

TOPOS BOOKS

# greek literary appetizers

2008





\*topos

**to·pos**, Pronunciation: \ 'tō- ,päs, 'tä-\

Function: *noun*.

Inflected Form(s): *plural to·poi* \- ,poi\

Etymology: Greek, short for *koinos topos*, literally, common place.

Date: 1936.

: a traditional or conventional literary or rhetorical theme or topic.





ART IS A LIE THAT TELLS THE TRUTH

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Tell all the Truth but tell it slant—

Success in Circuit lies

Too bright for our infirm Delight

The Truth's superb surprise

As Lightning to the Children eased

With explanation kind

The Truth must dazzle gradually

Or every man be blind—

Emily Dickinson, c.1868

Topos Books

Topos Books, a newly-established independent publishing house, created by its parent company, Motivo S.A., and a core team of respected editors, writers, managers, and designers from the publishing field.

Its focus is mainly on literary fiction—Greek and foreign—and non-fiction about current affairs issues as well as academic books, with emphasis on Human Sciences.

Topos Books is proud to be the publishers of several distinguished writers, Greek and foreign, but also aims to introduce readers to new literary voices while keeping alive Readers links to literary classics.

Topos Books hopes to be the topos of the utopias of a dynamic and growing reading community.

Through its website, Topos Books also hopes to become a channel of communication between and among us by offering this website as a useful, and engaging, tool for pupils, students, young writers, teachers, journalists, and readers.

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Topos Books GREEK LITERARY APPETIZERS

# *Topos Books*

## A dynamic publishing company in Greece

*Topos Books* is a meeting point of people with publishing, printing, and design backgrounds, people who are joining forces in the form of an associates partnership. *Topos Books* is under the umbrella of Motibo Publishing S.A., a publishing and production company, the result of the collaborative efforts of nine former colleagues, all from a publishing background, who decided it was time to invest in their own vision. Each brings their own expertise to the venture: publishing, writing, printing, graphic design, editing, but also finance, the latter being especially important as in today's world, vision and experience are not enough on their own.

The editorial efforts of *Topos Books* cover two principal areas: literary fiction, in the broadest sense (including literary essay), and non-fiction, with special emphasis on science, sociology, psychology, education, contemporary geopolitics, and economics.

This focus is underscored by the choice of the name *Topos*, which incorporates the meaning of "place" as well as that of "topic", and which we hope will become our "place" that we share with others in our effort to make *Topos Books* the geometric topos of our utopia.



# Trilogy

## *The Plant, The Well, The Angel*

Vassilis Vassilikos

The masterpiece of the world-acclaimed author of Z



Also released in a limited numbered collectors edition in clothbound hardcover format numbered and signed by the author.

*With wonderful cunning Vassilikos makes [in the Trilogy] the decadent technology of the West yield metaphors for our timeless fears and appetites. His realism has the epic touch, and his parables, no matter how far-fetched, live by heart's blood.*

*John Updike*

*Vassilis Vassilikos is a master, and some of the writing here will take your breath away.*

*The Washington Post*

*Vassilikos, like Kundera 25 years ago, is a cosmopolitan master deserving of promotion to world fame.*

*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

*Vassilikos's singular mixture of self-consciousness, naturalism, allegory, and caprice results in fiction both provocative and entertaining.*

*Publishers Weekly*

Since 1961, when Vassilis Vassilikos's novella *The Plant* was first published, the three works known collectively as *Trilogy* (*The Plant*, *The Well*, and *The Angel*) have been translated into dozens of languages. A milestone in Modern Greek Literature, *Trilogy* is a modernist long-seller spanning almost fifty years of modern Greece. Half a century after the first edition of this bold, political work of fiction, Topos Books is proud to present the definitive literary edition of the *Trilogy*, including critical reviews offering context for this masterpiece, extensive bibliography, photographs, and a detailed timeline of the work's publication, in Greek and in translation.

Vassilis Vassilikos's *Trilogy* is the fighting voice of a rebellious youth of the Sixties, a literary parallel to the rock & roll music of the period. Its candor and wide-ranging subject matter has given *Trilogy* a time-less relevance.

In *The Plant*, nature takes its revenge on the hapless residents of an apartment building who acquiesce to its destruction. In *The Well*, the earth takes its revenge on those who disregard it by promoting the delusion of technology. In *The Angel*, life exacts its revenge on those who invest on the promise of another life, whether that "other" life is metaphysical or a life invested on socialist visions.

