rarely take their stories from antiquity. The founding of various Greek-speaking schools[128] and cultural clubs[129] in urban and large rural communities brings to the stage a great number of ancient Greek dramas, in addition to European and Greek romantic plays and melodramas.

2.3 Greek-Cypriot historical plays on Antiquity

2.3.1 Archival Findings

In my research, the number of Greek-Cypriot historical plays published and/or staged in Cyprus between the period from 1878-2004 relating the history or characters to Antiquity, amount to twenty-seven.[130] It is interesting to note their thematic variety, with nine of these plays featuring narratives of mythical characters from the epics (*Odyssey* and *Iliad*) or story cycles (Theban plays) and others.[131] Such characters are Achilles, various Olympian gods, Adonis and Aphrodite, Antigone and Polyneices, Hero and Leandro, and others.

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[128] Other examples of schools are the Elliniki Sxoli Lemesou [Ελληνική Σχολή Λεμεσού] (1819) and the Faneromeni Girls School (Παρθεναγωγείο Φανερωμένης, 1859) in Nicosia.

[129] The Elliniki Dramatiki Eteria 'Sophocles' ('Sophocles' Greek Drama Company) in Larnaca, stages in 1869 the first modern Cypriot play, entitled "*I Kipros ke oi Naite*" [*Cyprus and the Templar Nights*], by Georgios Sivitanidis. Other clubs include, the Ellinikon Theatron Aris [Ελληνικόν Θέατρον Άρης] in Limassol, staging Greek and European dramas through the 1880s, and consistent theatrical activities by an unnamed group in the town of Paphos in the winter of 1889 ("Theatre in Cyprus", 31; Vol. A).

[130] A complete list of plays can be found in Appendix 1.1.

[131] In his Introduction to the edited volume, "Rebel Women: Staging Ancient Greek Drama today", S.E. Wilmer (2005) notes that "in searching for appropriate strong female characters, both historical and mythological, who can speak to the current generation about the condition of women and the potential of women to be active in shaping their present and their future, contemporary theatre directors and dramatists have often turned to Greek tragedy and comedy" (xiv).

Furthermore, there is a second group of six plays, which deal with historical figures whose activity unfolds in the Greek region (for example, the city-state of Athens, Delphi, and, the island of Kos), and with themes of men of medicine (Hippocrates and Herophilus), the philosophers Socrates and Diogenes, and two Cypriot athletes, Golgos and Nikon. The last thematic group involves: nine plays set in Cyprus, dealing with the histories of sacrifice of Cypriot kings and queens (Nikoklis, Axiothea, Dimonassa and Onisilos); two of which deal with the military feats of the Athenian general Kimon, during the first half of fifth century B.C., and his victory over the Persians in Cyprus, despite his death during battle; one deals with the settlement of Cyprus by the Hellenic tribes and the interaction between the two populations entitled, *Anihnevondas tis Rizes mas* [*Ανιχνεύοντας τις ρίζες μας*/*Tracking our Roots*] by Christodoulos Pachoulides (2008); while *Evdimos o Kiprios* [*Evdimos the Cypriot*] by Kipros Chrisanthis (1958) concentrates on Evdimos, a young Cypriot who leaves the island to become educated in Athens in Philosophy, and ultimately dies heroically in Syracuse. Lastly, the oldest play in the category must be mentioned. It was published in 1893, and entitled, *I Sinomosia tou Katilina [Η Συνωμοσία του Κατιλίνα*/*The Conspiracy of Catiline]* by Evgenios Zenon, and its plot centres around the efforts of the Roman politician Catiline to overthrow the Roman republic in the first century B.C.

Evidently, this last play is the only one which does not take its storyline or characters from Greek or Cypriot history, or myth, but follows the European continent's practice, and the example of Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen, who had also written a play entitled *Catiline*, published in 1850, in then Christiania, now Oslo, and 1875 in Copenhagen. The vast majority of the plays in this category thematically connect Cyprus with the Hellenic philosophy and science of antiquity, by using historical characters in order to establish common goals, ethics and even, a genetic lineage for ancient Cypriots and Hellenes. This connection is either direct, in terms of the protagonist being local or the story itself being set on the island, or, indirect, by the establishment of common character traits between Cypriots and Hellenes, therefore establishing common ideals. Through this cultural production, a perceived close connection of Greek-Cypriots with mainland Greeks is generated through the described ancient past, which in turn leads to how Cypriots perceived their identity at the time. These ideological implications for twentieth century Greek-Cypriots will be discussed later in the chapter.

In terms of language, one must note that of the twenty-seven plays, the two oldest plays are written in *Katharevousa*, with a possible third play entitled *Achillevs*[132] *[Αχιλλεύς/Achilles]*, by M. Gavriilidis, but which has not been found. The remaining twenty-five plays are written in standard mainland demotic Greek (*Dimotiki)*[133], but with a large majority fashioning a poetic and/or lyrical language. This practice is intensely reminiscent of the translations of ancient Greek drama into modern Greek, popular during the first half of the twentieth century. However, Andri Constantinou (2006) observes of these authors who write in Demotic Greek that it "sounds artificial when the characters are talking about day-to-day issues" (57). This is not surprising since the exposure of Greek-Cypriot authors to literature in Katharevousa was not systematic, unless they lived outside the island.

The structural relation between these plays and the neo-classical model is quite complex. One example to start here, and which will reach its full capacity in the analysis of the plays further in this chapter, is that within this group of plays, there exists a frequent practice of writing plays modeled on the dramaturgical format of ancient Greek tragedies. Kipros Chrisanthis is the best example, having written seven dramatic plays in the period between 1950 and 1973, which structurally resemble an ancient Greek tragedy to such an extent that some of the works even include a chorus.[134]

Lastly, there are four satirical/comedic works in this group: *Atlantis* [*Ατλαντίς*],[135] a Lyrical Comedy (1923) by Ioannis Karageorgiades, set in the fantastic world of mythical Atlantis; *Theomahies* [*Θεομαχίες/Battles of the Gods*], a satire (1951) by Kipros Chrisanthis; *Ta genethlia tu Dia* [*Τα Γενέθλια του Δία/The birthday of Zeus*], a satire (1973), by Kipros Chrisanthis; and, *Socratis ke Xanthippi* [*Σωκράτης και Ξανθίππη/Socrates and Xanthippe*], a comedy (1994) by Costas Socratous. These plays present interesting features, especially in terms of character development, but remain unrelated to the model of dramatic plays studied in the context of the present research. Moreover, their protagonists are in most cases anti-heroes, which would change the landscape of literary analysis towards more modernist

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[132] The title itself is in Katharevousa and it is *Αχιλλεύς* rather than the demotic Greek Αχιλλέας, which leads us to the conclusion that the play itself is in Katharevousa.

[133] Popular form of the Greek language.

[134] In *Evdimos o Kiprios*, there are two choruses, one of old men in Cyprus and one of young men in Athens.

[135] The play's first scene was first published in the journal *Avgi* [*Αυγή/Dawn*] in 1911.

practices, such as a deconstruction of the characters, and this is not within the interests of the present study. Therefore, these plays will not be discussed further in the present study.

2.3.2 Antiquity plays referring to Nikoklis - Axiothea

For a better understanding of the 3rd century B.C., an account of the history of the island up to that point in chronology is necessary. As for the usual introduction to discussions on Cyprus' history, one usually highlights the unique geographic location of Cyprus, which lies at the crossroads of sea trade in the eastern Mediterranean, making it an important center for trade and commerce in antiquity. By the Early Bronze Age (*circa*. 2500 B.C.– *circa*. 1900 B.C.) and Middle Bronze Age (*circa*. 1900 B.C.– *circa*. 1600 B.C.), Cyprus had established contacts with Minoan Crete and, subsequently, Mycenaean Greece, with the ancient civilizations of the Near East (Syria and Palestine), Egypt, and southern Anatolia, specifically, the Syro-Palestinian coast. Rich copper resources provided the Cypriots with a commodity that was highly valued and in great demand throughout the ancient Mediterranean world. Cypriots exported large quantities of this raw material and other goods.

During the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1600 B.C.–ca. 1050 B.C.), copper was being excavated and exported on a massive scale, as shown by the presence and number of Cypriot ingots in distant areas, such as Sardinia. Products from Cyprus were traded in Egypt, the Near East, and the Aegean region. Refugees from mainland Greece found refuge on the island sometime in the twelfth century B.C, due to instabilities in their own society's structures. Changes are indeed visible in Cyprus at a cultural and political level at this point. In *History of Cyprus*, George Hill (1922) speaks in a lyrical language of the first, as he refers to them, "Greek settlers" (11) and their arrival on the island, referring to local tradition and legends as references to the story. The clearly non-scientific manner of portraying the history of this period reflects the romanticized perspective of the origins of the Greeks of Cyprus, much in the spirit of the example mentioned in the Introduction to the present chapter. The glorification of the Greek settlers and the indigenizing nature of the reference to the locals exemplify this point.

By the eighth century B.C., Cyprus has eleven kingdoms: Salamis, Kition, Amathus, Curium, Paphos, Marion, Idalion, Tamassos, Murium, Soli, Kyrenia and Lapithos. In the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. Cyprus was conquered by the Assyrians, followed by a brief

period of independence and in the sixth century B.C. it came under the power of the Egyptians. In 525 B.C. the kings of Cyprus transferred their allegiance to the Persian ruler of Egypt, and in 499 B.C. all Cypriot kingdoms except Amathus joined the Ionians in their revolt against the Persians. The Revolt was subsequently suppressed, culminating in the sieges of Paphos and Soli. The Classical Period (475-325 B.C.) was characterized by the influence of the Athenians on the island evident in artistic creation. Moreover, they helped Evagoras of Salamis in his, eventually unsuccessful, efforts to unite the Cypriot kingdoms in order to disassociate themselves from the Persians. Cyprus remained under Persian rule, till 331 B.C. when it joined victorious Alexander, who allowed the Cypriot kings to continue their own administration system, without permitting them to mint their own coin.

At this historical moment, we meet Nikoklis and Axiothea, the king and queen of the city-state of Paphos of the third century B.C. For the purposes of this research, I will focus on the historical narratives around these two characters, as they appear in three different plays: *Nikoklis–Axiothea* by K. Nikolaides (1952)[136]; *Axiothea*, by Kypros Chrysanthis (1968); and, *Axiothea* by Mona Savvidou-Theodoulou (1982). There is significant historiography and archeological writing around the period when these characters lived. The throne of Paphos[137] (one of the eleven Cypriot kingdoms) became the seat for the Kinyrad kings,[138] who held the title of "King of Pafos and Priest of the Ruling Lady (Wanassa)". This made them, according to Maier "temporal rulers of Pafos and at the same time High Priests of Aphrodite" (1995, p. 77).[139] The worship of Aphrodite was closely associated with the city-state of Paphos, mentioned in many authors of antiquity, including Homer.[140] The importance of the goddess will be demonstrated further in this study, as she is mentioned by the authors and associated with the action in various predictable but also entirely unexpected ways.

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[136] The dates mentioned are of the publication of the plays.

[137] Also known as PalaePaphos, modern day Kouklia.

[138] The Kinyrad line starts with the mythical king Kinyras, and is already in place by the eighth century when the city-kingdoms are formed.

[139] Maier (1995) adds that "This traditional role of the oriental priest-king set the rulers of Pafos apart from the other monarchs on the island" (77).

[140] Interestingly enough, the matter of the three mentions of Aphrodite and/or Paphos in Homer is discussed in "The Handbook of Cyprus": a booklet written for the British visiting or intending to live in Cyprus (first published in 1901). Here, I offer the most interesting of the three mentions: «η δ' άρα Κύπρον ίκανε φιλομμειδής Αφροδίτη / ες Πάφον· ένθα δέ οι τέμενος βωμός ντε θυήεις.» (Odyssey, viii, 362), which translates to "But laughter-loving Aphrodite went to Cyprus to Pafos, / where is her precinct and fragrant altar" (translation of "The Handbook of Cyprus").

In the fourth century B.C., the support of the Cypriot kings of the victorious king of the Macedonians, Alexander the Great, was a well-considered political move which preserved, for a while, the status of a local independence they had enjoyed in their previous regime. However, this phase was to be short-lived, since Alexander died in 331 B.C., and the conflicting ambitions of his generals resulted in the extended Wars of the Successors, part of which Cyprus inevitably became a part of due to its geographical location.

These political changes, the violent incidents and intrusive nature of the Ptolemaic kings on the island greatly influenced king Nikoklis, the last Kinyrad king.[141] Two of the principal rivals for the throne of Alexander, namely Ptolemy and Antigonos, saw the island as a source of wealth and a strategic strongpoint, which forced the Cypriot kings to take sides in their feud. Nikoklis, along with the kings of Salamis, Soli and Amathus, sided with Ptolemy, a wise move for a while, since "the kingdoms which had sided with Antigonos were abolished. The inhabitants of the destroyed city of Marion were transferred to PalaePafos as a reward for Nicocles' loyalty." ("Pafos: History and Archeology", 224). Eventually, even the fate of the four allies of Ptolemy was unfortunate, starting with Nicocreon of Salamis, who had served as *strategos*[142] of Cyprus from 313/312 B.C. to 311/310 B.C, and was forced to take his own life. Menelaus, the brother of Ptolemy, was appointed as the new *strategos* of Cyprus, and started a campaign to truly subdue the island.

One of his challenges was obviously Nikoklis, due to his position and influence on many levels of government.[143] Maier and Karageorghis (1984) describe Nikoklis as "obviously an active and enterprising monarch, a great builder and something of an innovator" (222), taking evidence from inscriptions mentioning his feats.[144] Moreover, they

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[141] In *Pafos: History and Archeology*, F.G. Maier and V. Karageorghis (1984) point out that "The last decades of the 4th century B.C. thus brought a decisive change. The newly established kingdoms of the Successors left no room for political relics such as the traditional small city kingdoms and Cyprus lost its last vestiges of independence. […] No other kingdom in Cyprus was so deeply affected by this change as PalaePafos" (222).

[142] The term is explained by Młynarchzyk (1990) as "the representative of the Lagid dynasty toward the other kings and at the same time one of the subject kings of Ptolemy" (73).

[143] Młynarchzyk (1990) adds that "[his] activity within his kingdom was too dynamic, his authority' as priest-king and descendant of the divine Kinyras too great, his treasury presumably full, finally the strategic qualities of the kingdom and primarily of the newly founded Nea Paphos too apparent for Ptolemy not to desire to remove a potential ally of Antigonus" (73).

[144] Młynarchzyk (1990) mentions that "at present, eight known inscriptions refer to the person of Nikoklis. […] Six of the inscriptions commemorate the building activity of the king, while the topographical dispersion of

point out that inscriptions from that era denote the beginning of the use of the Greek alphabet, in addition to the local syllabary. In her study of Nea Paphos [New Paphos], Archeologist Jolanta Młynarchzyk (1990) states that, "This looks like a conscious policy of "opening" the Paphian kingdom and at the same time stressing its place within the Greek world", and continues her argument saying, "Similarly, the sanctuaries which Nikoklis builds or beautifies are shrines of deities which, though originally probably local, had now clearly become identified with Greek ones" (68). Furthermore, during approximately ten years of his reign from the early 320s B.C. to 310/309 B.C., one of Nikoklis' most important acts was establishing Nea Paphos, a port city which was meant to serve better the needs of the inhabitants of the kingdom. However, as Młynarchzyk (1990) mentions in her findings, given the nature of the fortifications, Nikoklis "clearly aimed at strengthening his own authority and his kingdom" (71). Lastly, the ambition of the Paphian king can be safely assumed based on another important archeological discovery: "the silver *tetradrachmae* of the Alexander-the-Great type minted in Paphos. On their obverse decorated with the head of Heracles, hidden in the lion's mane is the microscopic legend 'ΝΙΚΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ'" ("Nea Paphos III", 71), thus establishing the presence of Nikoklis on the coins.

The main sources of information for the historical characters, Nikoklis and Axiothea, and their dramatic death, are found in the historiographies of Diodoros Sikeliotis[145] and Polienos.[146] They write on the events of 310/309 B.C. surrounding the death of the Paphian royal family and court. Diodorus mentions how "Ptolemy, suspecting Nikoklis of a secret agreement with Antigonus, sent two commanders, Argaios and Kallikrates, to Cyprus. With troops supplied by Menelaos, the *strategos*[147] of Cyprus, they laid siege to Nikoklis in his palace forcing him to commit suicide. His family followed suit, first setting fire to the building" (21; DIOD, Ch. XX) ("Nea Paphos III", 26). Both historiographers offer brief but

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these finds permits a consideration of the range of Nikoklis' power and proves the interest which the king harbored for different, also peripheral, regions of his kingdom" (68).

[145] Diodorus Siculus [Διόδωρος Σικελιώτης] was a Greek historian, who wrote works of history between 60 and 30 BC. He is known for the monumental universal history *Bibliotheca historica*, consisting of 40 books, of which 1–5 and 11–20 survive. The story of Nikoklis and Axiothea can be found in XX. 21,1-3.

[146] Πολύαινος lived in the second century B.C. and wrote the eight-volume works, *Στρατηγήματα*, where one can find the story of Axiothea and Nikoklis in VIII, 48,1.

[147] Military commander.

vivid narrations as to the fate of Axiothea after Nikoklis dies[148], and these are the basis for the narratives of the three plays studied.

2.3.3 Analysis of Plays

a. Nikoklis-Axiothea, by Costas Nikolaides (1952)

Nikoklis-Axiothea [*Νικοκλής – Αξιοθέα*], written by Costas Nikolaides was published in the Cypriot journal *Kipriaka Grammata* [*Κυπριακά Γράμματα*] in Nicosia, in the two consecutive issues of February and March in 1952. This publication appears three years before the beginning of the EOKA movement on the island, and eight years before the declaration of the independence of the Cypriot state. The play is a 'heroic tragedy' and has "associated the classical with Ancient Greece" (Papageorgiou 29). Creating a literary bridge between this work and that of Greek author, Ioannis Zambelios and his ideological baggage, one can sense the same purpose of writing in a sentence he wrote in 1860: "[the play] arouses in the souls of their contemporaries the love and fairness of glory"[149] (297).

Each one of the two acts of the play is an autonomous narrative, with the first part of the play telling the story of the death of Nikoklis and his knights, and the second half narrating the story of the death of Axiothea and the women of the court. The two parts function independently, and could be one-act plays in their own right. It is interesting to note that Act II has a Chorus, whereas Act I does not. Also, no same characters appear in both acts of the play: Act I involves only male characters, while Act II only female characters. Despite these differences, the two Acts have the same basic structure in terms of the development of the action, and also share figurative language mechanists (imagery, allusions, etc). In terms of language, the play is written in Demotic Greek, in the metric poetic rhythm of the iambic

[148] The full texts can be found in Appendix 1.2.

[149] «να εγείρωσιν εις τας ψυχάς των συγχρόνων των την αγάπην και την άμιλλαν της δόξης» in *Τραγωδίαι*, Ιωάννη Ζαμπέλλιου Λευκάδιου, έκδοσις Σεργίου Χ. Ραφράνη Ηπειρώτου. Τμ. Α'. Εν Ζακύνθω. 1860. As found in Ioanna Papageorgiou's (2010) «Οι δραματικοί Ήρωες του Ιωάννη Ζαμπέλιου».

pentameter, a poetic meter used in Byzantium since the tenth century A.D.[150] and in many folk songs[151] of the Hellenic world.

The characters in this play fall into three categories. Firstly, there are the protagonists of the respective Acts, Nikoklis and Axiothea, who develop the action in all ways possible. The second group consists of fictional characters, such as the court and the staff of the palace, who act as supportive roles, and finally, there are the two representatives of Ptolemy (both historical characters) who come to bring the message to the king of Paphos that he must surrender. It is interesting to note that Nikolaides labels the latter two characters as "Strangers", although they introduce themselves by name when they speak, and the historical accounts reveal their identity.

In a general evaluation of the characters, one could say that they are all one-dimensional and serve a single function in the play, each category its own. Here is the group of fictional characters in each Act: the 'Brothers and Counselors' of Nikoklis (who speak as one), the guard Lysandros, and a Messenger in Act I, as well as the Chorus (which consists of 'Four Princesses of the Court', but who speak as one), in addition to the Handmaid Fivi in Act II.

The functions of the Counselors in the action of Act I consist of supporting and following Nikoklis in all his actions. Their basic decisions through the course of the play are two: when asked by Nikoklis what their opinion is on the issue of the eminent threat by the two rival Ptolemaic kings, they advise him that the best he can do for Paphos is to "stay away from the war" (66)[152] and to fortify the town. Nikoklis agrees with the Counselors, since "I had the same opinion as you" (66).[153] The second point in the action is their support of the king's final decision of self-sacrifice. After his heated last speech in which he asks them

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[150] The term iambic pentameter is first mentioned by Byzantine scholar, Ioannis Tzertzis (1110-1180) in *Ιωάννης Τζέτζης: Βιβλίον ιστορικής «Ιωάννου του Τζέτζου βιβλίον ιστορικόν το δια στίχων πολιτικών, άλφα δε καλούμενης»* F.C.G. Vogel, 1826.

[151] Among them, *Tou Nekrou Aderfou* [*Of the Dead brother* / *Του Νεκρού Αδερφού*] and *To Giofiri tis Artas* [*The Bridge of Arta* / *Το γιοφύρι της Άρτας*].

[152] «μείνε μακρυά απ' τον πόλεμο»

[153] «την ίδια μετά σας είχα κι' εγώ τη γνώμη»

whether he should throw "this honored sword and this holy crown / humbly to the feet of our enemies" (68), they decide to support him in his decision, and say:

> " […] death is better than humiliation·
> Because a proud race, worthy and honorable,
> Like ours, the Greek race, clean,
> Does not surrender arms, does not lower the head·
> It knows how to live proudly and knows how to die."
> (68) [154]

Following this, Nikoklis agrees with them and after bidding them farewell, he commits suicide by impalement. The Counselors follow his example and take their own lives by stabbing themselves. This group presents characteristics of a chorus, acting in unison and complementing the thoughts and actions of the protagonists. One can even go so far and assume that the two Counselors and Nikoklis share a common consciousness: they are in reality one character split in many bodies.

The next character is Lysandros, the guard, who, according to stage directions, "*stands* (…) *motionless, with his pike*" (65),[155] as a symbol of the army's commitment to the king. This devotion is also demonstrated by the king, who calls him "my faithful Lysandros" (65) and is verified in the single line which Lysandros has during the play: "[…] your humble Lysandros and the people you govern / we plead to the goddess[156] to protect the kingdom" (65).[157] This testifies to the fact that the character of Lysandros represents the people, who are unseen and unrepresented in this play.

The final character in Act I is the Messenger, who has come to deliver the message that the foreigners have arrived and that they seek an audition with the court. Also, he informs the court of strange the foreigners look, their dress and general appearance

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[154] «[...] καλύτερος ο θάνατος απ' την ταπεινοσύνη·/ γιατί γενιά περήφανη, άξια και τιμημένη / σαν τη δική μας τη γενιά Ελληνική, καθάρια, / δεν παραδίδει τ' άρματα, δε σκύβει το κεφάλι·/ ξεύρει να ζει περήφανα και να πεθαίνει ξεύρει»

[155] «στέκεται [...] ακίνητος, με το κοντάρι του»

[156] The reference to the goddess regards Aphrodite, whose worship in the Paphos area was pivotal. Moreover, the king of Paphos, like all other Cinyrad kings before him, was the High Priest of Aphrodite. F.G.Maier and V. Karageorghis (1984) mention that even when Paphos was captured by Alexander in 320 B.C., Nikoklis maintained his function as High Priest of Aphrodite (223).

[157] «[...] ο ταπεινός σου Λύσανδρος κι' οι λας που διαφεντεύεις / παρακαλούμεν τη θεά να σκέπει το βασίλειο.»

manifesting their Other-ness. He says, "they come from afar, their attire shows it" (66).[158] An easy commentary made on this character is to simply compare him with the Messengers in ancient Greek tragedies: typically, a lower class man bearing an important message and given the platform before men of authority to present his own viewpoint of the situation.

Act II, includes only female characters, and begins with queen Axiothea and the Chorus sitting in a comfortable room in the palace. The relationship between the queen and the 'Princesses of the Court' starts to unfold, as one of trust and companionship. Moreover, the Chorus functions in the play as a representation of virtuous womanhood, enhanced as the action unfolds by association with other women in the history of the Hellenism. Returning to the action, the trust between the Queen and the noblewomen is established as she confides in them her bad dream. As the four women of the Chorus listen to the dream, they evaluate it as a bad omen and suggest that she order the slaves of the palace "to take sacrifices to the goddess[159] and gifts to Apollo" (100).[160] Following this speech by Axiothea (in which she agrees with them and outlines her future actions in line with their suggestions), all the women kneel before a statue of Aphrodite, at the back of the room, and pray that she "safeguard the city, the people, the King, the castle!" (100).[161] The interdependence between the women is further established with the involvement of the Chorus when the bad news of the King's and the knights' deaths come. They ask the queen "what is your will?" (101),[162] thus giving her power over their fate. In spite the fact that she advises them to do whatever each one considers appropriate under the circumstances, the Chorus immediately states, "But it is obvious what must be done:/better to be dead and free rather than alive and enslaved"(102).[163] They then embrace and kiss Axiothea, declare their fearlessness towards death, bid farewell to the Queen and the light of day,[164] and finally exit. The next we hear of the Chorus is when Fivi brings to Axiothea news of their death, in a description intensely

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[158] «Από μακρυά μας έχουνται· το δείχνει η φορεσιά τους.»

[159] See Note 156.

[160] «Να παν θυσίες στη θεά και δώρα στον Απόλλω»

[161] «Φύλαε την πόλη, το λαό, το Βασιλιά, το κάστρο!»

[162] «ποιός είναι ο ορισμός σου;»

[163] «Μα είναι ολοφάνερο το τι πρέπει να γίνει: Κάλιο νεκρές κι' ελεύθερες ή ζωντανές και σκλάβες»

[164] «Δε μας φοβίζει ο θάνατος, δε μας τρομάζει ο Χάρος. / Χαίρε, καλή Βασίλισσα. Φως της ημέρας, χαίρε!» (102)

reminiscent of the rhetoric commonly employed to describe the death of a group of people, usually women and children, originating from the town of Souli in the North part of Greece. Their death is registered in hegemonic narrative as the "Dance of Zaloggo" and is associated with the Greek Revolution of 1821.[165] The event was reproduced repeatedly, exemplifying the brutal nature of the Ottomans and the heroism of the Greek women. Much of the idea of willing self-sacrifice for honor is seen in Fivi's narration of the events in the palace of Paphos, when she says:

> "Assembled in the highest point of the palace
> The princesses of Paphos, as worthy Greek women,
> For the wreath of honor, they engage in a dance with Charon
> Embracing tightly their poor babies
> And throwing them into the void, as a sacrifice to the patris.
> Each one pushed the sword deep into her chest
> And falls into the precipice dead, but not a slave."
>
> (102)[166]

The narration, and the natural association with a historic group of women who had, according to the hegemonic rhetoric, engaged in the same act, constitute the women as heroic by association. The incident in Zaloggo in 1803 acted as an ideological prequel for the Philhellenes of Europe and nurtured the historical understanding of the Greek revolution in 1821. Although the incident itself is historically rather obscure – there are many conflicting testimonies about what actually happened – hegemonic rhetoric has come to exemplify it as the modern archetypical female sacrifice for Greek women, a sacrifice for honor and country.

Lastly, in Act II, we find the character of Fivi, a Handmaid and the female equivalent of the Messenger on Act I. Fivi enters the scene twice: the first time to inform Axiothea and the Chorus of the political upheaval and the suicide of Nikoklis and his Counselors, and the second time to inform Axiothea of the death of the Chorus. Before her first narration, Fivi hesitates, only to be encouraged by Axiothea to speak up, by saying: "Speak, Fivi,

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[165] The events of 1803 were recorded by various foreign travelers to Greece, with the common line in their narrative being the death in Zaloggo of a group of Souli inhabitants, who were pursued by the Ottomans. The versions of the story are even today inconsistent, the number of the women varying and the exact historical circumstances remaining unclear.

[166] «Στου παλατιού το πιο ψηλό το μέρος μαζεμένες / της Πάφου οι Πριγκίπισσες, σαν άξιες Ελληνίδες,/για το στεφάνι της τιμής, στήνουν χορό του χάρου, / σφίγγοντας στις αγκάλες τους τα δύστηχα μικρά τους / και ρίχνοντας τα στο κενό, θυσία στην πατρίδα. / Και το σπαθί της κάθε μια χώνει βαθιά στο στήθος / και πέφτει κάτω στον γκρεμό νεκρή, μα όχι σκλάβα»

courageously […]/you have been crying and are pale and frightened" (p. 101),[167] establishing a relationship of compassion between the queen and her servant. As she starts to narrate the bad news, however, Fivi apologizes for what she is about to say, thus re-establishing the power structure. Finally, it must be added that at the end of her narration of the suicide of the king, Fivi utters something the Chorus will then drawn on as they decide on their own sacrifice: "better to be dead and free rather than alive and enslaved" (101). Obviously, the sentence is a 'loan' from the king, as it is uttered by Fivi to describe the thinking behind his sacrifice. This constitutes Fivi (an extension of the working classes) a carrier of the patriotic ideas of the upper classes, thus validating their decisions and establishing the unity of the kingdom.

Finally, studying Nikoklis and Axiothea, the protagonists of Act I and Act II respectively, is necessary since they are *actants* and their 'articulations of praxis' are the central point of the analysis:

Love/desire: For both characters, their manifestation of action regarding love/desire appears to be in relation to two entities, rather than to people. On the one hand, it is the physical place of Paphos and its extension, the idea of the region/area of Hellas. On the other hand, it is Aphrodite, the patron goddess of the city, who "adores [her] humbly and loves [her] respectfully" (100).[168]

In defining space (both physical and metaphorical), one finds that both Nikoklis and Axiothea express feelings of love/desire for the physical place of Paphos. In his opening monologue, Nikoklis speaks adoringly of the physical place of Paphos and urges Lysandros to "look around/so that your heart is filled with divine tranquility" (65).[169]Axiothea in her final monologue bids farewell to Paphos saying, "Farewell my sweet, worthy and honored homeland" (103).[170] Additionally, the two characters use the same metaphor in order to establish the relationship between Paphos and the idea of Hellenism: they speak of Hellenism as a tree and Paphos as one of its branches: in Act I, Nikoklis identifies the king of Paphos as

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[167] «Μίλησε, Φοίβη, θαρρετά, [...] / κι' είσαι κλαμένη και χλωμή και κατατρομαγμένη»

[168] «που σε λατρεύει ταπεινά και σ' αγαπά με σέβας»

[169] «[...] κοίταξε τριγύρω / να σου γεμίσει η ψυχή με θεϊκή γαλήνη»

[170] «Χαίρε, πατρίδα μου γλυκειά, άξια και τιμημένη»

"a branch from the tree called Hellas[171]" (67).[172] Speaking of the Hellenes who had come to Cyprus headed by Agamemnon to seek advice for the Trojan war, he says, "[king Kinyras of Paphos] greeted them with joy, because they are branches/from that same tree of our own race" (68).[173] In a similar manner, when praising the decision of Nikoklis and the Counselors to take their own life, Axiothea, says, "The king and the Counselors, and me and you, women/we are branches from the tree, called Hellas" (101).[174] The action of the characters to take their own lives is driven by their love/desire for the space they occupy, Paphos and its (natural) ideological extension, Hellas.

Secondly, Axiothea and Nikoklis act based on their love/desire for Aphrodite, the patron of the area. Nikoklis begins the entire play narrating Aphrodite's coming to Paphos from the island of Cythera, connecting the beauty of the goddess to that of Paphos. In that same monologue, Nikoklis prays to Aphrodite, saying "My humble head, along with my people, / I lean before your grace to plead / that you safeguard the Island, and love Paphos" (65).[175] Further along in the scene, and as they are expecting the foreigners to arrive, Nikoklis pleads to "the Queen of Paphos and mistress of the Island" (66)[176] that the foreigners bring news of peace rather than carry a hostile message. Also, in order to entice their favor (of Aphrodite and Hermes), he promises to sacrifice animals on their altar. In Act II, the stage directions dictate the existence of a statue of Aphrodite on a pedestal in the room. Axiothea and the Chorus pray before the statue, in order for the city to be saved, saying: "in tears lets kneel before Aphrodite, / lets plead with her, perhaps she will listen to us / and mediate to the gods

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[171] Let me note, that for this line in the plays, I have translate the word 'Ελλάδα' as Hellas not Greece, whereas in Greek both options are possible. In the metaphor, which is widely used in the play of the tree and the branches, Nikoklis determines the tree by associating it with the race (Hellenic race) rather than the (Greek) nation. See Footnote 118.

[172] «κλωνί απ' το δεντρί, που λέγεται Ελλάδα»

[173] «Τους δέκτημε μετά χαράς, γιατ' ήταν παρακλάδια / από το ίδιο το δεντρί της εδικής μας ράτσας»

[174] «Κι ο Βασιλιάς κι'οι σύμβουλοι, κι'εγώ κι' εσείς, γυναίκες, / είμαστε κλώνοι απ' το δεντρί, που λέγεται Ελλάδα»

[175][175] «Το ταπεινό κεφάλι μου, μαζί με το λαό μου, / το σκύβω μπρος στη χάρη σου για να παρακαλέσω / να το φυλάεις το Νησί, και ν'αγαπάς την Πάφο»

[176] «της Πάφου Ρήγισσα και του νησιού Αφέντρα». The choice of the word *Ρήγισσα* (queen) to describe Aphrodite can be assumed on the part of the author as being a reference to the value of the goddess through to the Middle Ages and the Hellenic Folk tradition. According to Stamatakos (1971), the term derives from the Middle Ages, and the male *ρήγας* originates from the Latin *rex* (155).

to salvage the city" (100).[177] Axiothea also calls on the women to weave a golden veil as a token for Aphrodite, in addition to the sacrifices that she will make to other gods. As their collective prayer starts, they refer to Aphrodite as "the matron of the world and the Mistress of the Island" (100),[178] and kneeling before her "divine body"[179] they plead for salvation for the city, the people and the king.

Communication: Throughout this short play, the two protagonists establish a relationship of functional communication with the Counselors (in the case of Nikoklis) and the Chorus (in the case of Axiothea). The dynamics of these *actants* are obvious, as we witness their common line of action on various issues: governance (between Nikoklis and the Counselors); the relationship of people with their gods (between Axiothea and the Chorus); and, their ultimate action (their voluntary death) dictated by their understanding of honor and duty. In the context of governance, Nikoklis and the Counselors agree early on in the play what the best course of action is for the city: "[to] stay away from war, stay away from trouble" (66).[180] Nikoklis agrees, saying, "your counsel is good, my counselors and friends, / because I have the same opinion as you" (66).[181] Furthermore, in Act II and in light of Axiothea's bad dream, Axiothea and the Chorus agree that they need to appease the gods in order to change the negative to positive. Lastly, and as the ultimate act of Communication on behalf of the *actants*, the characters agree at the end of their respective Acts to take their lives, as their common value systems dictate. In Act I, Nikoklis gives a long speech in which he reminds the Counselors of the Hellenic origins of the Paphians, of "the grand, proud, worthy and honored root", which had "never bowed, nor was it humbled" (68).[182] The Counselors agree that their Hellenic race "does not surrender arms, does not bow the head" (68).[183] Nikoklis acknowledges once more that their opinions coincide, takes his life, and is followed in close suite by the Counselors. In Act II, the course of action is rather different, with Axiothea

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[177] «με δάκρυα ας γονατίσουμε μπροστά στην Αφροδίτη, / να την παρακαλέσουμεν ίσως να μας ακούσει / και μεσιτεύψει στους θεούς για να γλιτώσει η Πόλη»

[178] «του κόσμου Δέσποινα και του Νησιού Αφέντρα»

[179] «το θεϊκό σου το κορμί»

[180] «μείνε μακρυά απ' τον πόλεμο, μακρυά απ' τους καυγάδες»

[181] «Καλά μου παραγγέλλετε, σύμβουλοι κι' αδελφοί μου, / γιατί την ίδια μετά σας είχα κι' εγώ τη γνώμη»

[182] «ρίζα τρανή, περήφανη, άξια και τιμημένη [...] Ποτέ δεν επροσκύνησε, ούτε κι' εταπεινώθη»

[183] «δεν παραδίδει τ'άρματα, δε σκύβει το κεφάλι»

asking the women what is their will, after a speech, which talks solely of the bravery of Nikoklis and his personal connection to values and virtues. When the women of the Chorus state their intention to die, Axiothea calls them "worthy Cypriot women" (102)[184] but still tells them to "do what has to be done" (102),[185] without naming the act. One could of course make a case that "what has to be done" does not provide them with a choice, since the values they share are common.

Help/struggle: In terms of the struggle of the main characters which lies in the figures of the Foreigners, the carriers of an Other-ness. This manifests itself as a physical presence of the delegates of Ptolemy on stage in Act I, and as a metaphysical presence – the dream of Axiothea- in Act II. The two delegates of Ptolemy, Kallikratis and Argeos, request of the king that he surrender himself, his people and his city to Ptolemy, otherwise he will be killed. They declare that if he surrenders, his life will be spared and he will live the rest of his days quietly, as a subject of the new regime. Nikoklis is deeply offended by these news, and in his speech considers the way in which Ptolemy is trying to take over Paphos as dishonorable, and says that "he forgets that he was a general of the army leader / of the renowned Alexander […] who brought our Hellas to the depths of Asia / for all peoples to tremble and all peoples to worship", to add that "your King is dishonorable and unworthy of our race" (67).[186] In order to enforce Other-ness in the successors of Alexander, the author makes a clear distinction between Alexander and the generals that took over his kingdom. He was a worthy Hellenic ruler, whereas they are portrayed as clearly dishonorable, since the presence of the Foreigners and their request comes in direct conflict with the virtues of Nikoklis, the Counselors, and the people of Paphos as a whole.

On a metaphysical level, Axiothea struggles as an *actant* to understand and overthrow her dream, which is narrated in a long monologue at the beginning of Act II and is interpreted by the Chorus as "bad omen" (100).[187] In the context of Romanticism, dreams demonstrate a parallel and inevitable reality of a metaphysical nature, in the same way with which the

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[184] «άξιες Κυπριοπούλες»

[185] «Κάμετε ό,τι πρέπει»

[186] «Μ' αφού ξεχνά πως στρατηγός ήταν του στρατηλάτη / του ξακουσμένου Αλέξανδρου [...] κι έφερε την Ελλάδα μας στα βάθη της Ασίας / για να την τρέμουν οι λαοί και να την προσκηνάνε» «άτιμος είναι ο Ρήγας σου κι' ανάξιος της φυλής μας»

[187] «κακό σημάδι»

enemies of Nikoklis present a threat in the physical world. Therefore, the two protagonists address their actions related to help/struggle against the same force, the threat of violence and death, materialized as people in Act I, and a bad omen through a dream in Act II.

b. Axiothea, by Kipros Chrisanthis (1967 edition)

The second play is entitled *Axiothea* [*Αξιοθέα*] and was written by Athens-trained Cypriot physician and author Kipros Chrisanthis (1915-1998). The play was published several times, in the post independence period of Cyprus: first, in the journal, *Filologiki Kipros* [*Φιλολογική Κύπρος/Philological Cyprus*] in 1967; subsequently, by the journal *Pnevmatiki Kipros* [*Πνευματική Κύπρος/Spiritual Cyprus*] in 1968; and, finally by E.P.O.K. [*Ελληνικός Πνευματικός Όμιλος Κύπρου/Greek Spiritual Association of Cyprus*] in a bilingual edition (Greek/Italian)[188] in 1989.[189] Chrisanthis is one of the most prolific twentieth century Cypriot authors writing in Greek, with a rich production in poetry, fiction, translation, children's literature, criticism and theatre. He first appears in the Cypriot literary scene in 1932 as a 17-year-old poet, and then in 1942 when he publishes a series of sonnets, and, continues producing literature and literary criticism until 1995. He publishes his last plays in 1989. He has also served as editor for several literary magazines on the island, which had allowed him to publish his works and engage in literary criticism.[190]

The play looked at here can safely be assumed to be a sample of the Romantic school. As primary evidence, we see the all-female cast place their virtue on public display, much like British women of the Victorian era, when "a woman's private virtues now had a public relevance. They had to be seen as crucial to the nation's welfare" ("The Norton Anthology of English Literature", 5) in accordance with the Romantic doctrine. In terms of structure and format, the play has intense neoclassical features, such as a chorus and the use of Demotic

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[188] The translation in Italian was done by Michelle Iannelli.

[189] For the purposes of this study, I shall be using the edition of 1967.

[190] In his Introduction to the publication entitled *Θεατρικές Αποδελτιώσεις και Δύο Μονόπρακτα (Theatrical Indexing and Two One-Act Plays)*, Chrisanthis (1978) reveals the "first fruit of [his] internship" (5) as an audience member of performances in Athens, where he had resided as a student in the 1930s: a critique in the journal *Κυπριακά Γράμματα* (3, 1936, 50), of Sophocles' *Electra*, presented at the Royal Theatre. He continues narrating the journey of his involvement with theatre, mentioning his admiration for Ancient Greek Drama, Shakespeare, school theatre, inspiration taken by the EOKA era and the independence. Moreover, he refers to his involvement with the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation and literary criticism in the context of the journals with which he was actively involved.

Greek in a lyrical and pompous version. Certain neo-classical features also appear in the characters, although there is no mention of their identity as Hellenic, Cypriot or otherwise. In the 1989 version,[191] the author distinguishes two chorus members as Leading figures,[192] thus determining the function of the Chorus to focus on general comments on the situation at the time, and the two Leading Women as distinct voices directly involved in the action, albeit as one-dimensional characters. Although in the play, the cast comprises characters who examine their personal role in the sociopolitical milieu, Axiothea herself embodies the stable force; she is certain of the prescription of her role as queen and woman in the palace, the world and her family.

Examining the play itself, one recognizes the familiar character of the ideal romantic heroine in Axiothea, as well as a group of (non historical, fictional) women of the palace (gentlewomen and slaves) engaging in their individual and personalized dialectics with patriotism, and finally the Chorus, composed of palace caretakers. A detailed examination of the group of fictional characters whose actions (or intended actions) reflect their inner moral battle, reveals a distinction between the noble women, Arsinoe (Axiothea's daughter), and Phaedra and Evrinoe (wives of two of the king's brothers), and the slave women, Cymothoe and the Wet-nurse.

Firstly, Arsinoe the young daughter of Nikoklis and Axiothea reveals a duality, which lies in the development of the character. Her innocence and optimistic view of life is contradicted early on in the play by pessimism, violence and death, carried in the world of the play by other characters, and by the action of the play itself. The literary allusions made, through the character of Arsinoe, of the literary figures of Antigone and Ophelia can be accounted for as part of various aspects of this conflict. Arsinoe has been recently engaged to Pasicrates, who is "brave and handsome and of good descend/ kind-hearted and gentile" (60),[193] and for whom she declares her love publicly. In the first part of the play, Arsinoe is presented as an innocent and hopeful girl, especially when compared to the other experienced, cynical and pessimistic women of the world of the palace. As she confesses, "I

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[191] The various versions of the play do not present significant differences between them. The changes are mostly functional and in terms of the characters and what lines they are assigned.

[192] Chrisanthis tags them as A' κορυφαία and B' Κορυφαία (Chorus leader A and B).

[193] «Αντρείος κι' ωραίος κι' από σπίτι / καλόκαρδος κι' ευγενικός»

stand here and cannot understand, my aunts, / your heavy words" (51).[194] As the play progresses and sounds of violence infiltrate the palace, Arsinoe declares that the violence is "a bad sign for my marriage" and "the heart is afraid" (54),[195] words which function as a premonition for the upcoming death of Pasicrates. When she is told of his death, she enters "with untied hair and scratched cheeks / and torn clothes" (60-61),[196] lamenting his untimely death and her childless and lonely future, already having entered a process of mourning. She is taken to her room again to be comforted, only for Phaedra to arrive somewhat later informing Axiothea of the attempted suicide of Arsinoe. When Arsinoe is brought before Axiothea, she declares that, "The sudden loss of Pasicrates, who should have been / a bridegroom at my side, / now shows me my duty. / In the Under World I must / follow his shadow" (65-66),[197] and despite Axiothea's objections and decision to confine her to a dark room, she insists in her decision to follow her dead fiancé to the grave. Her character at this point in the action, is defined by her intense inclination towards death (a strong reference to Ophelia)[198] and the desire to honor her commitment to her partner by following him in death (the imagery of the bride/bridegroom of death is reminiscent of Antigone).[199] In the last several pages of the play, and in light of the news of the loss of Nikoklis and the noblemen, Arsinoe fuels her youthful spontaneity and innocence towards the desire to mourn for the loss of her father: "I am losing my father, a second god, / my maker" (69).[200] The Wet-nurse advises her that this is not fitting behavior for an "unmarried woman to mourn / before people." (69),[201] a comment which Arsinoe dismisses, since her emotions are stronger than what social decorum allows. As Axiothea enters, she indirectly criticizes Arsinoe and her impulsiveness by saying: "The path of the heart is easy. / But logic orders us to do other

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[194] «Στέκω και δεν μπορώ να καταλάβω, θείες μου, / τα βαρετά σας λόγια»

[195] «κακό σημάδι για το γάμο μου», «η καρδιά φοβάται»

[196] «με ξέμπλεκα μαλλιά και ματωμένα μάγουλα / και ξεσκισμένα ρούχα»

[197] «Ο ξαφνικός χαμός του Πασικράτη, που έπρεπε / νυμφίος στο πλάι μου νάταν, / μου δείχνει πια το χρέος μου. / Στον Κάτω Κόσμο πρέπει / τον ίσκιο του ν' ακολουθήσω»

[198] Arsinoe declares that "It is beautiful to take alone / the road of death" «Ωραίο να παίρνεις μόνος σου / το δρόμο του θανάτου» (68).

[199] When Axiothea reminds Arsinoe that she and Pasicrates have not yet been married, Arsinoe says, "The secret engagement of the soul / no law can outright" «Το μυστικό αρραβώνα της ψυχής / κανένας νόμος δεν ξεγράφει» (66), stressing thus the intense nature of the commitment between the two characters, strongly reminding us of the relationship between Antigone and Aemon.

[200] «εγώ τον κύρη χάννω, δεύτερο θεό, / τον πλάστη μου»

[201] «ανύπαντρη κοπέλλα να μοιρολογά / μπροστά στον κόσμο»

things, / difficult things" (70),[202] as if asking her to put her emotions aside. Arsinoe obeys and when Axiothea asks her to take the women and children and lead them to the upper floor, she obeys and exits, thus making her final act, one of obedience and subordination. It seems like the author wants to stress how the eminent honorable ending informs the impulsive character's last moments, and offers her wisdom.

The characters who will next be studied are Evrinoe and Phaedra, another set of two-dimensional characters. They are the wives of two of the king's brothers, giving them high social status as women of the aristocracy. This is perhaps the only feature that these two characters have in common: they are both highly elitist and this is manifested through their discriminatory comments towards the Wet-nurse. At various points in the play, they dismiss her advice and seniority,[203] undermine her intelligence[204] and label her involvement in the household happenings as suspicious.[205] Otherwise, these two characters are essentially opposite forces within the private space of the palace. Evrinoe represents the quintessential mother and wife, the perfect example of putting oneself in the full service of one's family and through that service reaching completeness. As a mother, she feels fulfilled by her role, because even though she has many children, she states that "childbirth rejuvenates a woman / and fills her with endurance" (50).[206] As a wife, she is happy, as she has married the brother to the king who seems to be the most worthy, who also happened to be Phaedra's object of love in the past. When Evrinoe had married him, Phaedra in turn married a man whom she did not love and does not make her happy. This is the departure point for Phaedra, who represents the suppressed wife and mother. She complains to Evrinoe about various aspects of her life: "(…) it tortures me / to be next to you, to see / how fortunate you are / and I am misfortunate / next to my husband, if I can call him a man / and to my orphan children /

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[202] «Ο δρόμος της καρδιάς ειν' εύκολος. / Μα η λογική άλλα μας προστάζει, / τα δύσκολα»

[203] In pages 51-52, Phaedra says: "As for your requests and advice / that you pretentiously say / […], please / sell them elsewhere" «Όσο για τις παραγγελιές και τις ορμήνιες σου / που με το πρώτο ξεστομίζεις επιδεικτικά, / [...] παρακαλώ / να τις πουλάς αλλού».

[204] In page 51, Evrinoe comments on the political opinions expressed by the Wet-nurse saying, "Who spoke these utterances? / There is no way a Wet-nurse has thought of them" «Ποιός είπε τέτοιες φράσεις; / Τροφός να τα σκεφτή αποκλείεται»

[205] Phaedra commenting on the fact that the Wet-nurse is informed of what is happening outside the palace, says: "So were you eavesdropping? Or do you function as a spy / registering our movements and speeches?" «Ώστε κρυφάκουγες; Ή σ' έχουνε κατάσκοπο / να καταγράφης τις κινήσεις και τους λόγους μας;»

[206] «Οι γέννες ξανανιώνουν τη γυναίκα / και τη γεμίζουν με αντοχή»

although their father is alive" (51).[207] During the course of the play, Phaedra evolves in a most interesting way since her intended actions are in line with alternate ethics to those of the play: she secretly plans with Cymothoe to take her children and escape from the palace, taking advantage of the chaotic political situation created by the violent transition of power in the city. Her actions are guided by her confidence due to the power of her wealth[208] and justified because of her discontent, both with her husband, Eteocles, and the city.[209] Throughout the development of the play, although she has planned her escape, a talk with Axiothea changes Phaedra's mind. Axiothea does not judge her,[210] but sets before her the issue of being respectable before humans and gods.[211] Moreover, Axiothea puts Phaedra's plans in the framework of avenging her husband, and tells her that "revenge does not wash off the shame",[212] placing her choice to leave the city at a whole other level, more societal than personal, dealing with her position in the public, not the private space. Phaedra's personal happiness needs to be put aside, if her dignity is to be saved. By the end of the play, a series of events place Phaedra firmly at the side of Axiothea and her decision for a willing self-sacrifice: firstly, news comes that her husband, Eteocles, has died honorably "by his own hand" (71),[213] a fact which raises him to the eyes of Phaedra and inspires the women to follow the example of their husbands.[214] As Evrinoe becomes more reluctant to sacrifice her children, and suggests ways by which they could escape, Phaedra is also intensely skeptical. When Axiothea gives them the choice to leave the palace, possibly even becoming slaves, Phaedra declares, "I do not intend on being inferior to [my husband]" (72)[215] and "Axiothea

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[207] «[...] πολύ με τυρρανά / στο πλάι σας νάμαι, να θωρώ / το πως καλότυχα περνάτε / κι' εγώ να νοιώθω δυστυχία / δίπλα στον άντρα μου αν μπορώ άντρα να τον λέω / και στα παιδιά μου τα ορφανά μου / κι ας είναι ζωντανός ο κύρης τους».

[208] Although the line is said by the Chorus, according to the classical function of the Chorus, it reflects the views of Phaedra: "Gold buys off Gods and humans" «Θεούς κι' ανθρώπους το χρυσάφι εξαγοράζει» (56).

[209] Phaedra is not a Paphian, she comes from the Cypriot city-kingdom of Marion, where she was "[…] raised in nobility in sky-blue times / peaceful, drowned in gold / with an air of love and happiness" - «[...] αναθρεμμένη αρχοντικά σε καταγάλανους καιρούς / ειρηνικούς, πνιγμένους στο χρυσάφι / με γύρω αγέρα αγάπης κι' ευτυχίας» (49).

[210] As Phaedra tells Axiothea all the reasons why she is unhappy, Axiothea starts off by telling her, "I feel for your position. I do not blame you" – «Νοιώθω τη θέση σου. Δε σε κατηγορώ.» (59).

[211] "[…] to be respected by gods and men" – «[…] να σε σέβονται θεοί και άνθρωποι» (59).

[212] «η εκδίκηση το κρίμα δεν ξεπλένει»

[213] «με το δικό του χέρι»

[214] Like Nikoklis and Eteocles, Evrinoe's husband has also sacrificed himself.

[215] «Κατώτερή [του συζύγου μου] δεν σκοπεύω να είμαι»

is showing us the way of honor" (72).[216] She is also a catalyst in persuading Evrinoe to sacrifice her children, an action she is entirely against:

"Phaedra: We will not go alone.
Evrinoe: We will take the children along?
Phaedra: In our arms.
Evrinoe: No! I will not touch the children.
Phaedra: It is not honorable to send them off
To become slaves.
Evrinoe: No!"
(73)[217]

As the women go towards the upper floor of the building, it is Phaedra who pushes Evrinoe to climb up, telling her, "It is our turn, Evrinoe" (73).[218] The shift in the attitude of the two women in the world of the play towards their duty, is telling of the significance the author assumes of women's honor in the public space. This establishes them as potential heroines, but this can only occur once they have removed their maternal instincts and masculinized themselves.

Finally, in the analysis of the secondary characters of Chrisanthis' *Axiothea*, one has to examine the slave women, namely the Wet-nurse and Cymothoe.[219] In terms of the action of the play, these characters serve entirely different functions. The Wet-nurse, without a real name by which to be recognized, finds her identification through her role of domestic worker. Nonetheless, she functions as an active agent, through her capacity of moving between the public space (the world of the men) and the private space (the world of the women). Cymothoe, on the other hand, who is the slave of Phaedra, has the purely functional role of helping Phaedra with her plans to flee the city. Therefore, she is a one-dimensional character, characterized by her servitude and cowardice. Evidently, the character who presents the most

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[216] «Το δρόμο της τιμής μας δείχνει η Αξιοθέα»

[217] «Φαίδρα: Μονάχες δε θα πάμε.
Ευρυνόη: Θα πάρουμε μαζί μας τα παιδιά;
Φαίδρα: Στην αγκαλιά μας.
Ευρυνόη: Όχι! το χέρι δεν απλώνω στα παιδιά.
Φαίδρα: Τιμή δεν είναι να τα στέλλης
σκλάβοι να γίνουν.
Ευρυνόη: Όχι!»

[218] «Σειρά μας, Ευρυνόη.»

