

## ORALITY AND PERFORMANCE IN THE GREEK TRADITION



Byzantine feast accompanied with musicians playing various musical instruments, miniature from the fourteenth-century manuscript of Ps.-Callisthenes' romance of Alexander the Great, Hellenic Institute of Venice, codex no 5.

The project focuses on the identification of elements of orality and performance in the Greek tradition with special emphasis on literature. It has been running since November 2016 and is expected to last three years.

The theory of orality, first introduced by the Homerists Milman Parry and Albert Lord, was further expanded by Gregory Nagy of Harvard University. Up until now, it has been studied primarily in terms of literary works of the middle Byzantine period (Theodore Prodromos' poems, Manganeios Prodromos' poems, *Digenis Akrites* etc.) by Michael and Elizabeth Jeffreys. The last few years have seen several studies by Margaret Mullett, Emmanuel Bourbouhakis, Przemysław Marciniak and Stratis Papaioannou examining various aspects of the relationship between rhetoric and performance.

The aim of the project is to explore basic aspects of the theory of orality and performance in Byzantium, placing special emphasis on the themes of lamentation and the circle of life as recorded in literature.

The project has started with the compilation of bibliography and working meetings of all contributors, who sought to delineate the research framework of the project and provide particular examples deciding on their own case studies. Additional working meetings and workshops with the participation of actors and musicians are going to take place in the course of the program. Towards the end, we aim to organize an

international conference, produce a collective volume and stage theatrical performances of Byzantine literary texts, such as the *Christos Paschon* (with the collaboration of Margaret Mullett and her team) and others.

### **Contributors to the Program:**

#### **Research Areas and Case Studies**

**Maria Athanasopoulou:** Assistant Professor at the Department of Drama, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

‘Theoretical Tools Used as Interpretive Links between the Primary Literary-Liturgical Texts and Contemporary Performance Theory’

**George T. Calofonos:** Research Fellow at the Institute of Historical Research/National Hellenic Research Foundation.

‘Dreams, Performance, Lament and Orality’

**Theofili Kampianaki:** Doctoral Candidate at the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages, University of Oxford.

‘Laments for the Fall of Cities: Vizualisation and Memory’

**Kórinna Latélis:** Musician, performer and collaborator of the Contemporary Music Research Centre, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

‘Music and Musicians in Byzantium. Secular Musicians and Music, Performative Arts and Artists in the Palaeologan Era (1261-1453)’.

**Lampros Liavas:** Professor at Faculty of Music Studies and Head of the Sector of Ethnomusicology and Cultural Anthropology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

‘Rites and Rituals on Life and Death in Greek Tradition’

**Ioannis Petropoulos:** Professor of Ancient Greek Literature at the School of Greek Literature, Democritus University of Thrace.

‘Aspects of orality and performance from the 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC to Late Antiquity’

**Katia Savrami:** Assistant Professor at the Department of Theatre Studies, University of Patras.

‘Bodies in Action’

**Kostas Theologou:** Assistant Professor at the Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law, National Technical University of Athens.

‘Sites of Sacrifice in Modern Greek Territory under the Ottoman Rule’

**Niki Tsironis:** Byzantinist at the Institute of Historical Research/National Hellenic Research Foundation and Associate in Byzantine Studies of CHS-Harvard

‘Orality and Performance in Byzantine Homiletics’

**Iossif Vivilakis:** Professor at the Department of Theatre Studies, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

‘Preaching as Performance’

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For more information and detailed description of case studies please contact the responsible of the project, Dr Niki Tsironis, at [tsironi@eie.gr](mailto:tsironi@eie.gr) or [niki.tsironi@gmail.com](mailto:niki.tsironi@gmail.com)

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### **Short biographical notes of the contributors**

**Maria Athanasopoulou** currently serves as Assistant Professor in Modern Greek Literature & Literary Theory at the Department of Drama, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. I obtained my B.A. in Byzantine & Modern Greek Literature from the Department of Philology, University of Crete in 1989. I hold two Master’s degrees from King’s College, London; one in Comparative Literature with special reference to the study of European Romanticism, the other in Modern Greek Studies (1990, 1991). A recipient of the ‘I.K.Y.’ [i.e. Greek State Scholarships’ Foundation] scholarship for studies in comparative literature overseas [1993-1997], I was awarded the PhD. degree for a thesis on *The Greek Sonnet* by the Faculty of Modern & Medieval Languages of Cambridge University in 1999. I taught as Adjunct Faculty at the Universities of Thessaly, Patras, Crete and Cyprus, as well as at the Hellenic Open University for a decade, before joining Aristotle University in 2009. My research focuses on the presence of the *diasporic* and the transnational element in Modern Greek literature, the interface of literature, (religion) and nationalism, inter-arts analogies (esp. the relation of literature to the visual arts), and genre-theory. I am the author of three books of literary criticism on various aspects of Modern Greek poetry (*Theodore Dorros: Gazing at salvation*, 2005; *The Greek Sonnet [1895-1936]: A study in poetics*, 2011; *C.P. Cavafy’s ‘theatrical poems’*, 2014), as well as, among else, the translator of J. Hawthorn’s *Un-locking the Text: An introduction to literary theory into Greek*. My work to date examines 19th and early 20th c. Greek poetry and prose from a variety of perspectives, including: practical criticism, historical contextualization, neo-Marxism, critical theory, and comparative literature.

