

The sixteenth-century Cretan playwright Georgios Chortatsis as a parodist

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In 1993, a children's book by Eugene Trivizas was published in England, illustrated with vivid, colourful pictures by Helen Oxenbury, entitled *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*, a title that; needless to say, immediately recalls the universally known fairy-story *The Three Little Piglets and the Big Bad Wolf*; yet in the new tale things function in quite the opposite direction from that of the original story. In other words: "It was time for the three little wolves to go out into the world, so they set off and built themselves a splendid brick house." (As one can see, things start from where they ended up in the original story – i.e. from the brick house.) "But they hadn't reckoned on the big bad pig who soon came along and blew their house down." ("So he huffed and he puffed and he puffed and he huffed, but the house didn't fall down" is the phrase that we recognize as coming from the original story.)

The little wolves retaliated by building a stronger house, but that didn't deter the pig, who resorted to ever more violent methods of demolition. It was only a chance encounter with a flamingo bird that put an end to hostilities in an entirely unexpected and satisfactory way.¹

In fact, what happened is that after the failure of the strongest possible building materials used, the three little wolves decided to fall back on some rather unusual materials, provided by that flamingo bird: in their new house, "one wall was of marigolds, one wall of daffodils, one wall of pink roses and one wall of cherry blossom. The ceiling was made of sunflowers and the floor was a carpet of daisies." So, when the

¹ The summary is taken from the cover of the book. See Trivizas and Oxenbury 1993.

big bad pig took a deep breath ready to huff and puff, he liked the scent of the flowers so much that "instead of huffing and puffing, he began to sniff." The result was that "his heart became tender and he realised how horrible he had been in the past. In other words, he became a big good pig. He started to sing and to dance the tarantella," eventually becoming very good friends with his previous victims.

So everything in the old fairy-tale (starting with its very title) has been reversed in the new one, and especially the end and the message of the original story.

Soon after its publication, Trivizas's *Three Little Wolves* became a best-selling book in both the UK and the USA, thus proving the popularity that a successful remaking (albeit in reverse) of a favourite story may acquire; proving, in other words, the popularity often achieved by literary *parody*.

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Parody in literature means the exaggerated imitation and modification of the form or content (subject-matter, syntax, vocabulary or style) of a given literary text; an imitation which aims at the double-edged task of reform and ridicule. By changing these characteristics of the parodied text, we usually end up with their reversal in the parody text; a reversal that usually constitutes a comic incongruity between the original and its parody.² The changes made to the parodied text may of course vary from parody to parody, as to their range and sort: they may be changes to the subject-matter, to the grammar or syntax, to the lexicon, or to metre and rhyme if we have a verse parody, etc. (Rose 1993: 47-8).

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In the last decades of Venetian rule in Crete, the island experienced a flourishing in letters and the arts, which has led scholars to talk of a "Great Age" as far as literature is concerned.

² For these definitions of *Parody*, see the *Princeton Encyclopedia* 1986, s.v., and Rose 1993, ch. 1. "Ways of defining parody" (especially p. 45 for a summary of the whole discussion).

The period of flowering was marked by the presence of new genres, influenced by the Italian Renaissance. This influence was considerably promoted by the changes that took place in Cretan society over those years, changes that led to the forming of a prosperous and "clearly Greek" society, "mature enough to grasp the messages of the Renaissance movement" (Alexiou 1985: 49). Of that society the intellectuals formed a small but active part, and contributed to the lively cultural environment of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Cretan cities. Poets such as Georgios Chortatsis, Vitsentzos Kornaros and Markantonios Foskolos lived and wrote their works in the towns of Rethymno and Kastro (Iraklio). Among them, the first, Chortatsis, is generally considered the most influential and interesting playwright of the period. His three surviving plays are representative of the three genres of Renaissance drama: one tragedy, one comedy and one pastoral drama. In addition, there has also survived a number of interludes (*intermezzi*) written by him. Unfortunately, despite extensive research, scholars have not succeeded in identifying him with certainty, but on the evidence of his plays, he seems educated, having the culture of an Italian scholar.

Apart from Chortatsis's comedy, two more specimens of this genre have come down to us: the anonymous *Stathis*, and the one by M. Foskolos, entitled *Fortounatos*. All three of them, although clearly based on the Italian Renaissance *commedia erudita*, in using the same stock characters, intrigue and motifs in the plot, do not seem to have any specific model among the *erudita* plays.