[219] Her name is taken from one of the Nereids, the nymph daughters of Nereus, the sea god from Ancient Greek mythology.

interest here is the Wet-nurse, who uses her disadvantageous position on the social scale in order to acquire knowledge, and therefore power. The Wet-nurse first brings news of the disagreement between Nikoklis and his allies in other kingdom-states of Cyprus, which has created animosity and friction within the Paphian Council. This is news the Wet-nurse admits to have learnt of through eavesdropping: "I got half the point, because their languages / made it difficult for me, and their meanings" (46),[220] revealing her low level of education. On hearing the news, Axiothea admits she had heard rumors that "the island had filled with foreigners" (45)[221] but Nikoklis would not explain, as "he was grim and jittery" (45).[222] Interestingly, even though the Wet-nurse learnt the news through unorthodox means, she has the power of knowledge, as opposed to Axiothea who essentially does not know what is happening in the kingdom-state of Paphos and the island, despite being the queen. As their conversation continues, Axiothea tells the Wet-nurse of her dream, which the Wet-nurse then elucidates, putting her once again in a position of power, only this time over the metaphysical aspects of the lives of the ruling class. The next time we see the Wet-nurse is when she steps into the middle of an argument between Evrinoe and Phaedra, and, in spite of insultingly being told off, she prioritizes the conversation once again by asking them to put their quarrels aside and unite in these difficult times for the city. When the Wet-nurse enters again, she brings news of the death of Arsinoe's fiancé, Pasicrates, and empathizes intensely with the pain of Arsinoe, thus establishing the bond that unites the Wet-nurse and the child she has nursed.[223] As the queen exits to comfort her daughter, although it was the Wet-nurse who had first offered to console her,[224] the Wet-nurse talks with the Chorus about the political developments in Paphos. One of her comments says, "There is something rotten in the kingdom of Pafos" (62),[225] a clear reference to Marcellus' famous line[226] from Shakespeare's

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[220] «[...] μισοκατάλαβα, γιατί κι'οι γλώσσες τους / με δυσκολεύανε και τα νοήματά τους»

[221] «γέμισε με ξένους το νησί»

[222] «ήταν σκυθρωπός και νευρικός»

[223] As she witnesses the mourning of Arsinoe, the Wet-nurse says "Bitter, little girl, how you slaughter me" – «Πικρή, κορούλα, πως με σφάζεις» (61), expressing their close relationship and her great pain as she is watching her suffer.

[224] Later on in the scene, the two women seem to share motherhood of Arsinoe: on the one hand, Axiothea believes in being strict, while on the other, the Wet-Nurse urges her to show kindness to the girl in this time of intense sadness (65).

[225] «Κάτι το σάπιο βρίσκεται στης Πάφου το βασίλειο».

[226] "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." Act 1, Scene 4, 90.

Hamlet. She is commenting on the rottenness of the ruling class of Paphos, since the king and his brother, Pasicrates are in conflict over Nikoklis' choice of allies, with Eteocles even pulling his sword and threatening the king. The Wet-nurse's next entrance reveals the next phase of the developments, as she brings news of the mass suicide of Nikoklis and his brothers. After she reveals the news, she supports both mother and daughter, by telling Axiothea, "Let me hold you, my unhappy queen" (68)[227], while, on the other hand, advising Arsinoe on her position in the mourning hierarchy: married women have precedence over single women. She also rectifies the patriarchal structure in times of mourning by saying that "women's fate dictates / to secretly cry over what we love" (69).[228] We see her last as she helps Axiothea to plan and execute the mass suicide, when ordered by the queen to gather wood with the other slaves and set it around the palace, lighting it when she is told. This last, crucial order further establishes the firm relationship between the two women and the Wet-nurse's position of power in the palace.

The Chorus needs no in-depth analysis since, as mentioned before, its role is limited to commenting (enforcing or rejecting) on the opinions of the women, in a similar way as in ancient Greek drama. They are basically reflecting the ethical code of Axiothea. Nevertheless, in the edition of 1989, the playwright distinguishes two members of the Chorus, making them distinct characters; but even then, they are limited to functioning as mirrors of the main characters.

Finally, let us examine the "articulations of praxis" of the principle a*ctant* of Chrisantis' play *Axiothea*: the queen Axiothea:

Love/desire: in terms of the manifestation of action as regards love/desire, one can detect Axiothea's connection with the notions of *honor* and *duty*. Through the play, these extend to the direction of various other characters, mostly the invisible world of the men of the play. As the first news comes of the turmoil in the palace, Axiothea urges the women "each to her duty" (54);[229] down the line and as she interrupts the intense dialogue between the Wet-nurse and Phaedra, who is preparing to leave the palace, she advises Phaedra to

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[227] «Να σε κρατήσω, δύστυχη βασίλισσα μου»

[228] «Των γυναικών η μοίρα λέγει / κρυφά να κλαίμε ό,τι αγαπάμε»

[229] «Η κάθε μια στο χρέος της»

"measure your words with prudence" (58).[230] As Arsinoe learns of the death of Pasicrates, she laments, only for Axiothea to advise her against it, since "it is not proper for the daughter of a king before / the eyes of friends and strangers to weep intensely" (61).[231] Moreover, Axiotheas's actions manifest her control over domestic affairs, in the private space of the palace. As the troubles are revealed, she orders the supplies of the palace to be checked (48), telling Phaedra that "in the household, for two heads / to rule, it is impossible" (58).[232] This implies the necessity for women to rule in the house, while it is insinuated that men rule in the public space. Lastly, during the course of the play, Axiothea orders for actions that gear towards safeguarding honor and duty, but her ultimate honorable action (the mass willing self-sacrifice) is actually instigated by the example of the men, and *their* relationship with honor and duty. In her effort to convince the women, Axiothea says:

> "Phaedra, Eteocles, your unworthy companion
> As you referred to him, died honorably
> By his own hand.
> And you also, Evrinoe, your partner
> Chose the same death
> Rather than fall into the hands of the enemy as a slave
> And be humiliated.
> We are weak women, the example
> of our bed-companions in their actions I see"
>
> (70-71)[233]

For the last three pages of the play, Axiothea uses her own rhetoric and acts as an independent agent, whereas for the most part of the play, she had drawn on the rhetoric of the men to convince the women. In these last few pages, she guides and encourages the women towards sacrifice through her own words, but her rhetoric is still based on the action of men. It has been appropriated for her gender, yet the ideological basis of the sacrifice still belongs to the men.

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[230] «Μέτρα το λόγο με τη φρόνηση»

[231] «Δεν κάνει κόρη βασιλιά μπροστά / σε φιλικά και ξένα μάτια να ολοφύρεται»

[232] «μες το σπίτι δυό κεφάλια / να διαφεντεύουν δεν μπορούν»

[233] «Φαίδρα, ο Ετεοκλής, ανάξιος σύνευνος
ως τον καλούσες, πέθανε έντιμα
με το δικό του χέρι.
Κι' εσένα, Ευρυνόη, ο σύνευνος
τον ίδιο θάνατο προτίμησε
παρά να πέσει δούλος στον εχτρό
και να εξευτελιστεί
Εμείς αδύναμες γυναίκες, το παράδειγμα
στων ομοκρέβατων την πράξη βλέπω»

Communication: During the course of play, Axiothea's actions do not reveal holistic communication with any of the other characters, since, as a romantic heroine she does not diverge from her ethical road. However, for two distinct reasons, we notice that there is an interconnectedness between Axiothea and the Wet-nurse. The primary reason is Axiothea's belief that a single fate rules over them both. Axiothea admits to this at a point of inaction around the beginning of the play, when she has had a bad dream, and is concerned and fragile. She relies solely on the Wet-nurse to provide a positive interpretation of the dream, in relation to the socio-political developments and how they will affect them. Axiothea establishes the close association between the two women by saying, "Being a wet-nurse, your responsibility in the palace / is of the same fate as mine" (47-48),[234] showing that the two women have a common future. One can assume that the communication between them is determined by their interdependency in maintaining the women's private sphere in the palace: the Wet-nurse provides information from the public sphere, whereas Axiothea protects and elevates her above other slaves in the private sphere of the women.[235] Another point of convergence, which manifests itself through actions taken by Axiothea, is their common care for Axiothea's children: "You, old woman, who was present / at the birth of all of my children and raised / my off-springs as your own children" (70).[236] When Arsinoe finds out about the death of her fiancé, Axiothea's first action is to ask Phaedra and the Wet-nurse to stand by the young woman: "Phaedra, stand by the girl. / And you, old woman, who raised her, spending life, / take sweet words on your lips / to soften the pain of the virgin" (60). Later in the scene, Axiothea resumes her maternal duties, but it seems like the presence of the Wet-nurse and the "sharing" of motherhood is comforting to Axiothea: a woman of the upper classes, whose priority it is to run the house.

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[234] «Γιατί τροφός σαν είσαι, ευθύνη στο παλάτι / έχεις ισόμοιρη μ' εμένα»

[235] In his article on the *Public Sphere*, Jurgen Habermas (1964) gives a general framework for the terms, thus: "we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed" (49). He goes on to offer a historical perspective of the term. In speaking of medieval public spheres (and in differentiating it from the 'bourgeois public sphere') he makes an important distinction, quite relevant to the literary material at hand: "a public sphere directly linked to the concrete existence of a ruler. As long as the prince and the estates of the realm still "are" the land, instead of merely functioning as deputies for it, they are able to "re-present"; they represent their power "before" the people, instead of for the people."(51). The social scale utilized by the author in the play mirrors the model described by Habermas (1964).

[236] «Εσύ, γρηά, που παραστάθηκες / σ'όλες τις γέννες μου κι' ανάθρεψες / τα φύτρα μου ως παιδιά δικά μου»

Help/struggle: Axiothea's struggle only appears at the beginning of the play, and is manifested by her insecurities towards her dreams, which, to her, reflect the will of the gods. She confesses to the Wet-nurse that, "I fear dreams" (46),[237] because through them doubt is born in the mind, and "it is doubt that crushes us" (47).[238] Within the controlled private space of Axiothea, dreams reveal forces she has no access to or control over, and therefore tilt her internal balance. Axiothea's helplessness towards dreams derives from their supernatural origins and random intentions, and her action of entrusting their deciphering to another person, places her in a position of powerlessness. As the action of the play continues, dreams are not mentioned again; rather, the queen takes matters into her own hands and decides on her own fate and that of the other women of the palace, based on principle, rather than superstition. This happens regardless of her worst fears in relation to the interpretation of the dream, since her actions are now in line with the will of the gods, which she has how acknowledged and serves.

c. Axiothea, by Mona Savvidou-Theodoulou (1982)

The final play discussed in this chapter is *Axiothea,* published in Nicosia in 1982, by Mona Savvidou-Theodoulou (born 1949), a philologist of Greek. In her introduction to the publication of the play, the playwright creates several important connections: firstly, between her own life and that of Axiothea, in saying that "from the drama of my own life, Axiothea was reborn" (7).[239] This is quite a rare occurrence for a female writer to associate herself directly with a female heroine. This can be explained partly by the fact that Savvidou-Theodoulou writes in the 1980s, a time of relative emancipation for Greek-Cypriot women. The playwright herself had been a teacher in the public school system for many years, putting her in a position of relative power in relation to the women of the previous generation who were, for the most part, completely dependent on their husbands and fathers. Furthermore, she creates a parallel between the "political, religious, social, moral problems" (7)[240] of present times with Axiothea's historical era, both in terms of the external forces and also in

[237] «τα όνειρα τρέμω»

[238] «είναι η αμφοβολία που μας τσακκίζει»

[239] «από τη δραματικότητα της δικής μου ζωής ξαναγεννήθηκε η Αξιοθέα»

[240] «προβλήματα πολιτικά, θρησκευτικά, κοινωνικά, ηθικά»

relation to one's inner battles. On both points of association, Savvidou-Theodoulou is obviously referring to the events of Cyprus eight years beforehand, the coup d'etat and the Turkish invasion in 1974, as well as the general socio-political conditions created. She aims to go through the personal experience of the characters in order to reach the communal, on all the levels she mentions in her introduction, as quoted above. Moreover, in order to associate the story to the historical era, the author states how "all the main personae of my dramatic play are historical figures" (7);[241] in addition, she includes the historical sources of the story in the publication, actions which further legitimize the play and its messages.

Structurally, the play presents a clear departure from the neo-classical model. By its lack of uniformity in the style, and the structure of the two Acts and eight Scenes of the play, one notes the existence of elements of modernism, realism and romanticism. Plot-wise, the play starts from the point of the suicide of Nikoklis, although all actions regarding Nikoklis happen off stage. The story unfolds through narrations of the political conditions at the time in the Levant,[242] and through the eyes and perspectives of various characters, both fictional and historical. Interwoven with the political conditions, lay the parallel personal stories of other characters, central to which is the narrative surrounding the fate of Axiothea herself. Distinguishing the characters of the play into various categories, the obvious separation is between the historical characters and the fictional characters. However, there are striking novelties in relation to the previous plays examined in this chapter. Firstly, the characters are both men and women; secondly, they come from an array of social and economical positions; and, thirdly, the enemies, – both from within and without – are presented on stage, have names, and are not one-dimensional. A total of sixteen distinct speaking characters, as well as eleven silent characters, create a rather complete universe for the action of the play, with the aforementioned loud absence of Nikoklis. The characters, through their presentation of different value systems in the play, expose the reader to viewpoints that were hidden or indirectly hinted at in the previous two plays. These viewpoints are basically anti-heroic and oppose the value system (as we have seen it in the first two plays), but they retain an important place in the world of the play. This position is obviously not endorsed by

[241] «όλα τα κύρια πρόσωπα του δράματός μου είναι ιστορικά πρόσωπα»

[242] The author takes her historical information from historiographers, Diodoros Sikeliotis and Polienos. Her own narrative is an amalgam of the two recorded histories of the events. For the exact texts, please refer to Appendix 1.1.

Savvidou-Theodoulou, as can be seen through the figure of Axiothea, who presents herself as the legitimate and ethical antipode to these tendencies.

The play's historical characters are Axiothea, Argeos and Kallikratis (generals to Ptolemy I), Sopatros (poet of comedies) and Hrisippos (follower of stoic philosophy). Its fictional characters are Kinirarhos (high priest in the temple of Aphrodite); Filonidis[243] (escort to the queen); Nikokratis and Menedimos (citizens of Paphos); Melanthios (owner of a tavern), Gerginos (palace attendant); Emianassa and Rigilla (Axiothea's daughters); Evridiki (palace cook); the Wet-nurse; the priest in the temple of Aphrodite; the four brothers of Nikoklis; the wives of the brothers of Nikoklis (with a baby and a child); and, three handmaids.

The generals of Ptolemy, Argeos and Kallikratis, come to discipline Nikoklis, who is suspected of having moved into the camp of Antigonos, the rival of Ptolemy. In the first scene of the play, one witnesses the unraveling of the intentions and values of the two generals. In this brief scene, they speak of the possibility that Nikoklis has double-crossed them and, perhaps, even had secret contact with Antigonos. They consider him a traitor. In their discussion, it is clear that Argeos is more militant and impatient than Kallikratis. As they wait for Nikoklis to make a decision in regards to his own future and that of Paphos, Argeos says, "Action, Kallikratis, action. No need for doubt. What kind of military men are we?" (13),[244] to which Kallikratis replies with a solemn "Ptolemy should have let him offer an apology… it's a right that I would have wanted also" (13), which establishes Kallikratis as the more fair and empathetic of the two.[245] He goes on say that "[Nikoklis] appeals to justice" (14),[246] a right which he respects. Argeos rejects his arguments, and speaks the "language of war" (14).[247] As news comes of the suicide of Nikoklis, Argeos "*with relief and a smile of*

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[243] Although there is no historical figure at the time of the play with that name, *Filonidis* is the name of a Cypriot Christian saint of the 3rd century AD. The author notes in her introduction that "all the main characters of my dramatic work are historical personae taken from the literary, philosophical and religious sources of Cypriot realities of their time" (7), I assume to make the point that there have been important Cypriots in many eras through history.

[244] «Δράση, Καλλικράτη, δράση. Δε χρειάζεται να αμφιβάλλουμε»

[245] «Θάπρεπε ίσως να τον αφήσει ο Πτολεμαίος ν' απολογηθεί...είναι ένα δικαίωμα, που κι εγώ θα τόθελα»

[246] «[ο Νικοκλής] επικαλείτε τη δικαιοσύνη»

[247] «η γλώσσα του πολέμου»

success",[248] says, "At last. He has obeyed Ptolemy" (15),[249] and Kallikratis agrees, saying, "He followed our order" (15).[250] In this scene, the intention of the playwright seems to be to stress the violent nature of the generals and the great pressure they put on Nikoklis. Moreover, given the history of violence of Ptolemy on the island, it serves to present the choice of Nikoklis to take his own life as honorable, rather than cowardly.

The second time the two generals appear on stage is in Scene B. Argeos, who retains his primary function as the antipode to the virtue of the rulers of Paphos, is now opposite Axiothea. She claims her authority on the kingdom and the people, although they are now controlled by Ptolemy's troops, in spite of her husband's death, who was the male heir to the throne. General Argeos opposes Axiothea's political arguments of natural succession to the throne, in a patriarchal rhetoric combined with political force. This is best represented in his position towards her. He claims, "a woman who resists, multiplies her charm. A queen, however, multiplies the danger for her kingdom" (17).[251] Women are, at the same time, presented as a potential object of desire and in a dangerous place because of her political actions. Throughout the scene, Argeos continues in the same way: on the one hand, he praises her for her beauty and admits that he "is conquered" (19)[252] by Axiothea; while, on the other hand, in rage, he screams, "you know that I can determine your future with one command. Or do you deny it?" (20).[253] The character of Argeos unfolds further in Scene IY, in which the general tells Axiothea that he will speak to her "not as a general but as a man" (28)[254] and offers her "a place in my bed" (28),[255] in an effort to win her over and marry her. At her refusal, he restates his position as "ruler of the Mediterranean", reestablishing his status in the political and social hierarchy. He also admits to his weakness as a man, when he says, "I have

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[248] «*Με ανακούφιση και χαμόγελο επιτυχίας*»

[249] «Επιτέλους. Υπάκουσε στον Πτολεμαίο.»

[250] «Ακολούθησε τη διαταγή μας»

[251] «Μια γυναίκα που αντιστέκεται, πολλαπλασιάζει τη γοητεία της. Μια βασίλισσα όμως πολλαπλασιάζει τους κινδύνους για το βασίλειό της...»

[252] «Με κατακτήσατε»

[253] «Ξέρετε πως μπορώ με μια μου διαταγή να καθορίσω το μέλλον σας. Ή το αρνιέστε;»

[254] «όχι σαν στρατηγός μα σαν άντρας»

[255] «μια θέση στο κρεββάτι μου»

never had to plead with any woman" (29).[256] Moreover, he reaffirms his belief in the interconnectedness between power and life, a claim which Axiothea rejects. As Argeos exits, he says: "Very well. You women are good at words. But the last words belong to Ptolemy" (31).[257] Here, he reinstates his usual manner of juxtaposing the gender-based with power-based rhetoric, in order to create a power structure that will help him prevail, since he has been rejected as a man by Axiothea.

The next characters to be examined are two historical figures of Cyprus from the third century B.C.: Sopatros (poet of comedies) and Hrisippos (follower of stoic philosophy). However, neither of them lived in Cyprus; Hrisippos lived in Athens and Sopatros moved around in the eastern Mediterranean. Both characters appear in Act 2, as part of the space of the tavern (in Scene Y) and the temple of Aphrodite in Paphos (in Scene YI). Both public spaces are populated by men. In Scene Y, Sopatros, a joyful character, poetic in expression about food, acts as an artistic outlet and antipode to the complaining of the Paphian men, Nikokratis, Menedimos and Melanthios about current politics. Despite him reciting light-hearted poetry centering on food[258] and his general function as a comic figure, Sopatros is also crucial in maintaining an ethical balance: when Menedimos shows leniency towards the new rulers, Sopatros calls him a "fatalist", and accuses him that he is "ready to compromise" (38).[259] There is a clear distinction between Sopatros and the Paphian men, in terms of their perception of the world and their analytical power. In Scene YI, just before daybreak, at the temple of Aphrodite, Sopatros maintains his jovial manner and is joined by Hrisippos and Kinirarhos, the high priest in the temple of Aphrodite. The three men debate politics, philosophy and ethics, related to the philosopher Zenon. This scene does not move the action in any way, but serves as a scene-setter for the following episode in which Axiothea takes her life. The philosophical setting for Cyprus in the fourth century B.C. unfolds before the reader as a place with ethical concerns and a firm tie to Athenian philosophic trends. The discussion is on stoic philosophy, Zenon and Plato, thus creating a link between the local characters and the metropolis of Athens. Paphos and Axiothea are connected, by association, to this

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[256] «είμαι κυρίαρχος της Μεσογείου.» «Δεν παρακάλεσα καμιά γυναίκα ποτέ μου»

[257] «Πολύ καλά. Στα λόγια οι γυναίκες τα καταφέρνετε. Τον τελικό λόγο όμως θα τον πει ο Πτολεμαίος».

[258] His poetry on lentils gave Sopatros the nick-name Fakios, meaning "of lentils".

[259] «μοιρολάτρης» «έτοιμος να συμβιβαστής»

intellectual environment, establishing them as part of the Hellenic world and as stakeholders in the philosophical discussion happening in Athens.

Moreover, and as mentioned earlier, there are inner conflicts between characters that serve to further strengthen the ethical position of the protagonist. Such character is Kinirarchos. As the day breaks and the temple prepares for worship, he maintains a neutral position on the political developments in Paphos, instead, focusing his attention on the religious practices of the temple. As he leaves, he declares how "the queen will understand on her own that she has no power, no reason not to accept the authority of Ptolemy. The action of the king will teach her to submit." (43).[260] This viewpoint by the representative of the religion of the time (the goddess Aphrodite) is Savvidou-Theodoulou's clear commentary on the conformist attitude of Cyprus' Christian Orthodox church of her own time.[261] The scene ends with a short dialogue between Sopatros and Hrisippos, expressing their opinions (and one suspects, the author's) on the issue:

> Sopatros: Can one be indifferent?
> Hrisippos: Yes, about glory and namelessness, lust and pain, wealth and poverty.
> Sopatros: And justice?
> Hrisippos: That is wise thinking that validates everything, like bravery, which is wise thinking about things you must tolerate.
>
> (43-44) [262]

The position of the two men is clear: critical towards the indifference of Kinirarchos, and in support of justice and bravery, as demonstrated by Nikoklis and (soon) by Axiothea. The two characters appear for the last time in Scene YIII, when they are informed about the fate of Axiothea. The final words of the play are theirs, and said with a "*compelling voice*" (49).[263] They move through the audience, and describe Axiothea as the "frontier between humans and

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[260] «Θα καταλάβει και μόνη της η βασίλισσα, πως δεν έχει καμμιά δύναμη, ούτε κανένα λόγο να μη δεχτεί την εξουσία του Πτολεμαίου. Η πράξη του βασιλιά θα της διδάξει τν υποταγή»

[261] Kinirarchos is presented in the action of the play in Scene III, where in a long conversation with Axiothea, he positions himself as a moderate political presence, and advises Axiothea to do the same, that is, to adapt to the new conditions, as he plans to do, assimilating gods and religious practices with the worship of Aphrodite.

[262] «Σώπατρος: Μπορείς ν'αδιαφορήσεις;

Χρύσιππος: Ναι, για τη δόξα και την ασημότητα, την ηδονή και τον πόνο, τον πλούτο και τη φτώχεια.

Σώπατρος: Κι η δικαιοσύνη;

Χρύσιππος: Εκείνη είναι φρόνηση που μοιράζει αξία στο κάθε τι, σαν την ανδρεία, που είναι φρόνηση για πράγματα που πρέπει να βαστάζεις.»

[263] «*φωνή επιβλητική*»

gods" (49),[264] elevating her to a higher level. As the play closes, the characters draw the attention of the spectator from their own lives to that of Axiothea, who sacrificed herself and only left a "clay mask […] as a prize for you, don't forget it, by the immortal dance she's danced" (49).[265] Her elevation to the status of a symbolic woman encompassing principles by which modern people should live is the final affirmation of the piece, spoken by Sopatros, Hristippos, Kinirarhos and Filonidis, the escort and servant to the queen.

In regards to the "articulations of praxis" of Axiothea, the principle a*ctant* of Theodoulou-Savvidou's play, *Axiothea,* the following analysis can be made:

Love/desire: in terms of the manifestations of action in relation to love/desire, one senses Axiothea's connection with the idea of honor and duty. During the entire play, these principles are often challenged by way of many obstacles, which she must overcome. In her first entrance, the stage directions dictate that she is "*distraught but proud*" (16),[266] and for the remaining scene her main action is to try to win over the political authority, formerly in the hands of her dead husband. Her commitment to the idea of honor starts with a comparison between Alexander the Great, who she thought of as honorable and just, and his successors, who put their own ambitions above the rights of the conquered kingdoms. She declares to Argeos that she is free, and says that "for as long I live, I will be the legitimate ruler of my people" (17).[267] She also acknowledges her duty when she admits that "the actions of the leaders save or destroy a people" (17).[268] She takes responsibility for the fate of her people, in spite of the fierce resistance of Argeos. At the end of the scene, and during Scene IY, Axiothea's honor is tested by Argeos' doubts as to the power of her female nature to deal with political issues, and his propositions that she become his wife. To all these, Axiothea's actions are in line with her desire to be honorable, both personally, as a woman, and socially, as a queen, although, the two realms, tend to draw from each other's strengths. When Argeos comments that no one can understand female self-complacency, she immediately responds:

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[264] «σύνορο ανάμεσα στον άνθρωπο και τους θεούς»

[265] «μόνο το πήλινο της προσωπείο [...], βραδείο για σένα, μην το ξεχνάς, απ' τον αθάνατο χορό που εκείνη χόρεψε». The actual picture of the clay mask depicting Axiothea is found on the following page of the publication of the play.

[266] «καταβεβλημένη αλλά περήφανη»

[267] «όσο ζω, θα είμαι νόμιμη κυρίαρχος του λαού μου»

[268] «οι πράξεις των ηγετών σώζουν ή καταστρέφουν ένα λαό»

"you insult me" (19), resulting to his admission of her strength and power. At the end of Scene II, as Argeos is talking about her "interests", she redirects the discussion to the question of "duty" (20)[269] and ends the scene with a dramatic monologue on the subject. Scene III starts with the presentation of Axiothea in her role as mother to her two daughters. She admits to having dreams and hopes for them, but now she "does not want them to live as prisoners of the enemy because they are women" (23).[270] Therefore, her desire to be dutiful will also drive her actions towards new directions in relation to her daughters, namely, to self-sacrifice. For the remainder of this scene, Axiothea speaks with Kinirarhos, once more attempting to convince him that duty and honor are above one's personal interest. In Scene IY, Axiothea is courted by Argeos, who proposes marriage and a safe future for her and her family. To this proposition, she declares that she is not expecting anyone to save her, but that she "believe(s) in the inner me" (30),[271] basing her strength on herself, and living her life on her own terms, since she chooses to "listen to my conscience" (30).[272] Although Axiothea does not appear in Act 2, the silent Scene YII of the ceremonial preparation of the willing self-sacrifice of the women, and Scene YIII, when Filonidis narrates the events of the mass suicide, present images which support Axiothea's desire for duty and honor. Scene YII symbolizes, in its entirety, Axiothea's priority to 'do everything as it should be', although it is evidently a very painful process for her. Scene YIII and Filonidis' narration of the suicide are symbolic of Axiothea's stance towards her decision: she collapses when she sees her dead husband off stage, but when she returns to the women's quarters, instead of wailing, she gathers the women and suggests, "lets not accept anything unworthy in our race" (48)[273], and that their freedom allows them to choose their fate. She, and the other women, including her daughters, first adorn themselves; in the familiar way of Antigone, her daughters put on their wedding gowns, and then take their lives by stabbing themselves with their husbands' swords.

Communication: During the course of play, Axiothea's actions reveal communication with Sopatros and Hrisippos, although she never shares the same space with them. The two men,

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[269] «συμφέρον» «χρέος»

[270] «να ζήσουν αιχμάλωτες του εχθρού επειδή είναι γυναίκες»

[271] «πιστεύω στον άνθρωπο, που βρίσκεται μέσα μου»

[272] «θ'άκούσω τη συνείδηση μου»

[273] «Ας μη δεχτούμε τίποτα ανάξιο στη γενιά μας»

famous ancient Cypriots, function in parallel with Axiothea, and her own priorities and values are the same ones they share. This film-like structure, with characters expressing the same thoughts in two distinct settings without interaction, serves to emphasize that, at the time, Hellenic ideals and virtues were shared by Cypriots, especially intellectuals and those of the upper classes. Axiothea, Hrisippos and Sopatros share their belief in human dignity and in need for freedom. Each from one's vantage point tries to apply that: Axiothea as the widow of a king and ruler of her city, against the forces within (Kinirarchos) and without (Argeos and Kallikratis); Sopatros and Hrisippos, as philosophers moving among the people and engaging in conversation in taverns and temples.

Help/struggle: Axiothea's struggle appears at various stages of the play, and is caused by her interaction with various characters and supernatural phenomena. As has already been mentioned, Axiothea's actions are aimed towards honor and duty, but the author sets various obstacles in her way. This gives more value to her choices, since within the romantic context she knows that she has no chance of winning, but she struggles anyway. Within the public domain, Axiothea's struggle is against Argeos and Kallikratis (in relation to the rule of the kingdom), and Argeos (in relation to his marriage proposal), and, Kinirarhos (for his tolerance towards the new foreign gods and the regime). In the private domain of the world of the women, her struggle lies in the prospect of future happiness represented by her young daughters. Although the scene is rather short and we have a constrained impression of Axiothea, her pride and love towards her daughters, are all quite evident images. Secondly, Axiothea struggles with supernatural elements in two instances: the reporting by Yerginos, a palace attendant, that bulls have been washed on the shores of Paphos in Scene 2, and the sacrilege against the alter of the god Apollon, which Elatis in Curium reported by Kinirarchos in Scene 3. She dismisses the importance of these events and their negative explanations, rationalizing them and acting independently of the explanations given. Thus, she enforces her own will by using reason and not superstition, and her determination to act honorably.

2.4 Comparative Character Analysis: implications on identity

The postulations made from the analysis of the characters of Nikoklis and, particularly, "the heroine Axiothea"[274], as seen in the plays, *Nikoklis–Axiothea* by Kostas Nikolaides (1952), *Axiothea*, by Kipros Chrisanthis (1968), and *Axiothea* by Mona Savvidou-Theodoulou (1982), are presented in the final section of this chapter. For each of the categories of actions examined (love/desire, communication and help/struggle) the characters shift from one set of dramatic values to the other: from the enlightenment value of *vraisemblance* in Nikolaidis' and Chrisanthis' play, to the empowered Romantic heroine of Savvidou-Theodoulou's work.

The notion of fictional character from the Enlightenment through to the twentieth century is recorded successfully in Joep Leerssen's (2006) *National Thought in Europe*, where the "'philosophical' endorsement [by the Enlightenment] to racial and national stereotypes" (67) passes through neo-Aristotelian poetics. This entailed the creation of literary characters within a framework of distinct characteristics, which were associated with their origins.[275] Leerssen also presents the overriding term concerning neo-classical characters, namely, *vraisemblance*, which he defines as "the link between the personality (characterization) and plotline (plausibility)" (58). This is always made by assuming that the potential "admirable hero" (58) has a determined course, based on the respectability and nobility s/he carries as part of his/her status. On the other hand, Romanticism creates characters who insist on their self-sufficiency, a consequence of the Romantic period itself, "the epoch of free enterprise, imperial expansion and boundless revolutionary home", which led to individualism and "an extraordinary high estimate on human potentialities and powers" ("The Romantic Period" 15). In the context of literature, this personal initiative is, in turn, transformed into heroism, and centered around the "ceaseless striving for the unattainable" ("The Romantic Period" 15). As a value this was considered sinful in the pre-Romanticism

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[274] "Η ηρωίς Αξιοθέα": the characterization belongs to Athanasios A. Sakellarios (1991) in his book *Τα Κυπριακά*, (350, Vol. A').

[275] Leerssen (2006) mentions three important publications of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, which fashioned dramatic characterization by type, separated by ethnicity. These were Julius Ceasar Scaliger's, *Poetics libre VII* (1561), *Poétique* (1640) by Jules de la Mesnardiére and Johann Zahn's entry in his encyclopedic volume, *Specula psysico-mathematico-historica notabilium ac mirabilium sciendarium [Physical-mathematical and historical mirrors of noteworthy and marvelous things to know]* (printed in 1696) entitled "The differences between the five most important nations in Europe i.e. the German, Spanish, Italian, French and English ones" (56-60).

era, when knowing one's boundaries and acting within them was the virtuous condition of the noble character.

The first category of actions examined is the objects of love/desire of the protagonists. It may be observed that among the play by Nikolaidis, and those by Chrisanthis and Savvidou-Theodoulou, there is a clear thematic shift centering on the object of love/desire. The true divergence, however, lies in the differentiation between the first two plays and that of Savvidou-Theodoulou, as we observe the creation of the romantic hero in the last play, an antithesis to Axiothea/Nikoklis in the characters of Nikolaidis, and Axiothea in Chrisanthis' work, whereby the heroes embody *vraisemblance*. The actions of love/desire of Nikoklis and Axiothea in the play by Nikolaidis are primarily about the worship of the physical place of Paphos, and its extension, Hellas. Secondly, these actions are centered on Aphrodite and the practice of her worship. The metaphor of the tree and its branches is consistent throughout in reference to the metropolitan area of Hellas and the Hellenic provinces, among them, Cyprus. Clearly, this poses an interesting question, also asked by Anthony Smith (2004) in his exploration of nationhood in antiquity: *Were there 'Nations' in Antiquity?* Smith's answer is clear:

> "nationalism is more than a theory, or even an ideology, it is a modern phenomenon, emerging in the eighteenth century and coming to fruition under the aegis of Romanticism's cult of authenticity. What Hastings[276] terms 'nationalism', I regard as a more or less fervent 'national sentiment', and hence always particularistic even solipsist: whereas modern nationalism is, by definition, universalistic as well, since in its perceptions there are always other nations"
>
> (128)

In the case of the play by Nikolaidis, the idea of the nation is created in the world of the play in relation to several factors, especially the imagined origins of Greek-Cypriots from Greece's mainland, as well as the reign of Alexander the Great. Hegemonic rhetoric supports that he has united the Hellenes in his empire, and, Hellenized other populations and ruled wisely and fairly, an attitude shared by the protagonists in the play. On a secondary level, the love/worship of Nikoklis and Axiothea is demonstrated by the intensity and significance attributed to the worship of Aphrodite in the spatial context of Paphos/Cyprus. This acquires

[276] According to Smith (2004), Adrian Hastings argues in *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1997) that the "reaction of a nation under threat, can be found long before modernity" (128).

a broader meaning as we note that certain qualities of Aphrodite are associated primarily with the Virgin Mary [Panagia/Παναγία], and, therefore, to Christianity, as well as other religious personae. This attempt to acquire an understanding of the mythological personae of the Paphian Aphrodite within the world of the play reveals essential roots in the space,[277] in addition to origins in the geographical periphery.[278] The text manifests this connection through such references to Aphrodite as *matron* [Despina/Δέσποινα] and the concept of *mediation* [mesitia/μεσιτεία], which carry significant weight in Christianity and are associated with the Panagia. Both connections manifested in the play create bonds between the protagonists, with what they perceive as elevated ethical values (Paphos/Hellas and Aphrodite), through a process of sanctification. Evidence of the connection between the two concepts can be found in Vasilios N. Makrides (2009) and his discussion of the religious cultures of Greece from Antiquity to modern times, confirms that "behind the 'official end' of paganism, Hellenic religious culture lingered on, mostly in disguised or latent forms. It was mixed into or simply coexisted with Orthodox Christianity" (270). Moreover, and according to Paul Friedrich (1978), "the Greek[279] Aphrodite […], though primarily erotic, [is] also maternal" (182), which allows for the encompassment of traits within the pagan goddess of the major Christian saint.

Axiothea's actions towards love/desire in the plays by Chrisanthis and Savvidou-Theodoulou present a thematic shift, as they center around the notions of honor and duty.

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[277] In his article *Aphrodite Delight* (2006), Yiannis Papadakis explores the figure of Aphrodite as a contemporary icon for Cypriots, as well as for British colonialists. His account of the "birthplace of Aphrodite" and its implications are interesting: "The names of Aphrodite's birthplace - according to legend a large coastal rock near the city of Paphos - provide an illustration of the prevailing dialectic of intolerance, with its mixture of mythology, legend and history. The Greeks of Cyprus also called this rock the 'Rock of the Romios' (Petra tou Romiou), due to its legendary association with the figure of Digenis Akritas, one of the heroic guardians of the borders of Byzantium against 'infidel attacks'. It is worth noting that while Digenis means 'born of two races', his mixed Byzantine-Arab ancestry has been conveniently silenced in Greek historiography. The two legendary figures, Aphrodite and Digenis, were thus joined into a single place name, just as the dominant expression of Greek identity combined ancient Greece and Byzantium within an indissoluble union known as the 'Hellenic-Christian ideals'. Turks of Cyprus in contrast pejoratively named the same rock the 'Rock of the Infidel' (gavur tashi)." (240)

[278] In her thorough study of the origins of Aphrodite, Budin (2003) writes in *The Origins of Aphrodite*, that according to literary sources and archeological findings, and "contrary to much modern opinion, Aštart is not the most likely progenitress" (11). She supports that "[Aphrodite] emerged slowly from Cypriot, Levantine and Aegean influences, all left to simmer together in Cyprus for centuries during the Dark Ages before finally emerging and establishing her cult in the Greek world. Aphrodite is Cypriot." (273)

[279] The Cypriot Aphrodite is included in the family of Greek gods, as a reflection of the mode of identification of the ancient religious traditions employed by historians. For example, in her article, "A Reconsideration of the Aphrodite-Ashtart Syncretism", Budin (2004) identifies Aphrodite as Greek, whereas Ashtart is Phoenician (96).

However, in the play by Chrisanthis, these values are directly connected to, and originate from, the invisible world of the men, which lies outside the realm of Axiothea's private domain. In a conversation of the new place of femininity in early nineteenth century England, Stillinger and Lynch (2006) argue that "a woman's private virtues now had a public relevance. They had to be seen as crucial to the nation's welfare" (5). This makes a point for the new role of women as ambassadors of the men's' objects of love/desire, yet still inhabiting their private space.

In the case of the play written by Chrisanthis, the actions of the protagonist towards love/desire reflect those of the world of the men, but adapted to their own secure position in the patriarchal structure. Axiothea urges her daughters and sisters-in-law to sacrifice themselves, but she does so by bringing their husbands and fathers, as an example. Her arguments embrace the role of the woman as a wife and mother, and centre around the dishonor brought to those patriarchy-based roles through an imminent enslavement. Although her actions of love/desire towards honor/duty seem to manifest her independence, they do not, in fact, escape the *vraisemblance* of her role as wife of Nikoklis and queen. Therefore, in the play by Chrisanthis, the protagonist is not driving her actions in the way Savvidou-Theodoulou's Axiothea is: Axiothea's desire in this play for honor/duty is driven by her own decisions, made independently of the patriarchal structure, a fact which constitutes a major shift in the representation of the character. The evolution of Axiothea towards a true Romantic heroine, driven by her own internal needs is manifested in the play by Savvidou-Theodoulou through the multiple obstacles she overcomes on a personal level, in order to realize her actions in the direction of honor and duty. Leerssen (2006) places this shift "from someone's 'type' or outward appearance towards someone's inner predisposition" (112) in the context of Romantic idealism. It is through this that the "soul or *Geist*, of a nation's identity" (112) is revealed. The traits demonstrated by Axiothea through her actions as an independent agent and a new hero, as an extension formulate the character of the nation. The representation of these traits by the character can be seen as the closest visual representation of the 'embodiment' of a nation. The values and principles of a nation have found residence in the body of this dramatic character.

Furthermore, the actions entailing the aspect of communication present an interesting commentary on the social class of the characters the protagonists relate with. In the play by Nikolaidis, Nikoklis and Axiothea communicate most effectively with characters of their

social class: Nikoklis bonds with the Counselors (his brothers) and Axiothea with the Chorus, who are the women of the Court and wives of the Counselors. A different choice is made by Chrisanthis, who chooses the Wet-nurse, a woman without a name and of the working class. She does, however, have a clear function as a caregiver, and Axiothea shares two important qualities with her: gender and motherhood. The first two plays base the communication of the protagonists on the neoclassical foundation of creating a sense of community within one's own 'character type'. The protagonists rely on communication with their own dramatic 'type' in order to create their universe. These characters are of the same origin (Paphians and Hellenes) and social class (aristocracy, except in the case of the Wet-Nurse who is clearly valorized and elevated by Axiothea), and therefore share the same principles.

However, in the play by Savvidou-Theodoulou, we see a different relationship emerging: Axiothea communicates in a remote fashion with Sopatros and Hrisippos, who are never present in a scene with her, but deal with dilemmas like those of Axiothea and express the same ideas and ethical integrity she does, giving the impression of a common goal. This, in turn, formulates a community. One can safely assume that the last play finds Axiothea building her heroism through the use of the symbolism encasing a poet and a philosopher. According to philological research, Sopatros is a poet who lived as a poet in the eastern Mediterranean and Asia Minor and through his "few salvaged verses and mentioned titles to his plays emerges as a multifaceted poetic figure" (Voskos 182), therefore, used by the author as a symbolic ambassador of the classical era. The figure of Hrisippos is even stronger, in terms of intellectual capital. His name (Hrisippos o Solevs)[280] indicates that his origin is from the Cypriot kingdom of Soloi. According to historiographer, Diogenis Laertios, he was an important stoic philosopher[281] in Athens during the third century B.C. and made a significant contribution to his school of philosophy. The protagonist in the play by Savvidou-Theodoulou outlines her world and its values based on the two characters and their intellectual level. On a second level, their association to Axiothea is significant because of their validation as a literary figure and a philosopher respected in the broader Hellenic area. In the case of Hrisippos, he had lived his entire life in the metropolis of Athens. On the level

[280] Greek: Χρύσιππος ο Σολεύς.

[281] According to Diogenis Laertios (7, 180) the saying about Hrisippos was that "if the Gods engaged in a dialectic, they would obviously use the dialectic method of Hrisippos" («αν οι Θεοί κάνουν διαλεκτική, θα χρησιμοποιούν προφανώς την διαλεκτική του Χρυσίππου» «ΕΙ ΠΑΡΑ ΘΕΟΙΣ ΗΝ ΔΙΑΛΕΚΤΙΚΗ, ΟΥΚ ΑΝ ΑΛΛΗΝ ΗΝ Ή Η ΧΡΥΣΙΠΠΟΥ»)

of national identity, this adds another level of signification to the association of the heroine Axiothea to these characters.

The final category of actions is help/struggle, towards which the protagonists of each of the plays deal in a strikingly different manner. In the first play, Nikoklis and Axiothea each deal with their own demons: Nikoklis with the delegates that have come to take his throne (a physical threat), while Axiothea with a bad dream, seen as an omen from the Gods (a metaphysical threat). Chrisanthis' Axiothea struggles only at the very beginning of the play, since the only threat she acts against and admits fearing is, again, a dream. Jennifer Ford (1998) writes on the nature of the Romantic perception of dreams through British author, Samuel Coleridge's writings, claiming that the approaches in the classical world of dreams were still valid in the eighteenth century. For the purposes of the present research, the most relevant point being that at the time, dreams were perceived as "supernatural, sometimes termed irrationalistic: dreams were thought to be messages from gods; they could take the form of visions or oracles" (11). One can deduce from the synthesis of information offered here, that the playwrights had created the world of the hostile 'other' outside the protagonist. The problematizations put forth by the stress-inducing factors (the delegates and the dreams) for the protagonist were dealt with as factors that can simply be dismissed, since they are outside the realm of elements, which can influence the relationship between the character and plotline (*vraisemblance*).

On the other end, Savvidou-Theodoulou's Queen Axiothea, acts against many external threats, in addition to her own internalized struggle. Some of the threats are physical and others are metaphysical: men who try to take over her kingdom and get married to her, and others who try to convince her that, above all, survival should be one's priority. Her struggle against the metaphysical is related to incidents, which are framed and interpreted in the same light, therefore making their rationalization her true challenge. As a heroine with Romantic elements, she acknowledges these struggles and acts against them, essentially while being aware of the challenge they present, thus making her overcoming them into significant actions. Lastly, and in order to avoid any confusion, it must be added that Axiothea's struggle does not in any way parallel that of a three-dimensional heroine of realism. Nonetheless, Theodoulou-Savvidou's heroine presents striking distinctions with the previous protagonists examined in this chapter.

As we venture into a socio-historical contextualization of the protagonists of the three plays examined in this chapter, we must first acknowledge that these protagonists (the focus being primarily on Axiothea), are treated as symbolic entities by the authors. In line with the usual practice of the Enlightenment, the digging up of ancient historical grandeur and creation of a connection with glorious historical figures of the past was the case with Axiothea and Nikoklis. These newly discovered beacons of virtue and heroism, encompassing the traits associated with nation-building, function as pillars for the creation of a collective identity. In this case, the resurfacing of these historical characters is rather odd, since the mention of the historical episode in question is very limited in the sources, practically passes unnoticed by official historiography of the twentieth century and its heroic nature can be easily disputed. Nonetheless, all three authors take on this ambivalent material and choose to reshape it into theatre plays, with a very clear patriotic rhetoric as a backbone. We must also mention that within this glorification of the neo-classical, one also finds a blend of elements from enlightenment and romanticism. This is a reminder that the plays have known influences not only from the Hellenic space, but also from the continent.

Placing the characters in context, it can be assumed that they are shaped by their authors in the general framework of three important theoretical environments: Anderson's famous 'imagined communities', the ideological space of Andonis Liakos' (2011) 'utopias' and as presences in the 'dream nations' of Stathis Gourgouris (1996). The birth of nation-states in Europe, and more specifically of the birth and evolution of the Greek nation state, entails a historiography-related and literature-related mechanism which enhances its construction: the discovery and/or rebirth of historical figures and attribution to them of qualities perceived as 'classical'.[282] This practice serves in manifesting among the members of the new (*imagined*) community[283] a relationship with what Antony Smith (2004) calls a *usable past* (212). This is appropriated accordingly and subsequently utilized as a control mechanism on many ideological levels and societal functions. Focusing on the use of

[282] The classicists of the twentieth century, such as Bernand Knox (1993) acknowledge that "for the great poets of modern Greece […] the legacy of ancient Greece, is both a blessing and a burden" (130), recognizing, furthermore, the potential for a critical position towards the perceived Hellenic past, which often spans across the pride spectrum.

[283] Marios Hatzopoulos (2009) stresses that certain resurrections of the past led the Westernizing Greek-speaking elites towards the belief of the existence of a "distinctive community with a common culture" (81), thus placing a specific group of the population at the epicenter of this change.

antiquity in this context, Vangelis Calotychos (2003) eloquently mentions that "th[e] interplay between cultural classicism and historical constructivism, on which the Greek threshold of modernity derives, unfolds in a game of restoration and reformation of identity and its legitimacy" (5). This opens up the space for dialectic interplay between "the *diachronic* text of an autonomous, primary literary text with that of the *synchronic* text of a cultural system" (Calotychos 12). In his own presentation of this phenomenon in Cyprus, Michalis K. Michael (2010) mentions that "[t]he historical fact, therefore, in the way that it is represented in the present (that is, through its myth construction) reveals much more about the present than about the past" (149), continuing to explain certain myths developed about the Church of Cyprus (in relation to the Greek-Cypriot community) and its role in the construction of the nationalist narrative on the island. Sia Anagnostopoulou (2010) refers to this as "the Cypriot version of Greek nationalism" (196), which is closely related to the Greek, mainly due to the "the enosis movement [which] sought to incorporate Cyprus into Greece" (Calotychos 177).

The playwrights have embraced the newly-discovered glorious past fervently; they have entered it into the realm of the mythical, and have situated their protagonists at the basis of the hegemonic rhetoric prevalent on the island during the twentieth century. As mentioned earlier, however, there is a shift between the first two plays by Nikolaidis and Chrisanthis, and the third, by Savvidou-Theodoulou. The important date separating the writing of these two categories of plays is the war in Cyprus in 1974. More than the declaration of independence of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, it was the military coup in July 1974 which overthrew the government of Makarios, and the Turkish invasion which ultimately separated the island, that have impacted greatly the perception towards these dramatic characters, as demonstrated in Savvidou-Theodoulou's *Axiothea*. The pre-1974 plays create dramatic heroes as part of the Hellenic region, characters whose attributes are in agreement with the Hellenic ideals, as those are found in the Greek mythological construction of Hellenism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As mentioned in Chapter One, the imaginary of Hellenic history of the Enlightenment and the historiography of the nineteenth century, included Hellenic antiquity as the cornerstone of modern Greeks, their identity and ideals. Their place in the world of ancient Cyprus, as omnipotent rulers and Hellenes, informs the framework supported by the authors (Nikolaidis and Chrisanthis), of a Cypriot aspiration for rulers/heroes in the present (1950-1974). The plays were written in the years of the EOKA

uprising against the British colonial power and the first years of independence. This was a climate, which produced the first modern Greek-Cypriot heroes, and subsequently inspired the community to endorse this type of activity. These characters were the members of EOKA, some of whom even sacrificed themselves for the ideal of *Union* with Greece, such as Georgios Grivas Dhigenis and Archbishop Makarios III (the two leaders of EOKA), Archbishop Makarios III (as president of the Republic of Cyprus and Ethnarch)[284] and finally the protagonists of the post-independence struggle for *Enosis* (members of EOKA B' or other armed or unarmed groups). One could include Makarios himself in this last group, since "he decided to place independence and *enosis* in the context of his ethnarchical role" (Anagnostopoulou 200). The first target was in order to obey the will of Greece and the international community, which had decided on independence for the island, the latter in order to "express the will of Genos, of Hellenism" (Anagnostopoulou 200).

Several associations can be made between the ideals represented by the Greek-Cypriot heroes of the times when the plays were written, with the heroes of the plays themselves. The characters of Nikoklis and Axiothea by Nikolaidis, and Axiothea by Chrisanthis are associated directly with the group of modern Greek-Cypriots, who had also fought for Hellenism, but mostly for union with the motherland, the modern Greek state, in the same way Nikoklis and Axiothea associate themselves with Alexander and the golden age[285] of antiquity.

The third play, written by Mona Savvidou-Theodoulou and published eight years after any hope for *enosis* was violently eradicated (1982), portrays the heroine quite differently. Axiothea is now a romantic heroine, aware of the world around her, struggling against all the social and political forces at play. In the end, she strives to reach her potential, and to attain that which is seemingly unattainable. This play and the world around it constitute a different relationship between literature and history, as narrated by Antonis Liakos (2011): "the

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[284] Sia Anagnostopoulou (2010) alerts us of the fact that the term *Ethnarch* originates from the Ottoman period, and is a translation of the Ottoman term *millet basi*. In the "framework of the Greek Great Idea, the Ethnarch was the ethno-religious leader of irredentist Hellenism under Ottoman rule, since the Greek state was its national-political center" (198).

[285] Anthony Smith (2004) places the existence of a 'golden age' in the general context of nation-building, by supporting that the "collective appropriation of antiquity, and especially of shared memories of the 'golden age', contributes significantly to the formation of nations. The greater, the more glorious, that antique appears, the easier it becomes to mobilize people around a certain culture, […] and to identify a shared national identity" (213).

appearance of utopia on the horizon of the future has given birth to a new historicity, like an object does to its shadow. Because utopia means the departure of expectations from history" (165), but still according to the same Greek historian, utopias are "a myth that wants to become historicized" (170). Moreover, one suspects the origins of the approach of the author through a parallel historio-literary occurrence, as described by Hadjipandazis (2006). He mentions the changes in historical dramatic writing in Greece after the 1922 defeat of the Greek army in Asia Minor: "with the collapse of the front in Asia Minor, it looked like the historiocratic self-definition of the Ethnos was also collapsing" (188); he later adds on the character of post-1922 Greece, through the writings of the young intellectual of the time, Yorgos Theotokas, that "it's time [Greece] deserted her traditional nationalist isolation and joined the other European peoples in search of humanistic values" (190). Hadjipandazis then continues to examine the historical plays of such authors as Theotokas himself, Nikos Kazantzakis, and Aggelos Sikelianos, among others, in a chapter he names, "The transcendence of history", in which he examines the revisiting and the overturn of history by the playwrights of historical plays in the post-1930 era. Therefore, one can argue that the *raison d'être* for this shift in the composition and formation of the characters in Savvidou-Theodoulou's play is its association with the disillusionment of Greek-Cypriots after the war on Cyprus. A vision of the past, which encompassed a union with Greece was essentially buried after 1974, in much the same way as the *Megali Idea* was lost for the Greeks after the defeat in Asia Minor. Savvidou-Theodoulou's post-war utopia is based, on the one hand, on a visibly fallible society, while, on the other, on the solid belief in local political, cultural and philosophical leadership. The author's historically-referenced utopia (her projection into present and future Cyprus) is a world of opposing and conflicting forces: on the forefront is an exceptional political leadership which is aware of its surroundings and eager to fight, supported by people of culture and philosophy, whereas a mass of society, external enemies and the Church function as dystopic forces. The positive ideals represented in the utopia, through the characters, are still based on those associated with Hellenism, but the element which is no longer there is the attachment to Greece as motherland. The author seems to be unaware of any other path than that of empowerment on a personal level. As part of Savvidou-Theodoulou's anthropo-sociological study of nationalism in twentieth century Cyprus, her utopia seems to comprise of Cypriots, as they are described by Bryant (2004). "Cypriots have been victims, but they have not *only* been victims" (187) is a way of demonstrating the conflicting nature of the way Cypriots perceive themselves in relation to

the development of their history, and this designation is especially relevant to her discussion on the post-1974 era.

CHAPTER THREE
BYZANTIUM

Art and Life are theorized in splendid ambiguity
From *Modern Greece: A Cultural Poetics* by Vangelis Calotychos (9)

3.0 Introduction

Cyprus was part of the Byzantine Empire from 330 when Constantine moved his capital to Constantinople up to 1191, when the island was taken over by Richard the Lionheart, almost by accident, on his way to the Holy land for a Crusade. During this period, the Mediterranean changed immensely and the Eastern Roman Empire or Byzantium had already gone through its peak and demise, twice.

The history of the Byzantine Empire starts in the early fourth century when "emperor Diocletian[286] divided the empire into Eastern and Western parts, each with its own emperor" (Moorhead 10). Thus, he created a new administrative system with five administrative centers, four peripheral cities[287], in addition to Rome. Diocletian's successor, Constantine, in his effort to create a "new Rome", chose the site of the former Greek colony of Byzantium and there inaugurated the new capital of the Eastern Roman empire in 331 AD, naming it after himself, Constantinople. According to historian Norman Davies (1996), "Constantine did plant the seed of one historic notion – that the Christian religion was compatible with politics" (212). The inauguration of a new era in the relationship between the two was solidified in 392, with the accession to the throne of Constantinople of Theodosius I, the first emperor who was "exclusively Christian" (Davies 211). Davies also makes the point, that "within one or two generations it assumed a predominantly Christian character" (212), although Constantinople was always a multi-cultural city with communities from many parts of the world at the time.

The relationship of the Greek-Cypriot community in Cyprus with Byzantium is quite complex. With the introduction by the Christian bourgeoisie and trade cycles (Pachoulides

[286] Ruled between 285-305 A.D..

[287] These cities were Nicomedia, Mediolanum, Antioch, and Trier.

102) of Greek nationalism to Cyprus, in the early nineteenth century, the Christian inhabitants of Cyprus started to be considered descendants of the Mycenaean settlers in the islands millennia ago. Moreover, the connection of the local to the Greek historiographical continuum (unbreakable Hellenism through the ages) served to place Byzantium in the history line of Cyprus as well. The Greek-Cypriot community, the Rum (Turkish: Rûm) of Cyprus,[288] have now become part of the "imagined community" of Hellenism, as one of the large islands under the umbrella of 'Motherland' Greece (Pachoulides 122).[289] The inclusion of the island by its Greek-Cypriot inhabitants as part of the Greek Irredentism (αλύτρωτος Ελληνισμός) is based on the expansionist political line of Greece, 'Megali Idea', connecting the present to the glorious Byzantine past. The aspiration for the Greeks to return to the boundaries of the Byzantine empire, also identifies Cyprus as part of that past glory, aspiring once again to regain its former Byzantine, Helleno-Christian glory.

