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**Abstracts****The Wall and the Wallpaper: Thoughts on the Afterlife of Lyricism***Dionysis Kapsalis*

T. S. Eliot's writings lend this paper its title and its theme: what is the relationship between illusion and reality in poetic discourse? However the approach is no doubt post-new-critical, especially in the way it problematizes the issue of the reader/public of poetry and the cultural identity of the poet. This is often determined by "embarrassment", a feeling that negatively conditions the poet's answer to the question "what is the function of poetry": can, after all the wallpaper save us when the walls have collapsed? Or is there always a Harpo Marx holding a wall that will collapse as soon as he moves to the next scene of the film?

**Notes on Modern Greek Poetry***Katerina Anghelaki-Rooke*

The paper evaluates the legacy of our great poets – Seferis, Elytis, Ritsos – in terms of recent poetic production, given that they all had as a main poetic task to define or redefine our Greekness in the present time. For Seferis Greekness is this peculiar feeling, a glance that combines "ancient statues and contemporary sorrow", meaning, of course, the Asia Minor disaster. Elytis found the line that unites all moments of Greekness in the sensation of the Aegean Sea. As to our poetics now, we can say that we witness a more private vision: the poet turns almost solely to himself, to the examination of his or her personal history in order to find the source of poetic inspiration. Parallely there is a search in terms of language and form. Kiki Dimoula – an established poet of an older generation – in her very recent book plays increasingly with language, D. Kapsalis returns to rhyming, while Haris Vlavianos, says: "In poetry nothing is real except the exaggeration of the self".

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### **Greek Poetry in the Late Twentieth Century**

*Pantelis Boukalas*

The paper examines the Modern Greek poetic production of the last quarter of the twentieth century. It asks first a number of methodological questions, of which the most crucial is if this analysis should focus on poetry reviewed and studied during that period. The paper then considers the poetry under question in relation to past poetry in an attempt to discern changes of language, style, morals, form, etc., and weighs the “burden” of the seven-year dictatorship (1967-1974). It concludes by presenting “suffering” as the only property of the poet.

### **Communism and Poetry**

*Stathis Gourgouris*

This essay poses certain theoretical questions regarding the curious (but substantially evident) phenomenon of many of twentieth-century’s most experimental poets being avowed (albeit maverick) communists. The first part of the essay suggests a series of dialectical questions for further examination, built on a constitutive antagonism between the desire to control historical knowledge and the poetic daring to invent the historical horizon. The second part of the essay pursues, as a way of illustration, a comparative reading of two poems by Ritsos and Alexandrou.

### **Fantasies of the Feminine in Contemporary Greek Women Poets**

*Ekaterini Douka-Kabitoğlu*

The paper discusses the work of nine contemporary Greek women poets – Katerina Anghelaki-Rooke, Olga Broumas, Kiki Dimoula, Zoe Karelli, Maria Laina, Jenny Mastoraki, Pavlina Pamboudi, Athina Papadaki, and Andia Frantzi – within a broad feminist context as presented through French theorists like Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva and Hélène Cixous and also American poet-critics, mainly Adrienne Rich. It explores the way in which women poets writing in Greece today receive and react to the basic issues raised by feminist thinking, such as the muteness and double bind

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imposed on women authors by patriarchy, the self-conception and self-expression of the woman/creator, the relation to the (misogynistic) myths and tales of tradition, the need to articulate the feminine fantasies and perception of the world. Above all, the paper traces the attempt to reject stereotypes, to retrieve women's experience of history through the revisionary telling of women's stories, and to bring the female Imaginary into the male Symbolic, standing (perilously) on the edge of a linguistic system that has systematically ignored them.

### **Greek Poetry Elsewhere**

*Karen Van Dyck*

Experimental texts by contemporary women writers such as Olga Broumas, Kay Cicellis, Diamanda Galas, Eleni Sikelianos, Thalia Selz, Irini Spanidou and Soti Triantafillou produced between Greece and the United States foreground issues of multilingualism and translation. These texts written in a hybrid language of Greek and English, invite us to think about the material specificity of different languages. Rather than treating linguistic translation simply as a metaphor for cultural translation, these experimental texts challenge received notions about immigration and other forms of physical displacement by making us look at these experiences through the linguistic thicket of translation. For these writers, travel between Greece and America, whether real or imagined, is a linguistic enterprise. It describes the particular way the Greek language inhabits their use of English – whether it is the transliterated Greek vowel sounds in Broumas's poetry or the surreal-sounding literal translation of Greek sayings in Spanidou's novel *God's Snake*. What their writing suggests is that in an age when movement between places is only getting easier, the difficulty of linguistic translation can keep us attentive to globalization's imperfect balance of power.