*The Plant* is a manifesto worthy of the boldest environmental statements; *The Well* is a prophetic parody of the post-industrial age with echoes of Dante's *Purgatory*; *The Angel* is a daring denouncement of the capitalist world as a fraud. This trilogy represents the peak of Vassilis Vassilikos's literary oeuvre. Together with *Z*, it made his name in France and the rest of Europe. First published in 1961, *The Plant*, *The Well*, *The Angel* was soon translated into several languages and won lasting acclaim.

Writing under the influence of the militant literature that swept Europe after the Second World War, the author attacks many aspects of the social establishment. He uses a new technique to create a sense of fluidity around characters and situations that appeal to contemporary readers. There is an atmosphere of the absurd, which reflects the turbulent time in which the three texts are set, and which has similarities with our world today. The *Trilogy* deliberately takes a sidelong look at everyday life, which assumes unexpected dimensions in its pages.

These three novellas, which have set Greek literature on a new track, have lost nothing of their initial savour and freshness. In similar vein with Stratis Tsirkas's trilogy of the *Drifting Cities* and Aris Alexandrou's novel *The Box*, *Vassilis Vassilikos's Trilogy* is one of the most important literary works of the post-war period.



**Vassilis Vassilikos** was born in the island of Thasos in 1934. He graduated from Thessaloniki University with a degree in law and has worked as a journalist, script writer and film director. Between 1996 and 2004 he served as Permanent Delegate of Greece to UNESCO.

Vassilikos has published more than one hundred books, including novels, short stories, poetry and plays. He is the most widely translated Greek author, together with Kazantzakis, Ritsos and Kavafis. His most famous political novel *Z* (1967) has been translated into 32 languages, and was made into a movie by Costas Gavras.

His trilogy *The Plant*, *The Well*, *The Angel* (translated into English by Edmund Keeley) won the "12" Award in 1961 and has been translated into many languages.



# We Ourselves

Dionyssis Charitopoulos

A bold sketch of contemporary Greece



## Sample aphorisms:

*The Zeibekiko dance is like 'Lord's Prayer';  
You've said it all in a word.*

*Mechanisms for dulling minds always  
precede consumption mechanisms.*

*Career is the latter-day valley of tears.*

Anyone who loved *The Imbecility Manual*, a book of original aphorisms that remains at the top of the bestseller list several months after its publication, will enjoy in *We Ourselves* (first edition, 2003) some essays that sketch the complete range of contemporary Greek society's madness in the author's inimitable manner. From the *Zeibekiko* dance and Kazantzidis to the stock market and television, from the Feng Shui bug and spaghetti westerns to unemployment and football, from the fake glitter of the nouveau riche and call girls to the true heroes next door, Charitopoulos doesn't kowtow to anyone. With his inexhaustible, often dark humor and proven ability to separate the wheat from the chaff, the writer offers a merciless parody of modern life. **It's a book of essays that reads like a novel about contemporary Greece.**

## Excerpts from the book:

A sample text from the chapter about the Left:

*Today the Left is languishing in the margins. There are just few leftists left; most have fled. This is open to interpretation. Left means selflessness – a word that has been all but exiled from dictionaries; never mind our lives. And being a leftist is a lifestyle that's cohesive and has consequences; it's not some specialization or skill obtained while young that one can cash out later in life. As someone said, just because the Berlin Wall collapsed, that doesn't mean I'll become a bastard.*

A sample text from the chapter about football:

*There's no such thing as a fan who buys a ticket. We're all fans. No one goes to the game with a cold eye. There's no match without passion. The emotional mobilization is intense. The team is an extension of yourself; it may disappoint you, it may exasperate you but you will never betray it. Nothing else matters as long as the team is ok.*

A sample text from the chapter about unemployment:

*Of all the faults a man can have, there's none worse than going home empty-handed. How many women have put up with worthless husbands who are violent or unfaithful for the sole reason that they brought home the bacon? Extended unemployment traumatizes the man's soul; it negates him as an active human being. This debasement is not just financial; he sinks into a state where he underestimates himself and feels inferior to other men. He feels as if he has sunk in the eyes of his wife and children. He becomes a stranger in his own home. Words of consolation merely deepen this feeling of inferiority – man needs respect not pity.*





# The Imbecility Manual

Dionyssi Charitopoulos

Sold 50.000 copies in 5 months



**Dionyssi Charitopoulos**, mostly known for his monumental long seller work on Aris Velouhiotis (a famous Greek resistance leader and military genius) was born in 1947 in Piraeus, where he lived through 1967.

He abandoned studies in Athens and London, pursuing a writing career parallel to other professional endeavors which he also abandoned –in favor of writing– in 1990.

A best-selling writer and biographer, Dionyssi Charitopoulos is highly respected among intellectuals and academics but also highly popular among mass audiences for his witty, insightful, and deliciously down-to-earth columns.