**George T. Calofonos** is a Byzantine historian, educated in Birmingham (UK), specializing in Late Antique and Byzantine cultural history and, particularly, in the study of dreams. A Research Associate of the Institute of Historical Research of the National Hellenic

Research Foundation, he has published on a variety of related subjects including dream theory, oneirocriticism, incubation, dreams in historiography and hagiography, magic. He has co-edited, along with Christine Angelidi, the collective *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

**Theofili Kampianaki** is a DPhil/PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages at the University of Oxford. Her doctoral thesis is entitled 'John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories* (12<sup>th</sup> cent.): A Compendium of Jewish-Roman History and its Readers' and examines the structure and later reception of John Zonaras' chronicle, one of the best-sellers of the Greek-speaking world during the Middle Ages. She holds a BA in Greek Philology from the University of Athens and was awarded with *Distinction* a Master's in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies from the University of Oxford. For her studies at Oxford, she received scholarships from the University of Athens, the Alexander Onassis Foundation and the A. G. Leventis Foundation. She is the co-editor of the volume *From Constantinople to the Frontier: The City and the cities* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016). She is also interested in the reception of classical authors, such as Plutarch and Flavius Josephus, in Byzantium. Preliminary results of her research on Plutarch in Byzantine chronicles are included in a recent article in the journal *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* (2017) and in a study in the forthcoming volume *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Plutarch*.

**Kórinna Latèlis** is a classically trained musician, a performer and academic researcher. Since 2006, she has focused on Street Performance and Public Art. In 2011 she founded AérEchO (from "air" and "echo"), a platform dedicated to the artistic creation and research on public space. She has participated in various festivals, in Greece and in Europe (Italy, Poland, and Bulgaria). In 2012 she was awarded for her work at the 4th Athens International Street Festival-Istfest. Kórinna holds a History and Archaeology degree (University of Ioannina, Greece) and a DEA in History and Civilizations (EHESS, Paris, France). She obtained a PhD in History and Music Anthropology from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Departments of History-Archaeology and Musical Studies), in the frame of which she dealt with vernacular music and musicians, as well as with street performance and performers, during the Late Byzantine era (13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> c.). Her current research focuses on interactive site-specific public performance as a means of studying the correlation among public space, public life and public art in contemporary

society. She currently collaborates as a researcher with the Ethnomusicology and Cultural Anthropology Laboratory (EthnoLab), at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She has been a collaborator of CMRC-KSYME (Contemporary Music Research Centre, University of Athens) since 2005.

**Lampros Liavas** is Professor of Ethnomusicology in the Department of Music Studies at the University of Athens. He pursued studies in ethnology and ethnomusicology at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris, receiving in 1987 his doctorate for a dissertation on the lyra of Crete and the Dodecanese. His ethnomusicological research ranges from folk music (examination of local musical traditions and instruments, mainly Greek) to urban popular music (*rebetiko* and shadow theatre) and Greek song. He has produced various editions, documentaries, exhibitions, conferences, educational programmes, festivals and musical performances about Greek music in Greece and abroad. He was director of the Museum of Greek Folk Musical Instruments – Centre for Ethnomusicology from 1991 to 2014.

**Ioannis Petropoulos** is Professor of Ancient Greek Literature at the School of Greek Literature in Democritus University of Thrace. He is also director of Harvard's Center for Hellenic Studies in Greece. He studied in the USA (Bachelor degree in Greek Literature at the University of Harvard) and Great Britain (Doctoral degree in Ancient Greek Literature at the University of Oxford). He has taught as visiting professor and has given lectures in various universities in Europe, USA, China, Brazil etc. He has written extensively on various topics and has edited multiple volumes, focusing mainly on ancient Greek literature and society. Indicative examples of his oeuvre are the following: *Eroticism in Ancient and Medieval Greek Poetry* (2003), (Ed.) *Greek Magic, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern* (2008), (ed.) *Archilochos and his Age: Paros II* (2008), και *Kleos in a Minor Key: The Homeric Education of a Little Prince* (2011), a book which was awarded the Georges Florovsky prize in the USA.

