

she regards as outlandish, if not indecent (she is incredulous when told what a good Greek word such as ‘elpis’ sounds like in French). The everyday spoken language of the Greek community of the City, which even in the original book required footnotes, is a fascinating challenge for the translator, replete as it is with dialect forms, loan words, codeswitching and bilingualism. The publisher’s approach, as with the Papadiamantis stories in the same series, is to encourage each translator to find his or her own solution for a particular text—which is surely wise. Norma Aynsley Sourmeli’s ‘Translator’s Note’ to *Loxandra* describes how she drew on the speech of her own Northumbrian grandparents to suggest the ‘immediacy and verve and banter’ of the Greek. The resulting verbal style is engaging and expressive, absorbing idiomatic rhythms and flavours while avoiding the linguistic and cultural incongruities of an ‘equivalent’ variety of English. (There is no equivalent.) This translation has a few footnotes (different from those in the original, but equally useful): they gloss Turkish words and explain cookery, gesture, religious customs, folk remedies and other social details. There are also explanatory endnotes, filling in the broader historical and cultural context, and a glossary. One interesting endnote concerns the meaning of ‘romiosýni’—a significant aspect of *Loxandra*’s identity and outlook. (It is fitting that this translation should be published in Denise Harvey’s *Romiosyni Series*.)

The moment is ripe for a re-consideration of Maria Iordanidou herself, who has never fitted neatly into a chronological history of Greek literature; born in 1897, she should by rights belong to the generation of the 30s, but she wrote *Loxandra*, her first book, when she was already sixty-five. Her work also challenges ideas of genre. *Loxandra* is part fictionalised autobiography and part family memoir, but can also be seen as a variation on a specifically Greek literary mode: ‘ithografía’, but in an urban setting. Its mode, though seemingly oral, is crafted and ‘literary’.

Since the book was adapted for television in 1980, Greek interest in Constantinople, and other ‘lost lands’, has grown dramatically, with memoirs, exhibitions, concerts, themed restaurants and escorted tours; both Greek and international audiences responded enthusiastically to the film *Polítiki Kouzína* (distributed in the UK as *A Touch of Spice*). It would be good to think that English-language readers can now enjoy *Loxandra*, as they have recently embraced other, far lesser, books with a Greek theme.

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Dimitris Tziouvas (ed.) *Greece in Crisis: The Cultural Politics of Austerity*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., International Library of Historical Studies 108, 2017. Pp. xii, 323.
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Commentary on the seemingly endless ‘Greek crisis’ and the irrepressible spectre of ‘Grexit’ must surely have by now exhausted all possible permutations of explanation

and recrimination. Both the debtor nation and its troika of creditors have been comprehensively pilloried, and those of us living in the thick of things might well be wary of a bookful of yet more analysis. However, there is much for all to applaud in the volume *Greece in Crisis: the Cultural Politics of Austerity*. It inevitably engages with the well-worn litanies of blame, but not for more finger-wagging. As Dimitris Tziouvas explains in his editorial introduction, the volume ventures into the uncharted waters of cultural response to the economic crisis and explores how it has caused Greeks, both at home and in the diaspora, to interrogate their culture and identity. He concedes that only a provisional assessment of the consequences of this ongoing deadlock is possible at this point and hopes to provoke dialogue and orientate research in an eventual post-crisis era. Anticipation of future developments and calls for further research duly form a leitmotif in subsequent chapters (e.g. 154 and 291 f.).

The twelve constituent contributions draw upon diverse fields of scholarship ranging from archaeology and museology to film studies, from linguistics and literary hermeneutics to sociology, ethnic studies and musicology—and, inevitably, economics.

Three broad, overlapping themes emerge: cultural ideology (with particular reference to the role of antiquity), centrifugalism, and the artistic expression of both in various media.

The first explores the ideological underpinning of responses to antiquity in a variety of contexts, ranging from local and international media (Tziouvas, Ch. 1) to contemporary street art (Tulke, Ch. 8), and from the ‘authentication rituals’ surrounding archaeological finds (Plantzos, Ch. 2) to curatorial practices in the exhibition of classical and Byzantine antiquities (Gazi, Ch. 6). The cultural ideology behind the organization of festivals of ‘classical’ music in Greece is also analysed with particular attention to their funding and reception (Levidou, Ch. 7).

Centrifugalism, actual or imagined, is observed in the ‘utopias’, ‘anti-utopias’ and ‘dystopias’ of contemporary Greek prose fiction (Boletzi, Ch. 11), in escape-to-country ecological lifestyles (Stauning Willert, Ch. 9), and escape-from-country (emigration mainly of professionals to northern Europe—Labrianidis and Pratsinakis, Ch. 3). A bizarre manifestation of this theme can also be seen in Greek-American attempts to restore lustre to the internationally tarnished image of Greeks through social media (Anagnostou, Ch. 4).