The interest in the present chapter is to disclose the ways with which cultural production reproduces society's understanding of what Byzantium was, and the values it represented, in light of how Cyprus is today. The chapter aims to explore the inter relationship among the historical plays written by Greek-Cypriot playwrights in the period between 1878-2004; to look at how these plays were influenced by Byzantine narratives and characters; and, how they relate to nationalism and its development. The first object of analysis is the Greek world and its relationship to Byzantium. The complexities of this relationship will be explored, with a final focus on the production of historical plays in Greece, and the perceptions of Byzantium in them. Further in the chapter, the archival work conducted on the Cypriot historical plays relating to Byzantium will be discussed, as well as their place within the literary environment. The next part of the chapter will examine in detail three plays, which share the same historical narrative, relating to the reign of Justinian and Theodora in the sixth century. Finally, a section will provide a comparative analysis of the protagonists of the three plays, based on the socio-politics of the time when the plays were written or published. The conclusions drawn shed light on the perceptions of Greek-Cypriot playwrights on Byzantium, as seen through the ideological framework of landmarks in the history of Cyprus in the twentieth century.

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[288] Pachoulides (2007), speaking of the dichotomy between Hellenic and Roman (Ελληνική/Ρωμαίικη) identity. Hellenic is associated with the Classical/Ancient past of the Greeks, whereas the 'Roman/Rum' answered more to the realities of the identity of the Hellenes as they took form within the Byzantine and Ottoman periods." (100).

[289] The various smaller communities, especially the Muslims, are considered as 'remnants' of foreign powers and rulers (Pachoulides 105).

3.1 Byzantium in Historical Plays

Historical plays on Byzantium have been written in abundance in Greece after Greek independence, but to my great surprise, not in other central and northern European countries. Historical plays relating to Byzantium (and specifically to the sixth century) were written in Greece in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The main features presented in these plays and which are relevant to this research study are predominantly those of Romanticism and largely embody patriotic qualities.

For a better understanding of the origin of these plays, one must study this nineteenth century literary tradition in relation to Greek historiography and its attitude towards Byzantium. Specific features dominated the historiography of post-revolution Greece. These features were related, as in many other parts of the continent, to the process of creating a nation-state, in this case modern Greece. Important figures in the positioning of Byzantium in the continuum of the history of the Greek nation were historiographers, Spyridon Zambelios and Constantinos Paparrigopoulos. The earlier versions of their writings on the history of the Greek nation in the 1840s, leave Byzantium out of the continuum of Hellenism, whereas in the later versions of both their writings in the 1860s, they position Byzantium as the bridge between Classical Greece and Modern Greece. Contemporary historical research affirms the importance of the historiography of the nineteenth century in the development of historical perceptions for modern Greeks (Panaretou 1987, Kitromilides 2008). It is Romanticism which offers the aesthetic context for the evolvement of nationalist thought. Stamatopoulos (2009) eloquently writes that, "The Romantic canvas will offer a solution for the overcoming [of the discontinuity], with the prospect of compiling an "imagined community"" (24), in this case the Modern Greek state.

The issue of Orthodoxy and its important role in the development of the character of the modern Greek state is another important aspect of the place of Byzantium in perceptions of Hellenic history. Sofos and Özkırımlı (2009 deal with this important point in regards to perceptions of Byzantium by historiographers, raised by Paparrigopoulos in his writings: "Having engaged in research on the Byzantine Empire, Paparrigopoulos argued that the latter constituted a distinct phase in the development of Hellenism as a result of the creative encounter Hellenism had with Christianity" (50). This role becomes even more interesting and relevant to this study, with the correlation of Orthodoxy to Byzantium, and this

perspective of Byzantium as a Christian empire was written into the official historical narrative of Greece, which was passed down to popular belief.

Lastly, historiography makes one more connection, which is crucial to understanding the identity developments of the time in relation to Byzantium. There was an interconnectedness created between the *Megali Idea* [Great Idea /Μεγάλη Ιδέα] and the modern Greek state. This became a vital part of the national ideology from the 1880s to 1922. The historical beginning of the *Megali Idea* rhetoric is regarded the famous speech given in 1844 in the Greek National Assembly by Ioannis Kolettis, and is recorded by Kitromilides. In the speech, Kolettis urged his colleagues to seek the voices of the ancestors, namely "the empire of its Comnene forefathers" ("From Byzantium to Modern Greece" 26), meaning the Byzantine Empire. Thus the perception of Byzantium emerging from Koraes and his generation of Enlightenment thinkers as "an era of barbarity and darkness, unworthy to be included in the timeline of the grand course of the nation" (Hadjipandazis 79), is slowly overthrown, and Byzantium enters the national narrative in a new light. Kitromilides (2008) argues that "we need to look at the Megali Idea as an ideological expression of the Greek state and to interpret it in the light of social and cultural preconditions having to do with the cultivation identity in the process of nation-building in nineteenth-century Greece" (26). Therefore, the *Megali Idea* as a dominant expansionist ideology correlated Byzantium in terms of grandeur and territorial breadth to that desired by the modern Greek nation state.

These components of Byzantium historiography are revealed in various Greek historical plays in different ways. In terms of story lines, characters and ideological framework, historical plays reveal their connection with the spirit of the time. Through the examination of this sizeable literary production, Hadjipandazis (2006) detects main ideological trends, which formulate the version of (literary) Byzantium which has prevailed through the last two centuries and till present. Starting from the 1860s and the redefinition of the position of Byzantium in the national narrative, "the gaze of dramatists starts to increasingly focus its attention on the coast of the Bosporus and the dome of Hagia Sofia" (81). They increasingly set their plays against the backdrop of Constantinople, borrowing Helleno-Christian grandeur from the newly established Greek Byzantine emperors. Authors

such as, Panayiotis Soutsos[290] regards Constantinople as "the lost heaven of the childhood of the nation" (Hadjipandazis 81), and fervently believes in the recapturing of the lands once possessed by the Byzantine Empire, in what Hadjipandazis describes as "imperialist zeal" (81).

Another tendency of the historical plays inspired by Byzantium, consistent with the creation of the hostile 'Other' by nation-states, is to establish another enemy for the Hellenes: in addition to the Ottomans and Turks, the nation must also be cautious of the Westerners, and especially the Franks (French). Hadjipandazis offers the example of the play *Maria Doksapatri* [*Μαρία Δοξαπατρί*] (1858) by Dimitrios N. Vernardakis.[291] In the play, which was immensely popular until the first decades of the twentieth century, the figure of the (Hellenized) commander of a provincial Byzantine region personifies "the timeless struggle of the Nation" (Hadjipandazis 88) against the imminent threat, which now comes from the West, not the East.

Finally, an interesting point is made by Hadjipandazis in regards to the plays written in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Although they are quite diverse thematically, a common ideological goal of writing in the vein of Hellenic Romantic Classicism runs through them. This is articulated brilliantly by Spiridon Vasiliades in his introduction to his plays *Οι Καλλέργαι*[292] (1869), in which he states that the European Romantics can become nobler and more civilized in the environment of Hellenism.[293] Greek authors perceive their cultural heritage, classical and Byzantine, as appropriate filters through which Romantic ideals and the birth of the Greek nation can emerge. The idea(l)s of Shakespeare or the German Romantics (who are greatly admired) cannot be limited to solely fitting the Hellenic context. The process needed to follow the usual route adopted by the intellectual elite

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[290] Soutsos (1806-1868) was part of a literary and political family, who was born in Constantinople and died in Athens. He is a representative figure of the Athenian Romantic School, and wrote poetry, theatre and fiction. He is the author of what is regarded the first modern Greek novel, *Ο Λέανδρος* (1834).

[291] Dimitrios Vernardakis (1833-1907) is an intellectual and professor of History at the University of Athens. In his plays and general writings, he argues for the "development of poetry with a national color and the cultivation of a 'national' drama" (Hadjipandazis 101). He makes a point for drawing creative inspiration from the pool of Hellenic national consciousness, following the model of other European nations and their romantic practices.

[292] The publication includes the plays *Αι Καλλέργαι* and *Λουκάς Νοταράς*. Published in Athens, D. Ktenas and S Economou Printing Press.

[293] Vasiliades (quoted in Hadjindazis 2006) writes: "ο άγριος και παράφορος ρωμαντισμός των εσπερίων εθνών εισερχόμενος υπό τον ουρανόν της Αττικής δέον να προσλάβη γλυκύτητα τινα ευάερον και μεταρσίωσην πλατωνικήν [...] εδώ, όπου και οι βάρβαροι εξελλινίζοντο και οι Ρωμαίοι κατακτηταί υπ' αυτής κατεκτώντο.» (111).

represented by specific Greeks, that of adapting and recognizing the superiority of Hellenic ideals over foreign ones.

For the purposes of the present chapter, the historical time examined is the sixth century A.D.; more specifically, the reign of emperor Justinian (527-565). The historical place is Constantinople, the capital then of the Eastern Roman/Early Byzantine Empire. The plays investigated are centered on the historical figures the Byzantine emperors Justinian[294] and Theodora, and General Belisarius.[295]

Focusing on the sixth century, and in an effort to draw a general picture of the era, one can describe Byzantium as a hybrid empire of varied cultures, languages and religions in spite of its predominantly Christian character. An indicative fact is the lineage of its emperors at the time: Justinian was not born in Constantinople, and neither was the previous emperor, and Justinian's uncle Justin.[296] Justin was born in Bederiana, a Latin-speaking village, in what is today South Serbia, and had ascended to the throne at the age of 70, due to a combination of luck and court politics. His nephew, Justinian (born Petrus Sabbatius), was also born in the Latin-speaking Balkan village of Tauresium, now part of modern F.Y.R.O.M. He was brought to Constantinople by his uncle, who educated him and, officially adopted him. Michael Maas (2005) mentions that in his schooling Justinian was "showing a special bend for theology but evidently not a strong interest in the non-Christian 'classics' of Greek or Latin texts, which do not resound in his later writings" (5). Finally, Justinian also became familiar with the ways of the court, which enabled him to ascend to the throne in 527 when his uncle died.

Many aspects of Justinian's rule are recorded primarily by Prokopius, a rather empathetic historian of the time, although it is believed that "[he] is probably trustworthy in [his] main facts" (Browning 38). Justinian's reign was recorded also by other historians who wrote the history of the time in Greek or Latin.[297] Prokopius was especially biased with Empress Theodora, a woman with a suspicious past whom Justinian had wed two years prior

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[294] Greek name: Ιουστινιανός (Iustinianos)

[295] Greek name: Βελισάριος (Velisarios)

[296] Greek name: Ιουστίνος (Iustinos)

[297] John Moorehead (1994) in *Justinian*, mentions Agathias, Menander the guardsman and John Malalas who wrote in Greek, in addition to Marcellinus, Victor of Tunnunna, Evagrius and John of Ephesos, who wrote in Latin (3).

to ascending the throne, after overcoming several social and legal obstacles. Theodora was his companion and advisor for the duration of her life. She died before him in 548.

According to researchers, Justinian rule had characteristics which were both 'classical' and 'medieval' (Moorehead 1), and Michael Maas (2005) makes a more focused evaluation by noting his rule as "self-righteously pious, overbearing and bent on change" (6). The *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (1991) reports on the general purposes of his reign: "[t]he aim of his policy was to create a strong empire, based on a unified administrative system and a single creed, encompassing the whole Mediterranean and ostensibly brilliant" (1083); David Abulafia (2011) speaks of "Justinian's attempt to re-establish a pan-Mediterranean Roman Empire" (235), allotting to his territorial ambitions.

An overview of his reign reveals the breadth of his activities. Among others: Justinian had revised the Roman law entitled *Codex Justianianius* in 529; he had attempted from the beginning of his reign to "eliminate heresy and establish one Christian doctrine throughout his domain" (Maas, *Age of Justinian*, 6,), which materialized in various applications; he went to war with Persia during the first five years of his reign, which resumed in the 540s, and caused him economic hardship in the 560s;[298] he almost lost his throne in 532, due to the *Nika* revolt in Constantinople, which ended in a blood bath of civilians at the Hippodrome, led by generals Belisarius and Narses; General Belisarius had, in 533, defeated the Arian Vandals in a rapid victory and captured Carthage and surrounding African territories, whereas his subsequent attack, in 535, on the Arian Ostrogoths was a much longer war, ending in 554 with the freeing of Italy; in 532 the enormous cathedral of Hagia Sophia was constructed; in 542, there was an outbreak of the plague, which killed millions and almost cost Justinian his own life; the year 543 brought on a fracture in the relations between the Constantinopolitan church and the papacy, since Justinian's attempts to reconcile Monophysites with the body of the church backfired; Empress Theodora died in 548; and, in 599, Slav raiders attacked the city, "forcing Justinian to call Belisarius out of retirement to organize the defense" (Maas, *Age of Justinian* 8). Maas (2005) stresses how Justinian's reign did not present uniformity, since "the 530s were a time of success and achievement for Justinian, [but] the 540s witnessed only trouble" (7), and by the time of his death in 565, "the

[298] Maas (2005) mentions that in 561-62, when the peace treaty between Justinian and Persia concluded, this "required heavy payments of gold from the Romans" (8).

mood in Constantinople had changed by the end of Justinian's life to one of angry frustration" (9).

For the purposes of this research, another important aspect worth mentioning of the history of the time, were the conditions of living in Constantinople and, specifically, the function and social role of the Hippodrome. Robert Browning (1987) mentions that the Hippodrome was "a copy on a smaller scale of the Circus Maximus at Rome (…) [which] offered excitement and spectacle in plenty" (35). In the Hippodrome, the spectators were separated among two principle parties, the Greens and Blues, which "enjoyed from their supporters the fanatical loyalty which some football clubs arouse today" (36). Browning characterizes these parties as "safety-valves for popular discontent and as means to pressure upon the authorities" (36). Although the two parties comprised of citizens from different parts of the city and religious beliefs,[299] they collectively acted as the "voice of the people" (37). Historians mention that both Emperor Justinian, as well as Empress Theodora[300] supported the Blues.

For the purposes of this chapter, the relevant plays examined through Greek production are: *O Velisarios* i *I Areti ke i Kakia* [*Ο Βελισάριος* ή *Η Αρετή και η Κακία*/*Belisarius* OR *Virtue and Vice*] by Demosthenis Misitzis (Constantinople, 1870); *Theodora* [*Θεοδώρα]* by expatriate playwright, Cleon Ragavis (Leipzig, 1884); *Ioustinianos ke Theodora* [*Ιουστινιανός και Θεοδώρα*/*Justinian and Theodora*] by Antonios Io. Antoniades (published in Athens in 1884); *Theodora* [*Θεοδώρα*] by G. B. Tsokopoulos (staged by the Royal Theatre in Athens in 1908, and published in Athens in 1909); and, *I Theodora* [*Η Θεοδώρα*] by Stefanos Charalambides (New York, 1938).

These plays take on various aspects of the story of the three main historical characters (Justinian, Theodora and Belisarius), each of them focusing more on one character, but also including the stories of fictional characters.[301] The choices by the playwrights define, to a

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[299] Browning (1987) reports: "The Blues tended to represent suburban landowners and rentiers, and to be firmly Calcedonian and a trifle conservative. The Greens drew support from the traders and artisans, many of whom were of Syrian origin, and were inclined to make concessions to Monophysitism and present more radical demands" (37).

[300] Justinian supported them due to religious reasons, while Theodora for reasons of loyalty to those who had favored her when she was a dancing girl.

[301] Hadjipandazis (2006) refers to the phenomenon of how playwrights move between historical fact and fiction in their story-telling and creation of characters, using a very appropriate metaphor. When talking about Greek playwright of historical drama, Alexandros Soutsos, he says: "The cover of objectivity, with which he tries to

great extent, the didactic point each author wishes to make in relation to the perceived identity they wish to promote, as discussed in the previous section. For example, in Charalambides's *Theodora*, the focus is on Theodora and her effort to repent for her past sins, which ultimately makes her worthy of Justinian, his love and the throne. Despite its obvious dramaturgical shortcomings, the play manages to establish the ideological basis through the message "of the story of a poor girl of the people which ascends to the throne of the world" (Hadjipandazis 437), thus embodying female virtue in the character of Theodora. Moreover, in Misitzis' play, Justinian is presented as noble and ethical, but a victim of devious courtiers and conspirators, who finally realizes his mistake and saves the life of heroic, Belisarius from the evil, Galvas at the last moment, when he finds out the truth. Justinian here embodies the virtue of repentance and humility, stressed all the more since the character is a powerful king. It is interesting to observe in both plays the sanctification of their protagonists, who have sinned, but repent and transform. The ideological underpinning is related to the position the authors take towards Byzantium and its character: it is perceived as a Christian empire; therefore, its throne cannot be occupied by individuals who do not obey the Christian doctrine and are not virtuous themselves.[302]

Moreover, Hadjipandazis (2006) writes of the plays' intense Romantic elements, evident in Misitzis, Ragavis and Tsokopoulos: the 'struggle between good and evil', usually between the Byzantines and their enemies (physical or psychological), which in Misitzis reaches melodramatic proportions (312); the idea of *unfulfilled love*, such as that between Ioannina (daughter of Belisarius) and Anthemios (architect of Hagia Sophia) in Ragavis's play, as well as between Arkadios (son of Belisarius) and Evdoxia (daughter of an adversary of Belisarius), who are revealed to be siblings, in Misitzis's *Belisarius*; the 'supernatural' which presents itself in dreams: an example being the dream of Theodora in Tsokopoulos's play, which prepares her for the arrival of her long-lost illegitimate child; other romantic elements are also presented to a lesser extent. Ragavis's *Theodora* is perhaps the best example of a romantic historical play, with its long and historically scholastic account of the events taking place during the reign of Justinian between 521 (first meeting of Justinian and

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seal the pot of his overflowing imagination, is lifted more than a few times and the boiling content reaches the most unsuspected observer" (57).

[302] The ties of the literary references with Christian doctrine can be seen in this quote from the Bible: "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ" Colossians 2:8.

Theodora) and 547 (death of Empress Theodora). The play centers around the figure of the Emperor, which is quite inconsistent with the title. Hadjipandazis (2006) notes that due to the tiring narration – the play stretches for 240 pages – "the reader has nothing else to do but observe the romantic details in the illustration of the portraits of the leading characters" (350), which enforces them as virtuous and able, but also patriotic.

But it is in the play by Charalambides that Romanticism is colored by Nationalism. We witness the new Queen of Byzantium as not only virtuous, but outspoken, as she states outright how she "belongs only to God, the Ethnos and her husband" (Hadjipandazis 437). This later play, published in 1938, represents a more mature nationalist narrative, centered on a clear idea of the Ethnos as a continuous and unbreakable history of the Hellenes. The research of Efi Gazi (2011) on the famous Greek motto *fatherland, religion, family*[303], locates the origin of the triptych proposed by Theodora. Gazi mentions that "it is a 'passphrase, a type of political and ideological 'slogan' which registers the main ideological consignment of conservatism" (15), which held up is socio-cultural value from the late nineteenth century into the mid twentieth. This saying is still sporadically heard today, especially during elections periods.

3.2 Byzantium in modern Greek-Cypriot Literature

In this period of study, it is important to note the thematic influence of Byzantium on the literature of Greek-Cypriot authors and playwrights. Although the influence of the theme of Byzantium, in relation to Antiquity, is quite different, it carries with it a certain type of gravity in relation to perceptions of identity of Greek-Cypriots that renders it necessary to investigate.

The second part of the nineteenth century, with the development of literature on the island and by Greek-Cypriot authors of the Diaspora, witnesses the inclusion of Byzantium as a part of the patriotic mosaic. In the Ottoman and British colonial times of the nineteenth century, Greek-Cypriot authors composed romantic patriotic poetry, which included the idea of Irredentism, and of "composing a new Hellenic empire or monarchy with its capital in Constantinople" (Kehagioglou & Papaleontiou 216). The notion of Constantinople as the Hellenic region, par excellence, has, as we will see in the development of the chapter,

[303] «Πατρίς, θρησκεία, οικογένεια».

important symbolic meaning for Greek-Cypriot authors, especially in relation to their established connection to Constantinople.[304] The connection of Constantinople with the promise for the rebirth of a glorious Hellenic empire, is obvious at the beginning of the twentieth century, with poems such as Vasilis Michaelides' "To Oroman tou Romiou" ["The Dream of the Rum (Greek)"/"Το όρομαν του Ρωμιού"] (1917), in which the *Megali Idea* is represented as the poet understands it: the Greeks march into Constantinople and hold service in Hagia Sophia, with the presence of Emperor Constantine Paleologos, the last emperor of Byzantium, who has risen from the dead.

Byzantium continues to be prominent in Greek-Cypriot literature of the twentieth century, and as we shall see in the analysis of the plays, associations to Constantinople remain strong. The bond between Byzantium and Orthodox Christianity keeps the former in the forefront. The Church of Cyprus is an autocephalous religious entity but retains close affiliations with the Patriarchy of Constantinople/Istanbul. The flag of Byzantium with the double-headed eagle is present outside and inside most churches in Cyprus, declaring the ideological connection with Byzantium. The Church of Cyprus is perhaps the only remaining organization, which retains a close tie with the idea of Byzantium, as the Christian Empire, the ideal state of Hellenism. The abundance of publications of the church and the ease of their circulation enhance this role.[305]

3.3 Greek-Cypriot historical plays reclaiming Byzantium

3.3.1 Archival Findings

In this primary research, the number of historical plays published and/or staged in Cyprus in the period between 1878 to 2004 relaying history or characters from the Byzantine period, amount to seven. Of these, three deal thematically with Justinian, Theodora and Belisarius; however, a further detailed examination of those will ensue. Of the other four, the themes vary but most deal with Byzantine emperors: *O Eraclios* [*O Ηράκλειος/Heraclius]* (1964) and *O Aleksios o alpha ke oi stravroforoi* [*O Αλέξιος ο Α' και οι Σταυροφόροι / Alexios the First*

[304] Such authors as expatriates, Nikolaos Saropolos (1817-1887) and Sappho Leontias (1832-1900) created links with Constantinople by living and working there. Their patriotic writings were inclusive of Cyprus in the Hellenic world, whose capital was Constantinople.

[305] A look at the website of the Church of Cyprus and their publications page, reveal the orientation of their publications towards Byzantium as the ideal state for Hellenism. http://www.churchofcyprus.org.cy/index.php?categoryID=11

and the Crusaders] (1970) by Kipros Chrisanthis, and *I Analipsi tou Timiou Stavrou* [*H Ανακάλυψη του Τιμίου Σταυρού / The Assumption of the Holy Cross]* (2000) by M. P. Mousteris. An exception is the play, *To Fiasco* [*Το Φιάσκο /The Fiasco]* (1980) by Andy Pernaris, dealing with Isaakios Komnenos (1093-1152), the renegade son of Byzantine Emperor Alexios Komnenos I, who took charge of Cyprus for a short time. Chrisanthis' plays exemplify the Byzantine emperors as strong and able rulers, even though in the case of Heraclius it is through personal struggle that his virtues emerge. The enemies in both plays come from the East (the Persians in the first and the Turks in the latter), with the Franks in *O Aleksios o alpha ke oi stravroforoi*, as an additional source of threat. The language in the plays is clearly nationalist, making clear distinctions between the Greeks, Rum, and the others, Turks, heretics, and heathens. Finally, the figures of the emperors exemplify the alpha males, figures who succeed the throne because of their gender and, as is implied, bring forth their task due to this biological fact. The model of patriarchal society is clearly presented in these plays. Mousteris' play is another uninteresting example of a naïve historical play, a one-dimensional rendition of the discovery of the Holy Cross by St. Helena, and her association with Cyprus. Both Helena and Constantine (her son and Byzantine emperor) are portrayed as stereotypically virtuous characters, with a battle between good and evil taking place throughout the play.

On the other hand, the play (1980) by Pernaris presents great interest. In the foreword of the publication, he mentions that "[the play] started being written on July 15th, 1974 and was completed on April 5th, 1979, after a lot of work." (5). This statement places the play and the inspiration for its writing on the day of the military coup which took place in Cyprus to overthrow the elected government of Archbishop Makarios. The play tells the story of Isaakios Komnenos, an opportunist and evil-doer, towards both his family and the Cypriots. However, the author draws a picture of the character as a man who has been scarred by his loveless upbringing (as the illegitimate child of his father) and this psychological burden is the exposition for his unethical actions. A synthesis of the information can lead us to assume, that, just as Isaakios was not inherently evil, individuals and groups who performed acts of treachery against Cyprus (i.e. the Coup and the civil violence) were not evil either. Their behavior can potentially be understood, if one looks into their past and the wounds they carry.

Moreover, it is interesting to note the geographical location of the settings of the plays. Five of these take place exclusively in Constantinople, dealing with characters and narratives that are unrelated to Cyprus. Of the other two, one takes place in Cyprus while the

final one takes place in both locations, a cross of Byzantine and Cypriot characters and narratives. In *Byzantium after the Nation*, Stamatopoulos (2009) mentions that the notion of Byzantium in the Balkan historiographies after the founding of the nation-states, was dual: Byzantium as Middle Ages, relating to the temporal dimension and defining the common problem of continuity for many Balkan states; and, Byzantium as Constantinople, reflecting the spatial dimension, a common breeding ground for cultural and political thought, different from that of the nation-state center (Stamatopoulos 19). Therefore, the choice to set these plays in Constantinople creates the potential for a more powerful and majestic view of Byzantium, different to one imagined had they been set in Nicosia and Athens.

Finally, the language of all the plays is in standard mainland Greek, the older published play fashions a light version of Katharevousa, whereas, the other six are written in demotic Greek.

3.3.2 Byzantium plays referring to Justinian-Theodora-Belisarius

For the purposes of this chapter, I will focus on the three Cypriot plays whose historical narratives center around Justinian, Theodora, Belisarius, Narses, Kappadokis, Anthemios, and other historical characters of the sixth century. The plays examined were written and published over the span of the twentieth century, the first published in 1913 and the last in 1993. The plays are: *O Aetos i Ioustinianos ke Theodora* [*Ο Αετός ή Ιουστινιανός και Θεοδώρα / The Eagle* or *Justinian and Theodora]*, by Ioannis Karageorgiadis, *Theodora* [*Θεοδώρα]*, by Loukis Akritas and *Belisarius* [*Βελισάριος]*, by Sophocles Sophocleous.

A departure point is offered by Leonidas Galazis (2012) and the dialectic of his book. There, Galazis presents an interesting case for the historicism[306] developed in Cyprus, offering insight into the environment in which a number of these plays were written, and the nature of their connection to Greek plays. He sets a framework for his argumentation, by claiming that "during the period we are investigating [1869-1925] in the literature of the Cypriot periphery, […] the dominant trends and tendencies of neo-Hellenic literature of the

[306] Galazis (2012) uses the term in the Hegelian manner. At this point, it is important to define "historicism" in the scope of Hegel. As reported by Joseph McCarney (2000), Hegel in, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, talks about two kinds of history, the 'original' ("'the spirit of the writer and the spirit of the actions he relates are one and the same'") and the 'reflective' ("the writer approaches his own material 'in his own spirit, which is different from the spirit of the content itself'") (11). By the mid-19th century, Hegelian historicism developed into "the assumption that history is not merely one realm of being but all reality and that there is nothing behind or beneath or above history" (Gillespie 18).

19th century are visible" (48). Furthermore, he examines the nature of historicism in Greece and relies on the writings of Paparrigopoulos and Zambelios to do so. Thus, he connects social conditions in Greece with Cyprus by claiming that historicism in Cyprus was linked to the development of a national consciousness (the Greek identity of Greek Cypriots), which was supported by the mechanisms set up in the Press and in Education (Galazis 50).

Galazis continues to engage in a detailed analysis of the plays, in connection with the trends in literature and identity in Greece. The problematic aspect of his otherwise well documented analysis is in relation to the relationship he establishes between the plays and the European enlightenment and romanticism. Taking into account that a large amount of Greek-Cypriot playwrights at the time were expatriates living in Europe and Egypt, his claim, in my view, as to the origins of these influences is not satisfactory. He notes only one link between these Greek-Cypriot plays and the outside world, that being its connection to the Hellenic region. Omitting the possible influence from other socio-cultural and linguistic environments, he fails to acknowledge the complexity of the island itself and the area surrounding it.

3.3.3. Analysis of plays

a. *O Aetos* or *Iustinianos ke Theodora* by Ioannis Karageorgiades

The first play entitled, *The Eagle* or *Justinian and Theodora*, was published in 1913 in Limassol, by Ioannis Karageorgiades, an expatriate Cypriot playwright. The historical setting of the play is identified as the sixth century. In his introduction, written in Paris in 1910, Karageorgiadis states that, "Justinian's reign admittedly was one of the most famous reigns for the Byzantine state" (γ')[307], thus providing grounds for his decision to write a play based on the life and times of Justinian, as well as clarifying his own ideological position in regards to the national character of Byzantium.

The characters of the play fall into various categories. The primary characters are the historic personae of Emperor Justinian, Empress Theodora, and General Belisarius. The author attributes positive characteristics to them, among others, virtue, wisdom and bravery.

[307] «η βασιλεία του Ιουστινιανού ομολογουμένως υπήρξε μια των διασημοτέρων δια το Βυζαντινόν κράτος». There is an evident contradiction in this statement, since it simultaneously refers to specific rulers of the Byzantine Empire, while on the other hand identifies Byzantium as a state.

In the first three scenes of the play, the primary characters are indirectly presented by secondary characters, through dialogue that takes place in locations, like the street in Constantinople. Belisarius is characterized as a "glorious general" (2)[308] and a "Persian-killing general" (2),[309] stressing his bravery. In addition, Justinian, Theodora, Belisarius and Anthemios (the architect of the church of Hagia Sofia, a minor character) are presented as victims in a "broad, as they say, conspiracy against this Emperor" (2),[310] since they are implicated in the "familiar fabrications by the courtiers" (2).[311] In a general evaluation of the primary characters of the play, they are all "creature[s] of passion and emotion" (*The Development of Civilization* 13) according to the Romantic ideals, and entangled in a perpetual Hegelian struggle to "reconcile individual freedom and obedience to the state" (*The Development of Civilization* 18).

The antipodes to these essentially good historic characters are the evil historic characters: Yelmeros, king of the Vandals, and Seniras, his general. They are characterized as devious, sacrilegious and barbaric. At the onset of the play, two civilians are talking about the hippodrome and people learning there the bad news, that "they are advancing / the Vandals, and they are unstoppable in their ravaging"(1).[312] Later, they add a more general evaluation of the character of Yelmeros: "on the land where he has stepped, no grass grows" (1),[313] attesting to the violence of his disposition, enough to make the earth barren after he has stepped on it. Further on in the action, in Act 1, Scene B', a General reports to Belisarius that a visit to the Vandals camp has revealed to him that "the enemy had set up a lethal trap for us" (5),[314] insinuating that the Vandals are not honorable warriors, trying to win by devious means. Later on, the author dictates in the stage directions of Act 1, Scene D, in which Yelmeros first makes an appearance, that "[c]lose to the army camp there is a graveyard of

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[308] «ένδοξος στρατάρχης»

[309] «Περσοκτόνος στρατηγός»

[310] «συνομωσία / Κατά του Άνακτος αυτού, ως λέγουσιν, ευρεία»

[311] «των αυλικών τεχνάσματα γνωστά»

[312] «προχωρούσιν / οι Βάνδαλοι κι' ακάθεχτοι τα πάντα ερημούσιν»

[313] «Σ' την γην που' πάτησεν αυτός χορτάριν δεν βλαστάνει»

[314] «μας έστησ' ο εχθρός ολέθριον παγίδα»

tombs of ancient people" (10),[315] thus establishing that the Vandals are sacrilegious having set up a camp close to a graveyard.

What distinguishes the two sets of characters, the good and the evil, is the worthiness of the nations they are struggling to obey. The first group is Byzantines and the second group is Vandals. The difference in the worth of the two nations is established firmly in Act 1, Scene D: the ghosts of military figures of the perceived Hellenic historic past of the Byzantines, Annivas, Themistocles, Miltiades and Alexander, appear before Yelmeros. The four ghosts characterize Byzantium as "our holy territory" (10)[316] and the army of Yelmeros as a "bestial flock" (12).[317] They also inform Yelmeros that he will be defeated, as other enemies had been defeated in the past and new ones will be defeated in the future.[318] A determining point in this scene in terms of the worthiness of the two national entities occurs when the ghost of Alexander appears before Yelmeros. The latter is very respectful towards this presence, and informs us that as a child Alexander had been his hero. When Alexander dismisses him, by saying "I admire and bless true bravery / I despise unmanly and crude monstrosity" (13),[319] Yelmeros is very angry and threatens with war and violence, thus validating the evaluation made by Alexander in regards to his character. The development of the play also verifies the superiority of the Byzantines. The beginning of Act 2, Scene A is a declaration by Justinian of the victory over the Vandals and the Bulgarians, thus "leaving my State completely free of enemies" (15).[320]

Act 2 onwards sees the fierce emergence of another type of enemy against the four primary characters: the conspirators of the court. Although we hear of this situation in Act 1, the nature and force of the treason from within, against Justinian, Theodora, Anthemios and Belisarius is established in Act 2. In the conversation in Scene B, representatives of the two parties of the Hippodrome weigh the pros and cons of the reign of Justinian, even considering overthrowing him and establishing a democracy. They also mention a rumor of the suspected relationship between the queen and Belisarius' wife, and lastly, converse on the possibility of

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[315] "Εγγύς του στρατοπέδου νεκροταφείον με τάφους αρχαίων"

[316] «το ιερόν μας έδαφος»

[317] «θηριώδης αγέλη»

[318] «Πόσοι ακόμη βάρβαροι της Δύσεως κι' Ασίας / Θα διωχθώσι κι' η Ελλάς θα τύχ' ελευθερίας;» (11)

[319] «Εγώ θαυμάζω κι' ευλογώ την αληθή ανδρείαν· / Εχθαίρω δε την άνανδρην κ' ωμήν θηριωδίαν»

[320] «μεν' ελευθερον εχθρών το Κράτος μου τελείως»

Belisarius himself being a traitor. As the play develops, in Scene C, the treason against Belisarius is exemplified when military officers bring news of hostile raids by the Goths, and the urgent need for the help of Belisarius. However, the Courtiers inform them that he is a traitor, omitting the details of the nature of his treason. As they are exiting, the officers declare: "Oh Courtiers! What monsters, what servile beings! / Whatever place you pass through conflicts are created" (23).[321] They go on to lamenting the evils flooding their nation,[322] meaning the enemies outside their borders, as well as the enemies within their dominion, the Courtiers.

An especially representative example of the Hegelian conflict is the figure of Belisarius in the play, since the nature of his individual struggle is based on the character of his daughter, Eleni. She is a fictional character who has gone mad due to the disgrace brought upon her father. In Act 2, Scene D, we witness Eleni in a scene, clearly Shakespearean in influence: it is a crossover between the Storm scene in *King Lear* (the intense climatic conditions described in the stage directions) and Ophelia's scene of madness in *Hamlet*, through the representation of the young woman. The scene is witnessed by two random passersby, who speak of the beauty of Eleni, the great tragedy of her fate, as well as the connection between her fate and that of her father. They cast the blame on the Courtiers and their conniving, and in conclusion comment on how "the nation sacrifices many of its great men" (25).[323] The intense nature of the conflict of Belisarius continues in the next scene, as he receives a pardon and is freed by Justinian who admits to have wronged him, but "the fool has rebuffed the pardon" (26)[324] and chose to remain in prison. The culmination of the personal suffering of Belisarius comes in Act 3, Scene A, where we see him in prison, visited by Justinian, who is begging for his forgiveness. Before he dies, Belisarius does not forgive him, but refers him to God for that. He asks that his daughter is taken care of and that he is buried secretly, in order "for the people not to rebel and be harmed without cause" (31).[325] The attitude of Belisarius, is therefore, different towards Justinian, whom he does not forgive on a personal level, yet understands that he has been victimized, than it is towards the people

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[321] «Ω αυλικοί! Τι τέρατα, τι χαμερπείς υπάρξεις! / Οπόθεν σεις διέρχεσθε παράγονται συρράξεις»

[322] "πόσα κακά 'ς το έθνος μας φρικώδη πλημμυρούσιν!»

[323] "πόσους μεγάλους άνδρας του το έθνος θυσιάζει»

[324] «Αλλ'όμως ο ανόητος απέκρουσε την χάριν»

[325] «Μη ο λαός εξεγερθή και πάθη αναιτίως»

and the state, which he wants to protect to the last minute. The last mention of Belisarius in the play is in Act 4, Scene A, when Belisarius is buried with great honors, with Demetrios bidding farewell with these words: "Your glory will be chanted in the East and the West / Sleep, glorious martyr, sleep… so that you can live" (43).[326] Through his noble death his reputation will live on. Although Belisarius does not actually commit suicide, his death is still considered a sacrifice for the nation, in line with the heroic self-sacrifice model, we have already seen in Chapter Two.

The Hegelian conflict is presented to a lesser degree but it is evident, nonetheless, in Empress Theodora. In Act 3, Scene D, the character of Theodora is presented for the first time: she is very ill, surrounded by her nanny, ladies in waiting, and Justinian. She is, however, nostalgic for her homeland Cyprus, and she longs to visit it one more time before she dies. At the end of the scene, and perhaps knowing that she cannot leave, Theodora says of her homeland: "I have you in my crown and within me… in my soul" (41).[327] She chooses to suppress her own desire to visit her home country due to her obligation to serve her nation, which is keeping her in Constantinople.

In regards to the fictional characters of the play, there are three groups, who are the true protagonists in the play:[328] the military officers, the Courtiers and the Conspirators. Only characters in the third group have names: Demetrios and Georgios, which are common Christian names. The existence of the latter characters establishes the identity of the base population of Constantinople as Christian. They have taken it upon themselves (since Belisarius was wrongfully accused and has died, and the Emperor himself has fallen victim to the Courtiers) to take action under the slogan "Homeland – Vengeance" (31).[329] They aim to restore the functionality of the crown to the service of the people. Demetrios declares: "We want the death only of the Courtiers; / Not of the Emperor; we respect the throne" (33).[330] During the course of the play, these characters instigate action, which eventually eliminates the Courtiers.

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[326] «Την δόξαν σου θα ψάλλωσιν ανατολή και δύσις / Κοιμήσου, μάρτυς ένδοξε, κοιμήσου... για να ζήσεις»

[327] «Σε έχω εις το στέμμα μου κι' εντός μου... 'ς την ψυχήν μου»

[328] They appear in a greater number of scenes than any of the historic characters.

[329] «Πατρίς – Εκδίκησις»

[330] «Θέλομεν θάνατον λοιπόν των αυλικών και μόνον· / Ουχί του Αυτοκράτορος; σεβόμεθα τον θρόνον.»

Several other parallel storylines unfold in the play, most of them short and structurally incomplete. An example is a group of female characters, which is activated in Act 4. These are Eleni, the mad daughter of Belisarius and Ariadne; the sister of Georgios; and, lady-in-waiting for the late, Empress Theodora. At the end of the play, we witness romantic feelings expressed between Ariadne and Justinian, which is cut short by her accidental death at the hand of Eleni, who, in a mad rage, was aiming to kill Justinian. While she is dying, Ariadne begs Justinian to "live for our nation" (55).[331] In his closing speech, he admits that "I have been punished […] we bring to our descendents and the homeland / misery or the royal ruby robes of glory" (56).[332] As a whole, the play presents many other patriotic moments, such as, the chanting of the Greek national anthem at the end, and a song related to the Nika riots, etc. However, the ending itself is rather anticlimactic and confessional on the part of Justinian, who admits to his own shortcomings as a ruler and man.

Lastly, there are important fictional characters who are introduced in Act 4, Scene C, in the middle of the dramatic ending. These are character whose names establish them as representatives from various parts of Greece: Ipirotis (from the mountainous region of Ipiros); Thessalos (from the plain of Thessaly); Cretan (from the island of Crete), Cypriot (from Cyprus); Kasios (from the island of Kasos in the Dodecanese island complex in the Aegean sea); and, Eptanisios (from the Heptanisa island complex in the Ionian archipelago). In a conflict scene in a bar somewhere "in Byzantium", these characters offer comic relief by commenting on their local characteristics, on politics and the church. This short (and unrelated scene) takes place in order to establish the spatial unity of Byzantium, as a Hellenic empire of populations who, despite their differences cohabitate the empire.

As we depart on a study of the protagonist, Justinian, as an *actant*, it is first necessary that to look at his "articulations of praxis" (Barthes, *Image-Music-Text* 107):

Love / desire: In line with the Romantic model of the play, Justinian's manifestation of action in regards to love/desire is materialized in his romantic relationships with two women, Theodora and Ariadne, and an ideological entity, the Nation. His praxis of love/desire in relation to Theodora and the Nation run in parallel and are homogeneous throughout the play: like the Nation, Theodora is ill and at times is distracted from her future; she wishes to return

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[331] «Να ζήσεις για το Έθνος μας»

[332] «Ετιμηρήθην [...] Ημείς 'ς τους επιγόνους μας, ημείς κι' εις την πατρίδα / Την δυστυχία φέρομεν ή δόξης αλουργίδα»

to her home island of Cyprus, whereas the Nation is attacked by outside conquerors and plotters from within. Justinian maintains a relation of love/desire for them both, at the same time acknowledging his weakness. On the one hand, he promises to take Theodora to Cyprus, but in the next minute he leaves her sickbed to tend to state matters; on the other hand, in relation to the Nation, his concluding monologue is representative of his personal weakness and inability to fulfill his task.

A third relationship of love/desire evolves throughout the play: Justinian's romantic relation with Ariadne (or promise thereof). We first witness their interaction as purely utilitarian, when in Act 3, Scene C, Theodora asks her to call Justinian to her chambers, and which she does. In Act 4, Scene B it evolves, when Ariadne mentions that she has had a dream in which a tiger had attacked the king, and at that moment she decides that she will save him: "if it so happens, I would like to die with him" (47).[333] This establishes the feelings of loyalty and love she has for him. In the final scene, Act 4, Scene D, Justinian declares:

> […]
>
> And that Theodora's life in not little, it is known
> And how I love Ariadne, you know.
> *Ariadne is again pale; Justinian takes her hand in his saying*.
> (54)[334]

As Ariadne lies stabbed by Eleni, and later on in the scene she dies, Justinian admits that "Oh! I have loved you very much… and how I worship you / And I will always love you" (55).[335] Justinian's declaration validates the existence of the love/desire connection between the two characters, with Ariadne replacing the two earlier objects, Theodora and the Nation.

Communication: Throughout the largest part of the play, Justinian is struggling to establish communication with Belisarius. In his introduction, the playwright mentions the greatness of the General and his victories over many enemies. He also informs the reader that he also partook in a conspiracy against Justinian, was imprisoned, but released after some time. He goes on to clarify, what in his eyes, seems like a shameful historical inaccuracy against

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[333] «Μαζί του θέλω, αν τυχόν, ... κι' εγώ να αποθάνω»

[334] « Κι' ότ' έχ' ολίγην την ζωήν, γνωστόν, ... η Θεοδώρα.
Και ότι πόσον αγαπώ την Αριάδνην, 'ξεύρεις.
η Αριάδνη ωχριά και πάλιν· ο Ιουστινιανός λαμβάνει την χείρα της εντός των ιδικών του λέγων»

[335] «Ω! Σε ηγάπησα πολύ... και τόσον σε λατρεύω / Και πάντοτε θα σ' αγαπώ...»

Belisarius: "that his eyes had been pulled out, fortunately lacks historical evidence" (β'),[336] as if trying to assure the reader of the worthiness of Belisarius, but mostly the king, who would have been the culprit of the shameful act. His comment is aimed at assuring us that, in spite of the rumors, Justinian's heroic nature was recognized.

In the context of the play, the dynamics of these *actants* are obvious, since the sequences of Justinian's actions are minimal in regards to the off-stage legacy of Belisarius. The latter has accomplished many military victories, which are repeated continuously by the secondary characters, establishing them as valid. Essentially, the only accomplishment of Justinian is the building of the church of Hagia Sophia, which Belisarius is not there to witness. In the core of their interaction, in Act 3, Scene 1, Justinian visits Belisarius in prison and begs for his forgiveness for having put him there, after having accused him of treason: "my God, forgiveness… oh! I have sinned… what a shame! / I have been a victim of vulgar court gossipers" (31).[337] The comments in relation to the gullibility of Justinian are repeated by various secondary *actants*, even Conspirators. However, admitting to his weakness in the presence of the exemplary Belisarius, manifests the impossibility of their communication due to the great gap of action between them. Belisarius is evidently more prone and capable of action than Justinian, although the latter character's position as king comes with certain qualities, as we have seen in Chapter Two.

Help/struggle: Justinian's struggle rests on his relationship with the plotting and conniving of the Courtiers, rather than the Courtiers themselves. These characters are successful in leading Belisarius to prison and his daughter to madness, and putting the whole kingdom at risk with their conniving. Although, as mentioned above, Justinian remains an honorable character during the play, reaching out to various other characters in order to cover his weaknesses against the conspirators, he often fails in his effort, resulting in the death of valuable allies, such as Belisarius. Despite him admitting his personal weakness, at the end of the play he remains the sole and omnipotent ruler. Anyone who could have threatened him by the deadly mix of malicious conspiracies and his own good-natured gullibility has been eliminated. Even the good and obviously capable Belisarius died, leaving Justinian to fulfill

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[336] "ότι τω είχον εξορύξει τους οφθαλμούς στερείται βάσεως ιστορικής ευτυχώς»

[337] «Θεέ μου, συγχώρεσιν... ω! Ήμαρτον... τι κρίμα ! / Αισχρών κολάκων αυλικών φευ! εγενόμην θύμα.»

his predetermined mission. Justinian's worthiness as a ruler, elevate both him and the kingdom he is ruling, they become models and idealized symbols for the kingdom itself and the values it represents.

b. *Theodora* by Loukis Akritas

The following play examined is *Theodora*, by Loukis Akritas. The play was published in Cyprus in 1965, in memory of the playwright who had died that same year. However, it can be assumed that it was written in the 1950s, during the time of his writing activity. Akritas was an Cypriot expatriate who lived in Greece for many years. His experiences and influences from outside the island justify the maturity of the use of Standard demotic Greek and the overall writing. Stylistically, there is greater attention paid to the theatrical – as opposed to the literary – aspect of the writing, with more efficient scenes and greater stage economy. Moreover, "the playwright handles his historical material with knowledge and craftsmanship" (Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou 407), which may lead us to assume that he had access to the historical writings of Prokopius, since many characters and large parts of the narrative originate from that source.

The primary group of characters consists of historical figures, who are presented as good and virtuous: Justinian, Germanos (a general, cousin of Justinian), Theodora, Narses (a general, eunuch), Antonina (wife of general Belisarius), Petros Varsimis (treasurer to Theodora) and Markellos (Leader of the Palace Guard). In this category are also Indaro and Chrisomallo (attendants to Theodora), who offer comic relief in certain scenes in the palace. Within this group, Theodora is the character who appears closest to the Romantic model of the characters in the play by Karageorgiades, which present the dichotomy between good and bad as their main characteristic. She is portrayed as a woman battling between the love of the son and her devotion to the throne.

The ethical antipode to the good characters is a single historic individual: Ioannis Kappadokis, the Prefect of Poli.[338] He represents the negative component throughout the play. He is a figure all-encompassing of the evil a human being is capable of, both on the personal and social level. His malevolent activities affect all main characters directly or

[338] 'Poli' is another way to refer to Constantinople (modern Istanbul).

indirectly, with the exception of the two comic characters, and are centered on his plans to overthrow Justinian and Theodora and take the throne. Kappadokis induces the action on many levels of plotlines in the play, creating a spiral of events resulting in tragic consequences for many of the characters. And although the play ends tragically, the throne is saved.

In placing the characters of *Theodora* in a general literary context, a valid departure point is the commentary of theatre historian, Thodoros Hadjipandazis on another play by Akritas, entitled *I Omiroi* [*Οι Όμηροι / The Hostages*].[339] In his analysis, he supports that certain dramatic practices in the play were common in works of the neoclassical tradition, such as the naming of characters in order to affirm their individual virtues (e.g. Fotini),[340] or fashioning the village elders on Byzantine saints "in the same way as in the plays by the leftist intelligentsia of the time" (Hadjipandazis 471), making a point of the parallel ideological agendas in Greece during that period and their reflection in plays. Despite the vast differences in the plotlines of the plays,[341] the similarities in the presentation of the characters are structurally very similar. In *Theodora,* despite their historical names and the historical events in which they are partaking (or are even the protagonists of), characters are portrayed in such a way by the author that they appear to carry a singular identity trait, in the same way as the descriptive names of the characters in *I Omiroi*.

In *Theodora*, the character of Germanos, the General, can safely be assumed to represent the virtue of loyalty to the throne. Even though in Act 1, Scene A', Kappadokis tries to fill him with suspicions about Theodora and Justinian, and their behavior towards him, Germanos remains unmoved and admits that "Germanos is always the Emperor's faithful citizen" (12).[342] Later in the action, Germanos exemplifies his loyalty in Act 2, Scene H', when he announces to the emperor that his children had fled Constantinople and started a militant guerilla movement in the mountains of Thrace. Then he makes what appears to be an

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[339] The play was published in 1956 in Athens and produced by the National Theatre of Cyprus (THOC) in 1973. It was the last play by the author.

[340] Translates into Greek as "one who gives light".

[341] *I Omiroi* are not a historical play, but according to the author (in the prologue), "the exemplary action of his play, wishes to dramatize the entire history of his home country" (Hadjipandazis 471). Thus, he attributes the play with historical qualities, even though it is not based on actual historical events, but on repetitive historical patterns of events or characters.

[342] «Ο Γερμανός είναι πάντα του Αυτοκράτορα πιστός υπήκοος»

extreme act of loyalty when he says that "the unfaithful nature of my house, king, I ask to punish, and you the master of my race, must contribute to my obligation" (39).[343] His willingness to punish his own children for being unfaithful to the throne serves as proof of his loyalty. Finally, although there is substantial talk of Belisarius and how loyal he is to the throne, he is never seen in the play as a physical character. It can be assumed that the playwright already had one character to represent the virtue of loyalty, so there was no need for a second.

General Narses is an interesting representation of the virtue of balanced thought. He is presented in Act 1, Scene C as a "characteristic type of a eunuch" (17),[344] a statement, which raises questions on the intentions of the playwright towards the portrayal of the character. Does he perceive Narses as a *characteristic* type of eunuch[345] as they were seen in the historical time of the play, or during the time of the author? One can assume, that Akritas does not portray Narses from a western vantage point of view (as we shall see in a subsequent play), but presents him in the same terms as Catheryn Ringrose (2003) does, as "one of the most prominent eunuch protagonists[346] […] who was the great General and *koubikoularios*[347] of Justinian I" (129). Also, in a similar manner two historians of the time, Prokopios and Agathias "depict him as intelligent and good at organizing things" (132) as well as "loyal to the emperor and good to his men" (132). In the scene, Theodora asks him for advice and suggests actions to eradicate the suspected conspiracy of Kappadokis and Germanos against the throne. She also reminds him, "you are my closest collaborator" (18)[348] and asks him to bear in mind that it is "better for one thousand innocent people to be lost,

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[343] «Την απιστία του σπιτιού μου, Αυγουστε, ζητάω να τιμωρήσω κι' εσύ που είσαι ο αφέντης της γενιάς μου, πρέπει στο χρέος μου να δώσεις συνδρομή»

[344] «χαρακτηριστικός τύπος ευνούχου»

[345] In her introduction to *The Perfect Servant*, Kathryn Ringrose (2003), stresses that "Byzantine society offers an opportunity to look at a very different culture. It is a culture in which certain individuals were intentionally changed into something that was neither male nor female as defined in Western culture." (3).

[346] In her discussion of the much debated role of eunuchs in societies, she makes the point that there are opposing trends: on the one hand, the "traditional historical narratives [which] present protagonists as central figures whose actions shape the world and historical trends around them", while, on the other, lies the "central aspect of the prevailing gender construct for eunuchs", which promotes the model of "eunuch as the perfect servant" (Ringrose 128).

[347] Ringrose (2003) offers the definition of the Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium for this term: " 'a general term to designate palace eunuchs who waited upon the emperor, the servants of the sacrum cubiculum' (ODB ii, 1154)" (xi)

[348] «είσαι ο πιο στενός μου συνεργάτης»

rather than one conspirator to get away with it" (18).[349] To Theodora's recommendations, Narses responds with less aggressive and more thorough comments, such as "the double plan, needs double caution, Queen!" (18).[350] Also, he asks her what the opinion of the emperor is, and generally presents a more mature and well-rounded thought on the situations, without an emotional component.

The antipode of the balanced thought of Narses, is Varsimis, a loyal but impulsive presence in the court. His impulsiveness is translated into making rash decisions and giving suggestions to Justinian and Theodora on their policies. When talking about the meeting of Kappadokis and Germanos, which was in truth staged by Kappadokis to make Germanos seem guilty of conspiring against the throne, Varsimis says, before Justinian and Theodora, "You could see it clearly, they had a conversation which had started some time ago…" (18).[351] He is insinuating a suspicious relationship between the two, whereas this was far from the truth. In Act 2, Scene I Varsimis declares, "if I hear from the mouth of Kappadokis, that he is preparing a conspiracy, my rage will be so great that I will immobilize him with my knife. I will gut him." (49).[352] He is reminded by Markellos, however, that they cannot act at will but according to the orders of Justinian. The presence of both characters seems to be the author's way of creating an environment around the protagonists which forces their judgment and their actions to be even more selective, thus making them even more worthy.

The female characters are undoubtedly headed by the figure of Theodora, who will be examined later in the chapter. However, Antonina also plays a very important role in the play, as she embodies a female loyalty to Theodora, enveloped in the perceptions of the author on the nature of gender politics of the time. In Act 1, Scene C when Antonina makes her entrance, Akritas describes her as, "*In her forties, intensely pleasure-loving, with a striking eastern grandeur, diamond-wearing and brilliantly decorated*." (17).[353] In relation to other characters in the play, this establishes a clear distinction from Germanos, with whom she shares the same basic virtue, namely, loyalty, but who is presented as a one-dimensional

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[349] «Καλύτερα να χαθούν χίλιοι αθώοι, παρά να γλυτώσει ένας συνωμότης»

[350] «Το διπλό σχέδιο, θέλει διπλή προσοχή»

[351] «Τόβλεπες καθαρά, πως πιάσανε συζήτηση αρχινισμένη από καιρό»

[352] «Αν ακούσω από το στόμα του Καππαδόκη, πως ετοιμάζει συνωμοσία, τόση η οργή μου που θα τον αφήσω με το μαχαίρι μου στον τόπο. Θα τον ξεκοιλιάσω.»