**D**ionyssi Charitopoulos's *Imbecility Manual* is a self-awareness handbook, a compendium of life wisdom centered on the intellect and comprehension, ingenuity and idiocy, stupidity and the simple-minded. These related phenomena are examined from an anthropological and historical perspective, as well as as clinical symptoms of contemporary life.

On the back cover, the writer pointedly notes that "because we all underestimate the number of idiots among us and are often stunned by its display by people 'beyond suspicion', we likely need to be introduced anew."

Charitopoulos has organized his original aphorisms into 88 categories that correspond to instances, examples, and interpretations of human stupidity.

The book can be read sequentially, from beginning to end, as well as out of order, just as a collection of poems or short stories.

## Excerpts from the book:

The excerpt below, Chapter 18, conveys the author's personal style which is simultaneously humorous and serious as he argues his aphorism, incisively and with common sense.

18

No other human characteristic has helped humankind's intellectual development as attention – this invaluable ability for intense concentration evident in all mammals: the cat preying on a mouse, the eagle honing in on prey, the tiger so completely focused on its potential victim that it's said you can walk right up to it. Thanks to the trait of attention, the bipod can and does perceive every aspect of life, gleaning the lucidity that allows it to anticipate and be more effective. It's not by chance that in the Greek vernacular those with cunning are dubbed a "cat" or a "sparrow hawk" while the unintelligent are referred to as "horned owl", an "animal", an "ox" or someone "who can't see his own blindness" because one views the world through a periscope while the other through a macaroni.

# Blue Suede Shoes

A Rock Story from the Troubled Days of '64

Thanassis Skroumbelos

A vivid and bold portrayal of Greece in the 60s



Rights sold: Turkey

*Skroumbelos's novel is a studied look at society's fringes in the 1960s. [...] This comes through without the author resorting to dogmatism or ideological propaganda but as a vibrant and totally tangible through its extreme contradictions and clashes world.*

*Sunday Eleftherotypia*

*Three worlds coexist in the novel: the para-state and American dominance; the Left; Gazouris's family under the emblematic mother Aristeia and his younger sister Nena. [...] Skroumbelos masterfully handles these three worlds, weaving them together to achieve cinematic speeds without losing a sense of economy.*

*Eleftherotypia, "Bibliothiki"*

*One of the most exciting erotic –yet also political– novels in recent years. [...] [Skroumbelos] soberly assesses the period he describes, offering lessons in literature and history at a time when the revisionism gripping many historians attempts to "exonerate" those who led Greece to tyranny. The child of a turbulent yet fascinating era, Skroumbelos relates in Blue Suede Shoes a simple tale that could be the epic of a generation.*

*Diavazo Literary Review*

*With his new autobiographical book, Blue Suede Shoes: A Rock Story from the Troubled Days of '64, he plunges into the most wicked bar of the times, 'Hawaii', and describes the world of the legendary transvestites performing there, the taboos of a dazed Greece, his role, and Tennessee Williams's passage through the bar. And all this from the perspective of Left humanism.*

*Lifo*

In *Blue Suede Shoes*—the title, a reference to the Elvis Presley song, is a leitmotif that sends unexpected ripples through the story—Skroumbelos takes on the black tactics of the para-state from November 1964, anniversary of the destruction of the Gorgopotamos viaduct by resistance fighters in 1942, under a plan code-named “Red Fleece”.

Using the event as peg, Skroumbelos, once again, hangs on it an entire tableau of Greece in the Sixties, woven from the threads of daily life as it evolved around the Hawaii nightclub, a hangout for transvestites in a lowly district of Athens. The club is also the meeting place of former members of X, a pro-Nazi organization, and the hub of conspiracies hatched by the darkest reaches of the para-state. Like the rest of Greece, the neighborhood is bitterly divided between the left and fascists in the state’s innermost reaches.

*Blue Suede Shoes* is a political novel in the broadest sense, focusing on the politics that emerge from the clash between rigid, entrenched mentalities and those young forces in society struggling to cre-

ate a brave new world.

*Blue Suede Shoes* is populated by distinctive characters that are depicted with a unique but unyielding realism that convincingly records the complexities of Greek society during the period. Not a single character dwells outside the collective norms, all ultimately victimizing others but also becoming victims at the hands of an omnipotent barbarous system. There’s the charming protagonist, Trilias or Gazouris or Charmer or Horse; Christos, the powerful boss of the Hawaii nightclub; the mysterious and strong-willed Boy; Malatsias, Aristeia, Nena, and a host of secondary characters. Skroumbelos’s tightly woven plot leaves readers breathless as he unravels minor, little-known incidents of the period and exposes their underground links to well-known political events.