The main common features in the plots of these three surviving Cretan comedies are: the pair of young lovers, who suffer because of the wish of the girl's parent to marry her off or simply to exploit her by giving her to some wealthy old man, and the discovery that one of the young lovers is in fact the long-lost child of a leading character in the play. Most of the easily-recognizable stock characters of the Italian *commedia erudita* are also to be found here: the hungry and gluttonous servants, the multilingual teacher, the silly enamoured old man, the braggart soldier and the avaricious match-makers.³

³ For a recent and informative introduction to the three comedies (playwrights, plot, characters, editions etc.), see Vincent 1991.

Recent research on the comedies has revealed and described a number of devices or modes in which the playwrights express the comic elements of their plays: in other words, the elements which give each comedy its particular comic stamp, and throw light on its possible dependence upon the Italian Renaissance theories of laughter and the ridiculous.⁴

Going from the most recent comedy to the oldest one – in order to conclude with Chortatsis's *Katsourbos*, the actual subject of this paper – I will begin with the comic modes of *Fortounatos* (dated 1655). In fact, this play does not reveal any specific laughter-provoking techniques, apart from the long lists of insulting and funny adjectives used for the harsh ridiculing of individual characters. The comedy also abounds in coprology and sexual innuendo, but there is no evidence that a conscious pattern of the use of the comic is followed.

On the other hand, the unknown poet of the comedy *Stathis* (dated at the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century) aims at the ridiculous in a more specific and conscious way, that is with the employment of purely comic rhetorical figures, and of the element of the unexpected. What, in addition, is more characteristic in *Stathis*, is that characters representing respected members of the family and society never become objects of ridicule, thus keeping the play in accordance with the theoretical instructions that harsh ridiculing should be reserved for heroes belonging to the lower classes.

Finally *Katsourbos* (Chortatsis's own comedy, dated in the last two decades of the sixteenth century) presents by far the most interesting and varied comic devices. The surprise resulting from an unexpected statement is the first such technique. But Chortatsis also emphasizes a series of techniques (apart from the abuse, indecent or silly utterances and slapstick jokes common to all comedies) which make his handling of the ridiculous more sophisticated than in the other two comic plays.

Katsourbos displays the best exploitation, among Cretan comedies, of rhetoric in the service of the ridiculous. In this comedy, we not only find those rhetorical figures prescribed by

⁴ For a detailed description of the comic in the Cretan comedies see Markomihelaki-Mintzas 1991: chapter 2, "Laughter", and Markomihelaki 1992.

the theorists as the most suitable for comedy, but we also encounter rhetorical figures which should belong to more sophisticated literary genres, and are used here exclusively in comic contexts. So figures like apostrophe, the sophisticated metaphor, or the rhetorical scheme of the monologue, normally belonging to tragedy, are used by Chortatsis in clearly comic environments, thus becoming even more laughable than the comic figures themselves.

There is finally a group of scenes, to which I will return later on, characterized by a subtle irony towards the prostitutes and match-makers of the play, where Chortatsis teaches morality (comedy's main aim according to Cinquecento theorists), through the reversal and ridiculing of what public opinion considers as proper and moral.

As I hope to have shown in this brief account of the modes of the comic in the Cretan comedies, there is a considerable degree of differentiation in the number and handling of, and in the importance given to, the comic elements from one comedy to another, starting with the sophisticated *Katsourbos* and ending with the cruder *Fortounatos*.

This paper aims to add to this discussion and description of the comic in the Cretan comedies one more dimension which has not been noticed so far: that of parody, which is to be found in the varied comic devices of *Katsourbos*, but not in the simpler treatment of the comic in *Stathis* and in *Fortounatos*.

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Katsourbos

Katsourbos is not of course exclusively a parody in itself. As it belongs to the Renaissance dramatic genre of comedy, it has to follow this genre's own rules and specific characteristics. Parody exists in this play only as an additional quality, introduced in order to embellish and enrich the comedy and to enhance its comic attributes.

Parody in *Katsourbos* functions in two ways. The first conforms with the earlier quoted definitions, as some parts of this comedy show "signals" of parodying another older, specific work of Cretan literature. This manner of parody is directed from one text to another. But there is also a treatment of parody by

Chortatsis which is directed from one part of the play to another: namely, there are speeches in the comedy which aim at parodying other serious speeches or utterances, by consciously using their syntax and style but for lower and ridiculous subjects. In other words, we have *Katsourbos* (the play) parodying *Katsourbos* (the play). And since parody means reversal, I will also reverse the above order and examine first the cases where Chortatsis parodies his own heroes, and then the case where he parodies the work of a literary antecedent of his.

A. *Katsourbos* parodies *Katsourbos*

Signals of parody are given from the very first verses of the comedy, and prevail in the whole of the first scene, reaching a climax towards the end of the dialogue between the enamoured young Master Nikolos and his gluttonous servant Katsarapos.