[353] «*Γύρω στα σαράντα, έντονα φιλήδονη, με μια χτυπητή ανατολίτικη μεγαλοπρέπεια, διαμαντοφορεμένη και λαμπροστόλιστη*»

character. Furthermore, the author's description of Antonina can be perceived as an effort to place her in a prominent position on the power-grid of the play. She is attributed with intense eroticism and sexual liberation, rich attire and jewelry,[354] and Eastern (Oriental) origins.[355] These attributes are additional to her already established position of power: she is influential by virtue of her presence in the world of the play, even though she is without husband, and has a high status as an aide and confidante to the Empress. Overall, Antonina is the carrier of power, since, among other qualities, she functions as a fetish[356] for the male imagination inside and outside the play. She activates the male gaze in the realm of fantasy within the play, as a means to generate action and to establish relationships, many of which are informed by the assumption that she is simply an exotic being. But she also appears in the gaze of the male viewer/reader as a way to activate the aesthetics of the experience of the Orient, what Said (1994) calls "aesthetic memory" (125). In Act 2, Scene St, the range of Antonina's actions is a manifestation of her power and important position in the world of the play. Her actions are multilayered, moving between the ethical and unethical. For the sake of her loyalty to Theodora, we witness her manipulating the pure and innocent Evfimia into trusting her, then guiding her to mistrust her lover, Ioannis, and finally convincing her to turn on Theodora. Consequently, she manages to approach Evfimia's father, Kappadokis and gain his trust in order to control him. This action results in the relationship between Antonina and Kappadokis to develop in quite a surprising manner, with Kappadokis telling Antonina, "I trust my daughter into your hands" (33).[357] This statement is telling, since Kappadokis is not a trusting man. The position of Antonina is demonstrated as even more powerful, since we know that this trust is not mutual, as she is working for Theodora. In the entire play no one

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[354] Micheal Uebel (2000), in his chapter "Imperial Fetishism: Prester John among the Natives" writes in the context of Medieval post-colonialism that "The fetishistic value of objects resides, then, in the magical potencies they harbor" (266)

[355] The position of women in the context of Orientalism is an issue discussed by Edward Said (1994). In his discussion of Verdi's opera *Aida* (first performed at the Khedivial Opera House in Cairo on 24 December 1871), Said describes how European Orientalism defines the material of the opera, in both the music and the libretto. The result, he mentions, is "Europe's vision of Egypt" (125), "an Orientalized Egypt" (121), which is quite unrelated with the Egypt of the 1870s. As an example of how this came about, Said mentions how Verdi treated the archeological material he was given in relation to Ancient Egypt: "he converts some of the priests into priestesses, following the conventional European practice of making Oriental women central to any exotic practice" (121).

[356] Steven F. Kruger (2000), in his chapter "Fetishism, 1927, 1614, 1461", supports how "the main promise of psychoanalytic thinking on the fetish lies in its capacity for calling into question the normality and centrality of heterosexuality' (194).

[357] «Την κόρη μου εμπιστεύομαι στα χέρια σου»

but Antonina has outwitted Kappadokis, managing to divert his intended actions and thus exercising power over him. One could argue that the author is playing on the thin line of perceptions of (Oriental) women as Eve-like gift seductresses. Antonina, doubtlessly, lives up to this perception; she manipulates a powerful man for her own purpose in order to serve Theodora. The determining action of Act 2, Scene I, takes place at the estate of Antonina on the Bosporous, a location which in itself is a sign of status and prosperity. Antonina is there from the onset, completing her deception of Kappadokis, who is fooled into believing that she will help him to overthrow Justinian and Theodora. When the plot against him is revealed, and as he flees, he calls her a "cursed whore" (51).[358] Thus she insults her ethically, by doubting her relation to God ('cursed') and her virtue as a woman ('whore'). At the end of the scene, after he has been arrested and taken away, exhausted Theodora thanks Antonina, who "bows to worship her" (52).[359] In the final scene, as the body of Theodora's son is brought before her, Antonina asserts her power once more as an important *actant* and urges Theodora to remember that she is always their queen (60), reminding her of her duty towards her subjects. Moreover, as Theodora crumbles from grief, Antonina's behavior is balanced between acknowledging her grief and expecting her to act, to become worthy of her crown:

> […] *Theodora, in spite of her obvious effort, surrenders weeping in the end.*
> Antonina: Lets go Queen. The river of mourning does not stop.
> *She gives Theodora her crown, who has risen in the meantime.*
> (61)[360]

Antonina's powerful presence sets life and its realities for Theodora to see: there will always be sorrows – expressed in the metaphor of the river of mourning – but through the symbolic action of giving her the crown, she reminds her of her duty as a ruler.

The comic antipode to Antonina, are Indaro and Chrisomallo. Although the comic function of these female characters interests this study, the aspects of these characters, which clearly distinguish them from Antonina, must be mentioned. They have no substantial social status as they are not married, as far as we know; they are not beautiful and look old;[361] they

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[358] «καταραμένη πόρνη»

[359] «Η Αντωνίνα σκύβει να την προσκυνήσει»

[360] «[…] *Η Θεοδώρα μ'όλη την φανερή προσπάθεια που κάνει, παραδίνεται στο τέλος σε λυγμούς.*
Αντωνίνα: Πάμε Βασίλισσα. Του θρήνου το ποτάμι σταματημό δεν έχει.
Παραδίνει το στέμμα στη Θεοδώρα που σηκώθηκε στο αναμεταξύ.»

[361] Akritas' stage directions in Act 1, Scene C' dictate that "two old women are especially prominent, who try in vain to hide their old age under fancy dress" («Ξεχωρίζουν δύο ηλικιωμένες γυναίκες, που μάταια πασχίζουν να καλύψουν τα γερατειά τους κάτω από τα φανταχτερά φορέματα») (17)

do not posses money; they do not have real influence upon Theodora; and, they have a suspicious past they have not managed to overcome. They also offer a comic antipode to Antonina's seductiveness, since they unrequitedly lust young boys. All these features render the two characters disempowered and virtually inactive, to such an extent that they are limited to a simple presence on stage with a role that does not advance action.

Ioannis Kappadokis' character does not produce a great deal of dramatic interest: he is presented as evil and ruthless, a man who tries to manipulate most of the characters of the play into obeying his own ambitions. He is portrayed as an unscrupulous man, who not only does not honor and serve the throne – as other characters do –, but does not even respect his own family. He even tries to manipulate his own daughter into serving his plans. As far as the action goes, however, he is the character who moves the action along in a singular and, finally, uninteresting manner. However, many of his actions are either stopped altogether or diverted.

In terms of the fictional characters of the play, among them are the principal romantic lovers Evfimia, the daughter of Kappadokis, and Ioannis, the illegitimate and long-lost son of Theodora, who clearly represent the Romantic component of romantic love. Even though their main function is to represent the ideal romantic lovers, these characters are also directly involved in the main action. Evfimia is the channel through which Kappadokis' plots are eliminated, and Ioannis is the cause of actions taken by Theodora, as well as the embodiment of her weakness and ambivalence. The romantic lovers are first presented in Act 1, Scene 2, in the idyllic garden of Kappadokis' house at sunset. In true Romantic style (aesthetically, linguistically and structurally), they exchange words of love and subsequently about the danger of Evfimia's father not approving of their relationship. The rest of the scene between them is a disagreement about whether or not Ioannis should go to the Palace, where the queen has summoned him. Evfimia is skeptical of these summons, and as he leaves, she tells him, "Do not forget about me now that you will go to the Palace, my precious" (15).[362] The scene, nonetheless, ends with an unmistakable romantic touch, dictated by the stage directions: "*Evfimia lets her body fall on the bench*" (15),[363] which seems to echo Baudelaire, quoted in Mario Praz's, *The Romantic Agony* (1970): "Melancholy cannot be separated from the

[362] «Μη με ξεχάσεις στο Παλάτι που θα πας καλέ μου!»

[363] «[...] *η Ευφημία αφήνει το κορμί της να πέσει στον πάγκο*»

feeling/sensibility of beauty" (30).[364] As the romantic lover, Evfimia incorporates both elements of beauty and melancholy in a perpetual dialogue, which often foretells the disastrous outcome of love. As expected, their relationship ends in a tragic manner: their love is used by other characters to manipulate themselves or others; Ioannis is forced to deny his love for Evfimia before the entire court, which pushes Evfimia to madness, and Ioannis to finally be killed for the sake of the throne. We do not witness Evfimia in her mad state, as we did Eleni in Karageorgiadis's play, but we are offered many indirect clues of her fate. In Act 2, Scene IA', as Ioannis denies their love, the author gives two signs: as she is pleading with Theodora to help her, she says, "Queen speak. I can't stand this, my mind is going…" (58),[365] and, later on in the same scene, as she is taken out, the stage directions dictate how "her look seems crazy" (58).[366] Therefore, this is one more romantic heroine who has not escaped Ophelia's famous fortune.

In this same category of romantic characters, we find Urania, the caretaker of Evfimia, a typical mother figure associated with the romantic heroine. Her description in the stage directions illuminates her function in the play: "*With all white hair, bent, persevering and always with an advisory tone, she overlooks, with detained grief, on Evfimia*" (13).[367] For this character, the present seems to carry no prospect or possibility for action. Her relationship with Evfimia is one of an onlooker who cannot influence anything; however, her power lies in her experience and wisdom, which enable her to predict the future, since she can foresee the outcome of the story.

Lastly, in the same manner as Karageorgiades, there is a crowd of fictional characters without names. These characters belong to the lower social and economic classes, and serve two main functions: they provide a representation of the day-to-day life in Constantinople, and express the opinion of common people regarding the conditions at the palace. However, they offer little to the progression of the action of the play. They present an interesting variety: Act 1, Scene A, commences with a group of young men who start the play with an energetic but worrisome image of the poor financial situation of the empire, while at the same

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[364] "La mélancolie, toujours inseparable du sentiment du beau". From Baudelaire's *Œuvres Posthumes* (319).

[365] «Βασίλισσα μίλησε. Δεν το αντέχω, πάει να μου φύγει το μυαλό...»

[366] *«το βλέμμα της δείχνει έξαλλο»*

[367] «*Μ'ολόασπρα μαλλιά, σκυφτή, καρτερική, πάντα μ'ένα συμβουλευτικό τόνο, αναθεωρεί, με συγκρατημένο σπαραγμό, την Ευφημία*»

time, revealing their varied origins, thus stressing – as in Karageorgiades' play – the mosaic nature of Byzantium. Further on in the same scene, we encounter a Mad Woman,[368] who prophesizes to Kappadokis that he will become king, intensely reminiscent of the witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In Act 1, Scene C, a family of theatre actors is received by Theodora, and according to the stage directions "*She suddenly stops being a queen*. *She is a pleasant woman*." (21).[369] They ask for financial assistance and she gladly helps them. When they leave she confides in Antonina how well she knows actors, not only due to her own past as an actress, but because she filters the craft of acting through her present predicament, and the nature of court politics: "Antonina, nobody ever knows when they are good actors. When they play for others or for themselves?" (21).[370]

The play is clearly centered on the figure of Theodora, putting Justinian clearly in second place in terms of character importance, as seen through the actions they carry out. The distinguishing mark between the two characters is the focus of Theodora's existential dilemma: the need to choose between her roles/identities as a queen or as a mother. On the other hand, Justinian follows the pattern of the other characters, and his typical attribute is his weakness. This manifests itself in the situation he is faced with, but rarely does he propose or execute dynamic actions. Akritas places upon Justinian attributes that essentially harm his projected image as omnipotent emperor, which inevitably stresses his difference in power with Theodora. In Act 1, Scene D, during a discussion on the imminent threat of external enemies where he is presented by the Generals with his options, Justinian listens carefully but reserves his answer. He reveals his insecurities in decision-making by saying, "[…] if it happens that Asia barges in and Byzantium falls while I am king, another will have the glory and my fate will be receiving the curse of History" (25).[371] His preoccupation with his place in history and the way this hinders his actions is apparent in the following scene, which starts with a familiar setting: a stormy night and two guards who think they see a ghost! In actuality it is Justinian, who emerges from the storm "*as if he was born of the thunder, with a*

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[368] In the stage directions, she is referred to as "*the Mad Woman*" [*Η Τρελλή]*.

[369] «*Η Θεοδώρα παύει ξαφνικά να είναι βασίλισσα. Είναι μια πρόσχαρη γυναίκα*»

[370] «Αντωνίνα, δεν ξέρει κανείς πότε είναι καλός θεατρίνος. Όταν παίζει θέατρο για τους άλλους ή για τον εαυτό του;»

[371] «[...] αμαν τύχει κι'η Ασία ορμήσει και το Βυζάντιο πέσει στις μέρες μου, άλλος θάχει τη δόξα κι'ο δικός μου ο κλήρος η κατάρα της Ιστορίας».

phosphorescent demonic face" (27),[372] and in his monologue talks about his education, military conquests, his effort to gain a place in history through blood and art in all the corners of the earth, and finally asks if his name will vanish in the "flood of time" (28).[373] As his monologue ends, he asks of God the following: "give me the certainty of glory, or else drown my mind and give me the consciousness of an animal!" (28).[374] Immediately after that statement, there is another thunderbolt and through it emerges Theodora "*the same, phosphorescent, demonic*" (2).[375] The presentation of the two characters through the storm seems to establish a relationship with the divine, in both good and evil form. One could even assume that the author is insinuating a celestial origin of Justinian and Theodora, enforcing roman and byzantine rhetoric on the divine origin of emperors. This naturally functions as a means to justify the wrong doings of rulers. Moreover, the supernatural is an element of the Romantic, which attempts at "impressing upon readers a sense of occult powers and unknown modes of being".[376] This enforces the Romantic belief in the spiritual and the inability of a human to understand all aspects of existence. As the scene continues, Theodora is called upon to support the nervous Justinian who is full of doubts about many aspects of his life and rule. Finally he exclaims, "you are in front of the storm, to soothe my agony, my kind and brave companion" (28).[377] Theodora is credited by Justinian with the power to boost his morale and his fear of the world and his own insecurities. In Act 2, Scene IA', he attempts once more to assert authority over Ioannis and Kappadokis by condemning them both to death, meanwhile, killing Theodora's child, in spite of her fervent objections. Throughout the play, Justinian is generally influenced by Kappadokis and takes many rash decisions in an effort to attain the *certainty of glory* he is eager for, costing many lives and reputations.

To further study the character of Theodora, I will return to the theoretical framework of Roland Barthes:

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[372] «*Λες, γέννημα της αστραπής, με φωσφορίζουσα διαμονική όψη*»

[373] «του χρόνου η πλημμύρα»

[374] «χάρισε στη φιλοδοξία τη σιγουράδα της δόξας, αλλοιώς πνίξε το μυαλό μου και δόσε μου αίστηση ζώου!»

[375] «*το ίδιο*, *φωσφορίζουσα*, *δαιμονική*»

[376] According to the *Norton Anthology of English Literature, Vol. D: The Romantic Period* (2006), this thematic tendency started with the poetry of Coleridge, who "opened up to modern poetry a realm of mystery and magic" (13). Supernatural elements are met in such romantic plays as Byron's, *Manfred*, and Goethe's *Doctor Faustus*.

[377] "μες τη μπόρα θα βρεθείς μπροστά, την αγωνία που έχω θα γαληνέψεις, καλή μου και γενναία συντρόφισσα!"

Love / desire: Theodora's love/desire in this play is reserved for two things: her newly-found son Ioannis and her crown. Although she is, ultimately, forced to sacrifice one for the other, her actions throughout the play demonstrate her desire for both. In regards to her son, the revelation of his identity in Act 1, Scene C is accompanied by a burst of emotion: the stage directions dictate that she "*embraces him almost sobbing*" (23)[378] and "*the Queen reaches out to stroke his hair gently*" (23).[379] As he leaves the room, she is awestricken by her new predicament, and the stage directions dictate "*Theodora stands in the middle of the room in ecstasy*" (23).[380] In Act 1, Scene E, she convinces the king to appoint Ioannis to the high office of Protospatharis,[381] by personally taking an oath that he is indeed worthy of the office. In the development of the play, the relationship between mother and son sparks gossip, and Theodora often dismisses these rumors as talk, which does not concern her. In Act 2, Scene Z, she reveals to Ioannis his true identity; then she asks him to embrace her and call her *mother*: "I am no longer a Queen. I am your mother…" (37),[382] she tells him, acknowledging the incompatibility between the two roles. In spite of all the obstacles presented before them, Theodora, under cover about the true identity of Ioannis, uses her power and position in an effort to help him and, by the end of the play, to save him. Nonetheless, her other great love, the crown, is far greater than that of her son, and her actions indeed prove this. Act 2, Scene I, is the revelation of the conspiracy by Kappadokis, who runs to hide in the church. Despite objections, Theodora decides to arrest him, thus becoming sacrilegious. As she asserts her power, she states: "I have God's law in my hands. I am Byzantium and if Byzantium is lost, God and laws will be lost" (51).[383] She associates Byzantium with Christianity, adding a layer of meaning to her failure as ruler, since an empire *and* a religion would be lost. Moreover, she identifies herself with the kingdom and its survival, which explains her various actions, some of which do not serve her personal

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[378] «*αγκαλιάζοντάς τον σχεδόν με λυγμούς*»

[379] «*η Βασίλισσα ανάλαφρα πάει να του χαιδεύει τα μαλλιά*»

[380] «*η Θεοδώρα στέκει στη μέση της κάμαρας μ' έκσταση*»

[381] Πρωτοσπαθάρης / Protospatharios. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (1991): "first *spatharios*" a dignity of the imperial hierarchy; this dignity usually conferred membership to the senate. The first reliable evidence is in 718 and the last is in 1115" (1748). Let the reader note, that during the time of the action of the play, the rank of *protospatharis* did not yet exist in Byzantine hierarchy, making this element of the play anachronistic.

[382] «Δεν είμαι πια βασίλισσα. Η μάνα σου είμαι...»

[383] «Το νόμο του Θεού έχω στα χέρια μου. Εγώ είμαι το Βυζάντιο κι' αν το Βυζάντιο χαθεί, πάει κι' ο Θεός κι' οι νόμοι.»

happiness. Predominant among them is her marriage to Justinian, a man she does not love to the same extent as her crown,[384] and her tolerance (one could even say, indirect cause) of the execution of her own child. The latter point can be supported through this scene from Act 2, Scene IA, where the innocence of young Ioannis is debated:

> "Theodora: As it has been proven, eros had pushed him.
> Justinian: Often you have taught me, love cannot be taken into
> account before the passion of grandeur. The throne is above all else.
> Theodora: Your judgment is always fair, whatever that may be."
> (58-59)[385]

The eventual punishment of Ioannis is attributed to her own indoctrination of Justinian, which enforces the tragedy of this final scene.

Communication: During the course of the play, she only shares communication on a consistent basis with Antonina: a bond between the two characters on a number of levels. They are both loyal to the throne, but the great difference between them is that Theodora *is* the throne. They are both willing to take extreme actions in order to secure the throne, and their positions (financial, marital and social), and their personalities, promote these actions. The connection between the two women is seen through various actions: Antonina is the only one who knows the true identity of Ioannis and undertakes actions to protect this information; she plans the capture of Kappadokis through the manipulation of his daughter; finally, she is allowed to witness Theodora in her lowest state, (Scenes IA and IB) when she mourns for her lost child but must rise to serve her office. Moreover, within the two characters is integrated a Lady Macbeth type, a de-genderized and barren quality, which we find in different forms. On the one hand, Theodora is a mother for a short time to a child she thought was lost forever; and she then allows her child to die, since she chooses the throne over motherhood. On the other hand, Antonina, who is evidently childless, only admits her own unrealized hopes for motherhood in Scene H': "I wish, that a young man would come to me as mine, so I could give him all the caresses my sterile nature has deprived of me and for my heart to rejoice like a bird"; Theodora replies to this, "Yes, what you say is how I feel… And then, let people

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[384] "Only this crown is my own companion- my most trusted companion" «Μονάχα το στέμα τούτο είναι ο δικός μου σύντροφος – ο πιο πιστός μου σύντροφος» (19).

[385] «Όπως αποδείχτηκε, ο έρωτας τον έσπρωξε.
Ιουστινιανός: Συχνά με δίδαξες, δε λογαριάζεται η αγάπη μπρος του μεγαλείου το πάθος. Πάνω απ' όλα ο θρόνος.
Θεοδώρα: Δίκαιη πάντα η κρίση σου – όποια κι' αν είναι.»

talk" (38).[386] Both their relations with authority, however, seem to avert the two women from undertaking real actions to save Ioannis or Evfimia.

Help/struggle: Throughout the progression of the play, the struggle of Theodora between her son and the crown is certainly the central theme. From the beginning of the play, the relationship between Theodora and Ioannis is challenged by different dynamics: his love for Evfimia; the conspiring of Kappadokis; and, the rashness of Justinian's decision-making. During the course of the play, most of these obstacles are completely or partially overturned, but a major obstacle remains: her love for the crown. When speaking to Ioannis in Act 2, Scene Z, Theodora clarifies that "if you consider me an unworthy mother, because I will not let my worst enemy eradicate me, I am, however, a worthy queen" (43),[387] and, stresses the hardships associated with her position when she says that "with clear blood and bitter tears my name is knead" (43).[388] Her doubt and inner struggle naturally escalate in the last two scenes when the action reaches its dramatic peak, to a point where (according to the stage directions) she becomes a physical wreck.[389] In scene IB', the author says that she "*paces as if she is hypnotized*" (60),[390] whereas a little later, she "*advances and collapses next to his corpse* (…) *her body is torn by the sobbing*" (60). Finally, in front of her son's corpse, she admits her inability to overcome her weakness: she admits how "I would have been a good mother, my son, (…) had I not been a queen" (60).[391] Through her actions in the course of the play, the two roles are incompatible.

c. ***Belisarius*** **by Sophocles Sophocleous**

The last play is entitled *Belisarius* and was published in 1993, by Greek-Cypriot author, Sophocles Sophocleous. It was presented by the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation as a radio

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[386] «Αντωνίνα: [...] Άμποτες, κάποιος νέος ναρχότανε δικός μου, να του χαρίσω όσα χάδια μου στέρησε η στείρα φύση μου και να λαχτίσει σαν πουλί η καρδιά μου....

Θεοδώρα: Ναι. Έτσι, όπως μιλάς νοιώθω... Κι' ύστερα, ας λέει ο κόσμος.»

[387] «Αν με θωρείς ανάξια μάνα, γιατί δε θ' αφίσω τον χειρότερο εχτρό να μ' αφανίσει, είμαι, ωστόσο, άξια Βασίλισσα»

[388] «Με καθάριο αίμα και δάκρυ πικρό είναι ζυμωμένο τ' όνομά μου»

[389] «Βηματίζει σαν υπνωτισμένη»

[390] «προχωρεί και σωριάζεται πλάι στο πτώμα [...] Το κορμί της σπαράζεται από λυγμούς»

[391] «Πόσο καλή, που θάμουν μάνα, γιέ μου, [...] αν δεν ήμουν βασίλισσα»

play that same year.[392] In the prologue of the publication, the reader is informed at length of how the play came about through the encouragement of the Playwright's Guild of Cyprus and radio play director, Mikis Nikitas. Additionally, it was awarded Second Prize in 1991 in the Playwright contest of the Playwright's Guild Competition for new plays by Cypriot authors. Moreover, in his personal note, Sophocleous says that his aim in writing the play is not to teach history, but to "touch upon the concept of duty" (v);[393] nonetheless, he then continues with a "Short Historical Overview" as part of his introduction. He adds: "lords come and go, but the homeland, our homeland, our descendants, and the descendants of our descendants, will always be" (vi).[394] The Introduction is complete with "Comments" on the play by philologist, Stelios Papandoniou, who praises the dramatic virtues of the play and amusingly describes the language as "austere, Doric" (p. vii),[395] for a play that stretches into 127 pages. Praise also comes in a foreword by Mikis Nikitas, who had directed the radio production of the play. The latter concludes his comments in these words: "Duty, devotion, appreciation, admiration and (why not) love, are in constant conflict in the masculine chest of the tough general Belisarius, making him a truly tragic hero" (viii).[396] From the variety of comments in the introduction of the publication, one can deduce that the intention of the author and those who supported his creative process is to present diachronic patriotic, patriarchal and ethical values, through the figure of a leader, Belisarius. The play is written in demotic Greek and its language has lyrical and poetic elements. The characters speak solemnly in metaphor, thus rarely making the dialogue realistic and lively.

The categories and function of the characters in the play, sometimes cross common ground meeting there with the previous two plays. In the same manner as the first two works examined, there are two groups of characters: historical characters and fictional characters. The former group is presented in a positive light: Justinian, Theodora and Tribonian [397] (Justinian's Legislator), while there is only one character who is quintessentially good,

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[392] CyBC, Radio Program 1, Theatre for the Radio, 19.4-3.5.1993.

[393] «δεν είχα σκοπό να εξιστορήσω γεγονότα [...] αλλά ν'αγγίξω την έννοια του καθήκοντος»

[394] «οι άρχοντες του τόπου έρχονται και παρέρχονται, όμως η πατρίδα, η δική μας, των απογόνων μας και των απογόνων των απογόνων μας, θα υπάρχει πάντα»

[395] «λιτός, δωρικός»

[396] «Καθήκον, αφοσίωση, εκτίμηση, θαυμασμός και (γιατί όχι) η αγάπη συγκρούονται ακατάπαυστα στ' αντρίκια στήθια του του σκληροτράχηλου στρατηγού Βελισαρίου, κάνοντάς τον ένα πραγματικά τραγικότατο πρόσωπο»

[397] Greek: Τριβωνιανός.

Justinian's General Belisarius. The historical character, Prefect of Constantinople,,Ioannis Kappadokis, is depicted as evil. Within the latter group: Vasilios (the Arch-Eunuch of the Palace) is depicted as evil, whereas the Patriarch, and Ioannis Kondoheris (a General of Belisarius) are presented in a negative light. On the other hand, Alexios Vyzantios (a General of Belisarius) and Nikias (a former soldier of Belisarius, and now a beggar) are presented in a positive light. Guards, soldiers, servants and a Chief Craftsman are one-dimensional and fictional, encompassing a purely utilitarian role. However, in spite of the emergence of a two-dimensionality of the characters, and a general allowance for doubt in regards the intentions of the ruling class and members of the clergy, an overall ideology and nationalist undercurrent is evident in the play, and stated by the author in the prologue. Daniel Watkins (1993), through his materialist critique of Romanticism, attributes dualities of this nature to a much larger shift within Romanticism itself. He refers to this phenomenon as "the difficult struggle that marked the transition from an aristocratic to bourgeois worldview" (8), a view, which is part of a larger conversation, of which I will elaborate later in my analysis.

Furthermore, in attempting to offer an explanation for the shift in presentation of the characters in this final play, one can assume that the reasons lie in a marginal demystification of the historical era itself, and in an extension of its heroes. Thodoros Hadjipandazis (2006) offers valuable insight and examples. He talks about the initialization of the demystification process in Greece with I.K. Kordatos's mid 1920s re-evaluation of history[398] through the relativism that enveloped anew the role of the historian, "suggesting, not the abandonment of historical perspective, but solely of its ethnocentric version" (Hadjipandazis 229). According to Hadjipandazis (2007), this tendency had influenced such authors of historical drama as, Vasilis Rotas, Spyros Melas, Nikos Kazantzakis, and Giorgos Theotokas. In a number of their plays, Hadjipandazis notices "the appearance of concepts such as class struggle and the condemnation of nationalism" (232). In a telling example of the play *Papaflessas*[399], by Greek author, Spyros Melas, the "negative stance of the elite and the high-ranking priesthood" (233) is a given. This is a phenomenon that we meet with in Sophocleous' play.

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[398] *Η Κοινωνική σημασία της Ελληνικής Επαναστάσεως του 1821*, I.K. Kordatou, Georgios I. Vasiliou Publishing House, Athens 1924.

[399] Complete title: *Papaflesas, o burlotieris ton Psihon [Παπαφλέσσας, ο μπουρλοτιέρης των ψυχών / Papaflesas, the captain of souls]*. First published in 1938 by the House of Mich. Silvestros A.E. in Athens. A second publication is found as part of the anthology entitled *Ιστορικό Θέατρο: το 1821 σε 14 έργα και σκετς*, Biris Publications, Athens, 1972. First staged by the Kostas Mousouris company in March 1937.

In much the same way as Sophocleous, Melas "never abandons his basic ideological conformism" (Hadjipandazis 233), but turns his criticism against new groups and characters, such as the economic and religious elite. This positions Sophocleous in a wave of authors who stand critically towards certain groups of the population, without, however, abandoning their commitment to a patriotic duty to defend the values of the nation. The idea that the nation starts to become disassociated from individuals, heroes and heroines, by virtue of their position or perceived natural charisma, instead becoming attached to the idea of the nation, will be discussed further in the last part of this chapter.

In this analysis of the characters of the play, I will start from the fact that in accord with the title, Sophocleous makes General Belisarius the protagonist of the play and the essential *actant*, whereas Justinian and Theodora are both left to serve secondary dramatic functions. Despite both characters being sanctified due to their symbolic function as rulers of the Byzantine state, their faults are not only visible, but also accentuated through their actions.

In his construction of the idea of the nation, the author creates scenes where official processes and ceremonies are observed.[400] In addition, both rulers are addressed frequently as Avgoustos and Avgousta,[401] a title referring back to their imperial Roman past. Moreover, Justinian is referred to and addressed as *theoprovlitos*, a title, which according to Vana Nikolaidou-Kirianidou (1999) is indicative of the "Byzantine imperial ideology stemming from the fusion of her Hellenistic and Roman origins, together with conscious loans from the biblical perceptions of sovereignty" (192). Furthermore, offering evidence from the Psalms of David addressed to King Solomon, Nikolaidou-Kirianidou adds, how, "the relationship between the *theoprovlitos* ruler and divinity is that of 'adoption'. This means that the king can be considered "by law" but not "by nature" a descendant of the divine" (Nikolaidou-Kirianidou 192). Justinian was, therefore, not chosen by God, but once crowned king, he

[400] As Justinian enters the Throne Room, Vasilios greets him with the following: "The Ultimate lord of the world, the Theoprovlitos ruler and master. Kneel." («Ο Υπέρτατος άρχοντας του κόσμου, ο Θεοπρόβλητος ηγεμόνας και αφέντης. Προσκυνήστε») (72).

[401] Translation: Augustus/Augusta. According to Kantorowicz (*The King's Two Bodies*, note 231, 167), as quoted in Nikolaidou-Kirianidou's (1999) *Ο Απόβλητος και ο Θεοπρόβλητος*, "the title *Augustus*, which among others accompanied Justinian, comes from *augere*, meaning he who increases the empire".

enjoys the privileges of a close relationship to God, and shrouding a certain sense of enlightenment, which reflects from the divine unto him.

In regards to the actions taken by Justinian, most are either criticized or rejected by other characters in the play as manifestations of his destructive vanity. The playwright's perspective of the highest-ranking character in the play is indicative of the demystification of authority figures, mentioned earlier. The play starts with a scene in which Justinian rejects the architectural plans for a cathedral, which is to be built in Constantinople because he seeks grandeur, "that which leads a person to eternity" (3).[402] Further on, in Act 1, Scene 2, Justinian orders Belisarius to violently disperse the crowd, which is protesting in the streets against heavy taxation. This is an order which Belisarius refuses to carry out, since he is convinced that "our King must be our conscience" (20).[403] This immediately undermines the ethical correctness of the decision made by Justinian, and puts his own conscience above the commands of the king, resulting in another reversal of action attempted by Justinian. Later on in the story, in order to harm Belisarius' popularity, he once again orders the General to attack the crowds. Yet again, his order is refused by Belisarius, who takes a position against trying to force one's place into history (54), which comes in direct opposition with Justinian's stated need for a place in history, a place that he will construct himself.

Furthermore, as in the play by Akritas, Justinian's vanity is nurtured by courtiers. In this play, it is done through two specific characters: the eunuch, Vasilios, and Kappadokis. Various conversations throughout the play present these characters conversing with Justinian and influencing his judgment. But Sophocleous, unlike previous authors, does not overtly enter a process of an eventual sanctification of Justinian. Rather, he implies an evaluation of the character as failing to make his own decisions, and allowing himself to be influenced by Vasilios and Kappadokis.

Another aspect of the character of Justinian, which hinders his actions in the play is the physical manifestation of his inclinations towards pietism. In Act 3, Scene 2, he wears the robes of a monk and converses about theology with the Patriarch of Constantinople, in a space that the playwright identifies as "*the cell of Justinian*" (85).[404] Evident in this scene is

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[402] «Αυτό που οδηγεί τον άνθρωπο στην αιωνιότητα»

[403] «ο Βασιλιάς μας πρέπει να είναι η συνείδησή μας»

[404] «το κελί του Ιουστινιανού»

the agony of Justinian to be an erudite theologian, to be pious and attain Heaven. However, one cannot help but notice the disapproving tone of the author, as the scene lacks spirituality and piousness; instead, it seems to reflect the ethically-challenged sides of both Justinian and the Patriarch. Actions by both characters, such as the Patriarch (in the spirit of court politics) asking of Justinian to send Theodora away for the salvation of his soul, or Justinian telling him that this would mean his demise, reveal the playwright's skeptical attitude towards the two characters, as well as towards religion itself.

The scene reveals another character weakness found in Justinian, when he confesses that "my will is a scale… on the one hand is my love for Theodora, asking that I defend her, and on the other my desire for historical recognition, asking that I drive her away" (87).[405] As Belisarius comes into his cell for a secret meeting, Justinian asks that he save Theodora from the riots by smuggling her outside the city. Belisarius once again refuses, tilting again the ethical balance for Justinian, who admits that his love for her has become an impediment.

Although the image of Theodora through Justinian's behavior classifies her as a problematic presence in his life, a hindrance that keeps him from doing his duty, Justinian functions in a similar way for Theodora, on two levels. At one level it is overtly stated in Act 2, Scene 1, that Theodora admits to Belisarius that Justinian's doubts about her will always trouble her (52): namely, reservations which keep him from defending her and granting her the place she desires. The motif presented repeatedly by Sophocleous as to why Theodora is not valued is suggested in her shady past: on many occasions in the play she is referred to as "the strumpet",[406] not only by evil or negatively depicted characters, such as Kappadokis and Vasilios, but also by the people. This alludes to her having been an actress and, perhaps a prostitute. One might argue that the author's intent is to demystify this powerful female figure in the play (notably, the only female character in the play) through his commenting on her past, and keeping her from being a dynamic *actant*. During the course of the play, Theodora overcomes her initial portrayal and becomes more dynamic, claiming her place as a policymaker and decision- maker, with the encouragement of someone other than Justinian, namely Belisarius. In Act 4, Scene 2, she even embraces her past and uses it as a weapon against Kappadokis who suggests that they abandon the city, when she says, "You wished to

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[405] «Είναι στη ζυγαριά η θέλησή μου... μια στέκεται η αγάπη μου για τη Θεοδώρα, που ζητεί να την υπερασπιστώ και μια ο πόθος μου για την ιστορική αναγνώριση, που απαιτεί να την διώξω»

[406] «η εταίρα»

exterminate me, Kappadokis, but you miscalculated your strength. With a strumpet for an enemy, you cannot survive" (119).[407]

The other level on which Justinian functions as a hindrance for Theodora (only implied in the play) is that her marriage is keeping her relationship with Belisarius from evolving. Throughout the play, the two characters engage in conversation with honesty and mutual trust, guided by their desire to serve the people, and at times, even venture on mutual actions towards meeting that end. On the other hand, her conversations with Justinian are political games, battles against Justinian's shortcomings, and often fruitless in fulfilling their obligations as rulers. The plot seems to imply that if Theodora and Belisarius ruled, Byzantium and its people would have had a much better fate. The play ends in the culmination of the relationship between the two characters, and in tear-inducing. Theodora announces to Belisarius, "I have forced you to strike the people, who you love, and you have forced me to collide with Justinian, whom I love. One has enticed the other against our principles and duties… Our paths must part" (126).[408] The two characters are therefore separated by force, but the people also are deprived of the worthiest rulers. One could even perceive this as an indirect attack on the institution of monarchy.

Another character in the play is Tribonian who is Justinian's legislator, historically the architect of the Justinian Codex. Tribonian's rational thinking, although clearly serving Byzantium and justice (but often not Justinian), is written through a prism of cynicism. In Act 1, Scene 1, he sets his philosophical stage by stating to an overly emotional Justinian: "I simply want to say that all is vanity. Every person judges the works of others by their own measure" (2).[409] In the same scene, he proceeds to defend Belisarius when all other characters aggressively doubt his intentions. But it is Act 3, Scene 1, which serves as the demystifying scene for Tribonian. In a dark street in Constantinople, he and Belisarius are conversing about Belisarius' dilemmas. Tribonian tells him that "a rational person doesn't think at all… They simply live. Take me for example; I never think, I believe in nothing, I care for no one… Oh!

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[407] «Θέλησες να μ' εξοντώσεις, Καππαδόκη, αλλά υπολόγισες λάθος τη δύναμή σου. Με μιαν εταίρα για εχθρό δεν μπορείς να επιβιώσεις»

[408] «Σε ανάγκασα να κτυπηθείς με το λαό, που αγαπάς, και με ανάγκασες να συγκρουστώ με τον Ιουστινιανό, ποτ αγαπώ. Ο ένας παρέσυρε τον άλλο ενάντια στις αρχές και το καθήκον του... Πρέπει να χωρίσουν οι δρόμοι μας»

[409] «Απλώς θέλω να πω ότι είναι όλα μάταια. Ο κάθε άνθρωπος κρίνει τα έργα των άλλων με το δικό του μέτρο»

I can't advise you anymore! I will give it up!" (79).[410] This interpretation of a rational person as selfish seems to be a comment on people who have abandoned their emotional selves and do not adopt an assertive attitude towards life. For the sake of a peace of mind, they go along with conditions and simply take advantage of situations instead of struggling to change them, as Belisarius does. The scene continues with a violent attack on the two men. Belisarius stepping up as a soldier to kill one of the two perpetrators, while Tribonian declaring that he will not miss the opportunity to see him fight: "I am not in danger general. I will hide behind your back". (80).[411] Thus he entrusts Belisarius with his life, but he remains idle in the face of danger. Even though he has the opportunity to flee, Tribonian stays and leaves his fate in the hands of a military man, a highlighted difference, the author makes, between a man of letters and a man of arms. Clearly, for Sophocleous, the latter is far more worthy.

On a scale of importance in the play, Ioannis Kappadokis, Prefect of Constantinople and Vasilios, the Arch-Eunuch of the Palace, are two characters who share a same single quality: they represent the villain. In Act 1, Scene 3, the two characters even agree that they have "common interests" (30)[412] and agree to meet privately later in the evening in order to speak further, clearly hinting at a conspiracy against Belisarius and Theodora. Each one functions around their individual space of activity: the public space for Kappadokis, as Prefect of the city, and the private space for Vasilios, as the chief caretaker for Justinian.[413] It is worth mentioning the clear distinction in the way eunuchs are dealt with in this play, in contrast to Akritas' *Theodora*. Throughout the play, he is referred to as "the eunuch" as opposed to his actual name. This creates the image as seen through the eyes of a contemporary westerner looking upon this character, as "something that was neither male nor female as defined in Western culture" (Ringrose 3). This comes in opposition to Akritas' view of the accomplished Narses. A clear distinction between a (stereo)typical masculine behavior and the behavior of a eunuch is established in Act 1, Scene 4, when Belisarius is

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[410] «Ο λογικός άνθρωπος δε σκέφτεται καθόλου... Απλώς ζει. Πάρε παράδειγμα εμένα· δε σκέφτομαι τίποτα, δεν πιστεύω σε τίποτα, δε νοιάζομαι για κανένα... Α! Δεν μπορώ πια να σε νουθετώ! Θα σε παρατήσω!». Part of this speech is intensely reminiscent of the famous quote inscribed on Kazantzakis grave in Greek, «Δεν ελπίζω τίποτα, δεν φοβάμαι τίποτα, είμαι ελεύθερος» («I hope for nothing, I fear nothing, I am free"). This might create a link between the great Greek author, Kazantzakis, and the character Tribonian, or even the playwright himself, in terms of Kazantzakis's concept of personal freedom. This is, naturally, a conversation of immense dimensions for which this present study is unable to offer an opinion.

[411] «Δεν κινδυνεύω στρατηγέ. Θα κρυφτώ πίσω από την πλάτη σου»

[412] «κοινά συμφέροντα»

[413] In Act 4, Scene 2, Vasilios even identifies a "caste of eunuchs" which he is leading.

asked to surrender his sword and he refuses by saying that he will not surrender it at the hands of a eunuch (33), handing it to Tribonian instead. In the same scene, when Vasilios asks him to leave, Belisarius again refuses, and when the former orders that the latter is arrested, he says, "Large in words, small in soul, eunuch" (38),[414] clearly insulting the ethical standard of his character.

Overall, Ioannis Kappadokis and Vasilios function entirely as negative forces in the development of the play. They engage in two basic activities: being an antipode to goodness by acting in opposition to positive characters, especially Belisarius and Theodora, and trying to influence Justinian's behavior towards Belisarius/Theodora and the people. The acts of civil violence in the play are caused or enticed by Kappadokis, and supported in conversation by Vasilios): heavy taxation on citizens; two commands to break protests by force; and, a conspiracy against Theodora and Belisarius. Regarding Justinian, Vasilios feeds his vanity with flattery and imposes his suspicions of an affair between Theodora and Belisarius. Finally, Vasilios enforces Justinian's fears that Belisarius is plotting to take over the throne.

Ioannis Kondoheris and Alexios Vyzantios are both Generals of Belisarius, two men who function as the positive and negative force around him concerning to military matters. He trusts them as soldiers as both have an intense sense of duty, but it is evident through the development of the play that the playwright is torn between conflicting views of the army. As we shall see later on, this is not the case of his view on the institution of the church. Act 1, Scene 2, reveals the most striking difference between the two: from the beginning of the scene, Belisarius reacts negatively to Kondoheris' use of the word "herd" to describe the crowd of protesters, and immediately mentions his aristocratic upbringing, as a hindrance for understanding the people and their needs. We are never informed of Alexios' class origins, but we assume that both he and Belisarius come from humbler social classes, hence their more anthropocentric approach towards the people. The discussion that ensues, concerns the correct line of action: obeying the command of the king which would result in many innocent deaths or disregard the order, thus their duty as soldiers, and retain their humanity. The former is supported by Kondoheris; the latter by Alexios, whereas Belisarius is ambivalent. Finally, he chooses to refrain from violence. Act 2, Scene 1, reveals the depth of Kondoheris' attachment to a position, when he admits to Alexios how "If you love your office, you must

[414] «Μεγάλος στα λόγια, μικρός στην ψυχή, ευνούχε»

be tolerant" (45).[415] His true allegiance is revealed when he states, "Why should I risk my office whenever the general decides to act on a whim, my friend?" (45),[416] admitting that he is also friends with the Prefect's rats. When he leaves in order to avoid Belisarius who is arriving, Alexios exclaims, "Hide in the barn, Kondoheri. Along with the other animals. Opportunist, tattletale." (46).[417] This exposes a complete image of Kondoheris and his character, making clear the differences between the two characters.

The Patriarch is also in line with the demystification process attempted by the author, which is intensely manifested in this character. Throughout the play, the Patriarch is present in various scenes, most interesting among which are the ones describing his relationship to Justinian, already discussed earlier in this chapter, and his preoccupation with the search for the essence of Christianity. This discussion is part of the dilemma set forth in the play, namely, a delegation of Egyptian Monophysite Christians are to visit Constantinople, should they be greeted cordially – which would ensure peace in the region and prevent an attack by the Persians on Byzantium – or should they be treated as heretics, thus creating an enemy? In this dilemma, the Patriarch answers, "What fools you are! A thousand times better to be subordinate to heathens… rather than the monophysites! [...] Being slaves under heathens strengthens the faith; brings the strays back to church" (72).[418] Another important piece of the puzzle is completed when we hear of the existence of monks all around the city, chanting and calling Theodora a strumpet, and so, according to Tribonian, "fanaticizing the people" (69).[419] The Patriarch justifies this by claiming that they are "Protecting our faith" (70).[420] The Patriarch's evidently opportunistic and biased perspective is a commentary on the corruption of highranking clergymen in the Orthodox Church. Let it be also noted that the Patriarch does not have a name, only a title, which attaches universality to his figure, as well as a diachronic nature to his behavior.

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[415] «Αν αγαπάς τα αξιώματά σου, πρέπει να' σαι ανεκτικός»

[416] «Γιατί θα πρέπει να διακινδυνεύω εγώ το αξιωμά μου, όποτε αποφασίσει ο στρατηγός να κάνει του κεφαλιού του, φίλε μου;»

[417] «Κρύψου στο σταύλο, Κοντοχέρη. Μαζί με τ' άλλα ζώα. Συμφεροντολόγε, σπιούνε.»

[418] «Πόσο ανόητοι είστε! Χίλιες φορές καλύτερη η υποταγή στους αλλόθρησκους... παρά στους μονοφυσίτες! [...] Η σκλαβιά από αλλόθρησκους ενδυναμώνει την πίστη· φέρνει πίσω στους ναούς τους παραστρατημένους»

[419] «φανατίζοντας τον κόσμο»

[420] «προστατεύουν την πίστη μας»

The romantic ideal in the play develops in two scenes: the very last scene of the play sees Theodora and Belisarius entangled in manifestations of romantic love which had not previously been witnessed in the play. She admits to Belisarius "No one has seen me cry before, general, and nor will they again. They are tears that take the woman out of me" (125).[421] The stage directions dictate that "*with one movement, Belisarius wipes away a tear that is rolling down her cheek*" (125).[422] The unfulfilled love between Theodora and Belisarius is sacrificed for the sake of the people, just as Theodora sacrifices her son in Akritas' *Theodora*. Secondly, in Act 1, Scene 2, the figure of Nikias, a former soldier of Belisarius, who is now a beggar, suddenly arrives as a foreteller of sad things to come. He warns Belisarius that blind obedience to the king will destroy him, thus inspiring him to change his mind about attacking the people. The figure of Nikias is a cross between a ghost and a dream, an omen, which arrives suddenly to prevent dramatic developments for the protagonist. Both these romantic episodes are sporadic and are not rooted dramaturgically in the action of the play. They are however, important glimpses into the literary loyalties of the author. Although he aspires to a modernist approach in his character development, his sporadic romantic interludes serve as a reminder of the conservative literary culture he inherits. The introductions to the publication also serve as evidence.

Sophocleous's protagonist, Belisarius, presents a rather distinct dramatic nature from the previous protagonists examined in this chapter, as he does not follow the line of any of the other characters in the play. To use a slang expression, he seems to be "in his own world", without communicating with the rest of the characters. He represents what is quintessentially good and noble, and he emerges as an ideal leader among the fallible Justinian, Kappadokis, the Generals and the Patriarch. In general, his actions are, at the same time, initialized by him, and are reactions to the actions of other characters.

A more detailed look at the aspects of his actions in the play will shed more light on the character:

Love / desire: Once more, we observe the dual nature of love/desire in relation to the protagonist. On the one hand, romantic love, in this case, Theodora, is the object of erotic

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[421] "Δε με ξαναείδε ανθρώπου μάτι να κλαίω, στρατηγέ, και ούτε θα με ξαναδεί. Είναι το δάκρυ που αφαιρεί από μέσα μου τη γυναίκα". The last sentence is a reference again to Lady Macbeth and her famous "unsex me" line, mentioned in an example earlier.

[422] *«ο Βελισάριος με μια κίνηση σκουπίζει με το χέρι του ένα δάκρυ της που κυλά»*

desire, while on the other, love of the crown, "the symbol of the State of Byzantium" (viii),[423] according to Sophocleous. In relation to the first aspect, Belisarius acknowledges the presence and status of Theodora in Act 1, Scene 4. In an argument at the palace on the causes of the riots, Belisarius supports that the cause is not the negative attitude of the crowds towards the dark past of the Empress, but the continuous provocations of Kappadokis. As the conversation becomes more heated, with Kappadokis and the Patriarch being provocative against Theodora, and Justinian remaining idle, Belisarius asks, in an intense manner: "Why don't you also ask the Augusta?" (37).[424] In spite of Belisarius' clear recognition of the value of her opinion in public, Theodora still refuses to take part in the conversation. Their relationship is better described in Act 2, Scene 1, where Theodora visits Belisarius at his army camp, in order to convince him to follow Justinian's orders and attack the crowd. Although he refuses her appeal and resolves to take his own action, in their conversation we witness the mutual trust and willingness to support each other. The conversation even takes a personal twist in Act 1, Scene 4, when Belisarius disapproves of Justinian not supporting Theodora, by referring to him ironically as "some husband" (52).[425] The last part of the dialogue between the two starts with a mutual confession on the existence of fear in both their lives, continues with the establishment of trust between them, and ends with Belisarius assuring Theodora that he will live by his conscience and what is dictated by duty. In Act 3, Scene 1, Belisarius defends Theodora against the sexist remarks made by Tribonian, who declares that trusting a woman is like throwing a feather in the wind, to which Belisarius answers that "her judgment is never wrong" (78),[426] and thus excluding her from the general sexist framework of the play. The last scene, as described above, places the two characters in a romantic environment. Their feelings for each other are expressed, and almost immediately suppressed. The scene closes the cycle of their interdependence, both political and personal, with their decision to live apart. Relating to Belisarius' love for the crown/state, that is presented as stronger than his desire for Theodora, in Act 3, Scene 1, a vengeful type of affection rises up in him, when he states to Tribonian that if Theodora does not carry out her duty as queen, he will take revenge on her. Moreover, in his conversation with Justinian in

[423] "το σύμβολο του Κράτους του Βυζαντίου"

[424] "Γιατί δε ρωτάτε και την Αυγούστα;"

[425] "Ωραίος σύζυγος"

[426] "Δε λαθεύει η κρίση της"

Act 3, Scene 2, he rejects his plea to help Theodora escape from the city, instead he tells him that "she will stay, because she ought to fight" (91).[427] Finally, his devotion to the throne is manifested in Act 4, Scene 1, when Belisarius and Theodora join forces and make crucial decisions for the future of the city, which is at a desperate phase. As Theodora tries to convince Belisarius to save the king in addition to the throne, he reacts by saying, "My duty was to displace the thoughtless king from his throne. Now I feel that I have neglected this role",[428] and adds that "I have always cared for the throne more than for my own life" (100).[429] This clear emotional attachment of Belisarius to an institution and not a person is perhaps the most important point of distinction from the previous plays.

Communication: Belisarius' communication appears to be principally with army officials, or even possibly with the army as an organizational system. Throughout the play, it is evident that he is most comfortable in his role as a member of the army. He reveals the framework of military service to Theodora, when she asks him what it means for a military leader to *rule worthily*: "Be fearless in battle, but be anxious and sad for each one of your soldiers who is killed. Maintain a measure for cruelty and kindness. Of firmness and justice. You ought to be trusted, Augusta" (51).[430] In Act 1, Scene 1, he states that he has reluctantly returned to Constantinople, since final victory was not yet achieved at the Eastern front where he had been serving. Upon his return, he was commanded to execute actions that disrupted his self-identification as an honorable warrior. In Act 2, Scene 1, he reveals to Alexios Vizantios and Kondoheris what his involvement in politics has done to him:" The world seemed complete, with my duty clear within it. Now I am in doubt, and it hurts" (47).[431] Moreover, his relationship with Alexios and Kondoheris is the most functional in terms of communication compared to any other relation in the play, including that of Theodora. His two scenes of

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[427] "Θα μείνει, γιατί οφείλει να παλέψει"

[428] "Το καθήκον μου ήταν να διώξω από τον θρόνο τον αλλοπρόσαλλο βασιλιά. Τώρα νοιώθω ότι αμέλησα αυτό μου το καθήκον "

[429] "Πάντα νοιαζόμουν για το θρόνο περισσότερο και από την ίδια τη ζωή"

[430] "Να είσαι άφοβος στη μάχη, αλλά ν' αγωνιάς και να λυπάσαι για κάθε στρατιώτη σου που σκοτώνεται. Να κρατείς το μέτρο της σκληρότητας και της καλοσύνης. Της αυστηρότητας και της δικαιοσύνης. Να σ' εμπιστεύονται, Αυγούστα."

[431] "Μου φαινόταν ένας κόσμος ολοκληρωμένος, με ξεκάθαρο το καθήκον μου μέσα σ' αυτόν. Τώρα αμφιβάλλω και υποφέρω"

self-doubt are accompanied by these two characters, with the exception of a short appearance by Nikias in Act 1, Scene 2, and by Theodora in Act 2, Scene 1.

Help/struggle: Belisarius' most prominent struggle, which overtakes many aspects of his life, is a civic one. His dedication to the institution of monarchy has gone from being all-encompassing of his understanding of duty, to being severely problematized by characters and situations. In various scenes his intentions are intensely challenged by Kappadokis, Vasilios, Alexios Vizantions, the Patriarch and even Justinian. Perhaps the line which best describes how he is perceived by society is uttered by Vasilios who warns Justinian that "Majesty, you should not fear an incompetent general, but an experienced and battle-hardened one. A general like that [...] how far is he from the throne?" (25).[432] He is referring to Belisarius and his popularity, due to his integrity and charisma, and explains how they are a liability to the throne. On the other hand, Tribonian believes in Belisarius' principles, but his personal cynicism turns into criticism of Belisarius' adamant practices. After the attempted murder of Belisarius, Tribonian wants to expose the crime, but Belisarius will not hear of it, and Tribonian answers to his appeal: "Alright... I won't talk, although I would like to swear at some cowardly emperors. But, at least, reveal to me the reason that you are not abandoning them" (83).[433] Finally, Theodora creates an internal struggle within Belisarius through their personal relationship. Belisarius faces the struggle of separating the person from the office, and remaining faithful to Theodora, without distractions. This struggle is resolved in the end, although the difficult decision is made by Theodora, not Belisarius.

3.4 Comparative Character Analysis: The development of the protagonists and the ideological implications

Byzantium is a thematic category that Greek and Greek-Cypriot dramatic production shares, presenting similar tendencies. Commenting on the Greek literary production, which also holds true for Cyprus, Hadjipandazis (2006) claims that “from the beginning of the 19th

[432] "Μεγαλειότατε, δεν πρέπει να φοβάσαι από έναν ανίκανο στρατηγό, αλλά ένα ικανό και εμπειροπόλεμο. Ένας τέτοιος στρατηγός [...] πόσο απέχει από το θρόνο;"

[433] Εντάξει... Δε θα μιλήσω, αν και θα ήθελα να βρίσω μερικούς δειλούς αυτοκράτορες. Όμως, τουλάχιστο, φανέρωσέ μου το λόγο που δεν τους εγκαταλείπεις."

century, Greek historical drama playwrights claim the role of historionomist and prophet, the person in a position to predict (or perhaps influence and shape?) with their works, the destiny of the race" (45). For all the plays examined in the chapter, the destiny of the race is certainly to overcome obstacles and prevail over enemies from within the nation and outside. As mentioned in the beginning of this Chapter, the various elements that have enveloped the idea of Byzantium in modern Greece and Cyprus, have, effectively, given the historical play, in themes and characters, patriotic extensions.