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**Drowning in White Ink: The Feminine in the Poetry of Katerina Anghelaki-Rooke and Eleni Vakalo**

*Liana Sakelliou-Schultz and Christina Dokou*

The influence exerted on contemporary women poets (as women and as artists, by the patriarchal traditions of the canon is examined here through the comparative analysis of selected works by Anghelaki-Rooke and Vakalo. The particularities of the Greek cultural context are, of course, accounted for; however, the investigation focuses mainly on tracing and analysing within the poems elements which contemporary feminist theory would identify as constituents of *écriture féminine*. The term, a product of the “French” feminism of Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva, denotes textual markers such as body-centered thematics; an experimental attitude towards language, form and meaning; use of circular time; references to the bonds of motherhood; a fluidity of identity; and an exploration of feminine sensibility – all of which not only appear in, but essentially characterize the work of the two Greek women poets. If, however, the exercise of *écriture féminine* is an act of pure feminist empowerment for the French theoreticians and authors, the undercurrents of the traditionally patriarchal Greek society, as felt in the poetry of Anghelaki-Rooke and Vakalo, do not allow for a similar, wholly positive outcome. To the extent, then, that the personal poetic experience can be said to reflect the tendencies and the questions of an entire society, the conclusion drawn from these two paradigms is that the use of “white ink” – the milk of motherhood, which Cixous sees as a fundamental means of expression in feminine writing – is, for the Greek 20<sup>th</sup> century literary canon, as ambiguous and obstacle ridden as it is inevitable and vital.

**An Untimely Poetry: The Call of Haris Vlavianos’  
*Angel of History***

*Assimina Karavanta*

The paper explores Haris Vlavianos’ poetry, with a particular focus on *The Angel of History*, as an “untimely poetry” that is blessed by the superfluous, the marginal, the footnote and the everyday and seeks, through the banality and often grim penumbra of the superfluous, the luminous excess that the grand narratives of

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modern Greek poetry have often sacrificed at the altar of the necessary, that is, the modern. Vlavianos' poetry completely and utterly demythologizes the modern and unconceals the nightmares of its dreams by speaking the silence of the margin in scenes of death and life, and visions of truth and darkness, without restoring them in a picture that renders them sensible and, thus, comprehensible. Hence, it is an "untimely poetry" for it acts counter to our time and on our time hopefully for the benefit of telling and retelling its stories, visions and scenes with the utmost and most painstaking sincerity. Its effort is to see through the curtain of the stage and beyond the "masquerade" of the history that veils the untrue to project it as the essential, and distorts the true to reduce it to the place of the footnote of the historical text.

#### **The Writer as Poet-Creator in Yiorgos Cheimonas' Work**

*Sophia Chatziioannidou*

The article traces the lines in Yiorgos Cheimonas' work that sketch the portrait of a creator. What constitutes creation, in the sense of writing, what is the ambition of the subject that comes to speak poetically, that is to utter a speech so personal as universal? In a type of writing that faces literature, both poetry and prose, in a unique way it searches through the limits of writing and speech, the responsibility, the power and also the freedom of the creator. Through a very modern thinking about speech, as Cheimonas' is, very traditional concepts in the theological register, such as *poiein*, are examined.

#### **Writing Wrongs, (Re)Righting (Hi)story?: "Orthotita" and "Ortho-graphia" in Thanassis Valtinos's *Orthokosta***

*Vangelis Calotychos*

The debates over postmodernism have prompted some historians to condemn the way in which literary and cultural critics flirt with facts (or "facts", to be more precise). It is rarely the case that literary critics turn on historians for shortcomings in their reading literature; even when, haughtiness aside, this approach might prove constructive. One such instance might be in undertaking a critical appreciation of the response of leftist historians to the Greek no-

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velist Thanassis Valtinos's *Orthokosta* of 1994. The novel, which considers events related to the Greek Civil War, provoked the most heated cultural debate in Greece, in the summer after its publication. This article focuses on the relation of Valtinos's challenging novel, and the ensuing debate, to the ongoing textual and ideological confrontation with that war. It places the issue in the equally anxiogenic field of historiography and literature, and considers how one reads and writes *correctly* about matters that defy such ambitions. The article maintains that a close reading of the novel's paratexts will show how the debate over these issues had already been staged, and theorized, in the book itself.