In the Appendix are printed: on the left-hand page the parodied utterances of Nikolos, and on the right the parody of these utterances. The correspondence between parodied and parodying verses is indicated by the numbers printed in bold. I offer the following comments on the examples:

1. Here we have Nikolos's love symptoms parodied by his servant, who is supposed to be in love with a "σκροφιά" (sow).
2. Notice the similar beginning of Nikolos's apostrophe and of his servant's parody: "Πρόβαλε (appear)...", as well as the rhyme "κερά μου - κοιλιά μου" (my lady - my belly), which parodies Nikolos's "κεράς μου - καρδιάς μου" (my lady - my heart); cf. the rhyme "κοιλιά μου - καρδιά μου" (my belly - my heart).
3. In addition to "πρόβαλε", other common or similar words or expressions in parodying and parodied verses are printed in italics. The parody becomes more acute at the end of the scene with the parallel distichs sung by master and servant, where the similar or common beginnings of the distichs emphasize the parody even more.

Yet some of Nikolos's utterances will be parodied in other scenes as well, not only by his servant, who has heard them, but also by his rival in love, the wealthy old man Armenis, who describes a series of love symptoms, quite inferior and unromantic in comparison to Nikolos's own love symptoms. In that case, only the audience is capable of getting the signal of the parody, which functions unbeknown to Armenis.

Note to the Appendix:

1. Instead of Nikolos's romantic symptoms, such as trembling, lamenting his fate, being in a state of vexation, Armenis experiences rather practical and everyday problems due to his love for the same girl: he cannot count his money properly, cannot get dressed properly, walks like a madman, talks like a stammerer, and – above all – he cannot eat and he cannot go to the lavatory even twice a week.

And whereas Armenis's parody belongs to the same act (first act) as that of Nikolos's parodied speeches, another parodic treatment of this latter hero will take place two acts later (Act 3, scene 3): Katsarapos will return on stage with a parody of the image of Venus and Cupid, used by Nikolos in the first scene of the play.

Note to the Appendix:

3. The favourite Renaissance image of the goddess of love and beauty "Αφροδίτη" and of her son "Έρως", is ridiculed in Katsarapos's mention of "Πισπορδίτη" (a play on the word "πορδή", fart) and her son, Hunger. In addition, the rhyme "Πισπορδίτης - ψειρίτης" can be said to act as a parodic play with the rhyme "Αφροδίτης - περρίτης" of the Prologue, which refers to the same image of Venus and Cupid.

B. Katsourbos parodies Sachlikis's Advice to Frantziskis

After acquiring some familiarity with the literary production of Venetian Crete that preceded the "Great Age" of Cretan Renaissance literature, I noticed that, despite the major differences in their models, subject-matter, character, and style, one could still trace some common elements between works of the first and works of the second period of Cretan literature. Extensive comparisons between the three Renaissance comedies and those works of "early Cretan literature" with a comic or satirical tone or content,⁵ led me eventually to the detection of striking similarities between the subject matter of some scenes of *Katsourbos* and the third part of an advisory poem, written at the end of the

⁵ The course of these comparisons is described in the introduction to my article "Οι Συμβουλές του Φραντζισκή και η ανπιστροφή τους" (in *Αφιέρωμα στον καθηγητή Ν.Μ. Παναγιωτάκη*, forthcoming). From this article I take section B (*Katsourbos* parodies the *Advice to Frantziskis*) of the present paper.

fourteenth century by the Cretan nobleman Stefanos Sachlikis, the earliest Cretan poet known to us from the Venetian period.

Sachlikis, consequently characterised as "the father of Cretan literature", "was born in Kastro around 1331. His parents were of Greek origin, but it is possible that they had become Roman Catholics. His father belonged to the well-to-do bourgeoisie of Kastro and had a fief of more than four and a half *serventarie* in different parts of Crete. His main activities were in leasing out land. He was also a member of the Senate." As is evidenced by his literary works as well as by the documents of that period in the Venetian Archive, Sachlikis lived an eventful life, which saw the loss of a large part of his fortune, and some period of imprisonment. The poet described his life in his verse *Autobiography*, in his didactic poems "On friends", "On jail" and the *Advice to Frantziskis*, and in his satirical poems on the prostitutes of Kastro, who were in fact responsible for many of his troubles.⁶

A common point of reference between *Katsourbos* and the satirical works of Sachlikis is to be found in the depiction of the prostitutes and the description of their world and life style. Four of Sachlikis's satirical poems are dedicated to their ridicule and castigation ("About the Whores", "The Council of the Whores", "The Tournament of the Whores" and the "Praise of Pothotsoutsounia"), while half of his didactic work *Advice* also refers to them. On the other hand, *Katsourbos* is the only one of the three comedies that contains four female characters engaged in some way in this job, Poulissena being the most representative of all.⁷ By contrast, in *Stathis* and *Fortounatos*, the depiction of this category of women is far less shocking, and is confined simply to the role of lovers' go-between.