A deeper analysis of the protagonists in the three plays, however, starts with a surprising realization. Although the events narrated are roughly the same, the protagonist in each of the plays is different: Justinian in the play by Karageorgiades; Theodora in the play by Akritas, and, Belisarius in the play by Sophocleous. This fact alone calls urgently for interpretations. Even the sociopolitical status of the protagonist changes in the last play. Belisarius is not royalty; he is not chosen by God to rule Byzantium, as is assumed in the two former plays about Justinian and Theodora. Sophocleous, indeed, endows his protagonist with an important social status, being a male and a capable General; but it is clear that he distinguishes his protagonist from any sort of divine providence. He is a man of the people, claiming his place among the simple population of Constantinople and the empire in general. Moreover, he finds most meaning and comfort within his army and the simple soldiers who serve under him. This is the world that makes more sense to Belisarius, rather than authority, as in the case of both Justinian and Theodora.

The three protagonists also present interesting features in their roles as *actants* in the plays in regards to love/desire. Justinian's manifestation of action is materialized in his romantic relationships with two women, Theodora and Ariadne, and an ideological entity, the Nation. He represents the Romantic hero. In much the same way Theodora has dual affections: towards her newly-found son, Ioannis, and her crown. Although Theodora's affections are not of an erotic nature, they represent the equivalent of Justinian's Romantic dimension. The object of romantic love for both characters is something unattainable, whereas their love for the nation is a solid and steady value they make sacrifices for and know, as heroes, they will be rewarded in the end.

Belisarius in the play by Sophocleous follows the familiar recipe, but his actions/intended actions centering on love/desire do not render the same result. The protagonist, much like the other two protagonists before him, has an object of erotic desire

(Theodora) and love of the crown. As we have seen in the analysis, the erotic affair is not presented before the end of the play, and even then it is eradicated before it even begins. In terms of his love for the throne, the nature of the love is connected to the institution, rather than the acquisition of personal authority. The play ends with him stating his commitment to the throne, even if during the course of the play a process of demystification has taken place. By the end of the play, he has a clear understanding of the destructive power of politics over idealism.

In terms of Communication and how the characters' actions are manifested, in the play by Karageorgiades, Justinian is struggling to establish communication with Belisarius. Although his efforts are not always successful, the protagonist makes a continuous effort to establish a relationship with the General. The process includes Justinian's effort to understand and adopt the virtues of Belisarius. His military excellence and popularity are traits that Justinian would like to have, therefore, his communication with him is more of a spiritual apprenticeship than a truthful effort at a friendship. In the play by Akritas, Theodora shares communication on a constant basis, but only with Antonina. The two women share common goals, and as in the previous case, it is not sure that they share an honest friendship, but they certainly share admiration and appreciation. Finally, in the play by Sophocleous, Belisarius's communication appears to be principally with army officials, but more specifically with the army as an organizational system. This protagonist engages in actions towards his fellow soldiers or the institution of the army that encompass communication. The code used between soldiers as part of the system of the army is the space where Belisarius is most functional. In an interpretation of the departure from relationships of communication based on the dependence of one person to another, towards a system of communication with an institution, manifests a shift in the figure of the hero. Belisarius is a far departure from the romantic protagonists of the first two plays, mostly in his attachment to a clearly nationalist institution. Communication with characters or institutions outside the army is confusing for him and he feels alienated from his essential being.

Finally, the comparative analysis of the protagonists' help/struggle reveals a shift from actions relating to characters and their actions, to actions relating to institutions. In *The Eagle*, Justinian's struggle rests on his relationship with the plotting and conniving of the Courtiers. In *Theodora*, the protagonist struggles between her son and the crown, an internal battle which materializes in her effort to protect the former, but eventually chooses the latter.

Finally, in *Belisarius*, the primary character is mostly troubled by his relationship to the institution of monarchy and his own duty towards it. His dedication to the monarchy in the beginning of the play was all-encompassing of his understanding of duty, and by the end of the play his struggle grows, disassociating the character from his ideological affiliation to the institution. All three characters relate to authority in a problematic way, since they are forced to sacrifice other elements of their lives in order to be able to retain their direct or indirect relationship with authority.

The three Greek-Cypriot playwrights seem to share the opinion of Greek playwright Ragavis, who, in his introduction to his own *Theodora*, notes that his play has national significance due to its subject matter.[434] Just as continental writers had done during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the creation of nation-states and the establishment of an official historiography, Greek-Cypriots are taking their turn in associating historical narratives to identity and the idea of the nation. Byzantium, as part of the continuum of the historical narrative of Cyprus, is nationally important, and the staging of plays around this subject matter does carry significance in relation to identity construction.

The group of plays examined indicates a shift in the relationship of the leader with the nation and a change in its center of gravity. Building a nation around the omnipotent leader, the motivated *actant*, is central in all plays. In the plays of Karageorgiadis' and Akritas', the leaders fulfill their Romantic destiny by sacrificing their erotic/familial desire for the love of the nation: the idea of Hellenism. In the play by Sophocleous, however, the protagonist Belisarius abandons his efforts to serve the nation as a political figure and finds permanent refuge in his role as an army man. The institution is doubted and disputed at its core.[435] How this comes to be is indeed an interesting question. In my view, the development of the romantic ideal during this late period in the twentieth century is directly connected to the political developments in Cyprus, which changed the face of national pride.

The plays show the seemingly conflicting descriptions of authority figures. On the one hand, Karageorgiadis writes at the time of the development of Hellenic ideals in Cyprus, leading to homegrown nationalism that manifested itself in the Enosis movement in the 1940s

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[434] "ως εκ του θέματος ο πραγματεύεται, κέκτηται σημασίαν τινά εθνικήν» p. vi

[435] Niederhauser (1973) notes that "as the national literatures developed, it was romanticism which offered models and methods" (350), confirming the consistency in the connection between the romantic model and the idea of nationalism.

and 1950s. Although Akritas writes his play in Greece in the 1950s, and this should have allowed him a more grounded point of view on Cyprus' politics, he still acts as a carrier of the nationalist narrative, placing Byzantium as part of the continuum of the Hellenic historical narrative.

On the other hand, Sophocleous writes in the 1990s: by this time, Cyprus has declared its independence, since 1960 (resulting in a demystification of the ideal of Enosis and of the Ethnos); inter-communal strife has broken out in the 1960s, and Cyprus has known a strong leader who failed to reunite the island after the 1974 war. Therefore, we observe the intense disillusionment in the figure of the king (apparent in the attitudes towards Justinian); a tendency to reward the true hero; and, an openness to less central figures to become agents of power, i.e., lower class men and women. Moreover, in the play we observe a demystification of the Archbishop, a practice we do not observe in the two former plays. This is commentary on behalf of Sophocleous on the figure of Archbishop Makarios and his political course, which came under scrutiny in the 1990s, as Cyprus moved into a true multi-party system. Until the late 1980s, the island was dominated by the political remnants of the virtually single party system of Makarios' era. It was as late as 1988 that the Democratic Party and Spyros Kyprianou (Makarios' ideological successor) lost the elections for the first time since the death of Makarios in 1977 to AKEL (left wing party), who supported the election of economist, Giorgos Vassiliou. Moreover, by then, the church and the new archbishop, Chrysostomos (Makarios' ecclesiastic successor) continued to pursue the ethnarchal role of the church. Belisarius embodies the desire for new heroes, coming from the social stratum of common people. The new hero does not have divine powers, but has virtues that are based in his bravery and idealism. Moreover, the involvement of the church in political matters is disputed and the importance of the ethnarch priest is re-evaluated. The corrupt and partisan archbishop in the play seems to personify this disappointment, and although Belisarius does not interact with him as much as Justinian, his characteristics create an association between the character and archbishop and president Makarios, a predominant figure of a political and priest for Greek-Cypriots. Moreover, it can be assumed that the author's effort to find heroes within the armed forces is also a result of a trend in the last decade of the twentieth century on the island, a time when affluence had allowed the Republic of Cyprus to purchase large amounts of expensive arms for the National Guard.

For Sophocleous, the Greek-Cypriot community in the 1990s remains firmly connected to the idea of Byzantium as a proud piece of local history. The Byzantine Empire itself was a worthy extension of Hellenism, but the human element, supports the author, and specifically organized entities such as the church, created problematic conditions, not much different to the present day. The Greeks of Cyprus are fighting as true patriots against their enemies (at this point in history it is the Turkish element on the island and the international powers), but forces from within and without are eroding the patriotic feeling and fighting spirit. It can be assumed that the play, dressed in the usual nationalist cloak, on the one hand makes an effort at untangling the disillusionment of Greek-Cypriots in finding a solution to the Cyprus problem. Even though the economy was doing very well, the 1990s are infamous for their stagnant politics, especially in relation to the Cyprus problem. On the other hand, it raises a daring social agenda by commenting on the role and problematic function of the church in society. While at the same time embracing the grandeur of Byzantium, which according to the hegemonic rhetoric is a Helleno-Christian empire, he simultaneously criticizes the role of the church. The author's frustration finds an outlet in his search for heroes and heroic leadership in the armed forces,

CHAPTER FOUR

MEDIEVAL COLONIZATION

Nations, like narratives,
lose their origins in the myths of time
and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye.
From *Nation and Narration* by Homi Bhabha (1)

Anyone who had experience of providing
maps of Medieval Europe for a historical atlas will
know that it is generally impossible to provide the
sharp lines and bright colors beloved by mapmakers.
From *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices* by David Abulafia (11)

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will analyze plays whose historical reference period is that of French colonization in Cyprus, specifically, the reign on Peter I Lusignan, king of Cyprus from 1359 to 1369. The plays present an obvious divergence from the previous two chapters: the specific historical era these plays refer to are particular to Cyprus, whereas Hellenic Antiquity and Byzantium are part of the historical narrative of other communities, as well. In spite of Cyprus' inclusion in the political entity of the "unity of Christendom" (Abulafia 13),[436] along with the greater part of the Euro-Mediterranean and the practice of medieval colonization by continental communities, there are no matching Lusignan kings[437] in the Mediterranean islands or coastal cities.

During the Middle Ages,[438] starting in the eleventh century, a time Abulafia (2012) calls "this commercial revolution" (277) for the great progress made in the area of commerce in the Mediterranean, many Mediterranean islands and coastal societies were colonized. At the time, "the Mediterranean was shaped by […] the Genoese, the Venetians and the Catalans" (Abulafia, xviii), and many islands and coastal communities were colonized by the

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[436] Abulafia (2012) reports that Henry VI, in his capacity as the universal Christian emperor "sent crowns to the rulers of Cyprus and Cilician Armenia" (13).

[437] Other kings of the Lusignan line reigned in areas in France from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries and in Cilicia (kings of Lesser Armenia) in the fourteenth century.

[438] For the purposes of this study, the dates which determine the beginning and end of the period in question are defined by the dates which determine European-style colonization: namely, the end of the Byzantine era (1185) and the beginning of the Ottoman Era (1570).

great commercial powers of the time: cities such as Genoa, Pisa and Venice, powerful families or religious orders. Therefore, exploring the historic and literary context of the colonization of Cyprus by the French line of Lusignan kings (1197-1489), will be set against the background of similar historical patterns taking place on other Mediterranean islands, and in "obviously colonial situations" (Herzfeld 54) such as Malta and Crete.

Placing this analysis in the Mediterranean region is a significant choice, since it is one of the oldest and multi-layered geographical areas, the womb of western history. The majority of scholarship produced in relation to the area has been conducted by isolating smaller areas, such as the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Iberian Peninsula, Italy (North and South), the Balkans, etc. Nonetheless, as Horden and Purcell (2005) state, in agreement with Herzfeld (2005), the choice of placing one's context in the geographical area of the Great Sea[439] can constitute an alternative to interpretations offered thus far in modernity, usually defined by the East/West or Orient/Occident dichotomy:

> "To think in terms of the Mediterranean history is, for us, an 'excuse' for 'creating new [scholarly] alliances and agglomerations to generate novel and interesting heuristic options'. It is an 'excuse' to undermine the now, on the whole, more usual agglomerations of European and Middle East, and ancient and medieval, historiography by (re)creating a *tertium genus*." (355)

Thus, there is a departure from the more conventional contextualization of Greek-Cypriot literary production within the European and Hellenic milieu – the case in the previous two chapters. In the present chapter, investigation is conducted in the geo-political context of the Mediterranean and other island communities within it.

The life and times of Peter I Lusignan are examined in the framework of acknowledging his reign as that of a colonizer/ruler of a Mediterranean kingdom. Such patterns of Medieval colonization are seen in other islands, coastal communities or groups of islands in the Mediterranean, during the same period. The comparison between Cyprus and other Mediterranean islands, specifically Malta and Crete, aims at opening new windows of interpretation. I will draw on Western post-colonial theory, even though, as Edward Said mentions "only recently have Westerners become aware that what they have to say about the

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[439] Abulafia (2012) uses this in reference to the Mediterranean, and features in the title of his fascinating book, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*.

history and the cultures of 'subordinate' peoples is challengeable by the peoples themselves" (*Culture and Imperialism*, 195). This is true of the cases discussed here. Post-colonial discussion on all three islands has been quite limited, since two of the islands (Cyprus and Malta) became independent states as late as the 1960s, whereas Crete, being a part of the Greek state, makes it, in many cases, part of a larger conversation on identity, namely, Greek-ness rather than Crete-ness. Nonetheless, this can be used as an opportunity to enhance discussion and enter new areas of interest within the post-colonial critical context.

4.1 Medieval Colonization in Historical plays.

As mentioned in the Introduction to this chapter, the analysis will focus on communities outside the areas, which we looked into in Chapters Two and Three. The area of research in this chapter is the Mediterranean, and the island communities within it that present the same socio-political trends as Cyprus. In this first part of the mapping of the production of historical plays, the investigation takes us to Malta and Crete, two island communities in the last millennium with historical pasts similar to Cyprus. This primary analysis will provide the material for a further comparative analysis in the final part of this chapter.

4.1.1 Malta

Malta consists of a group of islands situated in the center of the Mediterranean, in close proximity to both Italy and the coast of western Africa. It is a complex of eight islands, the largest of which are Malta Island and Gozo.

Due to its geographical position and size,[440] it shares historical tendencies with Cyprus. In a rundown of the conquerors it has known, we encounter: the Romans (218-330); the Byzantines (330-870); the Arabs (870-1090); the Normans (1090-1530); and, the Knights of St. John (1530-1798). After a small adventure under Napoleonic France, Malta became a colony of Great Britain from 1800-1964. In his dissertation entitled, "A study of post-colonial Drama in Malta", Marco Galea (2003) shows how, "[i]t is clear that despite their subjugation to a European colonizing nation, the Maltese saw themselves as no less European than their colonizers" (29). In spite of Malta's proximity to the coast of Africa and the intense remnants of Arab occupation on the island, the Maltese perceive their identity as predominantly

[440] In terms of its size, Malta ranks 34th in the Mediterranean.

European. The language of Malta is a synthesis of Arabic, Sicilian, and Tuscan Italian, although English is also widely spoken. Moreover, as part of the process of formation of modern Maltese identity in the late nineteenth century, which Galea mentions, the "two clearest aims" of Maltese historiography "were primarily to negotiate a position for the Maltese as Europeans within history, and secondly to justify the nationalist cause against colonialism" (30). Galea claims the source of this inclination to be in the common issue found in many colonized peoples, as distinguished by Franz Fanon:[441] the perception, that is, that white Caucasian Europeans are perceived as ranking "highest" in the hierarchy of human races, hence Malta's connection to Europeans, as opposed to Arabs, constitutes an assurance of superiority for the colonized themselves (30).

Malta was declared a sovereign republic in 1964, four years after Cyprus, in a smooth and non-violent transition. According to Galea, "Malta's acquisition of independence could be attributed as much to Britain wanting to shut down its empire as to the negotiating power of Maltese politicians" (169). Important points to take away here: firstly, Galea makes a critical point in relation to the lukewarm orientation Malta's independence outlook and a lack of passion, as well as to the fact that the transition was not brought forth by the rise of nationalism and the outbreak of violence on the island, as was the case of Cyprus. Finally, Malta joined the European Union in 2004, adding another level to the dialogue in relation to the identity of the island. Exemplifying the feeling of a group of Maltese, Cassola (2000) claims the island should now stop being perceived as a bridge between people, and instead be included in the European Union's philosophy of "unity in Diversity".[442]

a. Maltese Theatre and Drama

Maltese literature is dominated by the bilingual and multi-lingual nature of Maltese society of the last few centuries. Educated Maltese were, for the most part, bilingual: the local language, Maltese, was their oral language of communication, and a second language was introduced

[441] Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (25).

[442] Arnold Cassola (2000), in the second page of his introduction entitled, "The Literature of Malta: some points to ponder", explains his aspirations that the Maltese revisit their political and cultural position in the E.U.

for official purposes. Depending on the period during which they lived, the second language(s) would be Latin, Sicilian, Italian or English (Galea 41).[443]

In the period during the domination of the Knights of St. John, the last conquerors before the British, first signs of theatrical activity can be seen on the island. During that era, theatrical entertainment was mostly elitist and constituted of plays in Italian, presented to the Knights in their own environment. Galea notes that although the Knights of St. John had "no physical mother country to speak of" (since they were a religious order of Catholic monks from the whole of Europe), they "behaved as a typical colonizing force" and during their rule "the Maltese were practically voiceless" (46). In spite of the disadvantaged position of the Maltese, Cassola (2000) mentions the existence of two pieces of literature, both poems, in Maltese, in the early period of Maltese literature: *Cantilena* by Petrus Caxaro (fifteenth century) and *Sonetto* by Giovanni Francesco Bonamico (seventeenth century) (6-25); however, it is possible that there are many more written which were lost. Therefore, although the Maltese population was suppressed, the Maltese language found ways to emerge in written literature, at the time, albeit sporadically. This is also connected to the emigration of the Maltese to cities of the Eastern, but mostly, Western Mediterranean.[444] The direct exposure of writers to Islamic and Christian environments left lasting marks on their literature.[445] In his mapping of the influences in Maltese literature from various places in the twentieth century, it is interesting to note Cassola's evaluation of the poetry of two romantic poets from Gozo, whose work he characterizes as "typically Mediterranean" (78). His evaluation, though, does not reach a great depth of analysis, but it serves as a benchmark for the geographical framework, which I place in my study of the Cretan and Cypriot works that follow.

Oral literary tradition in Maltese dates back hundreds of years, and *għana*, "a local form of folk singing" (Galea 64) is still vibrant today, and, according to Galea, constitutes "a

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[443] In his introduction to *The Literature of Malta*, Arnold Cassola (2000) notes that "Malta can boast of a unique literary phenomenon" (3): in the last five hundred years it has produced literature written in six distinct languages: Arabic, Latin, Sicilian, Italian, Maltese, and English. Although the phenomenon is not particular only to Malta's context, as the author may claim, it is still worth noting, since it is telling of the linguistic legacy of the islands.

[444] Cassola (2000) notes that Bonamico (1639-1680) himself was a "veritable nomad" (28), having lived and studied in cities of Central Europe.

[445] Cassola (2000) mentions authors: Marcello Attardo de Vangoli (1605-1658), Giovanni Antonio Vassalo (1817-1868), Richard Taylor (1818-1868), Dwardu Cachia (1857-1907) and Manwel Dimech (1860-1921).

sub-culture, or indeed anti-culture" (Galea 64). Vicky Ann Cremona (2008) suggests that the Maltese "celebrations can be seen as theatrical events", although they are not theatre as such (119). This opens up the scope of what is designated as theatrical, and in this way, talk in this area would include religious and social events, such as, festivals (e.g. the Carnival) and processions.

With the coming of the British, English started to replace Italian as the high linguistic variety, and written dramatic production begins: the first play to be performed in Maltese is presented in 1839. It is Rosato's *Katerina*. From then on, as reported by both Cremona (2008) and Galea (2003), and for the next 150 years till today, the majority of plays were written in Maltese, rather than in an European language, including English (which is still one of the two official languages of Malta, along with Maltese). Galea (2003) reports how "many playwrights made their playwriting part of a struggle to make Maltese a respectable language of culture" (100-101), since "up to the 19th and early 20th centuries, the general middle class attitude was […] to look down on plays in Maltese" (Cremona 123). This new attitude on behalf of the playwrights reflects a fresh sense of ownership and pride attached to the language. The struggle of the Maltese to choose between theatre in English, Italian and Maltese was actually "a struggle to establish their own national identity and culture" (Cremona 123), and, to a great degree, liberation came during the twentieth century.

b. Malta's history plays

Malta's historical plays include a category of playwrights that has not yet been examined thoroughly. The information comes mainly from Marco Galea's aforementioned doctoral dissertation (2003), entitled "A Study of Post-colonial Drama in Malta": a thorough examination of post-independence theatre and drama on the island, but which has a broader scope and does not focus on historical drama. Nonetheless, there is enough information offered by Galea for certain patterns to be observed; at the same time, his post-colonial approach to Maltese theatre and drama is parallel to my own theoretical approach in this chapter.

As mentioned earlier, the first play presented in Maltese in 1839 was Rosato's play, *Katerina*, a historical verse drama, published in 1847. According to Galea (2003), the development of historical drama in Malta presented a surge after the mid 1850s. The direct influence of Romanticism on the island from 1800-1860 took place when exiles coming from

Italy (as a result of the war of the Italian Unification) "imparted to the Maltese educated class many of their liberal and often Romantic ideas" (Galea 66). Although drama developed later, Maltese Romantic poetry flourished, with the Great Siege of 1565[446] as a recurring historical point of reference. Historical novels also appeared at the end of the nineteenth century, "where the Maltese were presented as a population suffering at the hands of different foreign rulers" (Galea 67). At the beginning of the twentieth century, many of these novels were adapted for the stage, "popularizing heroes"[447] from the Great Siege of 1565 (Galea 97).

An important historical play was Ninu Cremona's, *The Peasant's Ransom* (written in 1913 and published in 1936), narrating a historic event of the fifteenth century, during which the inhabitants of Malta, presented as a "compact rural community" (Galea 103), gather money in order to pay a feudal lord, to which the King of Aragon has sold them. Galea supports that, like other playwrights before him, Cremona "does not think of independence as a realistic solution to Malta's problems" (103), since at the end of the play, the King of Aragon is still their ruler. The regime has not changed, but tougher living conditions have been avoided by the population, which has worked together to make this happen.

The progression of the twentieth century changed the nature of Maltese historical drama. Examples of plays written/produced/published in the latter part of the century, such as, Alfred Sant's, *In the Shadow of the Cathedral* (1977), present features of a discussion on representation of the historical figures, and episodes in reflection of the colonial past of the island. Galea (2003) makes the point that through the play (which is a play-within-a play narrative style of an episode from 1798), "colonization has insinuated itself deeply into the Maltese mentality" (146), allowing for an introspection of the colonial mentality. Despite the fact that this introspection reaches as far as discussing colonization, it is still carried out through clearly western literary aesthetics.

Galea remains judgmental of Maltese playwright, supporting that they are limited in their embrace of the principles of what Said (1994) identifies as "resistance writing" (216).[448]

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[446] The historic episode refers to a four-month siege by the Turks, fought back by the Knights and the Maltese.

[447] Galea (2003) mentions Toni Bajjada, "who was credited to have swum all across the Grand Harbor during the Great Siege, risking his life to send messages to the Maltese defending the fortifications on the other side of the Harbor" (97).

[448] In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said (1994) outlines the idea of 'resistance' as: "far from being merely a reaction to imperialism, [it] is an alternative way of perceiving human history" (216). Moreover, he mentions the parameters of "resistance writing" as: 1. Episodes are presented as parts of a unified history, 2. There is a

His judgment is based on his assumption that Maltese playwrights have refrained from engaging in a process of deconstruction of the local forms and themes. Such a process would constitute a rebirth of the literature, in much the same away, as African authors, such as, Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe have done.

4.1.2 Crete

Όχι πλέον η Κρήτη δεσμώτις
Ουδέ λέων απλώνων φτερά·
Φεύγει Φράγκος και όλος χαρά
Είν' ο Κρης στρατιώτης.
From *I Aftonomia tis Kritis* [*The Independence of Crete]*, 1899 (66)[449]

The second case study is the island of Crete, the fifth largest in the Mediterranean, which, in its history, presents many similar trends with Malta and Cyprus. Situated in the Aegean, it is the southern-most island of Greece and one of its thirteen administrative regions.

The post-antiquity history of Crete starts in 395 A.D, with the transition from the Romans to the Byzantine Empire. The island passed to the Arabs in 826 and remained under their rule until 961, when it was re-conquered by the Byzantines. Following the Fourth Crusade (1204), Crete was sold to the Venetians. From this point on, as John Mavrogordato (1928) mentions, "the Cretans are commonly said to have been in a state of revolution for 700 years" (77). In 1645, the Ottoman Empire began military operations in Crete against the Venetians, completing the conquest of most of the island in 1669, and acquiring complete control in 1715. After a series of Cretan revolts, independence was declared in 1898, and in 1913 Crete was ceded to the Greek state. Much like Cyprus, Crete had a mixed population of Cretan Greeks and Cretan Turks, until the beginning of the twentieth century. Between the late 1910s and1923, with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, and the population exchange, all Cretan Turks left the island for Asia Minor and other cities in the Levant.

Finally, Sotos Ktoris (2013) connects the Greek-Cypriot community with the history of Crete in a very enlightening way. In relation to the socio-political developments on the two

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choice of a national language for the play to be written in, and, 3. There is a move away from nationalism towards liberation and community. (261).

[449] Antoniadou, Antoniou I. *Η Αυτονομία της Κρήτης Επί Ενετών [The Autonomy of Crete Under the Venetians]*. Athens, 1899.

islands in the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, with the flourishing of Greek nationalism in the Christian populations of the two islands, he mentions the "syndrome of Crete", a term created within historical circles. He defines it as "the joining of Crete to Greece and the gradual displacement of the Muslim element" (86), which is, as mentioned earlier, a historical occurrence in Crete in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Ktoris connects the two islands and their parallel historical courses by pointing out that the scenario which had taken place in Crete, was a source of pride for the Greek-Cypriots and a source of fear for the Turkish-Cypriot community in Cyprus (86). In short, this association of Cyprus with Crete was one of the factors, that stimulated the tensions between the two communities in the first half of the twentieth century.

a. Cretan Literature

Crete carries a long literary tradition in many different genres. In theatre, in addition to the oral tradition, a western-style tradition of putting on plays has been in place since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. According to theatre researcher, Walter Puchner (1991), "performances took place in urban – and even aristocratic – environments in cities of Crete, and had the function of a glamorous social event. However, there are also indications of a more popular theatre outside the cities, perhaps, on the villas of big landowners" (153-154). We can, therefore, safely assume that the art of theatre was popular among various socioeconomic groups.

Perhaps the best-known literary work of a Venetian Crete is the heroic romance, *Erotokritos [Ερωτόκριτος]*, written by Vincenzo Cornaro, around approximately 1650, which recounts the story of the love between Erotikritos and Aretousa, set in Ancient Athens. Another important work of Cretan literary production is *Erofili* [*Ερωφίλη*] by Georgios Hortatsis, written in the late sixteenth century and published in Venice in 1637. The play was inspired by *Orbecch*, a play by Italian author B. Giraldi and refers to a king of Egypt and the affair of his daughter Erofili with the foreign, Prince Panaretos. A third play is the tragedy, *Vasilevs o Rodolinos* [*Βασιλεύς ο Ροδολίνος/King Rodolinos]*, a play by the poet, Ioanni Andrea Troilou, a Cretan from an urban family of Rethimno, Crete. The text was first published in Venice in 1647 and it is a slight modification of the Italian play, *Il Re Torrismondo* [*King Torrismondo*] by Torquato Tasso. The story takes place in Memphis, Egypt, and it narrates the events behind the love of two pairs in a world of complex personal

politics. Lastly, the seventeenth century saw the presentation of the play, *Zenon* [*Ζήνων*][450] by an unknown author on the Ionian island of Zante (Gr. Zakynthos)[451] between 1681 and 1683. The Cretan tragedy narrates the story and crimes of Byzantine Emperor Zenon and his cousin Logginos.[452]

One of the most important features of these plays is the use of language. Most are written in rhyming iambic pentameter, but most importantly they fashion the Cretan variety. Therefore the neoclassical structure of the plays, in combination with the language creates a result, which is unique in its expression.

In a different format and spirit, in the seventeenth century we find the biblical drama *I Thisia tou Avraam [Η Θυσία του Αβραάμ/The Sacrifice of Abraham]* by an unknown author. The work is one unified long text, written in the Cretan variety, and it tells the story of Abraham from the Old Testament. Another play, written by Georgios Hortatsis, *Gyparis*/*Γυπάρης* (also known as *Panoria*/*Πανώρια*) is a pastoral tragic-comedy in the spirit of the Italian tradition, which departs from the neoclassical style. The play is adapted for Crete, Cretan names are given, and the action is transferred from Arcadia to Mount Ida (Mavrogordato 91).

b. Cretan Historical Plays

Cretan historical plays were mostly written/published/presented away from the island, given that they were produced in the nineteenth century when Crete was still under Ottoman rule. The dramatic production written by Cretans or related to the history of Crete was published or performed in either mainland Greece or the Ionian islands.

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[450] This information comes from «Το Θέατρο στην Πόλη της Ζακύνθου, Τόμος Β', 1901-1915» («Theatre in the City of Zakynthos, Volume B, 1901-1915») by Dionysis N. Mousmoutis. The author is an independent researcher in the theatre life of Zante/Zakynthos, and his work consists of a series of four volumes, covering four periods (1870-1900, 1901-1915, 1916-1930 and 1931-1953). In the period examined in this volume, we see the transition from an Italian language melodrama to Greek-language prose plays, coming from the metropolis, Athens.

[451] Mousmoutis mentions that we know that the performance took place in Zante from the publication of the play in which Pavlos Minios, who was 'Proveditor del Zante' between 1681-83 is mentioned.

[452] In the play, the Venetian nobleman, Katerin Cornaro, is mentioned as a character. I have not been able to trace this character in historical accounts, but it is interesting that he carries the name of Catherina Cornaro (1454-1510), the last Lusignan monarch of Cyprus.

Plays relating to the period of Venetian rule of the island are several, the most popular theme being the family of Kallergis and the revolt of the Cretans against the Venetians in 1341. The first example is *I Kallerge [Οι Καλλέργαι/The Kallergis family]* by S. N. Vasiliades was first presented in 1868 and was later published in Athens in 1869. The publication starts with a long introduction, which sets the theoretical framework of the plays.[453] The introduction refers very little to the plays themselves, but deals mostly with the European and Hellenic traditions that inspired such plays to be written. There is a special reference to Shakespeare and his relation to other traditions as an important element of this trend towards the European and Hellenic traditions. The play tells the story of Alexios and Leon Kallergis, and according to the author:

> "[i]t is fair to note, that in writing *Kallergas* I wanted to stress court flattery, which has betrayed and enslaved the nation in many forms at various times, to stress and pinpoint the servility and obsequiousness of Alexios, rather than to glorify the patriotism of Leontios and Syrillios, since the heroism and love for one's country are part of Hellenic history, while its vile drugs are treason and obsequiousness."
>
> (ξβ')[454]

The author writes in poetic/metric Katharevousa and with an evident Romantic attitude. The story includes a classic villain in the face of Alexios Kallergis, a man who started life out well, but finally succumbed to the temptations of money and fame. A Judas-like character, who repents at the end, even though it is too late and the heroic and idealistic youth have died, having fallen victim to his malevolence. Along with the two young idealistic Cretans, the young daughter of the Duke also dies, having first declared her love for Leon and Crete.

Moreover, two plays were written entitled *Leon Kallergis [Λέων Καλλέργης]*. The first by Timotheos D. Ambela, published on the island of Skyros in 1871, while the second, a five-act play was written by Achilleas Paraschos. The latter play was published in *Estia* journal on March 18th, 1884. It is a romantic play, with a poetic narrative language. Act 1 (the only one I was able to access) takes place in Venice at the time of the Carnevale (Carnival). The first few pages reveal the low morals of the locals, as they converse among themselves in

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[453] The edition includes two plays, *I Kallerge* and *Loukas Notaras* [*Λουκάς Νοταράς*].

[454] "δίκαιον θα ήτο να ομολογήσω ότι γράφων τους *Καλλέργας* ηθέλησα να στηλιτεύσω την αυλοκολακείαν, ήτις υπό ποικίλας μορφάς εκάστοτε επρόδωκε και εδούλωσε το έθνος, να στηλιτεύσω και κατακαύσω μάλλον την δουλοπρέπειαν και φιλοδεσποτείαν του Αλεξίου, παρά ν'ανυμνήσω τον πατριωτισμόν του Λέοντος και Σμυριλλίου, διότι η ηρωισμός και η φιλοπατρία είναι η ιστορία του Ελληνισμού, ενώ το φαρμακερόν αυτού επεισόδιον είναι η προδοσία και το φιλοδέσποτον".

insinuation and sexual hints. The romantic couple, Eva and Leon Kallergis, appears on stage, and behind their masks reveal their love for each other, in a scene intensely reminiscent of the Masque Scene in *Romeo and Juliet*. In the short scene, Leon Kallergis is established as a brave patriot, who declares his hatred for Venice.

Krites ke Venetoi [Κρήτες και Βενετοί/Cretans and Venetians] was written by Timoleon Ambelas: a four-part play, first presented on the island of Syros in 1873, and then published in 1879 in "Vyronos" ["Βύρωνος"], a weekly publication in Athens. In a poetic summary in *Parthenon* magazine by the author himself, the plot of the play is revealed: Leon Kallergis, who has led two revolts against the Venetians/Franks, falls in love with the daughter of the Duke. As a way to control Leon, he is invited to dinner at the home of the Duke where he is killed by the Venetians/Franks who are present. His interest of love, the Duke's daughter, follows suit.

Another interesting example is *I Aftonomia tis Kritis epi ton Eneton [Η Αυτονομία της Κρήτης επί Ενετών/The Autonomy of Crete Under the Venetians]*, a tragedy in four acts written by Antonios I. Antoniades. The play is set in Crete in 1260 and was published in Athens in 1899. As the Cretans design a new collective revolution against the Venetians, they count on the help of their king, the Byzantine king, Ioannis Paleologos. The character Kallergis is identified early on as the figure of a traitor. He is insulted because they want to appoint a young man as the leader of the revolution. Throughout the play, we see the interplay between the honor of the men and that of the women, as the honorable Cretans try to face the enemy from within (ambitious traitors, such as Kallergis) and without (the Venetians). At the end of the play, the Venetians are defeated and all are saved. The emperor of Byzantium, Paleologos, arrives and praises the Cretans.

Three other important plays were written at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. The first is *Loukas Notaras [Λουκάς Νοταράς]* by S. N. Vasiliades, staged in February 1868 and published in Athens in 1869. The play *I Kori tis Limnou [Η Κόρη της Λήμνου/The young woman of Limnos]* by Aristomenis Proveleggios is a tragedy, which won an award at the Lassanios dramatic competition in 1891. Finally, Nikos Kazantzakis wrote the four-act drama entitled *Eos Pote? [Until When?/Εως πότε;]* in 1908, which was submitted to the Pandelidios dramatic contest that same year, although it was not awarded. The work is based on the novel by Spyros Zambelios entitled, *Kritikoi Gamoi*

[*Κρητικοί Γάμοι*/*Cretan Weddings*] and was published in "Nea Estia" ["Νέα Εστία"] literary magazine in the Christmas edition of 1977.

The overview of the manifestations of theatre in Malta and Crete serves to draw a parallel to the activity in Cyprus. The geographical area and socio-political conditions on these three islands during the period in question, in addition to their literary production of historical plays in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, raise questions in regards to common trends in the relationship between cultural production and identity. The way in which Medieval colonization of the three islands is perceived in the historical plays, specifically through their protagonists (the dramatic heroes/heroines), instigates conversation about the nature of the Mediterranean and the way literary and ideological tendencies have circulated through modern times in order to form a contemporary identity.

This section of the chapter is completed by exploring Cyprus, and the plays written there during the Medieval period, focusing on the reign of Peter I Lusignan. A conversation on the comparative level will resume at the end of this final chapter, in order to explore in detail the nature of the medieval hero/heroine on these three Mediterranean islands.

4.2 **Medieval Colonization in modern Greek-Cypriot Literature**

The appearance of the theme of Medieval colonialism of Cyprus is found in Cypriot literature of the nineteenth and twentieth century in various forms. Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010) mention the sporadic but consistent use of the historical period of the French and Venetian rule of Cyprus, as subject matter for literature. In correspondence with the conditions of the times of their appearance, these literary phenomena strongly relate to various social developments.

The first example within the time period covered in this study is from 1884; it is the second part,(unfinished) of a historical novel by Themistocles Theocharides, which deals with the period of French rule in Cyprus, with the first part narrating the situation on the island in 1821. The novel titled "Dio Skine tis Kipriakis Istorias" ["Δύο σκηναί της Κυπριακής Ιστορίας"/ "Two Scenes from Cypriot History"] is of particular interest, according to Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou, in that it signifies a "'cypro-centric' thematic turn" (257). Around that same time, in 1897, the novel "Diigisis tis Tromeras Poliorkias ke

Aloseos tis Ammochostu kata to etos 1571" ["Διήγησις της τρομεράς πολιορκίας και αλώσεως της Αμμοχώστου κατά το έτος 1571"/ "Narration of the terrific siege and loot of Ammochostos during the year 1571"] is written by Aggelos Gatsos and translated by Petros Dandolos. Both aforementioned works of fiction seem to move, according to researchers, within the scope of "creative prose", aiming mostly at "narrating events chronographically, rather than demonstrate them through the actions of its very schematic characters" (Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou 258), evidently hinting at the didactic function of these works.

In their presentation of the literary production during the 1930s, Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou mention the work of Achilleas Emilios. This was a series of historical short stories entitled "Palia Kipros" ["Παλιά Κύπρος"/"Old Cyprus"] (1933). These are pointed out as an exception in the broad spectrum of the writings at the time. The publication was a compilation of stories, which represent various episodes of the "resistance of Cypriot Hellenism towards foreign dynasts" (Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou 376), such as, the Arabs, French, Venetians and Turks. In the midst of the popularity of the genre of 'social' short story, Emilios "aims at giving an answer, though literature, to the a-historical ideologies and the restrictive measures of the British" (Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou 376), by defining 'otherness' for the Greek-Cypriot community in his presentation of various historical narratives.

The following interesting publication in the 1950s is of four 'medieval' novels by Kipros Chrisanthis. The novels are: *Ta Diskola Hronia* [*Τα Δύσκολα Χρόνια/The Difficult Years]* (1957), *Kanakis o Kipriotis Koursaros* [*Κανάκης ο Κυπριώτης Κουρσάρος/Kanakis the Cypriot Pirate*] (1959), *To Ksesikoma ton Sklavon [Το Ξεσύκωμα των Σκλάβων/The Uprising of the Slaves]* (*Times of Cyprus*, 1958) and *To Kipelo tou Thanatou [Το Κύπελλο του θανάτου/The Chalice of Death]* (*Times of Cyprus*, 1958-1959). The subject matter of these novels spans through various episodes of the Cypriot Middle Ages: respectively, French rule in Cyprus, Venetian rule, the revolt of Re (king) Alexi in 1426-1427, and the figure of Eleni Paleologou. Researchers support that all four works were "written in a nation-centric approach in order to serve the ideological needs of the specific times" (Kehagioglou and Papaleontiou 401), noting their ideological relations to the ongoing EOKA struggle of Greek-Cypriots against British colonial rule.

4.3 Medieval Colonization in Greek-Cypriot historical plays

4.3.1 Archival Findings

The plays whose historical personae and narratives cover the period between the twelfth and the sixteenth century, represent a rather large proportion in the group of Cypriot historical plays. There are sixteen historical plays written in the period between 1878 and 2004, and there are three more plays written before then: in 1869 Georgios Sivitanidis wrote, *I Kipros ke oi Naite [Cyprus and the Templar Knights /Η Κύπρος και οι Ναΐται]*,[455] whereas in the 1870s, Theodoulos Constantinides wrote *Petros o A' Vasilevs tis Kirpou ke Ierousalim* or *I ekdikisi tou Kiarionos [Peter I king of Cyprus and Jerusalem* or *The Revenge of Carion/Πέτρος ο Α' Βασιλεύς της Κύπρου και Ιερουσαλήμ* ή *Η Εκδίκησις του Κιαρίωνος]* (1874), and, Themistocles Theocharides wrote *Petros o Singlitikos* [*Πέτρος ο Συγκλητικός/ Peter the Senator*] (1877).

A first thematic placement of the sixteen plays is chronologic, based on historical references. The first group represents the plays during the time of the transition from Byzantine to Lusignan rule. The plays are *Kipros Douli* [*Κύπρος Δούλη/Cyprus the Slave*] (1989) by Ioannis Karageorgiades; *To Perasma ton stavroforon* [*Το Πέρασμα των Σταυροφόρων/The passing of the Crusaders*] (1986) by Michalis Pitsillides, and *O Leondokardos stin Kipro* [*Ο Λεοντόκαρδος στην Κύπρο/The Lionheart in Cyprus*], staged in 1985 by Andros Pavlides. The stories take place between 1191 and 1194 when the first Lusignan king was crowned, ending the period of transition. These stories narrate events in the three turbulent years, which lapsed between the end of Byzantine rule and the establishment of the Lusignans, having passed the English king, Richard the Lionheart, the Templar Knights, and Isaakios Komninos.

The action in the second group of plays takes place during the Lusignan era. The plays are *Arodafnousa [Αροδαφνούσα]* (1939) by Glafkos Alithersis, *Juanna [Τζουάννα]* (1949) by Pavlos Ksioutas, *Petros o A'* (*Πέτρος ο Α'*) by Panos Ioannides (1990) and *Petros o A'* [*Πέτρος ο Α'*] (2000) by M.P. Mousteris. They take place during the years of the reign of Peter I Lusignan (1359-1369). The play *Oi Kalogeroi [Οι καλόγεροι/The Monks]* (1978) by

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[455] As the first published Cypriot play of modern times, Sivitanidis' drama has been analyzed by quite a few theatre scholars. Both Katsouris (2005) and Papaleontiou/Kehagioglou (2010) comment on the liberties the author takes with the historical truth, and attribute this to the "period of intense national claims" (274).

Christakis Georgiou brings together two distinct stories from two different times during the Lusignan era, which are, the reign of Peter I, on the one hand, and the slaughter of the Kantara monks in 1231, on the other. Furthermore, *I Douli Kipros* [*Η δούλη Κύπρος*/*Cyprus, the slave woman*] (1890) by Polixeni Loizias, *Eleni Paleologou* [*Ελενη Παλαιολόγου*] (1962) by Kipros Chrisanthis, and *Eleni Paleologina ke Karlotta I Vasilissa tis Kiprou* [*Ελένη Παλαιολογίνα και Καρλόττα (Η Βασίλισσα της Κύπρου) / Helen Paleologina and Carlotta (Queen of Cyprus)*] (2000), and *Karlotta, I Vasilissa tis Kiprou* [*Καρλόττα (Η Βασίλισσα της Κύπρου)/Carlotta (The Queen of Cyprus)*](2000), both by M.P. Mousteris, take place in the mid fifteenth century and are based on the lives of Eleni Paleologou (the wife of Lusignan king John II) and/or Carlotta (her daughter and queen of Cyprus from 1458-1460). Finally, *Ekaterini Kornaro* [*Αικατερίνη Κορνάρο*] (1995) by Michalis Pitsillides tells the story of the last Lusignan queen of Cyprus, who reigned from 1474-1489.

A third group are plays of the period of transition from Venetian to Ottoman rule, including three plays dealing with the life and death of Maria Singlitiki, presented by the playwrights as a figure in the resistance against the Ottomans during the siege of Famagusta in 1570. The plays are *Maria i Singlitiki* [*Μαρία η Συγκλιτική*] (1962) by Ioannis Kasoulides and *Maria i Singlitiki* [*Μαρία η Συγκλιτική*] (1989) by Mikis G. Nikitas.

Lastly, one play entitled, *Tis Kiprou to Vasilio* [*Στης Κύπρου το Βασίλειο*/*At the Kingdom of Cyprus*] (1985) by Giorgos Neophytou is an interesting addition to the list, as it is a satirical account of historical episodes from the three-hundred-year French rule of the island. Interestingly enough, it is the only play in the category to be written partly in the Cypriot-Greek linguistic variety.

4.3.2. Medieval Colonization plays referring to Peter I Lusignan

The figure of Peter I Lusignan was significant in the Medieval history of Cyprus. He was a king in a long line of Europeans who reigned over the island. Since antiquity, the practice of colonization of one community over the other, given their financial and military strength, has been practiced in the Mediterranean. In the same spirit, the twelfth century was a time when the trade in the Eastern Mediterranean was controlled by three Italian cities: Pisa, Genoa and Venice. The Byzantine emperor granted the Italians rights and privileges in Byzantium and Constantinople itself in 1126, even though the relationship between the two was never

smooth, with attacks of the Byzantines on Italian interests taking place sporadically. The Byzantine period ends in Cyprus in 1185, when Isaakios Komninos, a Byzantine aristocrat, and nephew of the Byzantine Emperor Emmanuel I Komninos, arrives on the island and takes over the rule. The Byzantines reacted against Isaakios by sending seventy ships to dethrone him in 1186, but Isaakios defeated them and stabilized his position as an independent ruler. Neophytos o Englistos [Νεόφυτος ο Έγκλειστος/Neophytes the Recluse], a monk and historiographer of the period, reports[456] of his tyrannical reign for the short time that he was king, by saying that he harmed the country.[457] His reign ends in 1191 when the British king, Richard the Lionheart, passed through Cyprus and captured the island by force, since Isaakios Komninos did not surrender. Richard the Lionheart had no intention of staying on the island, so after looting it and marrying his fiancé, Verengaria, he departed for the Holy Land, selling the island to the Templar Knights, a religious order.[458] A small number of knights arrived on the island after its purchase in 1191, but the cruel treatment of the knights towards the local population lead the Cypriots to revolt against the Knights. Although the riot of the Cypriots during the Easter of 1192 failed (sources involve, Florios Boustronios and Leondios Macheras), the Knights realized that they could not hold the island, they cancelled their agreement with Richard and returned the island to him.

The British king found a new buyer in Guy de Lusignan, a French nobleman, the founder of the Lusignan dynasty on the island, which lasted for the next three centuries (1192-1489). The period is known as French rule [Φραγκοκρατία/Frankocracy]. The Lusignan kings and queens, under the Crown of Jerusalem and Cyprus, were part of the Lusignan family who originated from Poitou in Western France.[459]

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[456] He reports in his letter entitled "Περί των κατά την χώραν Κύπρου σκαιών" ["On the in situ Cyprus sky"].

[457] «εκάκωσε την χώραν» (6).

[458] Macheras narrates in Book 1, Paragraph 13: «Οἱ ἄνωθεν Τεμπλιῶτες ἦσαν πολλὰ ἄρχοντες καὶ εἶχαν μεσόν τους μεγάλην αἱρετικίαν καὶ πολλὰ βρωμισμένην τάξιν εἰς τὸ κρυφόν […]»

[459] The Lusignan kings who reigned in Cyprus were: Amalric II, King of Cyprus from 1194 to 1205 and of Jerusalem from 1198; Hugh I (1205-1218); Henry I (1218-1253), Hugh II (1253-1267;, Hugh III (1267-1284), John I (1284-1285); Henry II (1285-1324); Amalric (reigned as regent from 1306-1310); Hugh IV (1324-1359), Peter I (1359-1369); Peter II (1369-1382); James I (1382-1398), Janus (1398-1432); John II (1432-1472), Carlotta (1458-1460); James II (1460-1473); James III (born 1473, died 1474); and, finally Caterina Cornaro, a Venetian wife of James II and mother of James III who reigned Cyprus from 1474 till 1489, making the transition to Venetian rule in 1489.

Cyprus was organized into a Western European-type feudal kingdom and was recognized as such in 1197. In order to establish a ruling class, European nobility was called to the island to take over the fiefs into which the island was split, while a large number of villages remained under the administration of the royal family. Together with the political authorities, the Roman Catholic Church, as well as various military religious orders, on many levels, made their presence felt in the local sociopolitical and economic life. In the general spirit of the commercial movement in the Mediterranean at the time, Cyprus and its ports became important stops in commercial routes. The port of Famagusta, especially, was the "base for merchants from Venice, Genoa, Barcelona, Ancona, Narbonne, Messina, Montpellier, Marseilles and elsewhere" (Abulafia 359). Macheras indicatively mentions the two Syrian brothers, Sir Frances and Sir Nikol Lachanestouris, who were wealthy beyond the capability of Macheras' descriptive potential, due to their commercial activity with Christians who traded on the island, as opposed to other locations in the Levant.[460]

When Peter I Lusignan ascended to the throne in 1359, Cyprus maintained an affluent upper class, although the locals were substantially suppressed, both economically and religiously. His reign was intense both on the political, as well as the personal level, with two expeditions in the area, in the model of the Crusades, which wreaked havoc on the cities of Asia Minor, and looted the prosperous Antalya. His plans included gathering an army in order to re-take Jerusalem, but his European tour only resulted in acquiring a few ships and an attack on Alexandria, and later Lebanon. A more generalized campaign was probably difficult to materialize, since "by 1300, […] the primacy of the Italians [was demonstrated] and the increasing integration of the Great Sea into a single trading zone" (Abulafia 327), centered around the Italian cities and their trading currencies. Peter I Lusignan negotiated alliances and economic deals with Christian and Muslim leaders of the area, Italian cities, the Sultan of Egypt and Syrian Christian tradesmen. Abulafia (2012) generalizes the fluidity in the relations between politics and economics in the area, when he supports that there are signs that "a single economic system was emerging in the Mediterranean, crossing the boundaries between Christendom and Islam" (359).

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[460] «[…] ὁ σὶρ Φρασὲς ὁ Λαχανεστούρης καὶ ὁ ἀδελφός του ὁ σὶρ Νικὸλ ὁ Λαχανεστούρης. Καὶ δὲν μπορῶ νὰ γράψω τὴν πλουσιότηταν τὴν εἶχαν, διατὶ τὰ καραβία τοὺς χριστιανοὺς δὲν ἐτορμοῦσαν ἀποῦ ἔρχουνταν ἀπὸ τὴν δύσιν νὰ πραματευτοῦν ἄλλου παρὰ εἰς τὴν Κύπρον […]» / "Sir Frances Lachanestouris and his brother, Sir Nikol Lachanestouris. And I cannot describe their richness, because the ships of Christians coming from the west did not dare trade anywhere else than Cyprus" (Book 2, Paragraph 91).

Returning to the production of plays, we see a plethora of plays written about Peter I Lusignan by Greek-Cypriot playwrights. The plays analyzed in this chapter are *Arodafnousa* (1939) by Glafkos Alithersis, *Petros o A'* (1990) by Panos Ioannides, and *Petros o A'* (2000) by M.P. Mousteris. In addition to these clearly historical in reference to the character of Peter I Lusignan, there are three other plays which present certain thematic and structural divergences from the main story line: *Oi Kalogeroi (*1978*)*, by Christakis Georgiou, a play which blends together two distinct historical episodes, and *Juanna* (1949) by Pavlos Ksioutas, which presents Peter as a character in the background of a working-class struggle against slavery and oppression. Finally, I will examine the play text of the production, *Leontios Macheras: To hroniko tis Kiprou* (1998) by the Theatre Workshop of the University of Cyprus, adaptation of the Chronicle of Macheras made by Michalis Pieris.

The play *Stis Kiprou to Vasilio* (1985) by Giorgos Neofitou, which is, according to the author, a "theatrical satire of the three hundred years of French rule" (cover of edition), will be examined at a very basic level, since it belongs to a different dramatic type. Although it presents great interest and has been one of the few historical plays with a very successful stage history, its comical elements and deconstruction of the heroes in the play are a long way off from the models examined thus far. Furthermore, there exists a seventh play in the same historical personae, entitled *Petros of A' Vasilevs tis Kirpou ke Ierousalim* or *I ekdikisis tou Karionos* [*Πέτρος ο Α' Βασιλεύς της Κύπρου και Ιερουσαλήμ* ή *Η Εκδίκησις του Καρίωνος* / *Peter I King of Cyprus OR The Revenge of Carion*] (1874, Cairo), authored by Themistocles Theocharides.[461] I will also refrain from examining this play in this chapter since the text of the play was never found, in addition to the fact that its publication date in 1874 precedes the period examined in this study.

[461] Theocharides was a "teacher, journalist, author", as mentioned in the title of the book by Andreas Cl. Sophocleous, published in 2002. Moreover, he was the editor of the newspaper, *Stasinos*, in Larnaca, from 1882 till 1886, when he died, and then continued by his wife.

4.3.3 Analysis of Plays

The historiographic source for the story narrated in the plays examined is the chronicle of Leontios Macheras, entitled "Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus Entitled 'Chronicle'" ["ΕΞΗΓΗΣΙΣ τῆς γλυκείας χώρας Κύπρου, ἡ ποία λέγεται Κρόνακα τουτέστιν Χρονικ(όν)"], a collection of six books that "narrate in detail the historical events in Cyprus during the French Rule" (Pavlides, ε') from 309 to1458. The reign of Peter I lasted from 1359 to 1369, a period of which Macheras gives a detailed account in the second book. Leontios Macheras narrates several episodes from the story of the king's life, his military, social, and personal affairs. Some episodes are narrated in detail, with reports on the king's activities on the island, but also all around the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. His personal life, his marriage to the Spanish princess Eleonora d' Aragon, and two main mistresses – Joanna L' Aleman and Jiva de Scandalie – as well as the queen's lover, Count de Rochas, are presented by the author. The adultery by both is justified in the same way, with Macheras claiming that the demon of prostitution was involved in Peter's adultery.[462] Moreover, Book 2 of the Chronicle narrates step by step the murder of Peter, and the genital mutilation the knights carried out.

This group of plays is also inspired by a folk song, a literary loan which is not met very often in historical plays. According to researchers, the folk tale entitled *Arodafnousa*[463] is inspired by the story of Peter I Lusignan, Eleonora D' Aragon and Joanna L' Aleman, with the latter embodying the protagonist of the song. Popular scholarship maintains that the reign of the Lusignans was "[an era] of happiness and joy, financial and spiritual rejuvenation" (Hadjioannou 336). Furthermore, as recorded in Achilleas Limbourides's (1988) lecture entitled "Arodafnousa*"* and published in *Exceptional Figures of Cypriot History*, ties were created between emancipated locals and Franks, and even goes as far as to say that "that's why the people sang with such artistry and passion the erotic adventures of the foreign king of Cyprus, and loved him and appreciated him and considered him as their own and their

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[462] "ὁ δαίμων τῆς πορνείας ὅλον τὸν κόσμον πλημελᾶ, τὸν ἐκόμπωσεν τὸν ρήγαν, καὶ ἔππεσεν εἰς ἁμαρτίαν" (Book 2, Paragraph 234).