No other author has painted the story of Greece in the Sixties as vividly or as courageously. *Blue Suede Shoes* is a passionate story about the trials of the Left and post-Civil War Greece. It’s a compelling tale that weaves together historical events with erotic drama.



**Thanassis Skroumbelos** is a writer, director, and scriptwriter. He studied Fine Arts (etching and hagiography) in Athens, and film at the London Film School on an Amnesty International scholarship. He has worked as a journalist and had several screenplays produced for cinema (*Passage*, *Ariadne Lives in Leros*, *The Good Homeland* etc.) and one television series, *Niobe’s Children*, directed by the acclaimed director Kostas Koutsomytis. He has also written and translated several plays into Greek for the theater and has directed six feature-length films, including the ensemble feature *New Parthenon*. Skroumbelos has served on the board of the Society of Greek Directors and is a founding member of the Association of Greek Scriptwriters.

Skroumbelos’s best-known books are *St George of the Greeks*, *My Red Friends*, *Snakes at Colonus*, and *Bella Ciao*. With *Blue Suede Shoes*, his latest novel, he completes a quartet of political novels. Set against the backdrop of the upheavals that shook the Left in Greece, all four novels expose the passions and class struggles of an oppressed society tormented by the final throes of the Civil War that lingered for almost a half century after its end.



# True Love

Aris Maragkopoulos

A harsh satire of sexual relations in the Internet era



*Aris Maragkopoulos plays a hardball. In his latest book romantic relationships become dangerous. Men and women plunged into existential crisis seek the meaning of life, a life that approaches its midpoint. True Love is a book that talks about sex but is really about love. It is cynical and mocking and subversive, just like love.*

**Athens Voice**

*True Love is a literary work that mocks modern life while taking its role and its identity very seriously despite the tackiness that prevails nowadays. Maragkopoulos is disarmingly direct in his narration and makes the reader feel part of it.*

**Pontiki Art**

## Excerpts from the book:

### I Epiphany of an Angel

*You never know when the Angel will shine on you; these are life's surprises. I was deep in fatigue, in wine and in light small talk with friends, in my wife's absence. It was summer, late evening and there She was, arriving out of the blue and taking her place next to me. The experience resembled those agonizing moments before drowning: when your whole life, film-like, rushes before your very eyes within split seconds. But as drowning was not the case with me at that instance, what I saw instead was a crystal-clear formation of my near and distant future. I saw pink, pink dew. Before me, a candyfloss horizon loomed, or something of the kind. Everything was reflected in fast-forward motion in her face and I did not choose to pause. My eyes went goggling (I guess) and I let the film run uncut.*

*The Angel's appearance was for my eyes only. How this sounds to you, I sincerely do not know. In all likelihood, this leaves you unconcerned, I'm sure. You read nothing and you hear nothing. Because there is simply no chance that you will hear. When was the last time you heard, anyway? When did you last see an Angel? As if an Angel's face has ever shone upon you! Well, if any of you have ever been through such a daunting experience, there is no need for you to read this confession further. You know it all, seen it all, read it all.*

Published: May 2008 Shape: 12,9 x 19,8 Pages: 192 ISBN: 978-960-6760-48-8 Price: 13.00€

**T** *True Love* is a cruel game of love liaisons in the era of My-space, YouTube and blogging. It is entertaining to the reader but often dangerous for the book's main characters – echoing Laclos's *Dangerous Liaisons*. It is a contemporary satire of nowadays erotic morals, with most characters in the middle of an existential crisis. The writer Mimis, his friend Sofia, the ads agent Kiki, the graphic designer Dina, Mimis's friend, Stelios, hairdresser Dazy, and police officer Porfyris clash with each other, showing no mercy, because they all lack the same valuable thing – which they vainly try to find in the wrong places.

*True Love* is a tale of unfulfilled love from men's point of view. It is about

the longing for a lasting relationship from women's point of view. It is the desperate quest for the Meaning of Life, in and out of a couple's life: The long ago perished dreams of May '68. The theme of *True Love* sounds like a romance story. But it's not. Its romanticism is subversive and the known conventions of the genre can only be read as completely farcical.

*True Love* is essentially a dark comedy that mocks all those who tend to forget that the mind is not the best counselor in matters of heart – a fact that befits some intellectuals who, even if they have devoted their life to the quest for Meaning, they ignore the possibility that this may literally be, if not within them, at least near by.