⁶ For the most recent and comprehensive introductory presentation of the life and works of S. Sachlikis, see A. van Gemert, "Literary Antecedents", in Holton 1991 (and especially the section "Stefanos Sachlikis", pp. 51-6), from where the quotation on Sachlikis's biography is taken.

⁷ Poulissena is a widow and foster-mother of Kassandra, Nikolos's beloved. After the death of her husband, Poulissena, with the aid of two older women in the job (Arkolia and Anneza, both appearing in the play), chose this way of life in order to earn money and amuse herself. It seems that her maidservant Annousa is also engaged in the same job.

The differences between the depiction of whores in Sachlikis's clearly satirical songs and in his advisory poem are various: in the first poems (belonging to Sachlikis's first period of literary production) the language is more obscene and the depictions more realistic; satire is more acute, and personal, since the whores appear with their real names. On the contrary, in the *Advice to Frantziskis* (a work from the second period of his literary activity), the intensity is toned down, satire is reduced, and it is not personal, as the prostitutes appear anonymously; also, their manners and morals are depicted from some distance, since the aim of the poet here is to advise the young Frantziskis on the dangers he should avoid in life, and not to take revenge on any individual whore for what she did to him. From this point of view, the depiction of prostitutes in *Katsourbos* (realistic, but without real names, and bound by the conventions of Italian comedy) approaches Sachlikis's advisory poem rather than his vengeful, satirical ones. In addition, *Katsourbos* and the *Advice* share the same metre (iambic fifteen-syllable) and the same form of rhyme – since here for the first time Sachlikis uses couplet rhyme, which, compared with the satirical, sneering nature of the polystich of his first poems on whores, is quieter and more aloof (van Gemert 1991: 55).

Yet, as we shall see later on, the aim of the depiction differs considerably between *Katsourbos* and the *Advice*.

In the *Advice*, the poet advises Franziskis to avoid three bad habits and great dangers: the night life of the large town, gambling, and the "secret" whores (such as Chortatsis's heroine Poulissena to some degree). This third subject occupies exactly half of the total poem and examines a series of some seven individual subjects concerning the whores (vv. 225-403):⁸

- their ways of setting their cap at a man (229-42);
- their unfaithfulness to their lovers (231-62);
- their hypocritical behaviour towards the lovers (263-80);
- their habit of splitting on their lovers to the authorities of the town (281-324);

⁸ The numbering corresponds to the text as edited by Vitti 1960 from the Neapolitan codex.

- their complaints that the lover compromised their reputation (325-46);
- the role of their mothers (345-71); and
- the venereal diseases that men may contract from them (372-9).

In the *Advice*, therefore, the whores' conduct is presented by the poet as a danger to avoid; the advice of the poet is directed against the whores.

In *Katsourbos*, on the contrary, things work quite the other way round; the point of view is completely reversed here: there is a group of scenes, interspersed in the acts of the play, where the prostitutes and match-makers themselves present their indecent manners as a way of life worth following (Scenes A.2, B.7, and C.5, 6, 7). More specifically:

- in scene A.2, Poulissena explains to her maidservant ways in which prostitutes should work, dwelling mainly on their hypocritical behaviour and the lies they should tell their lovers, a characteristic on which Sachlikis had insisted as well, but from the opposite point of view.
- in scene B.7, these explanations of Poulissena will become more systematic and will take the form of advice (but how different from the advice of Sachlikis!); the form of instruction by the old whore, Arkolia, to the younger one, Poulissena, now that the latter is about to introduce her foster-daughter to the job.

Arkolia gives Poulissena a series of pieces of advice, all of which have their *reversed* equivalent in the Sachlikian poem. (In the Appendix, parodied and parodying verses are again printed on facing pages. The exact correspondences are indicated by the numbers printed in bold.⁹)

Yet apart from these similarities in the subject-matter discussed thus far, the two works examined here reveal also some similarities in style and vocabulary, which make even

⁹ Apart from the prostitutes' own views on their job and life style, there are also some more connections between the *Advice* and other parts of *Katsourbos*, such as the gifts and money that whores demand from their lovers (*Kats.* A 315-18 and *Adv.* 259-60, 306-7, and 354), and the hypocrisy of women, stressed by the servant Katsarapos (A 87-94).

more probable the connections between them, and the function of these connections in generating parody.

