

haul, given the length and complexity of the text; its paucity attests to a triumph of the translator's art.

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Katerina Krikos-Davis (ed.), George Seferis, *Μέρες Η* (2 Γενάρη 1961–16 Δεκέμβρη 1963) and *Μέρες Θ* (1 Φεβρουαρίου 1964–11 Μάη 1971). Pp. 384 + 352 Athens: Ikaros 2018, 2019.
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In addition to his internationally acclaimed poetry and wide-ranging, thought-provoking essays, Seferis was a lifelong personal and political diarist. The results offer invaluable insights into the life of the man, the poet, the thinker, and the diplomat. Much of this material has already been published. The two-volume *Political Diary* (1935–52), edited by A. Xydis, appeared in 1979 and 1985, and Seferis himself edited the first five volumes of his personal diaries (1925–51), under the Cavafian title *Meres* (Days); these were published posthumously, beginning with vol. 5 (1945–51), from 1973 onwards.¹ Two more edited volumes, 6 (Panayotis Mermingas) and 7 (Theano Michaelidou) followed in 1986 and 1990 respectively. The exemplary work of the Seferis expert Katerina Krikos-Davis now completes this 46-year publishing journey with the last two volumes (8–9). K-D's dense and informative introductions, extensive and illuminating footnotes, clear translations of passages in other languages, and invaluable appendices all contribute to make perusal of these two final volumes a highly rewarding experience.

Meres 8 and 9 cover historic events in which Seferis the poet and Seferiadis the diplomat played leading roles, covering his last two years as Greece's Ambassador to the Court of St James and the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1963; they contain his thoughts on the resolution of the Cyprus crisis and indirect references to the military Junta, which he publicly denounced on the BBC, and the consequences of this action (he was denied a passport to travel abroad).² We also witness his ardent wish to return to Greece and finally settle in his own home, with all his papers around him, for the first time in decades;³ and we see him (re-)visiting places dear to him at home (Delphi, Amorgos, the Acropolis) and abroad (Toledo), or in order to receive honours and read his poetry, following the Nobel award (Princeton, Pittsburgh, Cambridge, Oxford but also Thessaloniki). Finally, we read some extremely interesting

1 Vol. 5 (1945–51) was published first, in 1973. Vols 1 and 2 followed.

2 The matter is recorded extensively in vol. 9, pp. 218–30.

3 As K-D reminds us in the introduction to vol. 9 (p. 11), Seferis had expressed this in a letter to Theotokas in the spring of 1963.

thoughts on aesthetic matters relating to poetry, painting, sculpture and music as Seferis encounters leading intellectuals and artists (Eliot, Bacon, Malraux, Pound), attends plays, and visits exhibitions.

As with volumes 6 and 7, these are diaries which Seferis did not have time to edit, leaving past and present editors with uneven raw material and the need to have recourse to other sources. K-D has consulted Seferis' desk diaries, which record his daily official duties, but also, fortunately for present purposes, his thoughts on events and news of interest to him, sometimes with newspaper clippings attached. She has also used his notebooks, his diaries 'proper' and his pocket diaries. In all this, K-D had the invaluable support of both Maro Seferis and Anna Londou, who were able to elucidate unclear entries and provide personal reminiscences to supplement the (at times) cryptic information in Seferis' notes. As did Mermingas and Michaelidou, K-D includes translations of all the passages in foreign languages. K-D, however, differs from the practice of the earlier editors in harmonizing punctuation: she eliminates Seferis' omnipresent dashes in all but the most uncertain cases, replacing them with the appropriate punctuation mark 'usually a full stop' (8.55). She also places the footnotes at the bottom of the page, which greatly enhances the reader's experience.

K-D's editing, which draws on extensive research in the Seferis Archive in the Gennadius Library, is detailed, careful and intended for the benefit and enrichment of the reader. To give but one example, her introduction to volume 8 stands as a research essay in its own right, providing an invaluable overview of Seferis' relationship with Britain and offering fascinating details hitherto unknown to the wider public. We read, for example, of Nicholas Bachtin's article in *The Link* on Seferis' translation of Eliot's *The Waste Land* (8.12 and fn 3). K-D also provides a detailed discussion of Seferis' own 'editing' practice, dispelling the widely held view that he carefully engineered his image for the public and for posterity (8.53–4). She also takes the innovative step of offering the reader an unedited sample of his official, administrative writing (8.162–3).