**Aris Maragkopoulos** was born in Athens, Greece, in 1948. He studied history, history of art and archaeology at Athens University and at Paris I University (Sorbonne, Paris). He has published more than ten books (novels, short stories, essays) and has translated equal number of Irish, English and French novels into Greek. He writes regularly on literary and cultural topics for Greek national newspapers. His book on Joyce's *Ulysses* (*Ulysses, a Reader's Companion*, Kedros 2001, Topos Books 2009), aimed both at the general reader and at the scholar, has been acknowledged by all critics as highly

contributive to the study of the Irish author.

Maragkopoulos is a member of the Board of Directors of Motibo S.A. / Topos books and is working in the company as Editor in chief. He is a former member of the International James Joyce Foundation and of the Three Seas Writers' and Translators' Council. He is also a member of the Hellenic Authors' Society (has been its Executive Secretary for two consecutive terms) and of the Board of the National Book Centre in Greece. He has participated as an expert in various national and European committees concerning book policy.

One of his novels (*Love, Gardens, Ingratitude*) has been translated into Serbian, another into Turkish (*Obsession with Spring*), a short story into English («Nostalgic Clone» in the *Dedalus Book of Greek Fantasy*, ed. and trans. by D. Connolly) and various texts and articles into English, French, Turkish and Serbian.

Vassilis Vassilikos, the author of *Z*, has written for his novel *Love, Gardens, Ingratitude*:

"... it is the first 'post postmodern' novel in Greece. [...] the book assimilates imaginatively the joycean techniques of the novel and renovates impressively the literary tradition created by Nikos Kazantzakis."

About his latest novel, *Obsession with Spring*, the same author has written:

"*Obsession with Spring* is the outcome of Maragkopoulos's difficult journey through the clashing rocks of Joyce and Borges, a fruitful journey that made him rediscover Balzac's gold...

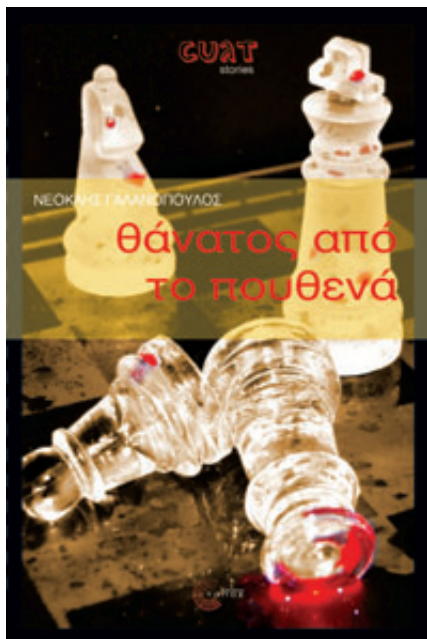
*A fantastic political thriller, an anatomy of the country we call Hellas*, a novel that I expect to open a wide discussion amid the reading community since it re-reads our recent history."



# Death out of nowhere

Neokles Galanopoulos

A murder mystery in the tradition of Agatha Christie



**Neokles Galanopoulos** was born in Athens in 1972. A lawyer who specializes in labor law, he often takes on the state in cases brought against it by public sector employees. He first began spinning detective stories while still a boy. His hobbies include watching movies, and reading crime novels, literary and translation theory, philosophy, history, and dictionaries. Most Greek critics have acknowledged his great talent in mystery stories. His first novel, *The Variant of Giorgos Darsinos*, received several positive reviews. Galanopoulos has also translated into Greek the classic crime story *The Hollow Man* by John Dickson Carr for Topos Books' Cult Stories series.



In a small Macedonian town, and specifically in Villa Athena, death hangs out with greater ease than the villa's residents. And they are numerous: servants, gardeners, chauffeurs, sons, daughters, cousins, friends, nieces and nephews, in-laws, partners. A lively gallery of provincial stereotypes whose main trait, which oddly they share, is that no one truly appreciates anyone else.

Everyone deceives and is deceived. Everyone conspires as easily as they take breakfast and all are potential victims of an intrafamily plot. Everyone has their eye on the huge estate left by the ill-mannered family patriarch when he dies unexpectedly at an engagement party (was it a suicide? was it by illness? an accident? or murder?).

Every word uttered by residents and guests, every conversation, every action, every movement triggers the

shivers of a *death foretold* that the reader cannot identify until the very last page.

In this mystery-shrouded crime novel every character could be victim or perpetrator. In reality nobody has an alibi. And when an alibi exists it is quickly overturned by an ever-twisting plot.

In a dark but superficially innocent world the clues pointing to the murderer are constantly obscured by the heroes' souls. But the author –with the same mastery he displayed in his previous novel, *The Variant of Giorgos Darsinos*– handles his characters not as spineless pawns but as what they are: solitary beings tied to the chessboard of a brutal life.