Common words in the two works are "ψόματα" and "κομπώματα" (lies and deception), as well as "σιργουλίσματα" and "μουτσουτσούνια", that is the mincing manner of the whores towards their lovers. The latter word appears exclusively in the two works examined here (*Adv.* 345, *Kats.* C 239), at least according to Kriaras's *Lexicon* (IA', p. 77). Common to both texts is the characterisation "πελελός" (crazy) (*Adv.* 237, 366, *Kats.* D 410) for the men who fall victim to these women, and also the whores' interest in their client's purse ("σακούλι") (*Adv.* 396, *Kats.* A 196). Finally, we find in both plays the standard rhyme "αλήθεια - παραμύθια" and the vivid description of the women's manners with the use of many verbs in the same verse (the "asyndeton" figure of speech: *Adv.* 322, *Kats.* C 313-16).

In addition, however, to all these similarities, we can also discern a parallelism in the composition of the examined extracts as a whole: what in fact happens in *Katsourbos* is that the hypocrisy of the whores and the deception of their lovers – the main danger that Sachlikis wanted Frantziskis to avoid – find here their practical application, from a reversed point of view, in the advice of Arkolia, and in the plan for the cheating of the ridiculous old lover Armenis.¹⁰

We have so far been talking about the reversal of the *Advice* subject-matter in the comedy *Katsourbos*, which shares common elements in style, vocabulary, metre and rhyme with the first text. Can we, consequently, talk of parody? Of the parodic use of the Sachlikian poem by a playwright who lived some two centuries later? Indeed, parts of the *Advice*, that is of a text written with a *serious* intention, are used in the comic context of another work, namely of a Renaissance comedy, written with a view to satire and ridicule. The ways in which we have seen Chortatsis using (as I believe) the *Advice* are compatible with the techniques of parody described by Fred W. Householder and M.A. Rose: from the types of parody explained by the first scholar, in *Katsourbos* we discern case "(3), where a writer

¹⁰ For borrowings of *Katsourbos* from Italian Renaissance comedies, concerning the depiction of the prostitutes, see Aposkiti 1994: 179-81, where the author examines the motif of the women's religiosity.

imitates (a) the sound and form of the original or (b) the general sense of the original" (Householder 1944: 6); from the changes "to the coherence of the text quoted", as classified by Margaret Rose, the Cretan comedy exhibits (1)(b), "changes to the message of the original, of a more ironic, or satiric and comic character" (Rose 1993: 37).

As far as we know, none of Sachlikis's works was ever published; they have come down to us in three manuscripts, all of them dated in the sixteenth century, the century in which Chortatsis lived and wrote his plays; it is probable that the Cretan playwright could have had access to Sachlikis's poems, unlike his wider audience who consequently may not have recognised in *Katsourbos* the original parodied text. Yet such a fact does not reduce the importance of the use of the *Advice* in the Cretan comedy: Chortatsis finds in this poem "ready-made" material for some of the scenes of his play: he finds the views of public opinion about the whores, expressed in rhyming couplets, in fifteen-syllable verses, divided into individual subjects, with specific figures of speech and characteristic words, and he – with his distinguished poetic genius – uses this opinion from a reverse point of view, by employing parody techniques, in order to vary his comic elements even more.

However, Chortatsis's acquaintance with parody does not stop with *Katsourbos*; instances of parody are also to be found in the playwright's pastoral drama *Panoria*.

Panoria

Pastoral drama is an offshoot of the third genre of Italian Renaissance drama, that is of tragicomedy. Tragicomedy was born out of the need felt by some playwrights to free drama from the excesses of both tragedy and comedy, and to "prevent the listeners from falling into the excessive melancholy of tragedy or the excessive lewdness of comedy", as the genre's main defender, Giambattista Guarini, characteristically says (Sidnell 1991: 153). Consequently it takes from both these genres only those components which would not lead to any excess but "which can unite with decorum and verisimilitude in a single dramatic form" (Sidnell 1991: 159). So tragicomedy comprises serious personages, who encounter "danger but not death", and comic ones, who cause "laughter that is not lewd" (Sidnell 1991: 153).

Panoria, the only surviving Cretan pastoral drama in the Greek language,¹¹ appears to be a very well written play which consciously follows the rules of the genre as set forth by its main theoreticians G.G. Cinthio and G.B. Guarini.¹²

When examining parody in *Panoria*, we return to the first way in which parody was used by the poet in his comedy *Katsourbos*; in his pastoral we find again the parodic treatment of some serious characters' speeches by other heroes of a more comic nature.

In this play two young shepherds, the wealthy and handsome Gyparis and his friend Alexis, experience a desperate love for two beautiful young girls, Panoria and Athousa respectively, who are so busy hunting on the mountains that they turn down any proposal of marriage. The ugly old woman Frosini, an echo of the comedies' match-makers, promises to help the young shepherds, who also have the support of Panoria's father Giannoulis, in order to sway the girls' opinion, as will eventually happen with the help of the goddess Venus (Aphrodite). So, among the characters borrowed from tragedy we count the four young heroes (girls and boys), and among those who remind us of comic heroes, we number the aged Frosini and Giannoulis. And it is precisely the desperate monologues and dialogues of these enamoured men (belonging to the serious component of the play), that are parodied by the discussions of the elderly characters (discussions belonging to the comic component of the pastoral).