[463] The whole folk song *Arodafnousa* can be found in Appendix 1.3. The version used here is found in Hadjioannou (1990, 366-369), as reproduced from the collection of X. Farmakides, Cypriots Epics (Ξ. Φαρμακίδη, *Κύπρια Έπη*), (88-92).

ruler" (38).[464] Needless to say, both statements are over-simplifications of the true conditions of the time, and can be easily challenged through a thorough study of Macheras. He mentions the strains met by the local populations, both in terms of financial hardship and exploitation by the rulers, but also the oppression by the Catholics.[465]

The poem/song is written in iambic pentameter, and presents narrative trends on loan from other folk poems of the time.[466] The plotlines bear great resemblance to the story narrated by Macheras, and in the various versions of the play, we find convergences and divergences from the historiographical account. The main storyline is based on the following: the Queen tortures her slaves to tell her who the mistress of her husband is; one of them informs her that it is Arodafnousa, who lives in the Upper Neighborhood with her two sisters; Arodafnousa is fetched to the palace twice, with the use of treachery, the second time she is killed. In some versions, her child is also delivered and killed, whereas in other accounts, the king arrives and kills himself over the body of Arodafnousa. The story involves a number of voices, the Queen, the Slave, Arodafnousa, and her sisters, as well as a narrator.

a. ***Arodafnousa*, by Glafkos Alithersis (1939)**

Arodafnousa was written by Greek-Cypriot expatriate educator and author, Glafkos Alithersis (1897-1965), literary alias of Michalis Hadjidimitriou; it was published in 1939 in Alexandria, Egypt. The play was staged in 1968 as a radio play by CyBC's "Theatre over the Radio" (Θέατρο από το Ραδιόφωνο) broadcast and was then staged by the Theatro ENA company in Nicosia in 1990.[467] Even though he lived in Alexandria for the most part of his life, and only moved back to Cyprus in 1963, Alithersis was an active contributor to a number of publications and literary magazines throughout his life, making him part of the literary landscape of Cyprus.

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[464] «γι'αυτό ο λαός τραγούδησε με τόση τέχνη και πάθος της ερωτικές περιπέτειες του ξένου Βασιλιά της Κύπρου και τον αγάπησε και τον εκτίμησε και τον θεώρησε σαν δικό του και Ρήγα του».

[465] "the Latins hate the Romans [Orthodox Rum Christians]" / "οἱ Λατῖνοι φθονοῦν τοὺς Ρωμαίους" (Book 1, Paragraph 72)

[466] Hadjioannou (1990) mentions that the introduction of the poem is taken from the epics (338).

[467] The play exists in two versions: the 1939 stage edition and the 1968 radio adaptation. For the present research, I will be using the stage version.

The publication of 1939 starts with a poem, dedicated to Nicos Nicolaides, a Cypriot expatriate, living, writing literature, and painting in Alexandria and Cairo. The poem is a dialogue between the author and Nicolaides, during which the author admits to being disheartened by the indifference demonstrated by critics. However, after the personae of Nicolaides re-positions the relation of a "restless heart" with destiny, Alithersis states that "In timeless time I too sank / my critical and poetic gaze, / and a blossom in my heart was ARODAFNOUSA, / LOVE AFFAIRS, LYRICAL, MEDIEVAL." (6).[468] The story of Arodafnousa and Peter I Lusignan inspires him to move away from the detrimental concern for the indifference of the critics, and to an intense interest in the essence of lyricism and love ('έρωτας'), through the story of Peter and the folk tale of Arodafnousa.

Through the inspirational value of the story established, confirmed by the great literary figure of Nicolaides, the playwright delves into writing the play. The play is a one-act piece, set in the "room of a medieval castle" (9),[469] in an unspecified location in Cyprus. The characters of the play are all taken from Macheras, with the exception of the Jester. The historical characters are Peter I Lusignan, Viscounte, Leonora, Jiva Lependit, Count de Roucha, and Joanna L' Aleman;[470] the latter is not mentioned in the list of characters but appears at the end of the play. The characters of the play are mostly two-dimensional, including the protagonist, Peter I Lusignan. The language of the play is lyrical and pompous,[471] but the stage economy: one set, a limited number of characters, and a short and concise dialogue, imbues the play's potential for an interesting staging.

Other than the characters and the relations among them, which are taken from Macheras, there are a few other elements of plot from the actual historical events described in the Chronicle. The author extracts a framework relating to the characters from the Chronicle, only to build the events of the play and the actions upon that. Alithersis' story takes place over a single stormy evening, during which we see his alliances and enemies; we witness his plot against Queen Leonora and his final revenge upon her, by killing her lover, and how he

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[468] «Στον άμετρο καιρό κ'εγώ βυθούσα / την κριτική ματιά μου και ποιητική, / κι άνθος μες τη ψυχή μου η ΑΡΟΔΑΦΝΟΥΣΑ, / ΕΡΩΤΕΣ, ΛΥΡΙΚΟΙ, ΜΕΣΑΙΩΝΙΚΟΙ.»

[469] «αίθουσα μεσαιωνικού πύργου»

[470] The character relates to the characters from Macheras: Jean Visconte, Eleonora d' Aragon, Jiva or Escheve d' Santellon, Jean Rocha Count of Morphou and Joanna L' Aleman.

[471] Kechagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010) suggest that the modern reader may find the "overly lyrical language" of the text challenging, in addition to the song verses scattered in the action (406).

presents the "ghost" of Arodafnousa (Joanna L' Aleman) thus driving her to insanity. The information extracted from the Chronicle concerns Peter I Lusignan's military victories, the trust he shares with Viscounte, his love for Joanna L' Aleman/Arodafnousa, the letter he received when he was abroad informing him of the fate of Ioanna L' Aleman, and the adultery of the Queen with Count de Rouchas, the torture and fate of Ioanna L' Aleman, and the loyalty of his mistress, Jiva. The events reveal the plotting of the Queen against Peter I Lusignan and of the latter against the former. This materializes in the second part of the plot during a masquerade party, resulting in the death of Count de Rouchas, the revelation that Ioanna L' Aleman lives, and the madness of the Queen.

The play is characterized by intense romantic aesthetics, and the creation of a dynamic whereby the battle between good and evil is established early on and is resolved by the end of the play. The play also presents influences of melodrama, such as the violent murder of Count de Roucha, by the use of deceit and poison.

In order to outline the exact nature of Peter's associations in the play, as the protagonist and hero, a revisit is necessary to the three main aspects of intended actions, as mentioned in Roland Barthes, and as they are met in the narrative of the play.

Love/desire: as the title of the play itself demonstrates, a central dramatic figure is Joanna L'Aleman, or as Alithersis calls her, Arodafnousa, merging the historical and the folk character into one. During the course of the play, Peter mentions his former lover and mother of his murdered child, who had been tortured by Leonora and sent to the monastery of Santa Clera to become a nun, from where Peter has taken her and brought her back to the palace. His love and continuing desire for her is evident when he tells Viscounte how seeing Joanna dressed in a nun's robe, "Oh! She was so beautiful even more so than the brightness of the moon in a light fog." (13).[472] Peter's love for Joanna is confirmed by Jiva, who asks his for a kiss saying, "I haven't been able to take a kiss from you since you came back. Even though I know that you love Lalema…" (22).[473] This line verifies the assumption that Peter loved Joanna over his other mistresses, even loyal ones such as Jiva. When he hears the hardships suffered by Joanna, Jiva reports later to Viscounte that only when she told him of the suffering of Joanna, did he swear to avenge her suffering and bring her back to life (p. 45).

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[472] «Αχ! Μα ήταν τόσο ωραία όπως δεν είναι / λαμπρή η σελήνη σ' ελαφριά νεφέλη!»

[473] «Κι ακόμα ούτε φιλί σου δεν αξιώθηκα / αφότου έχεις γυρίσει. Κι αν το ξαίρω / πως αγαπάς τη Λαλεμά...»

The connection made between Joanna becoming a nun and death, and his intention to bring her back to life, is repeated throughout the play, as a threat to both Count de Rouchas and Leonora. Peter connects the monastery of Santa Clera and the beautiful nuns (39) to the red roses used in the plot against Leonora and Count de Rouchas, clearly symbolizing blood, the suffering of Joanna and the eminent murder of the Count. The association of these flowers to Joanna and the Queen enforces the prospect of violence, death and bloodshed. Moreover, Peter tells Leonora: "Don't you remember my poor Juanna's suffering? She sends greetings from Hades!" (50).[474] Thus, he indirectly admits that his actions against her and Count de Rouchas take the form of revenge for the suffering inflicted on his mistress, Joanna.

Communication: The two characters Peter relates to in terms of communication are Viscounte, on the level of a male political ally, and Jiva, on the level of a female lover and confidante. The play itself starts with a discussion between Peter and Viscounte, in which the framework of the action is established: his return, the suffering of Joanna, the adultery of Leonora, and the plot against him. As the storm is raging outside, and in Peter's heart, he asks of Viscounte to interpret his inner darkness and misery: "Tell me Viscounte; tell me if you are a friend!" (9).[475] In response, Viscounte says, "… You have whispered everything to yourself / in the thick darkness of your selfishness" (9),[476] verifying the relationship of trust between the two men, since this is not something that any random person can say to a king. Viscounte points out Peter's weakness found in his selfishness, encouraging him to distance himself emotionally from what has happened, so he can judge the situation through clear eyes. Although he admits to his futile politics ("without need I went abroad to conquer what was not mine" (10)),[477] he still craves for revenge of the Queen. As the play progresses, Peter shows his trust towards Viscounte by confessing his plan to him. Their relationship of trust continues as Peter also reveals to him that he has brought Joanna back to the palace from the monastery, and tells him, "you are most loyal to me, my brothers love me less than you do" (13-14).[478] As the king is erecting his revenge plan on the Queen, he calls on Viscounte to help him implement it. Viscounte does not agree in the full scope of his plan since he is

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[474] «Δε θυμάσαι / της φτωχής μου Τζουάννας τα μαρτύρια; / Σου στέλλει χαιρετίσματα απ' τον Άδη!»

[475] «Πες μου Βισκούντη· πες μου αν είσαι φίλος!»

[476] «...Σου τα ψιθύρισε όλα ο εαυτός σου / στου εγωϊσμού το πυκνό σκοτάδι»

[477] «χωρίς ανάγκη πήα στα ξένα / να κατακτήσω τ'ότι δε μου ανήκε»

[478] «είσαι ο πιο πιστός μου, κι'οι αδελφοί μου / ποιό λίγη αγάπη μούχουν από σένα»

weary of scandal,[479] but assures him that he will obey no matter what the plan As the plan is put to action, Viscounte confides in Jiva that he is afraid of the developments of the action and the outcome of the king's plan. It is safe to assume that his fear lies in the uncertainty over the eventual fate of the king. On a parallel level, Jiva Lependit is a constant presence in support of the King, both on a romantic and political level. It is clear that Jiva is one of the King's mistresses, who became his friend and confidant. Although she is one of the ladies of the court and liaises between the Queen and the King (her first appearance on the stage is to convey a message from the former to the latter character), her loyalties clearly lie with him, and he, too, evidently distinguishes her as a friend. As she first enters, she refers to him as "Master of my heart" and he refers to her as "beloved" (17).[480] The action of the scene continues as Jiva reveals to Peter the plan Leonora has to poison him during the party, and therefore, Peter's plan is formulated to a great degree because of Jiva's intervening information. She admits: "I love you, and when a woman loves she can even betray her heart" (22).[481], After the plan is made, on exiting the room, Jiva confides to Peter that she will obey to everything he ordered,[482] even though she has a moment of weakness when she doubts the appropriateness of her decision to expose Leonora's plans to him.[483] Jiva basically provides the benevolent female force contrary to Leonora's malevolent female force, even though when Leonora actually appears on stage she is intimidated by Peter and seems helpless and scared.

Help/struggle: Within the world of the play, Peter's relationship with his wife, Leonora d' Aragon and – to a lesser extent – her lover, Count de Rouchas, involves struggle. From the onset, Peter's grievances lie with his wife's behavior towards Joanna L' Aleman and her adultery with the Count de Rouchas. He confides in Viscounte: "The suffering I feel in my soul, I want it to torment her for her whole life. My heart is heavy." (12).[484] As he grows confident of Leonora's adultery, he says, "My ship's sails billow with hatred and anger, and I

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[479] «κι α σου αρνιόμουν / είναι γιατί το σκάνδαλο φοβόμουνα» pp. 19-20.

[480] «Κύριε της καρδιάς μου», «αγαπημένη»

[481] «σαγαπώ. / Και μια γυναίκα άμα αγαπά, προδώνει / και την καρδιά της»

[482] «ότι μου όρισες θα κάμω»

[483] «... Δεν ξαίρω / κ εγώ, γιατί φοβούμαι απόψε! Νοιώθω / πως έκανα καλά που το μαρτύρησα / μα πάλι...»

[484] «Το μαρτύριο / που νοιώθω στην ψυχή μου, θέλω κείνη / να την παιδεύει σε όλη τη ζωή της./ Είναι βαρειά η καρδία μου.»

sail to oceans darker than my thoughts" (16),[485] and he now starts to formulate the idea of taking revenge. When Leonora visits him, their encounter is filled with efforts on behalf of Leonora to entangle him in her plan to kill him, and Peter insinuates about her treason. Leonora remains cool during all the conversation, until the very end. The dialogue that follows characterizes their relationship and its tensions:

> "Peter I: … and let conspirators fear death…
> Leonora: Enough! (*She jumps up distraught from the divan, looking strangely and scared*).
> Peter I: What's wrong? I speak and you tremble? […] Tonight I will decorate you with the red roses, red like the blood of your heart."
>
> (32)[486]

The play does not present Leonora as the treacherous and conniving adulteress, as described by Jiva and Peter. The reader assumes that Leonora indeed hides all the qualities attributed to her, since in the very end of the play, the revelation of the mistaken death of Count de Rouchas as the poison was meant for Peter, and the appearance of the "ghost" of Joanna, push her to madness. It is assumed that her guilty conscience is what drives her to madness. Finally, Peter's struggle is with his wife's alleged lover, Count de Rouchas, a nobleman. During the visit Rouchas pays Peter, before the masquerade ball, and his imminent death, Peter makes his aversion evident, when he tells him that he symbolizes death and asks him to look into his eyes, since they are "mirrors which reveal all" (38).[487] The stage directions dictate that "*they look at each other with hatred and agony for a few moments*" (38),[488] establishing an adverse attitude between the two, although once again the dialogue is not overtly descriptive of that. Rouchas is not seen alive on stage again. His body is brought forth at the end of the play. Alithersis' creation of these two villains is interesting, in that we mostly hear of their mischief, rather than the characters themselves on stage revealing it through actions. The most intense characterizations come from outside agents of information, and are reflected and materialized in the behavior of Peter.

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[485] «Του καραβιού μου τα πανιά, το μίσος / κι ο θυμός μου φουσκώνουν, κι αρμενίζω / σε ωκεανούς πιο μαύρους κι απ' τις σκέψεις μου.»

[486] "Πέτρος Α': Και το θάνατο ας φοβούνται / οι συνωμότες.
Λεονώρα: Φτάνει πιά! (*Πετιέται αλλόφρονη απ' το ντιβάνι, κυτώντας παράξενα και φοβισμένα*)
Πέτρος Α': Μα τί έχεις; / Εγώ μιλώ, εσύ τρέμεις! Τι συμβαίνει; [...] / Κι απόψε με τα κόκκινα τριαντάφυλλα, / τα κόκκινα σαν το αίμα της καρδιάς σου, / θα σε στολίσω!»

[487] «καθρεύτης / κι όλα τα φανερώνουν»

[488] «*Κοιτάζονται με μίσος κι αγωνία λίγες στιγμές*»

b. ***Juanna,*** **by Pavlos Ksioutas (1949)**

Pavlos Ksioutas (1908-1991) was of Paphian origin and an educator of Secondary education in Cyprus for the most part of his life. *Juanna* is one of two theatre plays he has written; in addition, Ksioutas has authored newspaper articles and poems, as well as the acclaimed[489] "*Kipriaki Laografia ton Zoon*" [*Animals in Cypriot Folk Tradition/Κυπριακή Λαογραφία των Ζώων*] (1975) and "*Parimies tou Kipriakou Laou*" [*Proverbs of the Cypriot People / Παροιμίες του Κυπριακού Λαού*], published in three volumes between 1984 and 1985. Ample information about the author and his work is offered by Yiannis Katsouris in his introduction to the publication of *Juanna* by THOC in 2002.

Juanna (2002) was the second play published in the THOC series of "Cypriot Dramatic Authors" ["Κύπριοι Θεατρικοί Συγγραφείς"], a telling fact of the importance attributed to the play by the state theatre institution, and the prominent (and only) theatre researcher and scholar on the island at the time, Yiannis Katsouris. In his introduction to the edition of the play of 2002, Katsouris suspects that Ksioutas "had the play in [his] mind since 1932" (8), but ended up writing it in 1946. The play was presented twice: once in December 1949 by the Amateur Theatre Club of the Nicosia "Omonia" club, and a second time, in early 1961 by the Neo Theatro [Νέο Θέατρο/New Theatre] company, which was then presented all over the island. Katsouris also reports that, in addition to the version of the play in 1946 (which is the published version, also referred to in this analysis), there is a second "more 'patriotic' version" (11).[490] This version was produced by the author for the staging of the play in 1961, shortly after the EOKA anti-colonial struggle. The author was implicitly "forced" to produce this second version, due to the "spirit" of the times, according to Katsouris (11). Scholars agree on the dramaturgical virtues and weaknesses of the play, which demonstrate, on the one hand a certain naiveté and didactic mood, while on the other attribute to the play a fast and effective dramatic pace (Katsouris (2002), Kechagioglou and Papaleontiou (2010) (406)).

The play is built on a three-scene structure, with shorter scenes within the acts, and an epilogue. The author identifies the time of the action of the play to "around 1369". There are two groups of characters in the play: the historical characters, the French Rigas, King Peter I,

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[489] The book was awarded by the Athenian Academy.

[490] «πιο 'πατριωτική' εκδοχή»

his French courtier Viscounte, and Juanna, who is described by the author as a "young woman, around 20 years old, from an old family of nobles" (16), clearly connected to the figures of both the folk figure of Arodafnousa and the historical Joanna L'Aleman; and, the fictional characters, who are Cypriots (in spite of the western-sounding names), including: Juanna's husband, Alexis, a liberated Cypriot; Mateos, a young paroikos[491], "leader of the paroikoi" (16); Janis, an opportunistic friend of Alexis; Mrs Louisa, an elderly neighbor of Juanna and Mateo's mother, Jacumo; Juanna's brother who has left the island and has become a corsair; and, Perros, described as a "madman, itinerant musician, musician" (16). The storyline is centered around the fictional characters, and Juanna, and it is a story of revolution against oppression, social justice, the recognition of two brothers, and the dominance of true love. Moreover, Act 1, Scene 1 and the Epilogue include the characters of a Grandmother telling the story to her Grandchild in present time, giving a final plotline which supports the didactic practice of passing down stories of Cypriot history from generation to generation, as a means of delivering the values and virtues of liberation and struggle.

Act 1 sets the story: we learn that Juanna and Alexis have been recently married, Mateo and Juanna are old friends who are fond of each other. Mateo and Juanna are characters with a social awareness, who speak up in favor of freedom and social justice. Alexis is presented as opportunistic and subservient; he even describes himself as a "loyal slave" (19-20)[492] to the French. The action starts when the Rigas and Viscounte overhear a conversation happening in the house of Juanna and Alexis, and decide to visit them in order to learn more. The Rigas is immediately taken by Juanna, her beauty and her spirit, and decides to try to conquer her. She tells the Viscounte: "Let us try viscounte. What do we have to lose? A new adventure will do me good. I am tired of all those minxes of the palace, with their bowing and hypocrisy. I am very much attracted to this wild thing…" (24).[493] In Act 1, Scene E, the character of Perros speaks with the Rigas and Viscounte, in a classic Fool/Jester style, whereby he 'speaks the truth' but is not taken seriously by the men of authority. He makes clear references to current time and mentions Queen Eleonora and her infidelities.

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[491] *Paroikoi* were independent work laborers in the Byzantine periods.

[492] «πιστός σκλάβος»

[493] «Ας δοκιμάσουμε βισκόντη. Τι χάνουμε; Μια καινούργια, ξέρεις, περιπέτεια θα μου' κανε καλό. Έχω βαρεθεί όλες εκείνες τις σουσουράδες του παλατιού με τις υποκλίσεις και τις υποκρισίες. Αυτό το αγρίμι με τραβάει πολύ...»

On entering Act 2, we witness the efforts by the Rigas to buy out Juanna's husband, as a means to buy and subsequently conquer her. He gives her husband a title, land and money, which he accepts gladly and declares that "[…] starting today you are my God..." (42).[494] He also tries to bribe Juanna into coming to the palace, but she resists the money, clothes and jewels. Juanna explains her behavior by putting forth her dignity, as well as the personal history of her family, the killing of her parents and brother by the French. Mrs. Louisa functions as a mother figure who represents the old values and virtues that Juanna is following, and therefore their conversation sounds like the passing down of Cypriot-ness. Act 2 ends with a declaration by Mateo of his love for the virtuous Juanna.

The final Act of the play resolves the various levels of narrative, in addition to a new one, which emerges in Act 3: the appearance of the long-lost brother of Juanna, who was thought to be dead. The Rigas has died, which has cancelled the privileges given to Alexis, who then decides to sell Juanna to Jacumo, who buys his sister under disguise. In the last Scene of Act 3, Alexis and Janis are punished by the crowd; there is recognition between the siblings, Mateo and Juanna declare their love for each other and join their forces with Jacumo (and the people) in order to fight against slavery.

The characters are one- and two-dimensional figures, embodiments of negative or positive values. Viscounte, Alexis and Janis are characters embodying negative character traits, such as cruelty, selfishness, opportunism, and others. On the other side is, primarily, Juanna, with her wholesome virtuous character, Mateo and Jacumo, who embody bravery, devoted love and love for their country, and Mrs. Louisa, in all her motherly love. Most characters are built based on *vraisemblance*, with the exception of the Rigas. Although he is clearly not the protagonist of the play – Juanna is – he is the only character who presents development beyond what is expected of his character type. Therefore, to compare with the same character in the other plays, Roland Barthes' model will be employed to examine the Rigas:

Love/desire: The Riga's main object of love/ desire in the present play is revealed early on in Act 1, and it is his love/desire for a woman. He is famous for being "[…] the most experienced womanizer in Cyprus and Terrasanta" (20),[495] a quality which he recognizes in

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[494] «[...] από σήμερα ο Θεός μου είσαστ΄εσείς..»

[495] «[...] ο πιο πεπειραμένος γυναικάς της Κύπρου και της Τερρασάντας.»

himself. In the play, his desire for women is personalized in the figure of Juanna. His actions are directed towards trying to conquer the object of his love/desire. In Act 1, Scene D, he listens to Juanna, in her desire for freedom and dignity, even if the Viscounte protests that she is being offensive towards their authority. He is also fascinated by the hospitality Juanna shows them, even if their means are, evidently, limited. As he leaves in Act 1, Scene F, he declares to Juanna that "One sweet word from you, an encouraging look will also make me your slave forever" (34).[496]

Communication: During the course of the play, the Riga's actions and intended actions establish communication with the principles that each person comes with a basic need to build their own life. Although, as an authority figure he is expected to act as Viscounte does, his character is presented in a monologue in Act 2, Scene 1, as one who believes in human dignity, regardless of the socioeconomic status of a person:

> "Every person –even the humblest of slaves- has the inner strength and selfishness of the greatest king. (…) That which is missing from everyone is a way of life, which will satisfy them and make them happy. If that is an honorable or a dishonorable way, that is irrelevant."
>
> (38).[497]

The author makes an effort to present Peter as a man with obvious weakness of the flesh, but his declarations (such as above) and the admiration he has for Juanna (in juxtaposition to the elitist stance of viscounte) give him another aspect, which humanizes him. His actions and intended actions of communication represent his effort to become in tune with his more noble and virtuous side.

Help/struggle: Peter's lack of communication and struggle lies primarily with his wife, Eleonora, and as an extension with the world of the French, the Western world. During the development of the play, we see his resentment against his wife materializing in various ways. In Act 2, Scene A, he says: "[...] My purpose in life is one now, Viscounte: to conquer, using means that are nice or harsh, all the women of my kingdom, slave women or ladies.

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[496] «Ένας σου γλυκός λόγος, μια ενθαρρυντική ματιά σου με κάνει και μένα σκλάβο σου.»

[497] «Κάθε άνθρωπος –και ο τελευταίος σκλάβος- έχει μέσα του τη δύναμη και τον εγωισμό και του πιο μεγάλου βασιλιά. [...] Εκείνο που λείπει από τον καθένα ειν' ένας τρόπος ζωής, που να τον ικανοποιεί και να ευτυχεί. Τίμιος, άτιμος τρόπος, το ίδιο κάνει.»

Thus I will crush the Spaniard woman who has taken me out of the path of God." (38-39).[498] By Act 1, Scene F, the Rigas and Viscounte have spent substantial time with the locals, and the King makes the following declaration:

> "[…] I want to forget finally Eleonora's ugly West which has made a fool out of me in the entire world. Very well, my degenerate West, if you wish, I will passionately embrace the East, which knows how to love and die, but also to respect the honor of your home, which you have reduced to nothingness"
>
> (31)[499].

Peter's drunken monologue moves on two levels: the first in reference to his cheating wife in juxtaposition with the honorable Juanna, who resists his advances, while, on the other hand, the author alludes to the general ethical demise of the West in relation to the tradition of honor and principle he attributes to the East.

c. ***Oi Kalogeroi*, by Christakis Georgiou *(1978)***

The play by author and literary figure, Christakis Georgiou, was presented at: the Greek Society of the English School in Nicosia in 1976; the Cyprus National Theatre (THOC) on June 26th 1980; as a TV movie through the CyBC TV; and, as a radio play through radio channels, like ERT, the former Greek National Radio Service.

The play is an unusual case of joining two different historical episodes into one story: the first is the story of the Kantara Monks, the killing of thirteen Orthodox monks in 1231 by Catholics who accused them of treason, and the second is the story of King Peter, his Queen and his mistress, Vergilina. Although Peter is not identified as Peter I Lusignan, the Queen is not named as Eleonora D' Aragon and Joanna L' Aleman is given a different name, the events presented in Scenes 2, 6, and 7, as well as the mention by the King of his death in Scene 8, refers back to the love triangle between Peter I Lusignan, Eleonora D'Aragon and Joanna L'Aleman, as narrated in Macheras. The two stories are linked by several characters, such as, the Cardinal (who visits the king to ask for punishment of the Monks), as well as a

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[498] «[...] Ένας είναι ο σκοπός πια της ζωής μου βισκόντη: Να κατακτήσω, με το καλό ή με το ζόρι, όλες τις γυναίκες –σκλάδες ή κυράδες, του βασιλείου μου. Έτσι θα τη συντρίψω τη Σπανιόλα που μ'έβαλ' απ'το δρόμο του Θεού.»

[499] «[...] Θέλω να ξεχάσω επιτέλους αυτή τη βρωμερή Δύση της Ελεονώρας που μ'έκανε περίγελο σ'όλο τον κόσμο. Πολύ καλά έκφυλή μου Δύση, αφού το θες, θ'αγκαλιάσω με πάθος την Ανατολή που ξέρει ν'αγαπά και να πεθαίνει, μα και σέβεται τουλάχιστον την τιμή του σπιτιού που εσύ έκανες ρεζίλι.»

couple (they are nameless, a Man and Woman) who act as the voice of the people. These are the characters whereupon the living conditions of the time, such as the poverty and gap between locals and rulers, etc, are reflected. During the story, these same people inflict pain on Vergilina, a woman who is also in a dire situation. In this way, the author wants to point out the low levels to which people can stumble when they are led to desolation.

In order to outline the nature of Peter's associations in the play, let us return to the three main aspects of intended actions as mentioned in Barthes and as they are met in the narrative of the play.

Love/desire & Communication: in the play, the actions and the intended actions of Peter that are associated with love/desire and communication coincide, and they are centered on the character of Vergilina. No other person in the play is associated with the King in a positive manner, other than Vergilina. In Scene 2, when both characters are introduced, they discuss their passionate relationship, and the desire between the characters is manifested by intense erotic acts, as described in the stage directions: "He grabs her and they both roll on the floor. Their hands intermingle (…)" (21).[500] Moreover, the communication between them is manifested when Peter talks about the restrictions imposed on him by his position, his mother, wife and brothers. In Peter's final monologue in Scene 8, when it is assumed through the plotline that he has already died, he reminisces his relationship with Vergilina, revealing, "Vergilina, Vergilina, we have become a negative plus before we were even trapped between memory and counter-memory. […] our existence was nothing but countless small isles which we bridged with our bodies." (71).[501] Beyond the poetic and rather enigmatic nature of the words, we can detect a sense of the unfulfilled in Peter's words. The relationship was never allowed to truly blossom, and Peter's intended actions, deriving from his love/desire of Vergilina, were not fulfilled. However, within the play, she is the only character with whom he shares this type of communication, and his actions and intended actions are steered towards her.

Help/struggle: Within the world of the play, Peter's relationship with several characters is manifested through a struggle. He enumerates these characters in Scene 2, when he tells

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[500] «*Την αρπάζει και κυλιούνται κ'οι δυό στο δάπεδο. Τα χέρια τους πλέκονται.*»

[501] «Βεργιλίνα, Βεργιλίνα γίναμε ένα αρνητικό συν πριν καν παγιδευτούμε ανάμεσα στην μνήμη και την αντιμνήμη. [...] η ύπαρξη μας δεν ήταν παρά αμέτρητες νησίδες που τις γεφυρώναμε με τα κορμιά μας.»

Vergilina that "[t]he affairs of the state, the queen, the queen mother, my brothers." (20)[502] are keeping him from being happy. A fourth aspect is added further on in the Scene, when the Cardinal and Andreas, the Preacher, enter, asking for Peter to sign a decree making Orthodoxy a heretical religion, therefore prosecutable. The discussion between the characters centers around the idea of ruling; the following short dialogue indicates the vastness between the two opinions, in illuminating the reasoning behind signing the decree: "King: […] For what? So that we rule in the streets? / Andreas the Preacher: (*spontaneously*) In the souls of people." (26).[503] Andreas the Preacher is debating a religious policy that would essentially change the 'souls' of people, granting control over them. This is not a methodology of conversion which Peter agrees with.

In terms of the struggle in the relationship between Peter and his family, we see his reserve and apprehension towards them in many instances during the play. In a discussion between the King and Queen in Scene 7, they try to locate where their relationship went wrong and communication stopped. Peter admits, "even now, I don't know why [this happened]" (56),[504] but let it be assumed that it was the Queen's political affairs and the dynamic roles of her brothers. On her behalf, the Queen tells him, "I had something of Clytemnestra and you had something of Agamemnon." (57),[505] commenting on the problematic nature of their relationship, in association with the famous ancient couple of Antiquity. Lastly, it is interesting to comment on the struggle with the Queen mother, Peter's mother, who evidently is present in political life, and a supporter of the Queen in relation to Peter's private life. In Scene 7, the Queen Mother admits to helping remove Vergilina from the forefront, and excuses her actions by saying, "Don't forget that we are not ordinary people, my son, we are kings. We need to give something also. We can't keep taking." (59).[506] The distinction between mother and son is vast, since she fervently supports his marriage to the Queen, as a way to maintain their status and power, evidently the Queen Mother's priority.

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[502] «Οι υποθέσεις του κράτους, η βασίλισσα, η βασιλομήτωρ, οι φρέριδες.»

[503] «Βασιλιάς: [...] Για ποιο πράγμα; Για να κυριαρχίσουμε στους δρόμους; / Ανδρέας ο Κήρυκας: (*αυθόρμητα*) Στις ψυχές των ανθρώπων.»

[504] «Ακόμα και τώρα δεν βρίσκω το γιατί.»

[505] «Είχα κάτι από την Κλυταιμνήστρα κ' είχες κάτι από τον Αγαμέμνωνα.»

[506] «Μη ξεχνάς πως δεν είμαστε συνηθισμένοι άνθρωποι γιέ μου, είμαστε βασιλιάδες. Κάτι τέλος πάντων πρέπει να δώσουμε και μείς. Δεν μπορούμε όλο να παίρνουμε.»

d. ***Petros o A',*** **by Panos Ioannides (1990)**

Petros o Protos by Greek-Cypriot playwright, Panos Ioannides was originally written as a TV series, and then adapted to a play, and staged during the 1990-91 season by the National Theatre of Cyprus (THOC). The play deals with the last two years of the reign of Peter I (1367-69) focusing on his erotic affairs rather than on his politics.

In relation to the characters, as with most historical plays, the characters are both historical and fictional. In the case of this play, most of the characters are indeed taken from Macheras, except for the characters of the lower classes, who are all Cypriots. The historical characters are Pier de Lusignan I, Eleonora d' Aragon, Joanna L' Aleman, Jean Rocha Count of Morphou, Jean Viscounte, Jiva or Escheve d' Santellon, Sir Francis Lahanestouris, Jean de Lusignan, Jacque de Lusignan, Philip D' Ibelin, Amiral de Sir, Cardinal Lafayette, Military Commander G. de Nores, Master of Ceremonies Juan Giblette, Gorap de Gornali, Aurora d' Ibelin, Eloize d' Asrouf, Marcel Chiraque, Maria de Giblette and Pier de Lusignan II. The characters presented as Cypriot are Eleni the Wet-Nurse of Joanna, Aretousa a servant, Margarita the Midwife, a fisherman and Alexis Kallantios a troubadour. Ioannides takes the liberty with certain characters, as for example, the decision to make Joanna L' Aleman, who was French, half Cypriot, although leaving all other historical information about her intact. The author mentions in his introduction to the publication of the play, "I identified Joanna L' Aleman with Arodafnousa, the folk mythical figure and I have indirectly connected her own fate with the collective fate […]" (6). Moreover, the playwright includes the merchant Lahanestouris[507] as a Syrian merchant with an understanding of the Cypriots' position as subjects to the Lusignans, who is referred to by other characters in the play as a Cypriot himself. His own position as a foreigner acts as a means for him to attain an understanding of the exploitation, which is the epitome of colonization. Although he is a very rich man, in order to remain on their good side and maintain close relations with the regime, he often gives large amounts of money to the rulers.

[507] In Macheras, Lahanestouris is actually the name of two characters, Sir Frances and Sir Nikol ("ὁ σὶρ Φρασὲς ὁ Λαχανεστούρης καὶ ὁ ἀδελφός του ὁ σὶρ Νικὸλ ὁ Λαχανεστούρης", Paragraph 91), Syrian brothers who indeed made their fortune from commerce and who resided in Famagusta.

Scene 1 of the play is loosely based on paragraph ninety-two of Book 2 of the Chronicle, where Macheras mentions a party, the rich merchant Lahanestouris threw for Peter I and the (predominantly) French nobility of the island. According to the historiographer, during the party the merchants showed off their riches to the rulers. Ioannides' scene serves to introduce main characters of the play and the general environment of the time, in all the corruption of the French nobility, their insatiability for wealth, and the class difference between foreign rulers/merchants and working class locals. Moreover, this first scene establishes the idiosyncrasies in the language of the play, which clearly aim at giving a sense of the language spoken at the time, with an evident influence of the writing of Macheras and of the French language.

The play is split into eight scenes and narrates events, which are either taken directly from Macheras, or are added by the author as fillers to the action. The development of the narrative and the characters by Ioannides are clearly superior to many of the other historical plays written on the island. The main reasons are that Ioannides, as opposed to many other playwrights, has an understanding of dramaturgical rules relating to form and structure, but also understands the practical aspects of the staging of a theatre play. The play is organized around a practical staging framework, a fast pace in the action and an intention to create realistic characters. As a result, the play has established itself as one of the most prominent of its kind on the island, acknowledged by the fact that it was staged by the National Theatre of Cyprus, in the early 1990s.

The main characters of the play, Peter I, Eleonora and Joanna form an erotic triangle and the main story line of the play, which is complemented by stories from Peter's military and regal feats. In the world of the play, the king has already proved himself as a General, having organized a Crusade with intense Western involvement and raided rich coastal cities of the Eastern Mediterranean, among them Alexandria, and a King, whose politics have allowed for the island to prosper (Macheras, Book 2, Paragraph 91-96), with rich merchants living and trading in Famagusta. The three main characters are two-dimensional, with Peter and Joanna forming the romantic couple, and Eleonora (although she is the legitimate wife and queen) acting as the opposing malevolent force to the benevolent couple.

Scenes 2 and 3 of the play are completely fictional and take place in Joanna L' Aleman's estate in Houlou, giving insight into another group of characters and relationships. On the level of the protagonists, we see the love affair developing between Peter and Joanna.

In terms of presenting local characteristics, the author introduces the figure of the Cypriot-speaking nanny Eleni, hovering at the back of the action, the Cypriot peasant girl, Aretousa – her name clearly draws a parallel to the folk tale figure – as well as the echoes of the violence, poverty and death the locals endure. During these two scenes there is a presentation of the experience of the Cypriots at the time, and an exploration of the essence of Cyprus, with mention of oral literary tradition, local myths and a nostalgic description of the landscape of the island. As the scenes progress, Peter learns to see through the eyes of the Cypriots – especially Ioanna, who is half Cypriot – all those things they love about the place, and acquired the language to talk about, literally and metaphorically. Scene 3 ends with news of violent raids of the coastal cities of Nemesos and Kiti by the Saracens, and the King decides he needs to deal with these situations by heading to the West for support, basically launching a new crusade. As he leaves Houlou, he declares that he will exterminate 'Turks, Saracens and Mamluks'. His rage against the Muslim groups in the area is clear and targeted.

Scene 4 takes place a few days later in the palace hall during a ball. The scene is antithetical to the previous two scenes, in so far as the character of the King and the relations between Cypriots and the ruling French are seen under a new light. On the one hand, the erotic life of the King is established as unstable, since, in addition to Joanna, he comments on other women of the court and on planning on taking them to his bed. His special bond with Joanna endures, since he takes measures for her safety during his forthcoming trip by appointing a guardian for her, but evidently becomes marginal. On the other hand, the scene stresses the tension in the relations between the French and the Cypriots, with the former's attitude being condescending and degrading. The antipodes, offered in Scenes 2 and 3, to the rulers and the colonized, such as: the idyllic landscape of rural Cyprus; the wise and kind in the figures of the Cypriot servants; and, the dominant importance of the love between Joanna and Peter, are all absent, thus creating a harsh and vice-driven environment.

Scene 5 is important in the development of the action, as well as a very interesting scene dramaturgically. It juxtaposes fictional and historical events, in an on-stage and off-stage parallel action. The fictional part shows the materialization of the erotic relationship between the Queen and John de Morphou, Count of Roucha[508] taking place in the throne room at the palace. The parallel action is described by Macheras in Book 2, Paragraph 234,

[508] The affair is mentioned in Book 2, Paragraph 239 of Macheras.

and it tells the story of Queen Eleonora's torture of the eight-month pregnant Joanna. The detailed description of the torture is transferred to the theatre in off stage action. What is depicted on stage is the erotic union between the Queen and John de Morphou. The two women are clearly portrayed as personifications of good and evil: Eleonora is a powerful and lustful foreigner, mercilessly torturing the pregnant, virtuous and persevering, local Ioanna. During the play, both women mention their place of origin and upbringing as defining qualities of who they are.

The following scene takes place in the King's chambers, and chronologically, it moves the action forward a few months, to the return of Peter from his trip to Europe. The scene is a medley of various events registered in Macheras, brought together with the skills of the author's imagination and his mindfulness for stage efficiency. The scene starts with the King speaking to several noblemen. Among them are his two brothers and John Viscounte, the man who was generally left in charge of the king's household and affairs, who are his trusted advisors. The discussion centers around a letter[509] sent by the Viscounte to the King while he was away, with news of the Queen's adultery, Joanna's torture and violent childbirth, the killing of the child and her being sent to a convent. Stage economy allows for Joanna to make an appearance, as she is fetched from the monastery by the king.[510] The revelation of the death of her child to Joanna, the promise by the King to avenge the death of the baby and the showing up of Eleni, Joanna's nanny who has come from Houlou, succeed each other. Although the Cypriot element in the play is restored from its symbolic eradication by Eleonora, by way of the defense of Ioanna by Peter, and the coming of Eleni, the scene closes with a long speech by Queen Eleonora. She is given the floor to tell her life story and her grievances in her marriage. As Peter ignores her and turns to leave, she has the last word in the act, and she calls out to him, "Pier de Lusignian, not only are you the first to have laid a hand on an Aragon. You are also the last!" (66).[511]

Scene 7 is a court hearing and trial for the allegations brought forth by the Viscounte, the adultery committed by the Queen, the abuse towards Ioanna and the murder of the infant. This is another moment in which the author carves and inserts various events narrated by

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[509] The entire letter is in Macheras, Paragraph 241.

[510] In Macheras, the meeting between the two takes place at the monastery itself.

[511] Πιέρ ντε Λουζινιάν, δεν είσαι μόνο ο πρώτος που άπλωσες χέρι σε μια Αραγκόν. Είσαι και ο τελευταίος.»

Macheras. During the trial, false testimonies are presented, making the events appear contrary to how they actually occurred. Peter presents his verdict: the Queen and Roucha are declared innocent; Viscounte is declared guilty of treason; and, Ioanna and Lahanestouris are exiled. Naturally Viscounte reacts. Moreover, during this scene, we witness how the King's brother Jean is a pioneer in the distortion of the events, whereas his other brother, Jacques, on the opposite camp, tries to reveal the truth. As the court hearing ends, there is a sensational development: the announcement arrives that Joanna, her nanny, and Lahanestouris have been murdered.[512] This officially ends the largest part of Peter's familiarization with Cypriot features, as three key characters representing Cyprus, are taken out of the story permanently.

The last scene of the play, which takes place some weeks after Scene 8, is alive with action, and encompasses events recorded in Macheras. The scene is set in the King's bedchamber, in which he is trying to engage in intercourse with a reluctant married lady of the court. As the scene progresses, it is revealed that as a means of revenge on what happened to Ioanna, he has slept with and abused many women of the court.[513] As the scene continues, Echibe de Scadellon, a loyal mistress of the King, enters and warns him about a potential conspiracy against him. He assures her that he has his own plan, but she warns him that everyone knows it, leaving him exposed and vulnerable. At this moment, news comes of the death of Viscounte. Following this, and after the King has cried over the death of his friend, the knights of the High Court, and his brothers, ask for an audition. As they come in, clearly offended and in a vindictive mood, the King rejects their pleas and talks only to his brother Jean[514]. There is a discussion of a case involving De Giblett, a noble family of the island, who the king had offended.[515] As the scene continues, the King offends everyone, even his brothers, kicks everyone out of the room, while a new mistress is led in. Ioannides describes

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[512] The story told by Macheras is a lot more intricate and corrupt. He reports in Book 2, Paragraph 245, that as the King was preparing to return to the island, the Roucha (for fear that his relationship with the Queen is revealed) approached Joanna L' Aleman and another of Peter's mistresses, Echibe de Scadellon and made a deal with them to lie to the King and blame it all on Viscounte. Indeed when the King came, he interrogated the two women, who lied to him about the letter sent to him by the Viscounte, saying the information in it was a lie. Macheras reports, however, in Paragraph 249 that "deep in his heart he did not believe them". The action moves along and in paragraphs 251-258, the King takes his case to the high court, which also decides that the letter was a lie, and sentence the Viscounte to imprisonment. He dies in prison about a year later.

[513] This information is found in Macheras, who says that, "he started to shame (all the gentlewomen, from young to old) the women of his enemies, those who had come together to shame him" (Paragraph 259). The historiographer continues to say that the knight grew to dislike the King because of this behavior.

[514] The discussion of the king with his brothers is described in Paragraph 201 of Macheras.

[515] The story of this family is mentioned in Macheras, in Paragraphs 261-267, in a lot more detail.

the violent behavior of the King over the lack of oil on his asparagus on the occasion of a dinner on the evening of St. Anthony's celebration day, documented in Macheras' narration, in paragraph 279.[516]

The last part of the scene is the murder of Peter as it happens in the same evening[517] when his brothers come back in and announce to him the decisions taken by the High Court to relieve him of many of his duties. As his brother steps out for a minute to allow him to dress, the rest of the knights storm in, brush the brothers aside and assassinate him. Alexis Kallandios, a Cypriot who has become the king's confidante, tries to defend him and dies, marking the end of the Cypriot presence in the play. The knights stab the king, for the honor of their wives and daughters. Finally, a Tourkopoulieris stabs the King in the genitals saying, "The demon of prostitution. That's what you were, Pier de Lusignian. For these you gave death".[518] The Queen then enters with her son, accusing and arresting the conspirators. She symbolically honors the dead in an act of apparent hypocrisy and declares her son king, under her guardianship.[519]

In evaluating Peter as the protagonist of the play, we return to the use of the term *vraisemblance* in order to place him as a neoclassical character. His position as King allow for an expectation that he will be the potential "admirable hero" (Leerssen 58) in the determined course to defend his land and people honorably. The brave military acts and his diplomatic accomplishments presented earlier on by the author create this expectation. However, Peter is a foreign ruler, therefore, the assumption is that his exposure to the values of the location is not carried by himself, but brought forth in the action by the Cypriot characters who surround him: Joanna, Eleni, Aretousa and Alexios Kallandios. Throughout a great part of the play, these characters, each in their own way, make an effort to indoctrinate Peter with attributes he does not have, due to his origin. Foremost among these is the love for

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[516] The paragraphs leading up to 278 describe the conspiracy of the nobles against the king.

[517] According to Macheras, the murder took place in the morning as he woke up from sleeping with his mistress Echibe de Scadellon.

[518] «Ο δάιμονας της πορνείας. Γι' αυτά είσουν Πιέρ ντε Λουζινιάν. Γι' αυτά πεθαίνεις.»

[519] In Macheras, the endings of the story (Paragraphs 280 - 281) are very different from that of the playwright, and rather more gruesome: one of the servants beheads Peter and as he lays there, stabbed and bloody, he takes a knife and cuts his genitals saying, "This is what you died for", and Macheras, adds "and he felt very sorry for him, but he did it to be friends with the others".

the place and the people. The playwright insinuates that he is a worthy man and able ruler, and if he can also be made to associate himself with the place and its people, then he will truly be a worthy ruler.

In order to outline the character of Peter's associations in the play, let us revisit the three main aspects of intended actions as mentioned in Barthes and as they are met in the narrative of the play.

Love/desire: As in the previous play, Joanna L'Aleman is Peter's main object of love/ desire. Peter's romantic attachment to Joanna starts in Scene I of the play at the party of Lahanestouris, when Peter romances her,[520] places his infatuation of her in the framework of his previous affairs, and states his intentions: "Now I see. In the women I have chosen, I was looking for you. Come to the palace. Will you come?" (16).[521] Even though Joanna refuses and Eleonora threatens her and asks her to leave for Houlou immediately, we meet Joanna, in Scene 2, in Houlou preparing her belongings in order to move to the palace. In a dialogue with her Wet-Nurse Eleni, she says, "for an entire winter I resisted, fought, you witnessed it. But I was defeated…" (23),[522] referring of her resistance against the King, but finally her love for him prevailed. During this first presentation of the two women, we receive an interesting piece of information about Peter's role in local politics, when he stopped the slaughter of peasants by the Franks, and treated Franks and locals as equals.[523] As Joanna offers this information, her language changes and Eleni comments, "when you have been wronged, my little monster, you debate in the language of your parents" (24).[524] Joanna uses French in official settings and the Cypriot language in intimate settings, an indication of the emotional closeness Joanna feels to her mother tongue and culture. Her Cypriot nature is also affirmed as the scene continues, when she helps the servant, Aretousa, with financial hardships and establishes her close relationship to Eleni. As the scene progresses, we also witness the intense nature of the relationship between Peter and Joanna: as Peter enters the Scene – since he has come to visit Joanna in Houlou – he sets their relationship against the story of a

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[520] The stage directions at the beginning of Scene I dictate, "*the king has eyes only for Joanna L' Aleman"* / «*ο βασιλιάς, που δεν έχει μάτια παρά για την Τζοάνα Λ'Αλεμάν*» (11).

[521] «Τώρα βλέπω. Στις γυναίκες που ξεχώρισα εσέν' αναζητούσα. 'Ελα στο παλάτι. Θα'ρθείς;»

[522] «Έναν ολάκερο χειμώνα αντιστάθηκα, πολέμησα, με' θώρες. Μα νικήθηκα...»

[523] «Φράγκοι, τόπακες εν ένα δια το νόμο;»

[524] «Αντάν είσαι εις άδικον, θερκούδι μου, μαλλώνεις εις την γλώσσαν των γονέων σου.»

mythical Cypriot couple, Aphrodite and Adonis. He tells Joanna that the story of the two lovers, despite their tragic ending, is that "He who is loved and loves the goddess is mature enough for death" (27),[525] clearly associating the goddess Aphrodite with Joanna, and the intensity of that love with theirs. There is also an element of foreshadowing, referring to the tragic ending of their love affair. As the scene ends, Peter asks Joanna to help him hide from state affairs and his knights, by taking him to the Baths of Aphrodite[526] in Lemona. Naturally, there is no actual association between the site and any historical/mythical events, but in the realm of the imaginary and contemporary touristic erotica, the Baths of Aphrodite creates a framework for the intensity of the erotic relationship between Peter and Joanna. It seems that the author borrows the commercial fantasy created around the Baths, as a means to provide recognizable associations as to the quality of the affair between Peter and Joanna.

As they leave, he asks her, "Will you do it? Will you humanize me?" (28),[527] adhering to the popular – and predominantly touristic – belief, that the baths of Aphrodite attract erotic energy and rejuvenate people sexually.[528] Evidently the couple start off their love affair in a space associated with erotic intensity, but also a tragic ending. In the following, Scene III, after an obviously intense erotic night, Joanna arrives in a white dress and loose hair (30), enhancing her romantic image. As the scene envelops, a multi-layered world is created in which Aretousa sings the folk song, "Arodafnousa" off stage, while Eleni narrates the tragic story to Joanna and the King. They contemplate the connection between the folk song and their real life situation, a dialogue, which represents the perspective of the author in regards to the position of the Cypriots and the Franks during the Lusignan period. This entire set-up is useful in so far as it serves the playwright to overturn it, thus emphasizing the sheer power

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[525] «Ο που θ' αγαπήθει και αγαπήσει τη Θεά είν' ώριμος για θάνατο»

[526] In the official website of the Cyprus Tourism Organization, the Baths of Aphrodite are described in this way: "This beauty spot is situated past the fishing harbour of Latsi towards the tip of the Akamas peninsula. A natural pool grotto surrounded in greenery, the site lies at the end of a small nature trail. As its name suggests, the grotto is said to be where the Goddess of Love used to bathe. Myth also has it that this is where Aphrodite met her lover, the handsome Adonis, when he stopped off for a drink while hunting. The moment he drank the water, Adonis fell in love with the goddess" ("Baths of Aphrodite").

[527] «Θα το κάνεις; Θα μ' εξανθρωπίσεις;»

[528] Information about the Baths comes from many ancient, medieval and colonial sources. In a paper by Paul W. Wallace (1983) entitled, "The Baths of Aphrodite and Pyrgos tis Rigenas", traces the Baths from antiquity, to Medieval poetry (Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*) and then to colonial times, in an interesting association with Pyrgos tis Rigenas (tower of the Queen). Moreover, in the *Μεγάλη Κυπριακή Εκγυκλοπαίδεια* (2011), it is mentioned that, until the seventeenth century, the location of the Baths of Aphrodite were actually close to the village of Yeroskipu, in the North-East of Paphos. When that fountain dried, the spring in Akamas was reinstated as the new Baths of Aphrodite.

of the relationship between Peter and Joanna; however, it is interesting to note the way the various levels of ideology and meaning are combined:

> "Joanna: […] Ever since I was a child I have been mixing Galician with Cypriot, I have been struggling between my French ancestors and the locals; I love my countrymen, my land; and I am ashamed at the same time about the way we ended up. […] I love you and I feel innocent and truly guilty at the same time. […]
> King: You are not just another mistress of the king, you are the beloved of Pier, a happy French settler. […]
> You have made me more tolerant, more generous with [my people]. With everyone!".
>
> (32-33)[529]

Peter W. Edbury (2002), in his article "Latins and Greeks[530] in Crusader Cyprus", examines the relationship of the two populations, which was characterized by a gradual and reluctant acceptance of Frankish rule (140)[531] by the Cypriots. Edbury further supports that "It would seem that the Latin and Greek populations on Cyprus went beyond simply reaching a measure of accommodation. There were, at least by the close of the Frankish period, signs of the emergence of what, Gilles Grivaud (2002) has termed 'la nation *chyproise'*." (140), evidently moving away from the relationship of the two populations on parallel but distinct levels, to a condition which allowed for a local character to be created by the Cypriots, within Lusignan rule. The fluidity of identities is further enforced by Edbury (2002), who borrows from Grivaud and comments on the failed scheme of polarization in this way:

> "Those historians who seek to construct the history of the Greeks of Cyprus simply in terms of their struggle to preserve their identity in the face of successive oppressors – Crusaders, Venetians, Turks, British – are, despite the validity and attractiveness of their approach, in danger of losing sight of the nuances."
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> (141)

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[529] «Τζοάνα: Από παιδί ανακατεύω τα Γαλατικά με τα Κυπριώτικα, παλεύω ανάμεσα στους Φράγκους προγόνους μου και τους ντόπιους· αγαπώ τους συντοπίτες μου, τον τόπο μου· και ντρέπομαι μαζί για την κατάντια μας. [...]

Βασιλιάς: Δεν είσαι μι' άλλη αμορόζα του Ρουά, είσαι η αγαπημένη του Πιέρ, ενός ευτυχισμένου Φράγκου έποικου. [...] Μ'έκανες πιο ανεκτικό, πιο γενναιόδωρο μαζί τους. Μ'όλους!»

[530] Edbury (2002) labels the Orthodox Christian populations of the island as Greek.

[531] Edbury (2002) continues with the parameters of the phenomenon: "I can suggest three possible explanations for why this might be: the Greeks lacked the sort of people who could lead an opposition movement; the Latins had settled on the island in sufficient numbers […]; and, thirdly, the Lusignans were clever enough to avoid provoking too much hostility." (140).