Anyone who fondly recalls Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Niggers* will discover a worthy heir in Galanopoulos. And anyone who enjoyed *The Variant of Giorgos Darsinos* will simply applaud.





# The Variant of Giorgos Darsinos

Neokles Galanopoulos

An intricately layered murder mystery accented by subtle humour



*Neokles Galanopoulos, following in Agatha Christie's footsteps [...] makes his debut with a novel-riddle that heralds a happy future in writing.*

*Diavazo literary review*

*Galanopoulos's thrilling crime novel has it all: suspense, humor, sarcasm, and incredible situations that everyone can imagine but few can transform into a well-structured story.*

*Proto Thema daily*

Is writing detective novels a way to let off criminal urges? Could every writer of murder-mysteries be a potential murderer? This is what Greek police investigating the violent death of best-selling murder-mystery writer Giorgos Darsinos seem to believe, which is why they've taken in for questioning five aspiring mystery writers – four men and one woman. Police officers have the suspects read the victim's diary, in which he names them as his murderers-to-be, because he had rejected their manuscripts while serving as a consultant to a large publishing house.

The five suspects deny any involvement in the crime, but realize they must decipher the diary to unravel its author's intentions in naming them as they look for clues that will lead to the truth. Pitting each of the five against the contents of the diary and against each other brings police and suspects face to face with Darsinos's past and readers to make

their own deductions who killed Darsinos (from 31 possible leads). Neokles Galanopoulos makes his debut as a novelist, but is well-versed in the detective novel. *The Variant of Giorgos Darsinos*, an intricately layered murder mystery accented by a subtle humor, navigates plot twists and red herrings to reach a surprise ending. Filled with references to Greek and foreign masterpieces of the genre, *The Variant of Giorgos Darsinos* can also be read as a perfectly entertaining (and succinct) introduction to the history of the detective novel.

The best critics in Greek have unanimously agreed on the top literary qualities of the book, and have stressed its dense artfully organized plot and the author's ability to build a page turner that keeps the reader's mind in constant concern.

# Random Entry

Basileios Drolias

Conspiracy theories in our media-centred deterministic society



Excerpt from the book:

*And yet this message meant something to someone. It wasn't the rambling of some nut-case or the random automated creation of radiowaves and my voice. It was a tangible text that symbolized continuity for someone or some people. But it also symbolized my continued quest in a world that had become real and no longer hid behind codes, keys, and mathematical equations.*

*[...]*

*A name stood out from the message. It was SS. I immediately recognized the person and the act. What could a murderer have to do with all this? What did a man who had been locked up in jail for roughly forty years have to do with terrorism, the message and my life from now on?*



Influenced by the writings of Thomas Pynchon, Paul Auster and J.L. Borges, Basileios Drolas examines in his book the way people comprehend and respond to events of chance in our media-centred, conspiracy-prone, deterministic society.

A romantic radio ham who persists in enjoying the loneliness of the radio world in the age of the internet accidentally picks up a coded message. Its origin and possible meaning and its implication in decision-making centers suddenly invade his secluded world and propel him into a frantic quest to solve the mystery. But is there such a thing as mystery in the cyberworld? Is there anything that's a mystery for intelligence services? For reporters with the inside track?

A metal-head computer nerd, a quirky philosopher who doesn't pigeonhole his thoughts according to cheap market categories, and a successful reporter who has open lines of communication to the establishment all become involved in deciphering the message. But the game takes unexpected turns as it touches international terrorism, national politics, and history: the assassination, forty years earlier, of U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy emerges as the sole solution to this incredible mystery. Yet reality is not al-

ways that spectacular. And when one event is the result of a random incident, for example a simple coincidence, few can accept it that easily.

The power of this compelling mystery lies in its ability to convincingly explain the social and psychological process that encourages everyone to model their thinking on a pattern dictated by the American media: conspiracy theory.



**Basileios Drolas** was born in Athens in 1969. He has a Ph.D. in Astrophysics and Cosmology from the University of London and, after holding a series of academic positions, has shifted into the Internet world, creating and marketing software applications. His two passions in life, reading and writing, take up most of his time, effort and resources. *Random Entry* is his first novel.



# *The Chinese room*

Katerina Chrysanthopoulou

*On the internet, nobody knows you're a dog*



Shy, stout, antisocial Harry spends his day with Sheba, his digital persona in the virtual world of the internet – social networking sites, chat rooms, avatars. It's a spectacular new world whose inhabitants –contrary to popular belief– don't lose their identities. In reality, they create a new identity that may be more real than their actual one.