Panoria parodies Panoria

The only purely comic scene of *Panoria*, a dialogue between Giannoulis and Frosini, is placed right in the middle of the play and acts as comic relief between various sloppy dialogues on love and marriage: in fact, it is a "duet" of insults and abuse between the characters, which can function as a parody of the young shepherds' duet of laments, which took place earlier in the

¹¹ One more specimen of Cretan pastoral drama has come down to us, Antonio Pandimo's *L'Amorosa Fede*, which is written in Italian. For an introduction to all surviving Cretan works of a pastoral character, see R. Bancroft-Marcus, "The pastoral mode", in Holton 1991: 79-102.

¹² For a fuller discussion of the relation of *Panoria* to the tragicomedy theories of the Cinquecento, see Markomihelaki, forthcoming.

play. In the Appendix, extracts from scene A.2 – with the laments of Gyparis and Alexis – and from the above-mentioned scene C.3 – which echoes the general "sound and form" of the previous one, but from a comic and ridiculing point of view – are printed on facing pages.

Some conclusions

Coming to the end of this search for traces of parody in the Chortatsian plays,¹³ it is time to see whether the title given to this paper can be at all justified. Can the talented playwright Chortatsis also be characterised as a competent parodist? Yes, I would answer, since we saw him parodying both another artist's work and his own plays.

It is remarkable that he set out to reverse Sachlikis's serious advice on avoiding the indecent manners of the whores, and to turn it into advice on how to live as a "proper" and "decent" whore. It is even more remarkable that he parodies his own heroes and their speeches.

As to this latter kind of parody, it is worth mentioning that Chortatsis tends to parody only his enamoured young men (in both *Katsourbos* and *Panoria*) and their, usually boring, descriptions of love sufferings. In other words, he parodies only serious, and not funny, speeches and characters;¹⁴ thus he is consciously aiming at lightening the serious-romantic components of these two plays in favour of their comic ones.

But once we have accepted Chortatsis in his new role, that of the parodist, the question which immediately follows is, "what kind of a parodist?" As Margaret Rose describes them, there have been in general two main theories about the nature of the attitude of the parodist to the text quoted: according to the first, the parodist's purpose is to mock the chosen text; and according to the second, the parodist is motivated by sympathy with the

¹³ It is of course self-evident why Chortatsis's third play, the tragedy *Erofili*, was excluded from this examination. Parody could never have a place in such a serious genre as tragedy.

¹⁴ One could also assign to parody the comic misunderstandings of the Schoolmaster's Latin, but this is a device directly borrowed from the Italian *commedia erudita* and, consequently, it may not constitute a conscious exploitation of the possibilities of parody.

imitated text and he imitates it in order to write in its style (Rose 1993: 45-6), a motive which I take to be the case in Trivizas's *Three Little Wolves*.

I believe that both these attitudes can apply to Chortatsis's treatment of a parodied text: when he is parodying his own heroes' speeches, the motive is to ridicule them; when, on the other hand, he uses the *Advice to Frantziskis* as a source for his scenes with prostitutes, the motive is apparently the respectful acknowledgement of the help he received from this earlier text of his Cretan literary tradition.

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Yet talking about Chortatsis as a parodist, what, one might ask, were the readings and knowledge he could have had on the subject? Was parody in his plays a haphazard fact, owed to his talent and sense of the comic, or might it have some roots in the poet's theoretical readings? For, as deduced from previous research on the relation of *Katsourbos* and *Panoria* to the Cinquecento theories of drama, it is more than probable that Chortatsis really knew and applied in these plays specific theoretical principles.¹⁵

As far as I have been able to find out, it was only Julius Caesar Scaliger, among the Italian sixteenth-century theorists, who wrote specifically about parody, providing "one of the earliest influential 'modern' (in the sense of post-Renaissance) discussions" of this genre, in his *Poetices libri septem* of 1561. Scaliger devoted to the subject the chapter "Parodia" (p. 46 of the 1561 edition), and defined the term as "the inversion of another song which turns it into the ridiculous" (Rose 1993: 9 and 281), which is exactly what Chortatsis was doing with both an earlier didactic poem and the speeches of his own serious heroes.

Chortatsis, then, could have had at his disposal and used a theoretical discussion on parody, to be found in one of the more influential sixteenth-century Italian treatises on the theory of literature, thus revealing one more aspect of his versatile poetic personality.