After closing this rather large thematic parenthesis, and returning to the play, we arrive at the end of Scene III, in which Peter decides to organize an expedition against the "Turks, Saracens and Mamluks" (360).[532] As he leaves, his relationship with Eleonora and Eleni, as representatives of Cyprus, is exemplified through a symbolic action:

> "([…] *Joanna opens [Peter's] palm and once Eleni has put rose water in it, she leads his hand to his forehead*.)
>
> King: (*Makes an effort and speaks Cypriot*) Many thanks misses Leni.
> Eleni: My liege, have my blessing!
> (*The Wet-nurse sprinkles the hand of Joanna*)
> Eleni: My Rodafnou!
>
> (36-37)[533]

One can go as far as to characterize this as a symbolic union of the two, in a ceremony sanctioned by an older Cypriot woman who grants her blessing, demonstrated by the rose water. The following, Scene IV, presents the courtly preparations for the departure of Peter, who at the end of the scene reveals a mural at the Palace events hall, depicting himself and Joanna, as Aphrodite and Adonis, under the menacing eye of a bull, obviously symbolizing Eleonora. The importance of the mural becomes obvious in the following scene, when the Queen poses for the portrait to be changed, replacing the head of Joanna with her own. After the torture of Joanna by Eleonora in Scene V, Scene VI further develops the relationship between Peter and Joanna, as they meet after Peter's return from his expedition to the convent where Joanna is now a nun. At first, Joanna is reluctant to bond with Peter, but after she learns that their child has been killed, her emotions for him are awoken. He tries to convince her by saying, "If you want me to be wise, compassionate and not tyrannical, a murderer and tax-imposer, give me your love." (64),[534] implying that without her love he will be all those things. Dramatically, the play appears, in the following scenes, and with news of the murder of Joanna and her servants, to solidify the bad side of Peter's character, which was indeed waiting to be unleashed, had he lost Joanna. In Scene VIII, he admits to raping over ninety women: wives, sisters and girlfriends of his knights. It is interesting to note, that the author

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[532] «Τούρκους, Σαρακηνούς και Μαμελούκους»

[533] "([…] *Η Τζοάνα του ανοίγει την παλάμη [του Πέτρου] κι αφού η Ελένη του ρίξει μέσα ροδόσταμο, αδηγεί το χέρι του στο μέτωπο του*)

> Βασιλιάς: (*Με προσπάθεια μιλάει Κυπριώτικα*) Πολλά 'φκαριστώ σου, κυρά-Λένη.
> Ελένη: Ρήγα μου, την ευκή μου!
> (*Η βάγια ραντίζει το χέρι της Τζοάνας.*)
> Ελένη: 'Ροδαφνού μου!

[534] «Αν με θες σοφό, πονετικό κι όχι τυρρανικό, φονιά και φορομπήχτη, δωσ'μου την αγάπη σου.»

does not condemn Peter, nor does he depict him in adverse light. On the contrary, Peter's behavior seems justified, and when the knights storm in Scene IX to murder him, we feel strangely sympathetic towards him.

Communication: During the course of the play, Peter's actions and intended actions establish communication with several characters: in terms of bonding with Cypriots, on a personal level, he does so with the mysterious figure of Alexis Kallandios; and, on an emotional level, with Jiva or Escheve d' Santellon. Alexis Kallandios is a creation of the playwright's imagination: a troubadour and servant of the palace, who rather inexplicably and outside the usual historical context offered by the author, functions as a person the King communicates with on a deep and metaphysical level. The character seems to represent Macheras, since Lahanestouris reminds him that he owes it to them, and to Cyprus itself, to tell the (hi)story (42).[535] In the beginning of Scene 5, nourishing the inconsistency of the character, Alexios – ordered by the Queen – replaces the head of Joanna in the mural with that of Eleonora. Scene VI witnesses Alexis opening the scene with Peter, who tells him, "You have ended up being a Jack of all trades. You and Viscounte. You for inside the palace, and Viscounte for outside." (57).[536] [537] Finally, in Scene IX, Alexis warns the King of the conspiracy, and the King, overcoming the stereotype which did not allow for a Cypriot to hold public office, declares, "Listening to you, I regret not having knighted you a Despot, Mr. Alexis." (82-83).[538] At the end of Scene IX, Alexis makes the ultimate sacrifice, acting as a "*human shield*" (87)[539] and taking the first blow to die in order to save the King.

Jiva or Escheve d' Santellon, was one of the King's mistresses, a woman who remains loyal to him throughout his erotic and political adventures. Throughout the play, Jiva appears in various places and the actions or intended actions of Peter emphasize the communication between them. Jiva is evidently more developed as a character than Alexis Kallandios, displaying her earthiness and playfulness, and acute sense of the political game at various

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[535] «Μη την Κρόνακα. Χρωστείς μας την, της Κύπρος! Κάποιος να ιστορήσει την τυραγνίαν της.»

[536] «Κατάντησες ο άνθρωπος για όλες τις δουλειές... Εσύ και ο Βισκούντης. Εσύ μες το παλάτι, ο Βισκούντης έξω.»

[537] The reason why Viscounte is not included as one of the characters with whom Peter communicates, is that the actions of Peter in Scene VII, in which he finds the Viscounte guilty of the charges against him, it can be assumed that (other than the trial being a being set up) the King's trust towards Viscounte was not absolute afterall.

[538] «Ακούγοντας σε μετανιώνω που δε σε έχρησα Δεσπότη, κυρ. Αλέξη.»

[539] «*ανθρώπινη ασπίδα*»

times; she also acts as a liaison between Peter and Eleonora, revealing the Queen's secrets to him. In Scene IV, as Peter prepares to leave, he gives Jiva an estate as a safely for her, and a token of appreciation for her services, although she acknowledges that their erotic relationship has ceased since he has met Joanna.[540] But it is in Scenes VIII and IX that Jiva's role truly flourishes, with her being responsible for bringing to Peter's chamber the women he rapes, acting as a sort of a female partner in crime. Entering the universe of the play, one can assume that Jiva's comfort and pitilessness towards the noblewomen Peter rapes, is simply due to her unconditional care for the pain he has suffered after the death of Joanna. Thus Jiva becomes an accomplice to the revenge he takes on his compatriots for not protecting Joanna.

Help/struggle: Peter's lack of communication and struggle lies with the world of the Franks, and especially with his wife, Eleonora d' Aragon. Eleonora is actually Spanish, but she belongs to the same socio-economic class as the French rulers. During the course of the play, we notice that he requires help in order to understand and to go with the people of his own race. As we have already witnessed, he feels more comfortable and transforms into a better person when he is part of the world of the Cypriots, personified by Joanna L' Aleman, Alexis Kallandios, and other Cypriots. As already seen in Scene I, he maintains a distance from the feast organized by Lahanestouris and does not demonstrate the greed the other Franks do, when fighting over who will take the jewels. Moreover, in this first scene, the character of the Queen, and their relationship is also explored: Eleonora d' Aragon is a feisty Spanish lady who is deeply offended by her husband's affairs but is comforted by the fact that he always returns to her. Her character is exemplified – therefore accentuating her differences with Peter – when at the end of the scene, the Queen punishes a servant so cruelly that he dies. Throughout the play, Eleonora provides the antipode to Joanna's virtuous and inspiring existence, at least for Peter. Her innermost hope surfaces in Scene V, when she says, "Since the Lusignans have degenerated, the times have matured for Aragon to take the lead." (49).[541] The Franks and the parody of a trial in Scene VI also serves as an antipode to the virtuous nature exemplified by the suffering Cypriots.

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[540] "(…) I know that you are giving it to me out of guilt, because you are leaving me" / «[...] ξέρω πως οι τύψεις σου μου το χαρίζουνε, γιατί μ'αφήνεις...» (43)

[541] «Απ΄τη στιγμή που οι Λουζινιάν εκφυλιστήκανε, ωρίμασε ο καιρός να παρ' η Αραγκόνα το πηδάλι.»

e. ***Petros o A'*** **(2000) by M.P. Mousteris**

The third play examined is *Petros o Protos* by M.P. Mousteris, an author with seven historical plays under his name, ranging in time and space, from fantastic antiquity to the twentieth century, and from Cyprus to Greece. The author's personal style, which runs through all his plays, is to write long and detailed accounts of the events in the life of his protagonists, in short, but accurate scenes in relation to the historiography.

The current play's action is taken from the *Chronicle* of Macheras, with a reflection of the most important, according to the author, moments in the life of Peter I Lusignan. It consists of two parts, the first narrating "*His Crusades*"[542] (the military and political actions during the life of Peter), and the second part narrating, *"His Love affairs and tragic ending*"[543] (his personal life and the events surrounding his death), both narratives taken from Macheras. There are three types of characters: the narrator, who provides historical information linking the scenes; the named characters who are extracted from the Chronicle (there are 39 characters in Part I and 17 in Part II); and a large group of nameless characters who are servants, soldiers, priests, bishops, Generals, and many others presented throughout the many scenes of the play. Moreover, in line with the other plays by Mousteris, the author presents non-theatrical elements, such as a constant change in settings, with eighty-six scenes comprising Part I and forty-four scenes comprising Part II.

In terms of character presentation, there are interesting and distinct features in both parts of the play. Part I, which is long and filled with events and information, is the playground of the author, who builds his characters on a set of assumptions regarding the world of the time. The playwright presents the world of the time as framed by the dichotomy between Christians and Muslims in the Eastern Mediterranean. Throughout Part I, the various non-Christian forces in the area are presented as territorial, imperialistic, fanatic and non-trustworthy. Twice in the play, Peter negotiates a deal with the Sultan of Egypt, and the deal falls through because the Sultan behaves "treacherously" (75).[544] The author presents these features both as part of how the Christians speak about the Muslims, but also in the

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[542] *Οι Σταυροφορίες του*

[543] *Οι έρωτες του και το τραγικό τέλος του*

[544] «παμπέσικα».

discussion between the Muslims themselves, therefore enforcing popular stereotypes about the group.

Furthermore, the attitude towards the Catholic Church and the Pope comes with a degree of discontent. While, on the one hand, Peter visits the Pope several times for state and financial matters, on the other, he supports the orthodox priests on the island when there is a reported effort to force them into Catholicism. In addition, he defies the Pope and his invitation for an audition and an apology, declaring that he refuses categorically.[545]

Within this construct, we witness events and actions, which take place in Cyprus and in the area, and which involve Peter one way or another. This framework, however, does not allow for the development of any character beyond their neo-classical, and stereotypical manner, not even for Peter himself. Therefore, the relationships developed between Peter and other characters or concepts in the play are limited to the dimensions provided by the framework mentioned, as well as the needs of the specific scene. Characters function based on the principles of *vraisemblance*, as does the typical hero. The author, however, offers an even less developed version of the hero since the character's actions are limited to those dictated by Macheras.

Part II presents a similar pattern, but fashions a more synthetic rendition of the characters and the action. For the first half of this second part of the play, the action is limited to the actions of the female characters (Eleonora d' Aragon and Joanna L' Aleman), whereas Peter emerges on the stage in Scene 13. Moreover, the playwright chooses to involve the folk figure of Arodafnousa in the narration. This is made apparent from the beginning, when the characters are mentioned and we see three sisters, Lady Anne, Lady Athousa, and Lady Joanna (characters in the folk song), whom, in parenthesis, he identifies as 'Arodafnousa'. The first two names correspond to historical characters, but they are met with in the folk tale and they play a vital role in the first part of the poem. Moreover, Part II of the play presents a large number of female characters, servants and maids at the service of the female protagonists of the most part of the play.

The development of the plot in the first 9 scenes is a mixture between the folk tale *Arodafnousa* [*Αροδαφνούσα*] and the events narrated by Macheras in his Chronicle. Thus, the character development of Eleonora d' Aragon and Joanna L' Aleman presents a duality, half

[545] «Να παρουσιαστώ, λέει, μπροστά στον Πάπα, στη Ρώμη, ν'απολογηθώ; Αρνούμαι κατηγορηματικά.»

taken from the historiography, and the other half from the folk story. An excellent example of this is presented in Scene 1, during a dialogue between Eleonora and a maid (βάγια), when we are informed of the infidelity of the King with Joanna. The maid explains who Joanna is by offering the lines from *Arodafnousa* in dialogue:

> "Maid: Oh my Queen, in the Upper Neighborhoods, three sister live, pretty and slim. All three have voices of nightingales, it's a joy listening to them. One is called Lady Anne, the other one Lady Athousa…
>
> Eleonora: I don't care about them. I want to know about the shameless one.
>
> Maid: The third (sister) and the best one is called Arodafnousa. It's her, Mistress, that the king loves, it's her that he runs to in the middle of the night, there, in the Upper Neighborhood."
>
> (9)[546]

A comparison with the lines from the folk poem offer insight into the heavy loan carried out by the playwright:

> "In the Upper neighborhoods there are three sisters,
> One is called Rodou, other Adorousa,
> The third, the best is Aroafnousa; […]
> She is the one the master loves, she is the one he embraces,
> She is the one he puts to sleep in his arms."
>
> (verses 19-28)[547]

The playwright immediately dislocates on multiple levels, the historiographically accurate account established in Part I of the play: Joanna L' Aleman/Arodafnousa is presented as a woman with familial ties to her sisters, as well as to the space, since she lives in a neighborhood of the town/village in which she is known for her beauty and singing voice. In the development of the play, as she chooses to surrender to Eleonora's wish and visit her at the palace, another level is added to her character, closer to Macheras and his portrayal of

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[546] «Βάγια: Αχ, Ρήγαινα μου, εκεί στην Πάνω Γειτονιά, κατοικούν τρεις αδελφάδες, όμορφες και λυγερές. Και οι τρεις τους έχουν μια φωνή αηδόνας, χαίρεσαι να τις ακούς. Τη μια τη λένε Λαίδη Αννέ, την άλλη Λαίδη Αθθούσα...
Ελεωνόρα: Δε μ' ενδιαφέρουν αυτές, την ξενδιάντροπη θέλω.
Βάγια: Την Τρίτη και καλύτερη την λένε Αροδαφνούσα. Είναι αυτήν, Κυρά μου, είναι που αγαπά ο αφέντης βασιλιάς μου και τρέχει νυχτιάτικα κρυφά να την συναντήσει, εκεί στην Πάνω Γειτονιά.»

[547] " Πάνω στην πάνω γειτονιάν έσσιει τρεις αερφάες,
την μιαν λαλούν την η Ροδού, την άλλην Αδορούσαν
η τρίτη η καλλύττερη εν η Αροδαφνούσα, […]
Τζείνην εν π' αγαπά ο αφέντης μου, τζείνην εν π' αγκαλίζει
τζείνην βάλει στ' αγκάλια του, την νύκταν τζιαί πλαγίζει" (στίχοι 19-28)

her. As she is concerned that her pregnancy might be revealed by the Queen, Joanna fears the repercussions on her class-based honor: "she will tarnish my name, she will traduce me in the eyes of the people, of the Nobility of the Kingdom, she will dishonor the name of the d'Aleman family (…)" (13).[548] In the following few scenes, the action presents Joanna both as the protagonist in the folk song-inspired episodes (e.g. the Queen calling for her to come twice; her sisters trying to protect her, etc), but also through the Macheras' narrative of her torture by the Queen, the loss of her child, her being shut in a monastery, etc. By Scene 20, the character returns fully to Macheras' narrative line, with her visit to the King's chambers in order to be interrogated, as just another one of his mistresses in regards to the Queen's infidelity and the accusations brought forth by Viscounte. The image of Joanna as Arodafnousa is, however, difficult to maintain, since the role the king's mistresses play in this part of the play is one of deception.

The treatment of the playwright towards Eleonora presents less interest, since her role as the evil, brutal and cheating queen is similar in both narratives and repeated in the play. As in previous plays, we do get a glimpse of the compassionate side of Eleonora, as she admits to her Maid that she is overcome by "rage and indignation" (9),[549] when she finds out that Joanna/Arodafnousa is pregnant with Peter's child. The playwright, though, does not spare cruelty in the depiction of the character in the development of the play, thus eradicating her benevolent side.

Finally, and in relation to the last category of the nameless female characters in the first several scenes of Part II of the play, the Maid and the Midwife present the most interest. The Maid is encountered in the folk song, and is a driving force in the first 32 lines. She tells the Queen who the King's mistress is (after she strikes an agreement with her to save her life) and then goes to Arodafnousa's house and fetches her to the palace, by lying to both her and her sisters. Although she is identified as a "slave" («σκλάβα»), in the folk tale, whereas in the play she is a "Maid" («Βάγια»), the character serves the same functions. The figure of the Midwife, presented in Scene 4 is taken from Macheras (Book 2, § 234). A note by researcher Kyriakos Hadjioannou sheds valuable light on the figure of the Midwife, as seen in

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[548] «Θ' αμαυρώσει το όνομα μου, θα με διασύρει στα μάτια του λαού, των Αρχόντων του Βασιλείου, θ' ατιμάσει το όνομα της οικογένειας Ντ' Αλεμάν [...]»

[549] «θυμό και αγανάκτιση»

Macheras, generally characterizing them as "shrewish midwives" (374),[550] creatures, who were capable of evil actions. In the play, the Midwife is summoned by the Queen to deliver Joanna/Arodafnousa's illegitimate child, and does so, delivers it to her, and then collects her plentiful payment. The almost metaphysical attributes associated with midwifery in Macheras is lost in the earthy and opportunistic character of the Midwife in Mousteris. The character is there, not in order to engage the reader/viewer in the multiple layers of the evil of Eleonora and the suffering of Joanna/Arodafnousa, but to serve a utilitarian purpose in the plotline.

For the final part of the analysis of the play, I will explore the protagonist Peter I Lusignan, through the structural model of Roland Barthes' analysis.

Love/Desire: In Part I of the play, Peter is the "defender of the Christian faith" (114)[551], the man who realizes his mission as a Christian king, living on the verge of the Western Christian world. During this part of the play, he talks of his duty, which is to defend the Christian world from the Turks/Saracens/Mameluks, in other words, the Muslims. His expansionist politics, apparent in Macheras, are layered in a Crusade-influenced philosophy of defending Christianity. Interestingly enough, the re-conquest of the Holy Land is not a leading feature in the King's intentions in the play.

In Part II of the play, Peter's actions towards love/desire focus on Joanna L' Aleman and their relationship. Although the depiction of Joanna as Arodafnousa is often disrupted by the historiography of Macheras and the actual role of Joanna as one of Peter's many mistresses, the figure of the mythical Arodafnousa is still dominant in the narrative. Even as late as in Scene 20, the King greets Joanna as, "My dear Arodafnousa" (42)[552] and she thanks him for allowing her to be reunited with her sisters (42)[553], thus reconnecting the character in her folk version.

Communication: in Mousteris' play, Peter's actions of Communication are related to the concept of authority. Throughout the play, in his public and private affairs, he acts towards

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[550] «οι στρίγγλες οι μαμμούδες, οι μάγισσες οι μαμμούδες»

[551] "υπέρμαχος της Χριστιανικής πίστης". This line is, interestingly enough, spoken by the narrator, not one of the characters. One can safely assume that this reveals the attitude of the playwright towards the character, whom he identifies as a man of virtue since he defends the correct faith.

[552] «Αγαπητή μου Αροδαφνούσα»

[553] "thanks to your graceful generosity, I find myself again with my beloved sisters" / «χάρη στη γενναιόδωρη καλωσύνη σας, βρίσκομαι ξανά με τις αγαπημένες αδερφές μου» (42)

the acquisition and maintenance of his regal authority and power. In Part I of the play, the character aims at gaining military authority in the area, even making agreements and pacts with regimes he does not respect or trust, such as the Egyptian Sultan and the Pope. The second part of the play ends with a famous line from Macheras, uttered by a Tourkopoulieris over the murdered body of Peter: "(*bends and cuts off the testicles and penis of the King*) Is this what you died for? (*demonstrates them*)" (81).[554] This last line confirms the view expressed by both Macheras and Mousteris, namely, that Peter died in order to maintain his authority in the palace over the knights by imposing his male sexual desires over their female relatives.

Help/Struggle: Peter's action of help/struggle focus on those elements which hinder his course towards being powerful. These are the enemies in Part I, such as: the Pope; the Muslims in the area of the Eastern Mediterranean; European countries that would not create alliances with him; internal enemies in Cyprus; and, finally, the King's cousin, Hugo de Lusignan who claimed his right to the throne of Cyprus. The play walks us through the struggle of Peter with Hugo, who was finally bought off by Peter. In the second part, the playwright also places many characters in opposition to the King: his wife Eleonora d' Aragon who tries to stop his womanizing and tortures Joanna L' Aleman; the knights and their wives and daughters who oppose his sexual appetites; and, around the end of the play, even Joanna herself who is brought on stage to offer her (false) incriminating statement against Viscounte, thus freeing Eleonora and her lover from the accusations of the Viscounte.

f. ***Leontios Macheras: To Hroniko tis Kiprou,*** **THEPAK (1998)**

The Chronicle of Macheras was adapted into a play by academic Michalis Pieris, and was first steged by the Theatre Workshop of the University of Cyprus (THEPAK) in 1998 for the under the direction of Pieris, himself. The play is published by THEPAK (1998), retaining the title of the Chronicle (*Εξήγησις της Γλυκείας Χώρας Κύπρου*) and identifying Macheras as the author, and Michalis Pieris as having carried out the 'dramatic adaptation'. Pieris had also written the lurics for the songs which became part of the play.

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[554] (*σκύβει και κόβει με το μαχαίρι του τ' αρχίδια και το όργανο του βασιλιά*) Είναι γιαυτά που πέθανες; (*τα επιδεικνύει επιδειχτικά*).

The edition of the play includes several texts, with the purpose to introduce the reader into the world of Macheras and medieval Cyprus, starting with a timeline of the Lusignan era and the poem written by Nobel prize winner Georgios Seferis entitled *O Demon tis Pornias* [*Ο Δαίμων της Πορνείας* / *The Demon of Adultery*] referring to the dramatic death of Peter Lusignan. The edition also includes a wealth of articles on Feudal Cyprus: the first by British scholar Peter W. Edbury investigates the era in the socio-political context of the West and Byzantine east, Kyriakos Hadjioannou writes on Diplomacy in the court of the French kings of Cyprus, French medievalist Gilles Grivaud comments on the spiritual life of the Frankish period on the island, and finally on the language a means of documenting the social phenomena and manifesting national identity at the time by Greek-Cypriot scholar Angel Nicolaou-Konnari.[555] Moreover, the edition hosts articles by British archeologist R.M. Dawkins about the Chronicle (first published in 1953) and by Michalis Pieris himself.[556] The latter starts with the telling statement "Leontios Macheras is an exceptionally gifted figure of early neo-hellenic letters" (89),[557] suggesting his place as part of the literary milieu of the Hellenic space. Pieris's article is extensive and multi-facted, commenting on both ideological and dramatic issues. However, one point which the author raises is especially important for the present conversation, since it releavs the additional levels of signification which exist in the text. In speaking about the nature of the narrator, the author supports that it is the "κυπριώτικη ελληνική λαλιά" (100) as that has been shaped through the historical

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[555] The title of the article is «Η γλώσσα στην Κύπρο κατά τη Φραγκοκρατία (1192-1489). Μέσο έκφρασης Φαινομένων αλληλεπίδρασης και Καθορισμού Εθνικής Ταυτότητας», but the author's references to 'national identity' are inconstistent, interestingly in terms of her own use of language. Among other, in her introduction and in reference to the fifteenth century, she claims that «η άνοδος του αριθμητικά υπερέχοντος ελληνικού στοιχείου σε συνδιασμό με την παρακμή του αμιγούς φράγκικου και τη δημιουργία ενός λεβαντινού πληθισμού με κυπριακή εθνική συνείδηση θα καθορίσουν τα γλωσσικά πράγματα του τόπου», a position which she repeats at the end of the article, even referring to the 'Greek Cypriot dialect' as a lingua franca between 'the two classes', namely «τους εξελληνισμένους Φράγκους και για τους Έλληνες των ανώτερων κοινωνικών στρωμάτων» (65). However, during the article she attempts to establish the position of 'Greek' in Medieval Mediterranean communities mainly through references to historical figures who used the language, mentions the famous quote by Macheras referring to the influence of the French language on 'Greek', as «'βαρβαρίσαν τα ρωμαίκα, ότι εις τον κόσμον δεν ηξεύρουν ίντα συντυχάννομεν» interpreted that he «οικτίρει το επίπεδο της ελληνικής όπως ομιλείται στην Κύπρο» (64). Moreover, throughout the article Nicolaou-Konnari uses the ideologically loaded terms «erosion» (διάβρωση) and «negative change» (αλλοτρίωση) to describe the changes which occurred in the languages on the island. Linguist Jean Aitchison (1991) makes a point of «the naturalness and inevitability of change» (250), whereas it is evident that Nicolaou-Konnari attributes linguistic change with negative elements, an indication of the influence of (Greek) nationalism in her narrative.

[556] The title of the article by Pieris is «Γύρω από το Λεόντιο Μαχαιρά: Ιστορική και Θρησκευτική Συνείδηση, Γλώσσα και Λογοτεχνικότητα, Αφηγηματική και Δραματική Δομή»

[557] «Ο Λεόντιος Μαχαιράς αποτελεί μιαν εξαιρετικά προικισμένη μορφή της πρώιμης νεοελληνικής γραμματείας»

circumstances, and which reveal "latent emotions of a hidden but existent racial pride and cypriotic tenacity" (100).[558] Pieris thus constructs identity on two distinct levels, as those are present in the language of the play: the over-arching Hellenic race and the local Cypriot sentiment, manifested in its tenacity. The publication also includes a Director's note and an Adaptor's note (both by Pieris) and a Glossary at the very end.

The characters of the play are mostly taken from the Chronicle, but a few key characters are constructed by the adaptor. The fictional characters with an important role in the play are the the Piitaris (folk poet), the three female figures, Mrs Loze, Mrs Maria and Vergilina,[559] and the figure of the Narrator, also called Leontios Macheras in the second part of the play. The first two are older, whereas the latter is young. The characters which Pieris pulls from the Chronicle are: Pier de Lusignan I, Eleonora d' Aragon, Joanna L' Aleman, Jean de Morphou Count of Rocha, Jean Viscounte, Jiva de Scantellon, Maria de Giblette, Jean de Lusignan, Jacque de Lusignan, Philip D' Ibelin, Juan Moustris, Juan Stathia, Charrin de Gibblette, Jakos de Torres, Philip D' Ibelin, Jaques de Gaviale, Juan Gorap (who were the men of the court), an old wise Amiras, the warmonger Mechlin Pecha, the pacifist Nasar Elitisi and the new Amiral, consultant to the Sultan. Moreover, he includes the Venetian merchant Nikol Zoustounia, the Genoan merchant Kaza Sengari and the servant to the king Ioannis Basset, as well as the Sultan and the Pope. Finally, there are the nameless crowds of servants, soldiers and 'the people of Cyprus'.

The language of the play as it developed through the adaptation is taken entirely from Macheras. The dramaturgical practice of Pieris was based on the principle that scenes would be adapted for the stage or constructed by taking bits and pieces of language and narrative from the Chronicle alone, with no other texts used. The only 'foreign' text, are the lyrics written for the songs, which Pieris wrote himself, keeping to a large extent to the theme and language of Macheras.

The construction of the literary protagonist, Peter Lusignan, by Pieris, presents differences from other plays. Primarily it is the fact that the convergences and divergences between the Chronicle and the play are not only in terms of the narrative and dramatic structure, but also in terms of language, and how words and expressions from the source

[558] «λανθάνοντα αισθήματα κρυφής μα υπαρκτής φυλετικής υπερηφάνειας και κυπριώτικου πείσματος»
[559] According to Pieris, Vergilina is not a fictional character since «she is mentioned in the Chronicle» (169).

work were moved around to find their new place in the play.[560] Moreover, in his notes in the publication of the play, Peter Lusignan is given a thorough description. In his note on the Dramatization of the Chronicle, he firstly mentions that Macheras believes that the greatest evils for Cyprus are the Venetians and the Genoans (168), an ideological backbone which is «projected and supported by the present adaptation» (168). On the other hand, later on in his note, he mentions the following: "The romantic king of Cyprus, lived with his naked sword as a symbol, symbolizing his constant battle against the Turks and Saracens" (168). This inconsistency in the construction of the ideolocal base for the character of Peter Lusignan, is interesting to note in the play itself, and the structuralist analysis of the play reveals interesting perspectives in relation to the figure of the hero.

Love/Desire: The protagonist maintains relationships of love/desire with the three main female characters of the play: his wife Eleonora d' Aragon and his mistresses Jiva de Scantellon and Joanna L' Aleman. In Scene 3, during his farewell to Eleonora, urges her "to have a good love between us"[561] and tells her that he has asked that they prepare a shirt belonging to her, so he can sleep with that every night when he is away. In Scene 11, when the news of Eleonora's adultery reaches him through the letter sent to him by the Viscounte, he "becomes pale, dark, wild" (139),[562] and prays to God that this piece of news is never given to anyone, neither friend or foe, since it is "a knot in the heart of a person" (140).[563] The second woman he is attached with is Jiva de Scantellon, a married noble woman whose relationship with the Peter is predominantly sexual, but also a relationship of trust, since she advises him on political and personal matters. In Scene 5, he tells that he would have preferred to take her with him on the trip to the West, rather than leave her behind.[564] Later on in the scene, they speak about Eleonora and his other lover, Joanna, in an environment of

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[560] Although the author claims consistency (at least lilnguistically) with the Chronicle [«το 'κείμενο' της διασκευής, ως γλωσσική ύλη, ανήκει εξ΄ ολοκλήρου στον Μαχαιρά» (170)], inconsistencies which lead to ideological issues arise: in Scene 20, which is not part of the Chronicle, the character of Leontios Macheras, in a speech supporting Peter Lusignan, refers to Genoans as 'God-less Genouvisoi' ('άθεοι Γενουβίσοι') (p.154). Within the Chronicle, however, in their many references they are only refered to as 'infidel Genouvisoi' (άπιστοι) and 'screwed' ('πονηροί'). The adjective 'God-less' in the Chronicle is used only in relation to Saracens in paragraph 9 of the Chronicle, thus creating an association between the two groups. The text of the play presents many such examples, especially in the scenes which are constructed by the author, but their examination is the work of a future study as it is very extensive.

[561] «Νά έχομεν καλήν αγάπην μέσον μας»

[562] «τόσο ωχραίνει, σκοτεινιάζει, αγριεύει»

[563] «Παρακαλώ τον Θεόν τιτοίαν μαντατοφοργιάν να μεν δοθεί ποττέ τους φίλους μου ουδέ τους εχθρούς μου [...] έναν κόμπον εις την καρδιάν του ανθρώπου»

[564] «Είχα το καλλιόττερον να σε έπαιρνα μιτά μου, παρού να μείνεις οπίσω μου εις την Χώραν» (133).

trust and friendship. Finally, his third relationship of Love/Desire, is with the widowed French noble woman Joanna J' Aleman, the mistress of Choulou. We hear about their relationship from both the previous female characters before we see their interaction. In Scene 7, constructed by Pieris as a romantic ancounter between lovers in a garden, sitting and kissing on the bench, Peter talks of "true and stable love" (135)[565] and goes on to warn her not to go to Nicosia, even if the queen summons her.[566] The two characters meet again when Peter returns from the West, and in Scene 15 he visits Joanna in the monastery where she was put by Eleonora after the torture and the birth of her child. Although Peter protects her and orders her to leave the monastery and rejoin the court, it is clear that the feelings of love between the two characters are no longer there. Moreover, in Scene 16, both his mistress become demystified when they both lie about the adultery of the queen and incriminate the Viscounte.[567]

Communication: in the present play, Peter's actions of Communication are related to several characters around him: the play starts with scenes of communication with his Knights, his brothers and the three female characters he is associated with. He also has a relationship of communication with the People who he addresses at his unique appearance as a public ruler when he returns from the West, and announces his intended actions pertaining to the Sultan and other threats in the area, and they cheer him on for his political decisions. In relation to the other characters, Peter rarely makes political statements about his beliefs and principles. However, his actions in relation to other characters are direct and their communication – which is mostly mirrored by them- is mutual. By the end of the play, however, much of that changes. The play leads us to the change in Peter himself, brought about mainly through the adultery of the queen, and the taking over of his body and consciousness by the 'demon of adultery'.

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[565] «την αγάπην μας την αληθινήν και στερεωμένην»

[566] In his article in the publication, Grivaud (1998) makes an interesting point in relation to the attitude of Macheras towards the two women, the mistress Joanna and the queen Eleonora, with his clear preference and sympathy towards the first rather than the latter, in spite the ethical discrepancy. Specifically mentions: "Ας σημειώσουμε ότι η ευαισθησία του Μαχαιρά συναντάται με την ευαισθησία των λαικών ποιητών, όταν τονίζει τη συγκινησιακή κατάσταση στην οποία περιπίπτει η Jeanne l' Aleman, θύμα της εγκληματικής μανίας της βασίλισσας Ελεονώρας. Παίρνοντας το μέρος της ερωμένης του βασιλέως, ο Μαχαιράς επιλέγει μια συναισθηματική κατανόηση ενός ηθικού προβλήματος, κάτι που η ορθοδοξία του θα έπρεπε να καταδικάσει. Στην περίπτωση αυτή ακριβώς ο Μαχαιράς φιλοτεχνεί μια καταλυτική προσωπογραφία της βασίλισσας Ελεωνόρας, σε πλήρη αντίφαση με την ευσεβή, ενάρετη και ταπεινή εικόνα που δίνουν για τη δύστηχη αυτή βασίλισσα οι Καταλανοί χρονογράφοι.» (56)

[567] «φαίνεσται μου και είναι συμβουλεμένες και οι δύο οι αμουρούζες μου» (147)

Help/Struggle: Peter's actions of help/struggle are intense and all encompassing, but they emerge strongest at the end of the play, when he is overtaken by the "demon of adultery". According to the characters around him, this is the element with which he is struggling: as early as Scene 5, his mistress Jiva de Scantellon expresses her concern about the "demon of adultery", since Peter has a wife and three mistresses; in Scene 20, after the narration of the rape of Maria de Giblette (which took place in the previous Scene), the character of Leontios Macheras explains his action by saying that the flesh of Peter has been taken over by the evil demon (155);[568] in Scene 21, when his brothers speak to him about the inappropriate nature of his sexual behavior with the ladies of the court, the author dictates that from a point on in the dialogue, "he now speaks as the demon of adultery" (156);[569] in Scene 22, his brother Jacob in trying to explain Peter's behavior, says that he has been taken over by the demon of adultery, but can find no satisfaction because he hates them (158).[570] In the murder of Peter Lusignan by the Knights in Scene 29, Pieris remains faithful to the Chronicle, where Peter's genitals are cut off, and the statement is made that this is what he has died for (164),[571] referring to his adultery.

g. ***Stis Kiprou to Vasilio*** **(1985) by Giorgos Neofitou.**

The play *Stis Kiprou to Vasilio*, "a theatrical satire of the three hundred years of French Rule" –according to the author – (*At the Kingdom of Cyprus*), was written in the early 1980s and was first presented on stage at the National Theatre of Cyprus (THOC) during the 1991-92 season, and then subsequently by other theatre companies on the island.

The play is an exception in the pool of historical plays examined in the context of this research. In terms of genre, it is a satire both of the historical times of the play – the period between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries – as well as of current times – the 1980s. The play is comprised of twelve scenes, it includes a Troubadour, a Cypriot folk poet and a group which constitute the locals, the People. All three entities are present in all scenes and

[568] «Οτόσον αντρειωμένος και γνωστικός, ο Ρήγας που ετίμησεν την Κύπρον περισσότερον παρού άλλου τινός, αμμέ ο αρχέκακος διάβολος ηύρεν στράταν και εμπήκεν μέσα του εις την ομορφίαν της σαρκός του»

[569] «μιλά πλέον ως δαίμονας της πορνείας»

[570] «εμπήκεν εις την ψυχήν του ο δαίμονας της πορνείας και ατιμάζει τες γυναίκες και κόρες μας και δεν ευρίσκεται πλερωμένος διατί μισεί μας»

[571] «Δια τούτα έδωκες θάνατον»

represent the thoughts and emotions of the people, in narrative, through Cypriot and standard Greek, song and dance, in western and Cypriot styles, medieval and modern form.

The play is well written, has a comic tone and rhythm and an intense theatricality, which allow for it to be staged often and by various groups (not only professional companies). Its political extensions are many, and comment both on the way Cypriots conceive their history, in the period of French rule and contemporary history, from British colonial rule onwards.

In terms of theme, two scenes are relevant to the life and times of Peter Lusignan: Scene 4 narrates the military feats of Peter, and Scenes 5, the events around the love triangle of Peter I Lusignan, Eleonora D' Aragon and Joanna L' Aleman. In a comical and highly political way, Scene 4 narrates the efforts of Peter to bring wealth and glory to the island. The scene starts with a political address on behalf of Peter, highly reminiscent of Makarios in the past, starting with "People of Cyprus"[572] (p. 25), and continuing with a controversial, "Peoples of Cyprus" (25),[573] broadening the scope of his address to many different peoples on the island. This latter acknowledgement is not something the late Archbishop had in his vocabulary, and yet, the author gives these words to a French King of the Middle Ages ruling the island. Nonetheless, the scene continues with several episodes being narrated (as reported in Macheras), and information is given more through various anonymous characters giving information than via dialogue. These characters are the troubadour, the People, the Town Crier and a Radio voice, which constitutes an anachronism, but reflects the playful mood of the play. The radio speeches use the rhetoric applied by modern Cypriot radio news bulletins but transferring news, which were relevant at the time. This has a dual functionality, firstly as an addition to the comic effect, and secondly as a commentary on the repetitive nature of historical occurrences. An interesting example of this is the following: "Radio: The King of Cyprus, Jerusalem and Armenia, Peter I departed today for meetings to European countries. The first stop in the King's tour will be Venice, where he will have a meeting with Pope Innocentio, to whom he will brief about the latest developments in the Middle East. […]" (6).[574] The parallels drawn between the perpetual problematic situations in the Middle East provide a rare insight into the nature of the neighborhood Cyprus finds itself in.

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[572] «Κυπριακέ Λαέ»

[573] «Λαοί της Κύπρου»

[574] «Ραδιόφωνο: Ο Βασιλεύς της Κύπρου, Ιεροσολύμων και πάσης Αρμενίας, Πέτρος ο Α' ανεχώρησε σήμερα για επισκέψεις σε χώρες της Ευρώπης. Πρώτος σταθμός της περιοδείας του Βασιλέως θα είναι η Βενετία, όπου

Moving to Scene 5, the stage directions dictate that "*the palace scenes are portrayed in grotesque pantomime*" (33),[575] giving the entire scene a distancing character from serious consideration. The character of the king is not presented on stage, rather we learn of the scandal from the People, by way of a short conversation between Eleonora and Joanna (in bad French!) and via a group of noblemen who have a discussion about the fate of the protagonists in the story.

The play will not be examined with the structural tools used in the other plays, since the scenes relevant to Peter I Lusignan are only two and do not serve in developing a character as a whole.

4.4. Medieval Colonization in Greek-Cypriot plays and aspects of identity

The analysis of the protagonists in this chapter, as they develop through time and different plays, presents common tendencies, regardless of the different chronological periods in which they were written. Certain elements are repeated, throughout all five dramatic works examined in detail, pointing to a general perception of identity by their Greek-Cypriot playwrights, and as an extension of the society itself on the island in the post-1878 era.

Starting with the actions of the protagonist which are focused on love/desire in the plays we have examined, they extend towards a woman: the figure of Joanna L' Aleman or Arodafnousa; in Ksioutas she is called Juanna, and Georgiou, Vergilina. In Pieris, he is associated through love/desire with three women, including Joanna L' Aleman. Interpreting this point, we can certainly claim that the figure of the male hero across the twentieth century is closely associated with an interest for female love. Even when Peter becomes an antihero, like in *Juanna*, his status as King is still informed by his desire for the local woman, who represents the integrity and honor that he seems to be lacking. The figure of authority, even in the aforementioned play when the protagonist is a working class woman, retains his attachment to an idealized romance, always doomed but intense and omnipresent. The love/desire of the French King for the Cypriot woman can also be seen as the link the playwrights keep between their own interpretation of Macheras and the folk tale of

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θα έχει συνάντηση με τον Πάπα Ιννοκέντιο, το οποίο θα ενημερώσει για τις τελευταίες εξελίξεις στη Μέση Ανατολή.[...]»

[575] «[...] οι σκηνές του παλατιού σε γκροτέσκα παντομίμα.»

Arodafnousa. Therefore, their attachment, both to the local historiographer, as well as to folklore, becomes essential in their understanding of the history of the period, as these two are the main sources used for compiling their own narratives.

Interpreting the actions and intended actions of the protagonist towards communication is a rather more complex issue. Each of the six plays presents a different orientation for Communication. Alithersis' Peter seeks communication with Viscounte, on the level of a male political ally, and Jiva, on the level of a female lover and confidante; for Ksioutas, Peter's actions and intended actions establish communication with what he perceives as life-building principles and virtue; in Georgiou, the actions of Peter that are associated with love/desire and communication coincide, and they are centered on the character of Vergilina, and therefore, on the interest for female love; in Ioannides, during the course of the play, Peter's actions and intended actions establish communication with several characters: on a personal level, in terms of the Cypriots, it is the mysterious figure of Alexis Kallandios; and on an emotional level with Jiva or Escheve d' Santellon; in Pieris, Peter enters the action of the play with communication on most levels (within the court, with his wife and lovers, with the common people), but by the end loses all of it, except the faith of the people, as that is documented through the voice of the narrator, Macheras himself; finally, in Mousteris, Peter's actions of Communication are related to the concept of authority and throughout the play, in his public and private affairs, he acts towards the acquisition and maintenance of his regal authority and power. With the exception of Mousteris' play, in which Peter is generally a one-dimensional character whose existence is dominated by his desires and ambitions (including his desire for Joanna L' Aleman and his struggle with Eleonora d' Aragon who tries to hinder the affair), the other protagonists have communication with characters and values that aim at making the protagonist better, at improving his morals and ideals. They advise him on a personal and political level, trying to improve his life and, at times, to save it.

Finally, the actions of help/struggle present certain uniformity throughout the five plays. In them, the character of Peter struggles with the figures and establishments representing foreignness, especially the Western powers and the Eastern threat. His struggle is personified in the figure of his wife, the Spanish lady Eleonora D' Aragon, who suppresses him and abuses his mistress Joanna L' Aleman/Arodafnousa. Although each play varies in the way this struggle is presented, the defensive position of Peter towards foreign features

remains strong. In some cases, Peter's struggle is against the entire world outside Cyprus, in addition to the powers within the court (Ksioutas, Mousteris, Ioannides), while, in other cases, it is limited to Eleonora D'Aragon and other similar characters, such as the Count de Rouchas in Alithersis, and his mother and brothers in Georgiou. In Pieris, the character is struggling against a metaphysical force, which is the "demon of adultery", as Macheras and Pieris call it. His weakness for carnal pleasure, which by the end of the play turns abusive and violent, is portrayed as an outside force which has overtaken the (otherwise) noble king. The character, as seen through the authors, represents distrust against foreign powers, even if Peter himself is not a Greek-Cypriot but a Frank. This process seems less artificial since Peter has first been initiated into the ways of Cypriots, the values and the aesthetics, especially through his love/desire for the quintessential local woman.

So the question is: what are the mechanisms that lead these playwrights to legitimize the reign of Peter as patriotic and present him as a figure, who may not always be heroic, but has the necessary values for heroism, while clearly vilifying other European characters? Why are the playwrights making their patriotic claim by presenting a promiscuous and warmonger French King who reigned on Cyprus 700 years ago, as a potential hero and even a role model? What is the post-colonial legacy carried with this decision? The latter question is the basis of the conversation, which will continue in the present study, since colonization and the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized are each at the center of these plays.

To deconstruct the figure of the French King and his relationship to contemporary Cyprus, one must firstly become aware that the historical subject matter is not, at least not at first glance, associated with Hellenism, as we had witnessed in the previous chapters. Therefore, the connection between the Lusignan King and the perceptions of identity presented in the plays, lies in another ideological space, outside Hellenism, which in the previous two chapters connected modern Cypriots with characters from a perceived Hellenic antiquity and Byzantium. That connection lies in the relationship of Cypriots with colonialism, officially ending on the island in 1960. In the context of medieval colonialism, Cyprus becomes a colony of a line of French Kings, who have come to inspire a series of historical plays in the twentieth century. In an effort to understand this phenomenon, a general understanding of colonialism in its sociopolitical dimensions is needed. The major thinkers of postcolonial consciousness, Franz Fanon and Edward Said, provide a basis for the connection to the historical plays, but it is with Homi Bhabha that the plays find their true relation to theorization.

The exploration of colonialism in modern times starts with the Western perception that often legitimized colonial rule over foreign peoples: that the racial superiority of the colonizers allowed for such an act.[576] This created a world "divided into compartments" (*The Wretched of the Earth,* 37), into zones, where "the zone where the natives live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers." (*The Wretched of the Earth,* 38). In his Preface to the English translation of Franz Fanon's (1963) *The Wretched of the Earth*, Jean Paul Sartre reveals the essence of the colonial experience when he states how "[v]iolence in the colonies does not only have for its aim the keeping of these enslaved men at arm's length; it seeks to dehumanize them" (*The Wretched of the Earth,* 15). This certainly implies the perceived distance between colonizers and colonized in the Western mind, which stands on the basic level of human dignity, and the justification of lack thereof. In the case of the plays, the distance between the colonizers and the colonized is evident through the playwrights' adoption of the viewpoint of the Western eye which creates a distance between the two entities that seems unbridgeable. Therein lays the basic element which differentiates Peter from the other non-Cypriot characters: he is presented as escaping from the group of Westerners who seek to exploit the island and its inhabitants, and as aiming to create an essential relationship with them.

Traditionally, post-colonial theory has stood in the middle of leftist thought, and has connected colonization with imperialism. Edward Said encompasses the four main parameters of the correlation between culture and imperialism:

> "1. On the fundamental ontological distinction between the West and the rest of the world there is no disagreement […].
> 2. With the rise of ethnography – […]- there is a codification of difference, and various evolutionary schemes going from evolutionary to subject races, and finally to superior or civilized peoples. […].
> 3. Active domination of the non-West world by the West, now a canonically accepted branch of historical research, is appropriately global in its scope. […] The rhetoric of *la mission civilizatrice*.[577]
> 4. The domination is not inert, but informs metropolitan cultures in many ways […]"
>
> (*Culture and Imperialism*, 108)

[576] Franz Fanon (1963) uses the famous line to set his Marxist framework for this distinction, using Africa as an example, though one might argue that this applies to most colonial situations: "The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich." (40)

[577] *the civilizing mission* (engl.)

These parameters testify to the fundamental nature of the belief in the West that lies in its superiority in relation to other cultures. Moreover, the parameters serve as a verification of the ongoing process of a scrutiny of culture through the lens of domination. The outlook of investigation may vary as time passes, but the basis of the comparative examination of culture lies in the West's perception of superiority over other cultures.

Post-colonial theory in recent years is "to a very large extent an engagement with French post-modern and post-structuralist theory" (Galea 4), as the work of pioneer post-colonialist theorist Edward Said advances from Michel Foucault's earlier work. Further connections are the work of Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha, which draw from Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan. One must first mention Said's (1978, 2003) seminal work *Orientalism,* and his enlightening examination of the Orient and the Occident (*Orientalism,* 2). However, for the needs of this study, Said offers limited relevant insight, since it (and other works by the author) deals almost exclusively with how the West "perceives" the orient, but does not explore the effects of colonization on the oriental colonized.

The relationship between colonizer and colonized has been much debated in the context of post-colonial theory. Homi Bhabha's (1994) post-modern understanding of contemporary post-colonial theory challenges the relationship between the colonial subject and the colonizer. According to Bhabha, this relationship is based on "mimicry", the basis of which is the observation and imitation of one towards the other. This makes the two "almost the same, but not quite" (*Of Mimicry and Man*, 86), since their relationship entails control of the colonizer over the colonized subject. The oppression felt by the subject is the origin of tension and rebellion against the colonizer. The action in the plays does not reach the point of rebellion by either of the two entities, colonizer or colonized, since the process of mimicry described by the authors is the equivalent of Peter mimicking the Cypriots, almost exclusively. There are a few scenes where characters imitate the Franks and are shunned by the Cypriots. Perhaps the reason why there is no conflict between the colonizer and colonized is that there is already internal conflict between the colonizers, leaving little space for a revolution by the colonized. Only in *Juanna* do we witness the locals contemplating revolution, but the time of the play, published in 1949, shortly before the EOKA uprising against the British, justifies the militant approach by the author.

In an exploration of the creation of national culture in colonial and post-colonial societies, Bhabha (2000) supports that it is a concept, which is firmly attached to the space,

rather than to other factors, such as time. He writes how "The 'locality' of national cultureis neither unified nor unitary in relation to itself, nor must it be seen simply as 'other' in relation to what is outside or beyond it" (4).[578] This frees cultural production from its rigid and unchanged character and places it in a relative and fluid construct, based on the changing relationships between people and communities in the space. This also creates a new perceived relationship between colonizer and colonized, with a firm connection to the concept of 'locality', as Bhabha refers to it.

In terms of the specific space we are examining, it evidently carries levels of identity brought forth by its folklore (represented by *Arodafnousa*), its social and political history, as well as its geographical location. In relation to the latter, and as we have seen earlier in this chapter, the Mediterranean islands of Malta and Crete have produced dramatic works encompassing features similar to those found in the Cypriot plays. Even though these two islands have followed different courses in terms of their socio-politics in relation to Cyprus, the historical plays referring to their period of medieval colonization present the features one sees in the Cypriot plays. The relationship between colonizer and colonized is characterized by an undefined and fluid relationship one finds in that of Peter I Lusignan and the Cypriot characters in the plays. This feature of the corpus of works deserves to be further examined in a (geographically) broader and (thematically) more focused study. Any such study must first recognize the uniqueness of the Mediterranean islands, especially in relation to the way in which their medieval colonization has influenced the formation of their identity in the latter half of the twentieth century.

This fluid structure is evident also in other spaces in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. In her "Performativity and Mobility: Middle Eastern traditions on the move", Friederike Pannewick (2010) claims that "The storyteller tradition in the Middle East […] represents a complex and multi-layered example of cultural mobility between Europe and the Middle East." (218). Furthermore, she explains that "Arab dramatists adapted the narrative political theatre of Brecht within a postcolonial Middle Eastern concept." (219), thus

[578] Bhabha (2000) comments further on the locality of culture: "a form of living that is more complex than 'community'; more symbolic than 'society'; more connotative than 'country'; less patriotic than *patrie;* more rhetorical than the reason of state; more mythological than ideology; less homogeneous than hegemony; less centered than the citizen; more collective than 'the subject'; more psychic than civility; more hybrid in the articulation of cultural differences and identifications — gender, race or class — than can be represented in any hierarchical or binary structuring of social antagonism." (291)

providing an explanation of the two traditions at play in spaces in the Arab world. Pannewick's analysis broadens the geographical area of investigation, and creates a clear link between the body of work we are examining and the literary practice of storytelling, with the intense presence of the folk tale of *Arodafnousa* in the historical plays examined in the present chapter. The mixing of the folk story (passed down through storytelling, an oral theatrical practice) with the Western historical play and its features of Romanticism and Neoclassicism, appears to be another popular practice in the plays studied here.

As we move to the geographical region of Cyprus, the "edges of European Christendom",[579] and look at the specific body of work examined in this chapter, the playwrights seem to have filtered their medieval colonial 'experience' retroactively through their recent history and developments in how they perceive their identity. The rise of Greek-Cypriot nationalism and British colonization inform the way these Greek-Cypriot authors perceive their French King. It is interesting to note, that despite Peter embodying the colonizer and the Cypriots personifying the colonized, in the progress of the plays their status is negotiated into almost becoming equal. The thematic and structural mobility, which is dominant in the presentation of the story and the characters, starts with the choice the seven authors make to engage with a complex character like Peter. This seems to testify to the need for a leader-figure, who – in the case of Peter – is legitimized by the literary imaginary, which establishes the link of the character with characters that are local. Both colonizer and colonized share national pride, for different nations in the beginning, but by the end of the plays, their visions seem to move to the same reference point, namely, Cyprus and a taste of the Hellenic ideal. Interestingly, Peter is not perceived as a carrier of terror since his terrorist actions[580] (raping the wives and daughters of his courtiers) are conducted against foreigners, and not against the locals. In the majority of plays, the colonial terror against the locals comes from the other colonizers, and not from Peter himself. In this way it justifies the terror Peter, himself, practices on the families of those who terrorize the Cypriots.

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[579] John Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, 13.

[580] Daniel Gerould (1990) in his article, entitled *Terror, the Modern State and Dramatic Imagination* in "Terrorism and Modern Drama", supports that "the interaction of terror and civilization have served as recurring themes in Western drama" (15), making references to Elizabethan, Tudor and French revolution playwrights as the predecessors of the modern idea of Terrorism. The collected volume edited by John Orr and Dragan Klaić gives a brilliant picture of the relationship between terrorism and theatre, until the late 1980s.

The reasons behind these attitudes are located in modern time, and the outlook of the authors on themselves and their society. Cyprus in the post-1878 period has built a set of perceptions around it in relation to its socio-geographical position, even though the events specifically take place in the Mediterranean, a sea shared by the peoples living on its coast, with their economic interests intertwined for thousands of years. These events inevitably influence each other. The influence of powerful families, powerful cities and individuals is felt all over the area. However, colonization by the Lusignans constitutes, in the Greek-Cypriot consciousness, colonization by a Catholic family, which although they are not Orthodox, they are at least Christian. The perceptions of Muslims for contemporary Greek-Cypriots are definitely not as positive as for Christians. The tolerance of western rule and the demonization of Ottoman rule of the island by official historiography, leads to a far more favorable consideration of the French as rulers.

Another very important point is that Greek-Cypriots perceive themselves as Europeans, since their identity is largely defined by their sense of belonging to the Hellenic race. The desire of many Greek-Cypriots for Union with Greece has brought an ideological connection to Europe and a distancing from an affiliation with the Middle East. Greek-Cypriots associate themselves more with Europe, having also become a part of the European Union in 2004 contributed to this perception, despite the geographical proximity of the island to the Middle East.

In his understanding of people and communities in the (imagined) nations of modernity, Homi Bhabha argues that space is both horizontal and vertical, and includes time and social conditions in the composition of the community.[581] The analysis of the works through the post-colonialist perspective suggests that Cyprus and other places similar to it in the Mediterranean, have filtered their medieval colonial experience retroactively through the emergence of nationalism, generating from it a new narrative about their identities. The choice of seven authors to engage with Peter testifies to the need for a leader-figure, who is legitimized by many dynamics, such as the (local) official historiography, the folk literary

[581] "If, in our travelling theory, we are alive to the *metaphoricity* of the peoples of imagined communities – migrant or metropolitan – then we shall find that the space of the modern nation people is never simply horizontal. Their metaphoric movement requires a kind of 'doubleness' in writing; a temporality of representation that moves between cultural formations and social processes without a 'centred' causal logic." (*Nation and Narration*, 293)

imaginary, and the positive attributes superimposed on the colonizer (Christian faith and European descend). The fluidity which characterizes their relationship aims to instill in both colonizer and colonized, a feeling of national pride which is closely associated with the island itself.

Naturally, a familiar ideological displacement emerges in this analysis: the playwrights write about Cyprus, but when talking about freedom they refer to their ideological affiliation with the Greek nation, rather than to a Cypriot independence. As we have seen from previous studies, Cyprus is seen as a part of the body of Greece, and culturally the idea of freedom, at least up to 1974, translates into an inclination to merge with the Greek state, rather than retain independence and self governance. The historical framework is, therefore, provided by the medieval and recent experience of colonialism, through the characteristics we have already discussed, but the underlying ideology rests on the firm attachment of Greek-Cypriots to Hellenism. The connection of the protagonists in the plays with Cypriot-ness (characters, values and ethics code), and the literary reiteration of the connection with Greece remains quite strong.