Harry's Sheba has supernatural abilities, is gorgeous, crude, provocative, and immensely popular in the digital world. She has many lovers, whom she changes often, offering her creator and "pimp" endless hours of pleasure and "self satisfaction". But at the same time Harry starts communicating via chat rooms with Shirley, a graduate student in Philosophy at a university in Boston. Shirley gradually initiates him into the world of philosophy and artificial intelligence, increasingly impressing Harry with her

knowledge and mind. Their relationship develops and Harry, now in love, decides to make the leap into reality and travel to Boston to meet Shirley. But there he's greeted by the absolute surprise.

*The Chinese Room* is a journey into the lesser known fields of technology, artificial intelligence and the cyber-world. It's a novel that familiarizes the reader with the incredible reality of modern computers and the internet.



# Primavera

## Gazing at Eyes Gazing at Me

Katerina Chrysanthopoulou

An artful narrative of the tension between the female body and society



Katerina Chrysanthopoulou was born in Athens in 1966. She studied Information Science, English literature, psychotherapy, and cognitive science. Chrysanthopoulou works as a researcher, translator, and interpreter. Poems from her



first poetry collection, *Dressed In You*, were published in 2005 in the *Mandragoras* review.

Her first novel, *The Woman who Wrote for the Man*, was published in 2006 (Kedros publications)

and the following year, Topos books released her second novel *Primavera*.

*Chrysanthopoulou's success lies in that she manages to give voice to a child and to 'show' –as opposed to narrate– its experiences. Filled with a dark light, the book asserts a physicality that dictates itself through its imperatives.*

*Eleftherotypia, "Bibliothiki"*

*A novel about the 'affair' of the vigorous erotic body with the world and their fights, reconciliations and discontents.*

*Eleftherotypia, "Bibliothiki"*

Katerina Chrysanthopoulou's novel is about the gradual awakening of female sexuality through the violent internal conflict between biological need and social roles.

*Primavera* is an innovative narrative form that seeks to recreate an album of holiday snaps. Through photographs described through very explicit texts, the reader is offered a keyhole on the life of a young girl, Vera, as she matures from kindergarten age to adolescence. The holiday snaps occasionally alternate with a diary, offering snatches of intense incidents from the girl's day to day life during winter. Between the carefree air of the holidays and the

somnolence of winter, a young life seeks through her physical urges to claim an equal place in a male-dominated world.

Written in a vibrant language, *Primavera* is an exceptional novel about the rites of passage, which merits careful reading by all parents who refuse to accept the fact that their children have any sexuality. It's also a recommended reading for young couples who have questions about aspects of their sexuality.

*Primavera* is an accessible, sensual novel that offers a simple yet artful narrative of the discourse between the female erotic body and society.

# KATA TON ΔAIMONA EAYTOY \*

(*The Devil within Himself*)

Yannis Adamis

The perfect exorcism for each reader's personal demons



Yannis Adamis was born in 1975. He studied law in Athens and he works as a lawyer since 2002. His novel KATA TON ΔAIMONA EAYTOY (=The Devil within Himself) is the first book he ever wrote and the third to be published.



KATA TON ΔAIMONA EAYTOY  
(=The Devil within Himself)

is a novel written in extracts for readers to piece together the beginning, middle, and end themselves. It's a tense biography without chronological order, a journal filled with "in-accuracies" which, as its author notes, are "a mistake, the result of a droll misunderstanding. Someone in my position, who was less spiteful and had more self-respect, would remain silent and let another writer tell the tale."

Demon-puppeteers are the main characters of KATA TON ΔAIMONA EAYTOY – that is to say, we're all protagonists, a statement that's neither exaggeration nor promotional hype but a simple truth.

KATA TON ΔAIMONA EAYTOY depicts a small town – or a large city. It's a single country or all countries. Adamis's novel is an anthropography of the small passions and great agonies inspired by life's beauty and ugliness. The novel exists only if read from start to finish – as the beginning of a life that's born, grows, and dies within it. This book is the perfect exorcism for our personal demons.

\*The Greek phrase KATA TON ΔAIMONA EAYTOY is inscribed on Jim Morrison's grave. Various meanings can be attributed to it such as: "To the divine spirit within himself"; "The devil within himself"; "The genius in his mind"; but also "He caused his own demons."



# The Eye of Justice

Yannis Chairetakis

Action-packed stories of the Trivial portrayed with the magnitude of an Epic



Born in 1977, **Yannis Chairetakis** spent his childhood in the outskirts of Athens, his balcony by the main road with the busy coffee shops, where millions of stories took place every day. He studied archaeology at the University of Ioannina and Crete.

He experimented with writing at a young age, somewhere in high school, when he wrote rhyming limericks on holiday cards that he sent to relatives and friends. Then, as a university student, he flirted with poetry, but almost simultaneously he began an affair with prose writing.