¹⁵ On dramatic theory in *Katsourbos*, see Markomihelaki-Mintzas 1991, and on the relation of *Panoria* to theory, Markomihelaki, forthcoming.

APPENDIX: The examples

1. KATSOURBOS

A. *Katsourbos* parodies *Katsourbos*

SCENE A.1

Nikolos

1. Έμας επά, Κατσάραπε, στο σπίτι τση κεράς μου,
 κι αν ήξευρες πώς άφτουσι τα φύλλα τση καρδιάς μου
 και πώς τρέμου τα μέλη μου, κρίνω πως μ' είχες κλαίγει
 κι αλύπητη τη μοίρα μου κι άπονην είχες λέγει,
 γιατί δε βλέπω τά 'μορφα και πλουμιστά της κάλλη
 τη σκότιση να διώξουσι του νου μου τη μεγάλη.
 Πού 'σαι, Κασσάντρα μου ακριβή, πού 'σαι και δεν προβαίνεις
 να σβήσεις τση καημένης μου καρδιάς τση πληγωμένης
 τη λαύρα κι όλους τσι καημούς μόνο με τη θωριά σου [...]
 (A 1-99)

2. Πρόβαλε κορασίδα μου, πρόβαλε να σε δούσι
 τ' αμμάτια μου του ταπεινού, να παρηγορηθούσι·
 πρόβαλε, δώσ' τωνα το φως, σαν ήσου μαθημένη,
 με τη γλυκειά σου τη θωριά, ψυχή μου αγαπημένη (A 13-16)

3. Αν ήξευρες τα πάθη μου και την πολλή μου αγάπη
 κι αν είναι και κιαμιά φορά σ' είχε δοξέψει, αζάπη,
 της Αφροδίτης το παιδί, φαρμάκιν είχες λέγει
 λογιάζω πως το φαγητό, και πάντα σου είχες κλαίγει.
 (A 49-52)

4. Καθώς θωρώ δεν έγνωσες ποτέ σου την αγάπη. (A 65)

5. Με το γλυκύ κιλαδισμό τον ήλιο προσκαλούσι
 κάθε πουρνό όλα τα πουλιά να βγει να τότε δούσι, (A 133-4)
 να πάρου φως τ' αμμάτια τως και λάμψη από κείνο,
 τα τάρια τως για να μπορού ν' ανταμωθούσι, κρίνω. (A 137-8)
 Γιαύτος με το τραγούδι μου κι εγώ, γλυκειά κερά μου,
 σε κράζω να 'βγεις να σε δου τ' αμμάτια τα δικά μου. (A 141-2)

[(scene A.3)

Armenis

1. Τούτος ο πόθος μού κρατεί το νου διασκορπισμένο,
σαν είναι των αγαφτικώ το φυσικό δοσμένο.
Μα τούτο δεν είν' τίβοτσι σιμά σε σφάλματα άλλα
οπού με κάνει ολημερνίς και κάνω πλιο μεγάλα.
Σφάνω τορνέσα όντε μετρώ, σκαρτσούνια μου δε δένω,
σαν αφορμάρης πορπατώ σ' τσι στράτες που παγαίνω,
την εμιλιάν οπού μιλώ καπακιστά τη βγάνω,
στην κεφαλή μου πα ξυστώ, κι εγώ τ' ατζί μου πάνω·
κι εκείνο που 'ναι πλιότερο, δεν ημπορώ να φάγω,
μηδέ στη σέκια δυο φορές την εβδομάδα πάγω.
Τη νύχτα ψίχα δεν μπορώ μιαν ώρα να τα κλείσω
τ' αμμάτια μου να κοιμηθώ, θαμάζομαι, να ζήσω,
πώς ζω σε τόση παιδωμή. ... (A 253-265)]

Katsarapos

2. Πρόβαλε, ναίσκε, πρόβαλε, μηδέν αργείς, κερά μου
τούτα τα λόγια τ' άνοστα πώς τα μισά η κοιλιά μου
(A 17-18)

1. 3. Δοξεύγει μου καθημερνώς η πείνα την κοιλιά μου
κι η όρεξη του φαγητού μού σφάζει την καρδιά μου.
(A 53-4)

4. Γνώθω τηνε και καίγει μου τα σωθικά τ' αζάπη (A 66)
[...]