CONCLUSION

"(…) processes of symbolic representation
establish and mediate the nature of collective suffering
[a]s the ground bass of cultural trauma theory"
From "Historical fictions and Postcolonial Representation" by Aparna Dharwadker

Overview

The beginning of my doctoral research was instigated by a personal preoccupation of my place as an artist and individual within society. My research started in 2009, several years after the Greek-Cypriot community rejected a plan for a solution of the age-old Cyprus problem in 2004, as a way to find its bearings and redefine itself for the first time since its independence in 1960. I found myself in the middle of a personal debate as to my own role in this negotiation, a process which I often found frustrating and rarely rewarding. My limited understanding of the reasons why the community functioned the way it did, was, as I explained in the Introduction, the main cause of my frustration.

In the period after the turmoil caused by the play *Performing the Experience* in 2007, Rooftop Theatre Group underwent several major changes, which also reflected the change in civil society and society at large. The first was in terms of its relation to the term and practice of bi-communality. The term is used on the island to describe the activities which engage people from the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities. From the mid 1990s when bi-communal encounters started taking place, first at the historic Ledra Palace hotel in the buffer zone of Nicosia, then in the mixed village of Pyla/Pile, and finally when the roadblocks opened in 2003, in the entire island, the term has described the connection between groups and individuals segregated for many year. Moreover, civil society and the communities began to mature, given also the shock of the failure to reunite the island with the 2004 referendum in spite fervent efforts. Therefore, establishing a healthy and strong society became broader than the restricted scope of the two communities, with other ethnic and linguistic communities gradually entering the conversation. Within this general spirit, Rooftop Theatre Group moved away from the mono-directional preoccupation with 'bi-communal' and tagged itself as 'multi-cultural'. In its work it started to consciously engage individuals from various groups, such as economic migrants in 2009 (which produced a play

about migration entitled *Heart*) and socially marginal issues such as gender and LGBT, which produced a performance in 2010, in collaboration with the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies and Family Planning Association of Cyprus.

After this transitory stage, the Group's next two endeavors manifested its readiness to deal with political issues directly. Taking along its wealth of information and experience from the more open and inclusive character of its recent work, with the involvement of a large array of people who lived in Cyprus, the Group started in 2011 and then revisited in 2012, a series of stories about the missing. The issue of the missing on the island was widely politicized and scrutinized on both sides, thus making it very sensitive. As the excavations and exhumations continued to take place on both sides of the island, many stories of atrocities and crimes were revealed, that were printed in newspapers and books. The Group used several of these stories and through two distinct dramaturgical processes, it produced two plays and subsequent performances in 2011 and 2012-13. For the first time since its establishement, the Group struggled to come to terms with the gravity of the material at hand. But the force of the stories and its connection to our own here-and-now was impossible to ignore. Nor did we wish to ignore it, as it was an intrical part of our own growth as artists and people.

Finally, the Group made an opening into the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region through the Anna Lindh Foundation. Through its participation in the activities of the Foundation in Cyprus and abroad, our scope started to become broader, embracing the countries of Middle East and North Africa, as well as the countries of the Mediterranean South. This new perspective informed many of our artistic decisions, and created an awareness of our connection with other similar communities around the Mediterranean. In conversations with theoreticians and practitioners from all around the Great Sea, we became aware of the potential for creating meaningful artistic links outside the island.

The end of my academic research therefore coincides with a much broader artistic negotiation: that which takes place in the area of the Mediterranean region. The Mediterranean countries on the side of the European continent are now called – in the context of the European Union – the European South. This definition implies that the heart of Europe is the continent, whereas in the 'old world' the center of the world was the Mediterranean Sea. Many of the communities that this study is interested in were at the center of the old world, whereas now they find themselves on the periphery, with features which clearly

distinguish them from the continental European nations. This new negotiation certainly places my research, its conclusions and its future prospects at a different level from what it initially meant to occupy. It started out as a study of Nationalism in the cultural production of the micro-cosmos of a Mediterranean island, and ended up acquiring an open scope, both geographically and critically.

The study primarily suggested a model of analysis for theatrical texts. Starting in Chapter One, it presented the three main disciplines it would employ, and continued with an explanation of how they would be used and combined. The study draws on: history, specifically, historiographical accounts, in order to place things in a historical context; political theory in order to trace and understand the development of nations in modernity; and, most importantly theatre, within the placement of the plays in the literary movements, presenting a structural analysis of the texts, as provided by Roland Barthes. The three Chapters which ensue, constitutes the application of the methodology on three different sets of plays, each encountering its own challenges, distinct analytical needs, and conclusions drawn.

Chapter Two engages with three Greek-Cypriot historical plays of the twentieth century written around figures of antiquity, specifically, Axiothea and Nikoklis, the King and Queen of the city-state of Paphos of the third century B.C. The plays researched were *Nikoklis–Axiothea* by K. Nikolaides (1952), *Axiothea*, by Kypros Chrysanthis (1968), and *Axiothea* by Mona Savvidou-Theodoulou (1982). The discussion in this chapter centers around Neoclassicism and its place within the main philosophical and aesthetic movements of Continental Europe and the Hellenic region from the eighteenth century onwards, and as seen in the literature and historical plays produced. The Chapter continues with an analysis of the production of historical plays on antiquity in the Greek-Cypriot community, and finally examines the three aforementioned plays by taking up Barthes' model. The conclusion of the analysis firstly notes the difference between the figure of Axiothea as the heroine in the first two plays, written before 1974, and Axiothea in the third play, written after 1974. The assumption made is that the disillusionment presented in the final play, is a sign of the same type of disappointment present in the Greek-Cypriot community after its own hopes of union with Greece collapsed for good, since the war essentially marks the end of the Irredentism period for Greek-Cypriots. Chapter Two is heavily comparative of the political and cultural conditions of Greek-Cypriots and the Greeks.

In Chapter Three, the theme of Byzantium is examined, through plays, which deal with the reign of Justinian and Theodora in the sixth century of Constantinople. The plays considered are: *O Aetos i Ioustinianos ke Theodora* (1913); by Ioannis Karageorgiadis; *Theodora* (1965), by Loukis Akritas; and, *Belisarius* (1993), by Sophocles Sophocleous. This chapter is preoccupied with the idea of history, and how it is constructed in the context of nationalism. The example of the Greek state is examined, since, as in the case of Cyprus, the inclusion of Byzantium as part of the glorious Christian-Hellenic past was a common trend in the creation of the nation. The chapters then go on to consider the three plays through a structuralist analysis, concluding that the heroes (Justinian and Belisarius) and the heroine (Theodora) undergo a transformation in the plays throughout the twentieth century. From the 1910s when the first play was written, to the 1990s when the last one was published, the approach to heroism, and the ideals attached to Byzantium change. Although we observe a gradual deterioration of the wholesome hero from the first to the second play, in the final play we observe a shift from the idea of Hellenism as that which is centred around a person to focusing on the idea of Hellenism itself. By the 1990s, the Greek-Cypriot community had not abandoned the idea of a Byzantine grandeur as part of their national history, they had, however, gradually started to recognize the weakness in their heroes. The hero remains wholesome and true to the nation-building ideals, but is surrounded by corruption, human frailty and weakness, rendering him quite powerless to react to what is going on around him. The assumption is that the events on the island after independence in 1960, the internal strife, the military coup and the invasion of the Turkish forces, served to demystify the people and even the institution that represented them, but not the ideals themselves. Those living within the hero and heroine, determine their actions to the extent that it is possible.

Finally, Chapter Four is an examination of the Lusignan period, the Medieval colonization of Cyprus by a French family. The events narrate the life (but mostly the death) of Peter I Lusignan, who ascended the throne of Cyprus and Jerusalem in 1359, and reigned for ten years until his assassination. The plays discussed in Chapter Four include *Arodafnousa* by Glafkos Alithersis (1939), *Petros o A'* (1990) by Panos Ioannides, *Petros o A'* (2000) by M.P. Mousteris, and *Leontios Macheras: To hroniko tis Kiprou* (1998) by the Theatre Workshop of the University of Cyprus, an adaptation of the Chronicle of Macheras made by Michalis Pieris. In addition to these plays, which are clearly historical in reference to the character of Petros the I Lusignan, two plays, which diverge thematically and structurally from the main story line, will also be included in the comparative process. These

plays are *Oi Kalogeroi (*1978*)*, by Christakis Georgiou, a play which merges two distinct historical episodes, and *Juanna* (1949) by Pavlos Ksioutas, which presents Peter as a character in the background of a working-class struggle against slavery and oppression. This Chapter places the conversation in a different geo-political context from the previous two chapters: it examines Malta and Crete as places confronted with parallel socio-political conditions of the Medieval colonization, which ultimately materialize in the plays. The communities of the Maltese and the Greek-Cretans have presented a dramatic production which resembles that of the Greek-Cypriots, in the ways in which they share the ideals of freedom, pride in the identity of the community, and unadulterated heroism. There is a departure date however, on which these islands take a different course from Cyprus: Crete becomes united with Greece in the early twentieth century after rejecting independence, a manifestation of their choice of Greek identity over their Cretan one, whereas Malta remains a British colony till 1963, and since then has focused on building a local Maltese identity. These historical shifts are evident in the plays written in these communities, with Greek-Cypriot authors presenting varied tendencies, as seen in the analysis. Given the great number of plays written, they do indeed, seem to be greatly preoccupied with the period of Medieval colonization on the island by the French and the Venetians. The conclusions drawn from the analysis of the five plays of this chapter, I argue, takes the conversation of Chapters Two and Three, a step further. Homi Bhabha's post-colonial theory and the fluidity with which he envelops the relationship between colonizers and colonized, allow for an escape from a nation-centered analysis. A response to the question, 'why do Greek-Cypriots select a medieval French King as their hero in the twentieth century', lies in the many layers of identity carried through the community. The final chapter concludes with the idea that nationalism is strong and omnipresent, but it is merely the vessel through which various aspects of identity are manifested. In the case of all these plays, Greek-Cypriots carry the perception of themselves as – among other defining characteristics – Europeans and Christians.

The final point made in the analysis in Chapter Four, sets the ground for a new conversation, one in which cultural products attain their freedom from the dialectic constraints of nationalism. If all nationalism is indeed cultural ('The Cultivation of Culture', 4), then all cultural analysis takes place within the social and cultural understanding of its over-arching presence. It is evident, from the historical plays written in the Greek-Cypriot community until the present moment, that they maintain their position in this realm of self-

definition through their affiliation with the ideal of Hellenism. In relation to the changing character of plarywright in other post-colonial communities such as Malta (mentioned in Chapter Four) or Quebec (mentioned in the Introduction), the Greek-Cypriot community has a stable production flow of historical plays which follow the same patterns as we have observed during the twentieth century. Even the political unrest caused by the referendum for the UN-proposed solution of the Cyprus problem in 2004, did not result in the production of new literary voices in terms of history plays. New playwrights have proposed interesting viewpoints on social issues (including Antonis Georgiou, and Giorgos Neophytou), but it was only Christos Zanos' *Charoula* [*Χαρούλα*] (2012), staged by ETHAL (Limassol Theatre Development Company) which offered an alternative perspective to a real event which took place in Cyprus in the 1980s, telling the story of a love affair between a Greek-Cypriot girl and a Turkish migrant in the North of Cyprus. In his play, Zanos gives a voice not only to Greek-Cypriots, but Turkish-Cypriots and Turks, drawing a vibrant picture of life in Nicosia and the occupied areas in the North of Cyprus. He undertakes a realistic and socially engaging perspective in his approach of the sensitive (for the Greek-Cypriot community) subject matter, rather than a nationalist perspective.

At the same time, however, other multiple layers of signification that exist within communities in the Mediterranean ought to be acknowledged. Starting from the basic information of Cyprus' geographical position, and moving into more complex information about its socio-political and economic histories, the interpretation of its cultural products opens into new readings and new insights on their identity at present. This, I believe, is the key for unlocking critical literary theory and analyses in the Greek-Cypriot community, in addition to other Mediterranean communities, so that the community is able to attain a clearer (and multi-leveled) view of its identities as seen through cultural production. Only one contemporary plays has aknowledged the extensions maintained with the colonial past, and this was Paris Erotokritou's *A Slight Risk* (2012), an English language production commissioned for the 'Kypria Festival 2012'. The play was based on the real story of the Orams family taking place in 2004: a British couple who brought a house in North Cyprus, only to be sued by he Greek-Cypriot owner of the land the house sat on. The play moved on two levels, the mundane life of the couple and their (apparent) indifference of the politics of Cyprus, fluxuating between realism and surrealism.

Although the appearance of new theatre groups in the Greek-Cypriot community is a common phenomenon in the past few years, trends in playwright which investigate the socio-historical past through the lens of the present are few and far between.

Future Prospects and New Horizons

The last few years have brought turmoil and instability to the countries around the Mediterranean basin. On the European side, on the Iberian peninsula (Spain and Portugal), in Greece, Cyprus and – occasionally – Italy have been troubled by challenging social and financial conditions. The financial bloom of Mediterranean nations in the last quarter of the twentieth century, was eradicated after 2000 since the new situation of the financial dependency locks the European south into the stronger economies of the Euro in the European north. This uncertainty has created a spirit of inequality within the European Union that stretches far beyond financial conditions in various countries. Europeans from East to West and North to South are deeply troubled by the way the balances shift, and entire countries and communities find themselves dependent on others, a condition which seemed foreign in the area, especially after the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Iron Curtain.

The humanitarian principles of the Enlightenment have gone through two loops of ultimate high and low in the last two hundred years. It has hit a record low with the World Wars, and the undermining of human existence through phenomena, such as the Holocaust, rising again through the new world order which included the access to information through the Internet. Most recently, it has come back to undermine human dignity through the global financial systems which evaluate the significance of an individual's contribution to society based on their country of residence, rather than how hard they work or what the significance may be of their labor in society. These transitions are also intricately connected to the rise of socialism and communism, and the fate of these socio-economical approaches to societal organization in various societies around the world, but especially Europe. One need only remember the civil wars, which broke out in European nations (Spain and Greece, for example) in the twentieth century, due to the ideological split between nationalists and socialists/communists.

In the general context of Greek language plays, there is substantial supplementary work required, as the mosaic of the investigation into this production has started to be

compiled but is not yet complete. Further research needs to be conducted in Crete (with its wealth of already existing scholarly work), and a new investigation into the historical plays of the Ionian Islands and the Greek-speaking communities of Egypt in Alexandria, Cairo and elsewhere. Initial research shows a vibrant production of work written in Greek in these communities, and sporadic research conducted by (predominantly) Greek scholars shows great promise.

On the other side of the water, the Middle East and North Africa regions have, themselves, entered a period of transition in the twenty-first century, with the social movement widely known as, "The Arab Spring". This started in December 2010 in Tunisia and spread to Algeria, Jordan, Oman, Egypt, Yemen, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, Oman, Bahrain, Libya, Kuwait, Morocco, Mauritania, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Palestine. The mass protests by citizens in these countries have caused change on many different levels, depending on the place: from minor modifications in legislature, to complete change in regimes, and everything in between. Transformation has not been a smooth process, and as I write these lines, the situation in Syria has developed into a disastrous civil war between the government forces of President Bashar al-Assad, supported predominantly by Russia, and opposition forces who are supported by the West. Egyptians are still in the streets shedding blood on a daily basis, having overthrown the elected president Mohamed Morsi, they are now preparing a new constitution.[582]

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[582] One of the most characteristic examples of the potential for further research in the context of the Arab Spring, is found in the choice of Time Magazine's 'Person of the Year 2011' and in the representation of 26-year-old Tunisian street vendor. Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire outside a police station in his home country, on December 17, 2010, "for dignity", his mother pronounced (Anderson, "The Protester"). Time Magazine's Managing editor, Richard Stengel (2011) explains the reasons behind this choice to show how an "anonymous" person became central to our existence. It pushed people out of their couches and onto the streets, in protest, starting a social unrest in countries of the Middle East which resulted in the overthrowing of oppressive regimes. The manner in which the analysis is done is most determining, with the use of features (structural and literary) for the construction of the modern hero. Notice that the Time Magazine's 'Person of the Year 2011' is not declared by his name, but by his quality, hence 'The Protester'. For the western reader, this one dimension of the character serves to tell us about him almost all that we need to know, and it places him within the world of the Middle East, where this narrative is taking place. As with many of the heroes and heroines we have seen in the plays examined in this study, not much is needed in terms of character development, for an author to make a striking point. Heroism comes with few features, at times, only one, and in this case it is that of protest. For a setting which has suffered oppressive regimes for many decades, protesting is a heroic feature. And as mentioned earlier, stereotypes (what we also call *vraisemblance* in the context of literary theory) raise an expectation in the reader (for a Tunisian man to be and act in a specific way) which the name, 'The Protester' overthrows. Furthermore, as with a Romantic hero, 'The Protester' is validated through death. His willing self-sacrifice is carried out for the purposes of dignity, a value he has been deprived of (Anderson, "The Protester"). Although his life and personal struggle were not known until after his death, this character, neither part of royalty nor nobility, became a symbol for this newly rediscovered value of dignity.

The significance and contribution of this PhD research is highlighted in the understanding that the scope of investigation found in this interdisciplinary model offers itself for evaluating cultural products, spanning from "high" culture to pop culture, and everything in between. The model has the potential to be applied to the writing of various structures, as long as they create a narrative, even if that narrative does not tell a story, but, in the very least, describes a person.

After these three years of research, observation and writing, what occurs to me is that the most interesting question connecting my own work in dramatic literature and the socio-political changes in my area of interest, is the way by which individuals and communities perceive their leaders: who are the people they want to lead them; what are their characteristics; and, how are they portrayed in literature. This last question can certainly become more engaging for today's audiences, once one engages critically with other types of narrative, articles in the media, and their representations of leadership and heroism.

Limitations and hindrances of the research

As for the limitations of the research, and my recurring sources of frustration, the most important ones are two: first, the research had to be limited to the Greek-Cypriot community and its cultural production. The research around Cyprus will remain incomplete for as long as the analysis corresponds to only one community, in a place with such diverse cultural composition, on so many levels. Especially taking into account the focus on the placement of Cyprus in its geographical environment, the Mediterranean, the influences of communities present on the island, such as Turkish speakers, Arab speakers and others, make this research more restricted, and evidently poorer. The limitation is also significant on the level of methodology, given the great importance given to historiography, and to how history was, simultaneously, perceived by authors, and how this was then transferred into a literary

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There is an interesting assumption to be made about the death of 'The Protester': the cause of his suicide may actually signify a concept so foreign to the western social consciousness, that it is this fact which has distinguished this sacrifice from so many others, enough to embellish it with this magnitude of symbolic power. The conversation in both the interview and the short clip regarding, 'The Protester', share the same narrative, of the street vendor who set a spark, which started revolutions: the dignity of 'The Protester' almost becomes a fetish to the western reader.

form. The analysis of the cultural products or sources of Cyprus has shortcomings, which need to be addressed in the near future.

The second major limitation of this research is the narrow comparative analysis of cultural production in relation to other communities outside continental Europe and the Hellenic region. Again, for reasons of financial, geographical and linguistic restraints, but also of limited access to other scholarly communities, the research was based on the findings in online libraries (e.g. the online library of the University of Crete) or via connections with academics (as in the case of Malta). The two cases mentioned materialized into a great wealth of plays and critical works, which proved invaluable for the research and the contextualization of Cyprus. Reaching material in other communities, which presented promising features in their histories, such as Sicily and the Ionian Islands, was a great challenge; however, unfortunately, incorporating it in my study had to, in the end, be abandoned due to a lack of funds and a restricted access, which, in effect, rendered my research limited. Nevertheless, I am consoled by the fact that the research carried out on the Greek-Cypriot production of historical plays was thorough, critical and an enhancement to a very limited bibliography on a history, informed by theory, of theatre in Cyprus.

Swansong

The marvelous adventure of this dissertation, I hope, will be only the beginning of a conversation on the island and region, about who we are beyond the constraints of nationalism and its rhetoric. The potential for the opening of a dialogic between the forces of the imagined national space which is at the forefront of identity in most communities, with other trends, such as post-colonialism, globalization and others. An acknowledgement of the many levels, which make up the synthetic fiber of the Greek-Cypriot, and other similar communities in the Great Sea, is one of the great challenges confronted by cultural analysts/activists, theatre scholars and literary critics of the next decades. In our ever-changing world, an understanding of what it is we carry as cultural agents and citizens is the basis for building a robust society, far from the destructive –isms which have flourished in the twentieth century, costing millions their lives and eradicating prospects for healthy and peaceful societies.

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APPENDIX

1.1 List of Greek-Cypriot Historical Plays 1967-2008

TITLE	AUTHOR	YEAR / LOCATION OF PUBLICATION	YEAR OF PRESENTATION	PUBLISHER	LOCATION (LIBRARY)
Antiquity (Mythical-Classical Times)					
Η Συνωμοσία του Κατιλίνα	Ευγένιος Ζήνων	1893 Limassol			Limassol Municipal
Ατλαντίς	Ιωάννης Καραγεωργιάδης	1923			Limassol Municipal
Αχιλλεύς	Μ. Γαβριηλίδης	1946			Not Located
Δημώνασσα	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1950, Nicosia			University of Cyprus & Severios
Θεομαχίες	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1951, Nicosia		Κυπριακά Γράμματα Journal	Arch. Makarios
Νικοκλής – Αξιοθέα	Κώστας Νικολαίδη	1952, Nicosia		Κυπριακά Γράμματα Journal	Arch. Makarios
Ο Κίμων στο Κίτιο	Θεόκλητος Σοφοκλέους	1956, Nicosia		Κυπριακά Γράμματα Journal	Arch. Makarios
Ηρώ και Λέανδρος	Διογένους Χρ. Γεωργιάδου	1956			
Εύδημος ο Κύπριος	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1958, Nicosia	1958	Λυρική Κύπρος Journal	University of Cyprus

Από τη ζωή του Σωκράτη / Σωκράτης	Άντη Παυλίδη - Περνάρη	1960, Nicosia		Λυρική Κύπρος Journal	Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus & Severios
Ηλέκτρα	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης (σε συνεργασία με τον Ανδρέα Κούρο)	1961 & 1968, Nicosia	1962 (Pedagogical Institute)	Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal & Εθνική Εταιρία Ελλήνων Λογοτεχνών Κύπρου	Arch. Makarios
Ο Ηρόφιλος	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1966, Nicosia		Πνευματική Κύπρος Journal	Severios
Ιπποκράτης	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1966, Nicosia	8 April 1965 - CyBC Radio	Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal	Arch. Makarios
Αξιοθέα	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1967-68 & 1968 & 1989, Nicosia		Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal & Πνευματική Κύπρος Journal & 'Εκδοση ΕΠΟΚ (Ελληνικού Ονευματικού Ομίλου Κύπρου) Ελληνικά/Ιταλικά	Cyprus Library & Severios
Δελφικές Αμφικτυονίες	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1969, Nicosia	11 Nov. 1964 - CyBC Radio	Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal	Arch. Makarios
Τα Γενέθλια του Δία	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1973-74, Nicosia	1973 - CyBC Radio	Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal	Arch. Makarios
Η Πηνελόπη και οι Μνηστήρες	Κώστας Σωκράτους	1978, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Ονήσιλος	Πάνος Ιωαννίδης	1981, Cyprus	1980-81 National Theatre (THOC)		Cyprus Library
Αξιοθέα	Μόνα Σαββίδου Θεοδούλου	1982, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Σωκράτης και Ξανθίππη	Κώστας Σωκράτους	1994, Nicosia			Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus
Αντιγόνη και Πολυνείκης	Κώστας Σωκράτους	19--, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Κίμων ο Αθηναίος	Σάββας Αντωνίου	1995		Atlas	Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus & Severios

Άδωνης και Αφροδίτη	Μιχάλης Π. Μουστερής	1996, Limassol			Cyprus Library
Διογένης η Κυνικός	Δώρος Τάκη Κακουλλής	2008, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Ανιχνεύοντας τις ρίζες μας	Χριστόδουλος Παχουλίδης	2008, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Byzantine Rule					
Ιουστινιανός και Θεοδώρα	Ιωάννης Καραγεωργιάδης	1913, Limassol			University of Cyprus
Ο Ηράκλειος: σε δύο εικόνες	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1964, Nicosia	1963 CyBC Radio	Πνευματική Κύπρος Journal	Cyprus Library & Severios
Θεοδώρα	Λουκής Ακρίτας	1965, Nicosia		Κυπριακά Χρονικά Journal	Arch. Makarios
Αλέξιος ο Α΄και οι Σταυροφόροι	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1970, Nicosia		Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal	Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus & Severios
Το Φιάσκο	Άντης Περνάρης	1980		Εθνική Εταιρεία Ελλήνων Λογοτεχνών Κύπρου	Severios
Βελισάριος	Σοφοκλής Ν. Σοφοκλέους	1993			Cyprus Library
Η ανακάλυψη του Τιμίου Σταυρού	Μιχάλης Π. Μουστερής	2000, Limassol			Cyprus Library
Medieval Colonization (French - Venetian Rule)					
Η Κύπρος και οι Ναίται	Γεώργιος Σιβιτανίδης	1869, Alexandria & 1931, Nicosia			University of Cyprus
Πέτρος ο Α' Βασιλεύς της Κύπρου και Ιερουσαλήμ ή Η Εκδίκησις του Καρίωνος	Θεόδουλος Φ. Κωνσταντινίδης	1874, Cairo			Not Found
Πέτρος ο Συγκλητικός	Θεμιστοκλής Θεοχαρίδης	1877, Athens			Not Found
Η δούλη Κύπρος	Πολυξένη Λοιζιάς	1890, Limassol			University of

					Cyprus
Κύπρος Δούλη	Ιωάννης Καραγεωργιάδης	1898, Athens			Not Found
Αροδαφνούσα	Γλαυκος Αλιθέρσης	1939, Alexandria	1968 CyBC Radio & 1990 Theatro ENA, Nicosia		Cyprus Library
Τζουάννα	Παύλος Ξιούτας	2005, Nicosia	1949	Cyprus National Theatre (THOC)	Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus
Ελένη Παλαιολόγου	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1962, Nicosia	1962 CyBC Radio	Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal	Cyprus Library
Μαρία η Συγκλητική	Ιωάννης Κασουλίδης	1962			Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus & Severios
Στης Κύπρου Το Βασίλειο	Γιώργος Νεοφύτου	2010, Nicosia	ΘΟΚ 1990-91	Άνευ Journal	University of Cyprus
Καλόγεροι	Χριστάκη Γεωργίου	1978, Nicosia			University of Cyprus
Ο Λεοντόκαρδος στην Κύπρο	Άντρος Παυλίδης		1985 Neo Theatro Vladimirou Kafkaridi, Nicosia		Satiriko Theatro Library
Το Πέρασμα των Σταυροφόρων	Μιχάλη Πιτσιλλίδη	1986			
Μαρία η Συγκλητική	Μίκης Γ. Νικήτας	1989, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Πέτρος ο Α'	Πάνος Ιωαννίδης	1990, Nicosia	ΘΟΚ - 1990-91		
Αικατερίνη Κορνάρο	Μιχάλη Πιτσιλλίδη	1995, Nicosia	ΘΟΚ - 1995-96	Epsilon Publications	
Λεόντιος Μαχαιράς: Χρονικό της Κύπρου	Θ.Ε.ΠΑ.Κ. - Μιχάλης Πιερής	1998, Nicosia			Arch, Makarios
Ελένη Παλαιολογίνα και Καρλόττα	Μιχάλης Π. Μουστερής	2000, Limassol			Cyprus Library
Πέτρος ο Α'	Μιχάλης Π. Μουστερής	2000, Limassol			Cyprus Library
Καρλόττα (Η βασίλισσα της Κύπρου)	Μιχάλης Π. Μουστερής	2000, Limassol			Cyprus Library

Ottoman Rule & Greek Revolution					
Κουτσούκ Μεχεμέτ ή το 1821 εν Κύπρω	Θεόδουλος Κωνσταντινίδης	1888 (Alexandria) / 1895 & 1927 (Nicosia)			Not Found
Αι Παραμοναί της Ελληνικής Επαναστάσεως ή ο Γρηγόριος Κωνσταντάς	Νικόλαος Καταλάνος	1888			Not Found
Ο Τζηλ Οσμάν ή Οι τραγικαί στιγμαί του 1794	Χρίστος Παπαδόπουλος				Not Published - Not Found
Τα Σουλιωτόπουλα δεν πέθαναν	Πολυξένη Λοιζιάς		1941		Not Found
Σουλιώτισσες			1949	Ελληνικό Γυμνάσιο Κερύνειας	Not Found
Ο Κονόμος Δοσίθεος	Κώστας Νικολαίδης	1948, Limassol			Limassol Municipal
Η τραγωδία της 9ης Ιουλίου 1821	Θ. Ξενόπουλου		1950	ΟΑΣΗ Λευκωσίας	Not Found
Χορός του Ζαλόγγου	Αναστάσιος Μούσκος	1953		Νέος Κόσμος	Severios
Η 9η Ιουλίου του 1821 εν Κύπρω: δράμα εις την Κυπριακήν διάλεκτον	Κυριάκος Χατζηιωάννου	1960, Ammochostos		Βιβλιοθήκη Ελληνικού Γυμνασίου Αμμοχώστου Publication	Cyprus Library & Limassol Municipal
Η Χαραυγή της Ελληνικής δόξης: το δράμα της Τήνου	Σώζος Πατής	1960, Astromeritis, Nicosia			Cyprus Library & Limassol Municipal
Η Μάχη στους Μύλους τ' Αναπλιού	Αναστάσιος Κουτσουλίδης	1962, Nicosia		Πνευματική Κύπρος Journal	Arch. Makarios
Ο Κανάρης στη Λάπηθο	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1962, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
9η Ιουλίου 1821	Μιχάλης Πιτσιλλίδης	1964, Nicosia (in the volume *Μικρά Θεατρικά*)			Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus
Της Τρίχας το γεφύρι: η ζωή και ο θάνατος του Εθνομάρτυρος Αρχιεπισκόπου Κυπριανού	Άντης Περνάρης	1967, Nicosia		Εθνική Εταιρεία Ελλήνων Λογοτεχνών Κύπρου	Cyprys Library & Severios

Παπαλεόντιος ο Πρωτομάρτυρας	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1971, Nicosia		Ζαβαλλή / Φιλολογική Κύπρος	Severios
Εθνομάρτυρας Κυπριανός : 9η Ιουλίου 1821	Ιάκωβος Κυθρεώτης	1979, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Ιωαννίκιος	Άντρος Παυλίδης		1982-83 Cyprus National Theatre THOC		THOC (National Theatre of Cyprus) Library
Ο Άγιος Κοσμάς ο Αιτωλός	Σάββας Αντωνίου	1999, Limassol			Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus & Severios
Η Δούκισσα της Πλακεντίας	Μιχάλης Π. Μουστερής	1996, Limassol			Cyprus Library
Χατζηγιωργάκης Κορνέσιος ο Δραγουμάνος της Κύπρου (1779-1809)	Μιχάλης Π. Μουστερής	2000, Limassol			Cyprus Library
Το έπος του 1821	Όρθρου Αττικού	19--			Arch. Makarios
Η 9η Ιουλίου του 1821	Βασίλη Μιχαηλίδη (διασκευή δια το θέατρον Α.Κούρου)	19--		Ministry of Education and Culture Publication	Faneromeni
ΕΟΚΑ					
Η Δράσις του υπαρχηγού της ΕΟΚΑ Γρηγόρη Αυξεντίου	Αναστάσιος Μουσκος		1959	ΘΟΙ Αναλυόντα	Not Found
Παλληκάρκα της ΕΟΚΑ	Κώστας Σωκράτους	1959			Faneromeni
Η Μάχη στους Μύλους (1957-58) / Η Μάχη των Μύλων	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1960, Nicosia		Δελτίο Ελληνικού Πνευματικού Ομίλου, σειρά Λυρική Σκηνή 1960	University of Cyprus
Γρηγόρης Αυξεντίου: σε τρεις εικόνες	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1962, Nicosia		Πνευματική Κύπρος Journal	Cyprus Library
Η τελευταία νύχτα	Μίκης Γεωργίου Νικήτα	1963/1995, Nicosia			Cyprus Library
Νενίκηκεν το Θάνατο	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1964, Nicosia		Πνευματική Κύπρος Journal	Cyprus Library

Ώρα Λευτεριάς	Σοφοκλής Κωνσταντίνου	1995, Nicosia		Costas Epifaniou Publications	Cyprus Library
Μνήμες Αγώνα: Θεατρικά	Φάνος Ναθαναήλ	1997			Cyprus Library
ΕΟΚΑ Θρύλος 1955-59: Πράξεις έξη	Σώζος Πατής	1999, Astromeritis, Cyprus			Cyprus Library
Μεταξύ Αγγέλων: Τιμή και Δόξα στον Ήρωα Ιάκωβο Πατάτσο	Σοφοκλής Κωνσταντίνου	2002, Nicosia		Costas Epifaniou Publications	
Ανοχύρωτα Νιάτα: Τιμή και Δόξα στον Ήρωα Πετράκη Γιάλλουρο	Σοφοκλής Κωνσταντίνου	2002, Nicosia		Costas Epifaniou Publications	
Συλλείτουργο για τον Κυριάκο Μάτση	Πάνος Ιωαννίδης	2003, Nicosia		Συμβούλιο Ιστορικής Μνήμης Αγώνα ΕΟΚΑ	Faneromeni
Πατριωτικό θεατρικό έργο Ευαγόρας Παλλικαρίδης: παρμένο από τον αγώνα της ΕΟΚΑ	Αναστάσιος Μούσκος	2006			Limassol Municipal
Θάλαμος 9	Δέσπω Κονίζου-Λοιζιά	2006		Power Publishing	Limassol Municipal
Ευαγόρας, Το Δίλημμα	Αγγελική Σμυρλή	2007		Costas Epifaniou Publications	Cyprus Library
Religious Themes					
Ο Πύργος της Βαβέλ	Γλαύκος Αλιθέρσης	1937, Nicosia		Κυπριακά Γράμματα Publication	
Θεοτόκε η Ελπίς (Μυστήριο)	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1966, Nicosia	9.12.1963 CyBC Radio	Πνευματική Κύπρος / CyBC Radio Publication	
Μαρία Μαγδαληνή	Αγαθοκλής Σεργιδης				Not Found
Βαρνάβας: ο γυιός της παράκλησης	Κύπρος Χρυσάνθης	1977, Nicosia		Φιλολογική Κύπρος Journal	Severios
Ξενιτεία, ή, Έκδοση διαμαρτυρίας κυπριακού θεατρικού έργου	Ρήνα Κατσελλή	1988, Nicosia	ΘΟΚ 1989-90		Cyprus Library
Βαρνάβας και Παύλος	Αγγελική Σμυρλή	2007, Nicosia		Costas Epifaniou Publications	Cyprus Library

20th century history

Ηρωικό εμβατήριο	Τεύκρος Ανθίας	1941		Ερασιτεχνικός Όμιλος Συντεχνιών Λευκωσίας	
Στάλιγκραντ	Τεύκρος Ανθίας	1942, Cyprus		Ερασιτεχνικός Όμιλος Συντεχνιών Λευκωσίας	Severios
28η Οκτωβρίου	Δ. Χρυσοστόμου		1943	Πατριωτική ένωση Λάρνακας	Not Found
Αρματωλοί και κλέφτες	Τεύκρου Ανθία	1943, Cyprus			Faneromeni
Θύελλα στην Πίνδο	Απόστολος Ζορμπάς	1949			Not Found
Κόκκινη θύελα στην Κίνα	Γ. Φιλής	1949			Not Found
Η Σκλάβα Ελλάδα	Αναστάσιος Μούσκος	1950			Not Found
Η τραγωδία της Κρήτης	Αναστάσιος Μούσκος	1951/1962 (Cyprus)/1988		Δελτίο Ελληνικού Πνευματικού Ομίλου, σειρά Λυρική Σκηνή 1960	Cyprus Library
Συ που σκοτώθεις για το φως	Πάνος Ιωαννίδης	1964 / 2004, Nicosia		Πνευματική Κύπρος Journal / Armida	Limassol Municipal
Η Φαμίλια του Λευτέρη (μονόπρακτο εμπνευσμένο από τα γεγονότα των Χριστουγέννων του 1963)	Μιχάλης Πιτσιλλίδης	1964, Nicosia (in the volume *Μικρά Θεατρικά*)			Cyprus Library & University of Cyprus
Ο Γιατρός Αχμέτ Αλήμπεης	Ρήνα Κατσελλή	1964, Nicosia		Φιλογογική Κύπρος Journal (reprint)	Arch. Makarios
Αιματοβαμμένα Πάτρια Εδάφη: Θεατρικό πατριωτικό έργο παρμένο από τα ιστορικά γεγονότα της Δερύνειας τον Αύγουστο του 1996 στην Κύπρο	Αναστάσιος Μούσκος	1998, Nicosia			Limassol Municipal
Ατσάλινος Πύργος ή Η Μάχη της Αλβανίας	Απόστολος Ζορμπάς				Not Found
Βασίλης	Μάκης Αντωνόπουλος		Satiriko Theatre 2004		Satiriko Theatre Library

Undetermined					
Θάνατος στους Προδότες	Τεύκρος Ανθίας	1945			Not Found
Το Κρυφό Σχολιό	Μαρίνος Ξηρέας		early 1940s		Not Found
Νενικήκαμεν	Μαρίνος Ξηρέας		1951	Presented at Pancyprian Gymnasium	Not Found
Ηρωίς της Μακεδονίας			1942	Ελληνική Χριστιανική Ένωση Νέων (Βαρώσι)	Not Found

1.2 Polyenus and Diodorus Excerpts

The Texts can be found in Η Αρχαία Κύπρος εις τα Ελληνικάς Πηγάς, Κυριάκος Χ''Ιωάννου, Λευκωσία 1971. Εκδόσεις Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Κύπρου. Τόμος Α'. pp. 24-27

Both passages and their translations into Modern Greek are from Hadjikostis' book *Eponymous and Anonymous Paphians of Antiquity*:

τῆς βασιλικῆς της ἰδιότητας. Ὅπως γράφει ὁ Διόδωρος *(XX. 21, 1-3): «Ἀξιοθέα δὲ ἡ γυνὴ τοῦ Νικοκλέους ἀκούσασα τὴν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τελευτήν, τὰς μὲν θυγατέρας τὰς ἑαυτῆς παρθένους οὔσας ἀπέσφαξεν, ὅπως μηδεὶς αὐτῶν πολέμιος κυριεύσῃ, τὰς δὲ τῶν ἀδελφῶν τοῦ Νικοκλέους γυναῖκας προετρέψατο μεθ' αὑτῆς ἑλέσθαι τὸν θάνατον, οὐδὲν συντεταχότος Πτολεμαίου περὶ τῶν γυναικῶν, ἀλλὰ συγκεχωρηκότος αὐταῖς τὴν ἀσφάλειαν».* (Ἡ Ἀξιοθέα ὅμως, ἡ γυναίκα τοῦ Νικοκλῆ, μόλις ἄκουσε τὸν θάνατο τοῦ ἄντρα της, ἔσφαξε τὶς ἀνύπαντρες κόρες της, ὥστε νὰ μὴ τὶς πάρει κανένας ἀπὸ τοὺς ἐχθρούς, ἐνῶ προέτρεψε τὶς γυναῖκες τῶν ἀδελφῶν τοῦ Νικοκλῆ νὰ προτιμήσουν μαζί της τὸν θάνατο, μολονότι ὁ Πτολεμαῖος δὲν εἶχε διατάξει τίποτε γι' αὐτὲς (νὰ θανατωθοῦν), ἀλλὰ ἀντίθετα τοὺς εἶχε παραχωρήσει ἀσφάλεια).

Ὁ Πολύαινος *(VIII. 48, 1)* δίνει μὲ περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες τὰ τραγικὰ γεγονότα:

«Ἀξιοθέα, Νικοκλέους γυνή, Κυπρίων βασιλέως, πολλῶν ἡκόντων παρὰ Πτολεμαίου βασιλέως Αἰγύπτου καταλυσόντων τὴν ἀρχήν, ἐπειδὴ Νικοκλῆς μὲν αὐτὸν ἀνεκρέμασεν, οἱ δὲ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ σφᾶς αὐτοὺς κατέσφαξαν, αὕτη τὰς τῶν τετελευτηκότων ἀρετὰς ἐζήλωσε καὶ τάς τε ἀδελφὰς αὐτῶν, καὶ μητέρας, καὶ γυναῖκας συγκαλέσασα, ἔπεισε μηδὲν ἀνάξιον ὑπομεῖναι τοῦ γένους. Αἱ δέ, πεισθεῖσαι συνέκλεισαν μὲν ἀσφαλῶς τῆς γυναικωνίτιδος τὰς θύρας ἀναδραμοῦσαι δὲ ἐπὶ τὰ στέγη, τοῦ πλή-

θους τῶν πολιτῶν συνδεδραμηκότος, τὰ μὲν τέκνα φερόμεναι ἐν ταῖς ἀγκάλαις ἀπέσφαξαν, πῦρ δὲ ἐνεῖσαι τοῖς ὀρόφοις, αἱ μὲν τοῖς ξίφεσιν αὐτὰς διεχρήσαντο, αἱ δὲ εὐθαρσῶς τῇ φλογὶ προστρέχουσαι διεφθείροντο. Ἀξιοθέα δὲ στρατηγὸς ἦν ἐν τοῖς δεινοῖς ἀρίστη· ὅτε γὰρ εἶδεν εὐγενῶς ἁπάσας κειμένας, τότε καὶ αὐτὴ τὸ ξίφος καθεῖσα διὰ τῆς σφαγῆς, αὑτὴν ἔρριψεν εἰς τὴν φλόγα, ἵνα μηδὲ νεκροῦ σώματος οἱ πολέμιοι κρατήσωσιν».

(Ἡ Ἀξιοθέα, ἡ γυναίκα τοῦ Νικοκλῆ, βασιλιᾶ τῶν Κυπρίων, ὅταν ἔφθασαν πολλοί, σταλμένοι ἀπὸ τὸν Πτολεμαῖο τὸν βασιλιὰ τῆς Αἰγύπτου γιὰ νὰ καταργήσουν τὴν ἐξουσία του, ἐπειδὴ ὁ Νικοκλῆς κρεμάστηκε καὶ πέθανε καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί του σφάχτηκαν οἱ ἴδιοι, αὐτὴ ζήλεψε τὴν παλληκαριὰ τῶν πεθαμένων. Κι ἀφοῦ μάζεψε τὶς ἀδελφές τους, τὶς μητέρες καὶ τὶς γυναῖκες τους, τὶς ἔπεισε νὰ μὴ ἀνεχθοῦν τίποτε ἀνάξιο τῆς γενιᾶς τους. Κι αὐτὲς πείσθηκαν κι ἀφοῦ ἔκλεισαν γερὰ τὶς πόρτες τοῦ γυναικωνίτη ἀνέβηκαν γρήγορα στὶς στέγες (τοῦ παλατιοῦ). Ἐκεῖ μπροστὰ στὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολιτῶν, ποὺ εἶχε στὸ μεταξὺ συγκεντρωθεῖ, ἔσφαξαν τὰ παιδιά τους ποὺ κρατοῦσαν στὴν ἀγκαλιά τους. Ὕστερα, ἀφοῦ ἔβαλαν φωτιὰ στὶς στέγες, ἄλλες ἀπ' αὐτὲς αὐτοκτόνησαν μὲ ξίφη κι ἄλλες τρέχοντας μὲ θάρρος μέσα στὴ φωτιὰ καίγονταν. Καὶ ἡ Ἀξιοθέα ὅταν τὶς εἶδε ὅλες νὰ τελειώνουν τὴ ζωή τους γενναῖα, μπήγοντας ἕνα ξίφος στὸ κορμί της, ρίχτηκε στὶς φλόγες, ὥστε οἱ ἐχθροὶ νὰ μὴ πάρουν οὔτε τὸ νεκρὸ σῶμα της).

1.3 Song of Arodafnousa

Κάπου στραφτεί κάπου βροντά,
κάπου χαλάζιν ρίβκει,
κάπου Θεός εθέλησεν μιαν χώραν ν' αναύρη.
Μήτε στραφτεί μήτε βροντά,
μήτε χαλάζιν ρίβκει,
μήτε Θεός εθέλησεν μιαν χώραν ν' αναύρη,
μονόντας εν η ρήαινα τες σκλάβες της τζιαί δέρνει,
τζιαί δέρνει τζιαί σκοτώνει τες,
για να της μολοήσουν,
πκοιάν αγαπά ο ρήας της τζιαί πκοιάν εν π' αγκαλίζει.
Τζιαί πκοιάν βαλεί στ' αγκάλια του την νύκταν τζιαί τζοιμίζει.
Τζιαί πολοάται η σκλάβα της, της ρήαινας τζιαί λέει:
- Αν σου το πω τζυράκκα μου, έσσιεις με σκοτωμένην,
τζ' αν σου το φήκω στο κρυφόν, είμαι θανατισμένη.
Τζιαί πολοάται η ρήαινα της σκλάβας της τζιαί λέει:
- Μα το σπαθίν που ζώννουμαι, που πα ομπρός τζιαί πίσω,
τζείνον να ένει ο χάρος μου, σκλάβα μου αν σου τζίσω.
Τζιαί πολοάται η σκλάβα της, της ρήαινας τζιαί λέει:
- Πάνω στην πάνω γειτονιάν έσσιει τρεις αερφάες,
την μιαν λαλούν την η Ροδού, την άλλην Αδορούσαν
η τρίτη η καλλύττερη εν η Αροδαφνούσα,
τον μήναν που γεννήθητζεν ούλλα τα δέντρ' ανθθούσαν,
επέφταν τ' άνθθη πάνω της τζιαί μυρωδκιοκοπούσαν.
Ροδόστεμμαν εν η Ροδού, γλυκόν εν η Αδορούσα,
μα το φιλίν του βασιλιά εν γιά την Αροδαφνούσαν.
Τζείνην εν π' αγαπά ο αφέντης μου, τζείνην εν π' αγκαλίζει
τζείνην βάλει στ' αγκάλια του, την νύκταν τζιαί πλαγίζει,
που το μάθεν ο Βασιλιάς τζεί πάει τζιαί κονεύκει.
Που το μάθεν η ρήαινα, αρκώθην τζιαί θυμώθην,
Κάθεται γράφ' έναν χαρτίν, γλήορις το βουλλώνει
τζιαί δια το της, της σκλάβας της, στ' Αροδαφνούν να πάρει
χαπάρκα τζιαί μυνύνατα πεμπεί της για να πάει.

Τζ’ έπηρεν ούλλον το στρατίν, ούλλον το μονοπάτιν,
το μονοπάτιν βκάλλει την στ’ Αροδαφνούς τα σπίδκια,
τζιαί πολοάται η σκλάβα της Αροδαφνούς τζιαί λέει:
- Άνου να πας Αροδαφνού, τζ’ ωσγοιάν αν θέλεις πάμεν
Άνου να πάμεν Ροδαφνού τζ’ η ρήαινα σε θέλει
- Τζιαί μέναν σκλάβα η ρήαινα που μέ’ δεν, που με ξέρει!
Ίντα με θέλει ρήαινα, ίντα’ν το μήνιμαν της;
τζιαί αν με θέλει για χορόν, να πκιάσω τα μαντήλια,
αν ένι για το γέμωσμα, να πκιάσω τα λαήνια,
αν ένι για το ζύμωμαν, να πάρω τες σανίες,
τζ’ αν ένι για μαείρεμαν, να πάρω τες κουτάλες.
Τζιαί πολοάται η σκλάβα της Αροδαφνούς τζιαί λέει:
- Άνου να πάμε Ροδαφνού, τζ’ ότι αν θέλης πκιάσε.
Τζ’ επκιάσεν τ’ ανικτάριν της, τζιαί στο σεντούτζιν πάει,
τζ’ έβκαλεν τα παλλιά ρούχα, φόρησεν τα καλά της
π’ αππέσσω βάλλει πλουμιστά, π’ αππέξω γρουσαφένα,
τέλεια που πάνω έβαλεν τα μαρκαριταρένα,
καζακκάν ολόγρουσον φορεί, γρουσόν μαλαματένον,
ποδά κομμάτιν λασμαρίν, να μεν την πκιάνει ο ήλιος,
ποζιεί γρουσόν μήλον κρατεί, τζιαι παίζει το τζιαί πάει.
Τζιαί βάλλει βάγιες που τ’ ομπρός, τζιαί βάγιες που τα πίσω,
τζιαί βάγιες που τα δκυο πλευρά τζιαί πέρνουν την τζιαί πάει,
τζ’ επολοήθην τζ’ είπεν τους, των βάγιων της, τζιαί λέει:
- Έλατε, βάγιες μου καλές στης ρήαινας να πάμεν,
γιατί εν ενί θέλημαν θεού,
πόψε εις την εκκλησσιάν αντίερον να φάμεν.
Επήραν ούλλον το στρατίν, ούλλον το μονοπάτιν,
το μονοπάτιν βκάλει τες στης ρήαινας τον πύρκον.
Εβκέην έναν το σκαλίν, τζιαί σούστην τζ’ ελυίστην,
εβκέην τζ’ άλλον το σκαλίν τζ’ ενιφτοκανατζίστην,
τέλεια στο πάνω το σκάλιν τζ’ η ρήαινα την νώθη,
φωνάζει τζιαί της σκλάβας της, τσαέραν γιά να φέρη.
Που την θωρεί η ρήαινα έμεινεν σπαγιασμένη:
- Είδα την τζιαί σπαγιάστηκα, τζ’ άντρας μου πως να μείνει!

- Τζ’ ώρα καλή σου ρήαινα.
- Καλός την πέρτικαν μου!
Καλός ήρτες Αροδαφνού, να φας να πκιής μετά μας
- Εγιώ εν ήρτα ρήαινα, να φα να ξεφαντώσω,
παρά βουλήν μου έπεψες τζιαί ήρτεν να με πάρη.
Ρωτά την τζιαί ξαννοίει την πκιάν αγαπά ο ρήας.
- Εγιώ τζυρά μου ρήαινα, χαπάριν εν το έχω.
Τζιαί τζει χαμαί η ρήαινα έκαμεν τζει να πάει
τζιαί πολοάτ’ Αροδαφνού τζιαί λέει τζιαί λαλεί της:
- Άδε την αναρκοδοντούν, την τουμπομετοπούσαν,
το πετινάριν το τσιφνόν, καλά μου το λαλούσαν !
Η ρήαινα εν άκουσεν,
οι σκλάβες της που τουν τζεί χαμαί, τζείνες εν που τ' ακούσαν
τζ' επήαν εις την ρήαιναν τζιαί λέουν τζιαί λαλούν της:
- Τζιαί να’ ξερες τζυράκκα μου, Αροδαφνού ιντά πεν!
Άδε την αναρκοδοντούν, την τουμπομετοπούσαν,
το πετινάριν το τσιφνόν, καλά μου το λαλούσαν!
Κάθεται γράφ’ έναν χαρτίν, γλήορις το βουλλώνη
τζιαί δια το εις στην σκλάβα της, Αροδαφνούς να πάρη
Χαπάρκα τζιαί μηνύματα πάλε στην Ροδαφνούσαν
- Άνου να παμεν Ροδαφνού, τζ’ η ρήαινα σε θέλει.
Τζιαί πολοάται η Αροδαφνού της σκλάβας της τζιαί λέει:
- Τωρά μουν εις την ρήαιναν, πάλε ίντα με θέλει!
- Άνου να πάμεν Ροδαφνού τωρά εν που σε θέλει.
Έμπην έσσω τζιαί έφκαλεν τα ρούχα τα καλά της
τζιαί φόρισεν τα μαύρα της τα ρούχα τα παλιά της,
μαυρίζει τζιαί το μήλον της, τζιαί πέζει το τζιαί πάει
τζιαί πολοήθην τζ’ είπεν τους τζιαί λέει τζιαί λαλεί τους:
- Τζ’ ελάτε βάγιες δαχαμέ να ποσσιαιρετιστούμεν,
γιατ’ εν ηξέρω βάγιες μου αν ενά ξαναβρεθούμεν
τζιαί που σα πάω βάγιες μου, πού σ’ αποσσιαιρετώ σας
γιατ’ εν ηξέρω βάγιες μου, πκιόν αν τζιαί ξαναδώ σας.
Έσσιετε γειάν ψηλά βουνά, τζιαί κλίνη που τζοιμούμουν,
τζ’ αυλή που δκιατζενεύκουμουν, τόποι που δκιατζενούμουν.

Τζ’ επήρεν ούλλον το στρατίν, ούλλον το μονοπάτιν,
το μονοπάτιν βκάλει την στης ρήαινας το πύρκον.
- Ίντα με θέλεις ρήαινα, τζ’ ίνταν το θελημάν σου;
Που την θωρεί η ρήαινα που τα μαλιά την πκιάννει.
- Ελα να πάμεν Ροδαφνού, τζ’ ο κάμινος αφταίννει.
Τζιαί πολοάτε η Αροδαφνού της ρήαινας τζιαί λέει:
- Τζιαί χάμνα με που τα μαλλιά, τζιαί πκιάσ’με που το σσιέριν.
Χαμνά την απού τα μαλλιά, πκιάννει την που το σσιέριν.
Τζιαί βάλλει μιαν φωνήν μιτσσιάν τζιαί μιαν φωνήν μεάλην.
Τζ’ ο ρήας εις την περασσιάν, εσείστην η πιννιά του,
πάνω στο φαν, πάνω στο πιείν, ο ρήας την ακούει:
- Μουλλώστε ούλλα τα βκιολιά τζιαί ούλλα τα λαούτα,
τουτ’ η φωνή, που ξέβικεν, εν της Αροδαφνούσας,
Τζιαί φέρτε μου τον μαύρον μου, σελλοχαλινωμένον.
Ππηά, καβαλλιτζεύκει τον, σαν ήτουν μαθημένος
τζ’ ώστι να πεί έσσιετε γειάν, έκοψεν σσίλια μίλια,
τζ’ ώστι να πουν εις το καλόν, στης ρήαινας τον πύρκον.
Βρίσκει την πόρταν βαωτήν, βάλλει φωνήν μεάλην
Έλ’ άννοιξε μου, ρήαινα, Σαρατζηνοί με τρέχουν,
Σαρατζηνοί με τα σπαθκιά, Φράντζοι με τες κουρτέλλες.
Τζιαί πολοάται η ρήαινα τζιαι λέει τζιαί λαλεί του:
- Έπαρ’ μου λλίην πομονήν, λλίην καρτερωσύνην,
γεναίκαν έχω στο τζελλίν, πέρκιμον την γεννήσω.
Κλοτσσιάν της πόρτας έδωκεν, όξω’ τουν, τζ’ έσσω βρέθην,
θωρεί τζιαι την Αροδαφνούν χαμαί στην γην σφαμένην,
τζιαί πκιάννει τζιαί την ρήαιναν, στον κάμινον την βάλλει.
Αγκάδκιασεν στην κόξαν του, τζ’ ηύρεν χρυσόν φηκάριν,
μέσα στο χρυσοφήκαρον, βρισκ’ αρκυρόν μασσιέριν,
στους ουρανούς το πάταξεν, στο σσιέριν του ευρέθην,
τζιαί πάλε ξανασύρνει το, εις την καρκιάν του έμπην.
Τζ’ επκιάσαν τους τζ’ εθάψαν τους τζεί πάνω πον τα τζιόνια.
Τζιαί τζείνος που το έβκαλεν, σαν ποιητής λοάται,
τζείνου πρέπει μακάρισι τζ’ εμέναν ως παλλά τε.