He currently lives in Athens, working as an archaeologist. After a Creative Writing Seminar, he and seven more of its participants decided to continue meeting on a weekly basis. The result of this is the writing group MELOMA. Under its auspices, he began to work more consistently: he wrote, read and –mostly– shredded to pieces. This collection of stories is his first attempt to bring his work out in the open...



In *The Eye of Justice*, a biology teacher initiates her students into her subject just as a dime store clerk would with a young buyer of porn magazines: through repetition. The power of the flesh is irrepressible in every story of this volume; so is the will to survive and overpower the Other. But so is the power of justice – a justice that isn't rooted in some divine or human law and is irrepressible as it takes the form of a wild nemesis that seals the uneven course of human events.

Thanks to the careful sketching of his characters and the studied escalation of his plot, Yannis Chairetakis's short stories as are action-packed as novels yet they narrate events in the lives of the people next door. What distinguishes Chairetakis's work is his ability to give his account of even the most trivial incident the magnitude of an epic event. He does this by using the simple ploy of the classic detective story where everyone, even suspects, fail to notice what the reader notices – an insignificant detail, the slimmest edge of the wedge through which the eye of justice peers.

# FOREIGN ACQUISITIONS

Motibo S.A. / Topos Books Acquisitions:  
Spring 2007 - Spring 2008

## Literary Fiction

Jay Parini, *The Last Station* – Canongate  
Rachel Cusk, *Arlington Park* – Faber & Faber  
Sibylle Berg, *Sex II* – Reclam, Leipzig  
Andrew Davidson, *The Gargoyle* – Doubleday  
Julian Gough, *Jude: Level 1* – Old St Publishing  
Nadeem Aslam, *The Wasted Vigil* – Faber & Faber  
James Meek, *We are now beginning our descent* – Canongate  
David Peace, *Tokyo Trilogy* – *Tokyo Year Zero* - *Tokyo Occupied* - *Tokyo Regained* – Faber & Faber  
David Cronenberg, *Consumed*  
David Peace, *Damned United* – Faber & Faber  
Martin Prinz, *Der Räuber* – Jung and Jung

## Masters of the 20th century

Boris Vian, *J' irais cracher sur vos tombes* – Arthème Fayard  
Guillermo Cabrera Infante, *Tres Tristes Tigres* – Editorial Seix Barral  
Alain Robbe-Grillet, *Un roman sentimental* – Arthème Fayard  
William Burroughs, *And the Hippos were Boiled in their Tanks* – Penguin  
William Burroughs, *Junky* – Penguin  
William Burroughs, *Queer* – Penguin  
William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch* – Penguin

## Science Fiction

Philip Dick, *Ubik* – Vintage Books  
Philip Dick, *The Man in the High Castle* – Vintage Books  
Philip Dick, *Solar Lottery* – Vintage Books

## Crime Fiction

Peter Temple, *The Broken Shore* – Text Publishing  
John Dickson Carr, *The Hollow Man* – Orion  
John Dickson Carr, *He Who Whispers*  
John Dickson Carr, *The Judas Window*



## Graphic novel

Andreij Klimowski, *Horace Dorlan* – Faber & Faber  
Zadie Smith, *The Book of Other People* – Penguin

## History

John Burrow, *A History of Histories* – Penguin  
Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great* – Yale University Press  
Justin Marozzi, *The Man Who Invented History: Travels with Herodotus*  
– Capel and Land  
*Medieval & Byzantine History* (collective: with extensive references to New Cambridge Medieval History) – Cambridge  
Chris Harman, *A People's History of the World* – Verso

## Non Fiction

Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* – Verso  
T. S. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution* – Oxford University Press  
Collective: *World Atlas History* – Dorling Kindersley  
Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want* – Inkwell Management  
Philip Gourevitch, *Paris Review Interviews* – Canogate  
Alan S. Miller & Satoshi Kanazawa, *Why Beautiful People Have More Daughters* – Penguin  
Ken Rigby, *New Perspectives on Bullying* – Jessica Kingsley  
David Whitbread, *The Design Manual* – UNSW Press (University of South Wales)  
*Art in Centuries* (originally 8 titles) – Mondadori  
Rebecca Mileham, *Powering: Up Are Computer Games Changing Our Lives?* – John Wiley  
Davey Winder, *Being Virtual: Who you really are online?* – John Wiley

## Young Adult, Crossovers etc.

Henry Chancellor, *The remarkable Adventures of Tom Scatterhorn* – Oxford  
David Whitley, *The Midnight Charter* – Puffin  
Disney's *Children Encyclopedia* (24 titles) – Disney  
Grande Enciclopedia dei Ragazzi – Mondadori



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