Artistic responses to cultural and economic conditions before the crisis and during its evolution are explored in film-production (Papadimitriou, Ch. 5), graffiti and street art (Tulke, Ch. 8 and Boletzi, Ch. 11), and in prose fiction (Felisa Barbeito, Ch. 10 and Boletzi, Ch. 11). Albeit less emphatically, the volume also comments on poetic responses (cf. Tziouvas 5 f. and 10 f.), and, curiously perhaps, only incidentally on popular music genres, warranting a mere footnote in Goutsos and Hatzidaki, Ch. 12 (note 33). Increasing ‘westernization’ in performance, even where folk lyrics and traditional instruments are involved, may partly explain this or possibly signal a topic for future musicological research.

The book-cover eloquently illustrates a crucial irony permeating the volume: a commissioned mural on an Athenian apartment block features a pair of hands clasped in prayer, but pointing earthwards rather than to the heavens. The volume's contents also convey a sense of hope beyond witnessing changes in Greek identity and some positive cultural spin-offs from the crisis—Tziovas discerns 'an explosion of creativity' (5) and a worldwide creative drive (9).

Cultural practices in Greece are seen to have been brought into a state of tension between continuity with a past now viewed with some suspicion; change is either desired or feared. And this in the context (outlined by Tziovas in Ch. 1) of feelings of personal and collective indignation, melancholy, victimhood, and national trauma. Also fears of regression to a pre-modern past, xenophobia, and defensive forms of nationalism. On the other hand, there are suggestions throughout the volume that adversity has precipitated some overdue self-reflection, re-imagination and inventiveness.

It is no small irony that Greek fiction is credited (p. 6, note 21) with having rung early warning bells of impending doom in the decadent years of the late post-junta era (*metapolitefsi*), but in opaque science fiction or obfuscating parodies and allegories. Felisa Barbeito (Ch. 10) and Boletsi (Ch. 11) argue that it took more direct reference to the crisis in Sotiris Dimitriou's futuristic visions and Petros Markaris' crime-fiction to drive home the extent of the nation's discontent with the status quo and its hidebound institutions.

Street art and film are even less indulgent of national sacred cows, with the education system and the Greek family singled out for memorable drubbings, as authors reveal (respectively 45, fig. 1.4, and 5). Indeed, so-called 'Weird Wave' films such as *Dogtooth* (2009), *Attenberg* (2010), *Miss Violence* (2013) and *A Blast* (2014) all foreground 'failed social collectivity' (Boletsi 240) and profound distrust of human relations. Tziovas (5) sees this as a counterbalance to negative media coverage on Greece at a global level.

The book's overall argument is perhaps not best served by the organization and structuring of chapters 7 and 12, but this does not seriously detract from its value as an in-depth, interdisciplinary investigation of the politics of austerity and their impact on Greek culture. Indeed, the multi-disciplinary approach is a laudable aspect of the whole undertaking. It both does justice to the complexity of the subject and highlights its global significance.

Moreover, an implicit sub-text of the book foreshadows a future for Greek Studies as a necessarily multidisciplinary area of inquiry: it seems to have disengaged itself from the exclusive study of literature in the original which restricted its bona fide investigators to a handful of hellenophone *philologoi*.

Notwithstanding this, all chapters seem to interpret cultural products and activities much as one would a literary text, thus restoring the value of reading nuances in the original.

Monolectic graffiti declarations in Athens such as the middle-voiced βασανίζομαι (I'm tormented/I'm being tortured/I'm suffering) and the self-referential λάθος ('mistake', with its 'ω' often underlined in red paint) illustrate that street art and literature are best treated as 'continuous performance' open to interpretative plurality rather than granting access to fixed or concrete truths.

Indeed in one of the volume's outstanding chapters, the ambiguities of the aforementioned graffiti art are used to explain the complexities of Sotiris Dimitriou's novella *Close to the Belly* and warn against treating 'crisis discourse' as a potentially all-explaining master narrative (Boletsis 274 ff.).

Similarly, Anagnostou (Ch. 4) offsets the exhortations directed by prosperous Greek-Americans to their Helladic brethren to adopt their capitalist ethos, with inconvenient reminders of the structural causes of poverty in Greece and the different scope for social mobility in the two countries (118 ff.).

To end with some seemingly trivial but telling personal observations from the thick of things on Greece's changing culture, for the reader to ponder in the light of the insights derived from the volume under review: in coffee culture, *frappé* is no longer the beverage of choice; in restaurants one is now routinely asked how one's beef is to be cooked; and interest in personal counselling and psychotherapy courses is at an all-time high.

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