**Katia Savrami**, Choreologist, holds an MA and a PhD from the Laban Centre, City University London. She is Assistant Professor at the Department of Theatre Studies, University of Patras, Greece. Her publications include books in Greek and in English: *Ancient Dramatic Chorus through the Eyes of a Modern Choreographer*, Zouzou Nikoloudi

(due to be published by Cambridge Scholars, in 2016) and articles including a recent one titled: 'Does dance matter? The relevance of dance technique in professional actor training' published in 2016 by: *Research in Dance Education*, DOI: 10.1080/14647893.2016.1208647. Katia worked at the State School of Dance and the professional dance school of National Opera in Athens, Greece and has contributed as a writer and critical reader at the Open University of Patras. She is a member of the International Editorial Board of *Research in Dance Education Journal*, published by Taylor and Francis Group UK. and Editor-in-Chief of *Choros International Dance Journal*. Recently she was a visiting professor at the University of Surrey, UK.

**Kostas Theologou** is currently serving as an Assistant Professor at the School of Applied Mathematics and Physics of in the National Technical University of Athens. He studied Law and Political Science at the National University of Athens, and received a DEA (Diplôme d' Etudes approfondis) from Paris-I, Panthéon-Sorbonne in Social History and Social Theory. He was awarded a doctoral degree from the Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law of the National Technical University of Athens. His main focus is on how people interact with their 'technical' milieux and their relevant structures by following their technological evolution from the first civilizations until the recent environmental crisis emphasizing on the period after the Industrial Revolution. He has also discussed the concept of acculturation, a key-notion for the current period of the formation of multicultural spheres worldwide, from the communities of tradition to their transition to modernity. Indicative works of his oeuvre are the following: *Space and Memory. The transition of Thessaloniki from the traditional communities to the urban modernity (15th-20th c.)* (2008) [in Greek, *Χώρος και Μνήμη, Θεσσαλονίκη 15ος -20ός αι. Η μετάβαση από τις κοινότητες της παράδοσης στην αστική νεοτερικότητα*], and *Citizen and Society in EU, an approach to the supranational features of European Citizenship* (2005) [in Greek, *Πολίτης και κοινωνία στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση - Προσέγγιση στα υπερεθνικά χαρακτηριστικά της ευρωπαϊκής πολιτιότητας*]. He has also edited and translated into Greek a great number of foreign works in Philosophy, History, Sociology and literature. Also see: <https://ntua.academia.edu/KostasTheologou/Books>

**Niki Tsironis** is Byzantinist at the Institute of Historical Research/National Hellenic Research Foundation and Associate in Byzantine Studies of the Centre for Hellenic Studies of Harvard University. She received her doctoral degree from King's College,

University of London on the Lament of the Virgin under the supervision of Dame Professor Averil Cameron. Her research focuses on cultural history, with special emphasis on the cult of the Theotokos, homiletics, hymnography, as well as the history of the book and book decoration in the Byzantine and post-Byzantine era. Since 2006 she is working on the topic of orality and performance and she has published studies related to the topic. She has organized international conferences for the National Hellenic Research Foundation, the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, the Society for the Promotion of Education and Learning and Harvard's Center for Hellenic Studies. She is founding member of the Society of Patristic and Byzantine Studies of the University of Oxford and the Ainos Cultural Society. She has curated exhibitions of the Mount Athos Photographic Archive, the Photographic Archive of the Russian Diaspora, as well as the exhibition with title "The Art of Bookbinding: From Byzantium to Contemporary Artistic Creation" at the Byzantine Museum of Athens.

**Iossif Vivilakis** is Professor at the Department of Theatre Studies in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. In 1996, he completed his doctoral thesis entitled «Η θεατρική ορολογία στους Πατέρες της Εκκλησίας. Συμβολή στη μελέτη της σχέσεως Εκκλησίας και Θεάτρου» ["Theatre terminology in Church Fathers. Contribution to the study of the relationship between Church and Theatre"] at the University of Athens. In the year 2007-2008, he was awarded research fellowship from the University of Princeton (Stanley J. Seeger Visiting Research Fellow). He has written extensively on the theory of theatre and the history of Greek theatre. His oeuvre includes the following works: *Για το ιερό και το δράμα. Θεατρολογικές προσεγγίσεις* (2004, (ed.) *Θρησκεία και Θέατρο στην Ελλάδα* (2005,)) και *Το κήρυγμα ως performance. Εκκλησιαστική ρητορική και θεατρική τέχνη μετά το Βυζάντιο* (2013), a work which was awarded the Prize of the Critics' Award for Theatre and Music by the Union of Greek Critics for Drama and Music (2013-2014). He was member of the Board of the National Theatre of Greece (2015-2016).