The appendices are a unique feature of these twin volumes. In them, K-D publishes important material for the first time. Vol. 8 includes a letter which Seferis never sent to Zissimos Lorenzatos, in response to his essay 'The lost centre', included in the volume *For Seferis*. Seferis never sent this important essay-letter, which preoccupied him for ten months (early February to late November 1962) (8.38 and 311–325), but it is one example of the treasures unearthed by K-D in the course of her meticulous research. It also bears witness to the trust and support of Maro Seferis, who gave K-D access to the Lorenzatos file. Two more examples should be mentioned here: the inclusion at the end of vol. 9 of notes Seferis kept as he was tidying up his papers, harking back to his pre-1925 years; and the remainder of his 1916 diary. These are contained in Appendices II and III, providing yet more interesting information (such as a positive comment by Cavafy on some lines by Stelios Seferiadis) (9.272–3) and bringing the diaries (and the diarist's life) full circle.

Meres 8 and 9 were to be Seferis' last diaries. They exude an image of the artist that is familiar but at the same time more intense; excited but also disillusioned; full of energy

and freedom to be the poet and thinker that he wants to be, but also tired and acutely aware of his own mortality, the ‘ageing of his body and his face’.⁴ Death haunted Seferis from an early stage, but it permeates the last volume of *Meres* with myriad references to his failing health and the approaching end he seems to sense. It is also the cause of a persistently reflective mood and his return yet again (and understandably) to his pre-1925 life and lost childhood paradise. K-D’s inclusion of all this material in the appendix of vol. 9 offers the reader valuable insights into the poet’s mind and heart.

As Seferis reflects on what a diary is and what it means to him, one is reminded of what he wrote in *Meres* 5 in 1950: ‘μια “μποτίλια στο πέλαγο” ακόμη, ιδιωτική τούτη τη φορά. Μπορεί να βοηθήσει κι αυτή, ποιος ξέρει, άλλους θαλασσινούς σαν εμένα’.⁵ Just as the diaries of others nourished him intellectually (in his last years, he reads the diaries of Virginia Woolf, Albert Camus, André Gide and Matsuo Bashō), Seferis hopes that his own βιαστικές σημειώσεις, direct, spontaneous impressions that caught his eye (9.142), will guide and enrich the intellectual pursuits of the generations of the future. An invaluable legacy indeed!

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Petros T. Pizanias, *The Making of the Modern Greeks, 1400–1820*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2020. Pp. xiii, 544.
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The period of their 3500-year-long recorded history that Greeks still routinely call the *Tourkokratia* remains one of the least documented and least understood. Some scholars have tackled it through the institutional history of the Orthodox Church, others through the piecemeal stories of particular communities, through the evolution of the Greek language, through close reading of the works of the ‘Greek Enlightenment’, or (increasingly in recent years) from the perspective afforded by Ottoman sources. Petros Pizanias, a social historian writing in the tradition of Fernand Braudel, sets out to explain the *Making of the Modern Greeks* through a rigorously theoretical bottom-up approach.

‘The inside history of the Greek peasant and pastoralist populations remains to be written’, the author concedes in his epilogue (p. 476). But no one can say that he hasn’t tried. And where these ultimate actors remain, unavoidably, consigned ‘to

4 What he writes about the formal dinner hosted in his honour by M. Bowra following the Nobel prize is indicative: Seferis felt humiliated because he could only drink milk. ‘Εξευτελιστικά πράγματα’, he notes. (p. 46).

5 Σεφέρης, *Μέρες Ε’, 1 Γενάρη 1941 – 19 Απρίλη 1951*, β’ έκδοση, επιμέλεια Ε.Χ. Κάσδαγλης, Αθήνα 1977, σ. 153.