1. Και πώς σου φαίνεται η σκροφιά; Τούτή 'ναι που με σφάζει
τούτή 'ναι που με τυραννά και την καρδιά μου βράζει,
κι όντα τη δω, λουκάνικα κι απάκια λογαριάζω
κι από την τόση πεθυμιά κλαίγω κι αναστενάζω. (A 75-8)

5. Με το μοσκάτο το γλυκύ και μ' όμορφη λογάδα
κάθε πουρνό οι φρόνιμοι διώχνουσι την κρυάδα, (A 135-6)
να πάρουσι τα μέλη τως δύναμη, να βαστούσι
τσι κόπους και τσι λογισμούς οπού τσι τυραννούσι.(A 139-40)
Γιαύτος κι εγώ 'χα πεθυμιά σήμερα να 'χα χάρη
σ' ένα βουτσι να βρίσκουμου γή πούρι σε πιθάρι. (A 143-4)

[Prologue: Eros

Εμέ με κράζουν Έρωτα και γιο της Αφροδίτης,
 οπού δοξεύγω τες καρδιές και κάνω σαν πετρίτης (Πρ.37-8)]

B. *Katsourbos* parodies Sachlikis's *Advice to Frantziskis*

Advice to Frantziskis (the poet)

1. Η πολιτική όντα γρικά ότι έχει να κερδέσει,
 περιλαμπάνει σε σφικτά ώστε να σε ποδέσει (229-30)

Και όποιον ευρίσκει πελελόν και έχει να της χαρίζει,
 με λόγια και κομπώματα σαν μύλον τον γυρίζει (237-8)

2. και αφ' ότις φα και γλείψει σε, τότε αποκουντουρίζει,
 και άλλον ευρίσκει και τον τρω, και εσένα αποχωρίζει.
 (231-2)

3. Η πολιτική, αν της δώσουσιν, μετά χαρά επαίρνει·
 ως δια τα γρόσια η πολιτική κολουμουντρά και γέρνει!
 (239-40)

4. Ποτέ της η πολιτική εις ένα δεν ιστέκει·
 ενός σακούλι κτάσσεται και άλλου γαιτάνι πλέκει.
 Τον έναν αποχαιρετά και άλλον περιλαμπάνει
 [Έναν σου φαίνεται κρατεί και των παντών προδίδει].
 (243-6, but also 251)

Scene C.3

3. Ένα κοπέλι την καρδιά μου 'σφαξε την καημένη.

ΝΙΚ. Σε ποια περιά και δε θωρώ αίμα ποσώς να βγαίνει;

- Μέσα την έχω την πληγή και πάγει στο στομάχι.

Οϊμένα ο κακόμοιρος, μάτια ας μην ήθελά 'χει!

ΝΙΚ. Ποιον ήτο το κοπέλι αυτό;

- Ο γιος της Πισπορδίτης!

ΝΙΚ. Ποιας Πισπορδίτης;

- Γείς γυμνός, κακός, (...) ψειρίτης.

[...] Μα στέκοντας και βλέποντας τα ξίγκια τα περίσσα

και τσ' ομορφιές οπού 'χασι, τα σάλια μου κινήσα,

γιατ' είδα δυο κομμάτια κριας όμορφα μέσα στ' άλλα,

τόσα παχιά, τόσα καλά, τόσα πολλά μεγάλα,

π' όλος εξαναστάθηκα, κι αυτό το κοπελάκι,

της Πισπορδίτης το παιδί, σύρνει το δοξαράκι

κι εις την κοιλιά μ' εδόξεψε, και λέγει μου: "δε γιάνεις

ποτέ απ' αυτείνη την πληγή, καημένε, μα ποθαίνεις,

ανέν κι αυτά τα φαγητά δε φάγεις να χορτάσεις."

(C 51-6, 83-91)

Katsourbos (Arkolia)

1. Μα τούτο θέλω μοναχάς πάντα σου να θυμάσαι:

μ' όσους σου λάχου σπλαχνικιά, σα θέλει η τέχνη, να 'σαι
(B 321-2)

Κάνε καλή θωριά ολωνών, κι όσο μπορείς τούς γέλα,
με γκρίνια μην ιδεί κιανείς ποτέ σου την κοπέλα. (B 329-30)

2. κι όσο μπορείς αγαφτικούς την κάμε πάντα να 'χει
γιατί κακό με τους πολλούς δεν ημπορεί να λάχει. (B 331-2)

3. ουδέ 'ς τς αρχές σου να ζητάς τις πληρωμές μεγάλες,
να μη σου φεύγου σαν πουλιά να πηλίνουνσι στις άλλες.

Κάλλιο το λίγο και συχνό γεμίζει το σακούλι,
και στη φτηνειά κατέχεις το το πως γλακούσιν ούλοι.

(B 325-8)

4. γιαύτος λωλάγρα την κρατώ και γι' αγνωσιά μεγάλη
όντες ακούσω πως κιαμιά κιανέναν αποβγάλει. (B 337-8)

Στην κάμαρα ας είν' ο είς κι άλλος εις την αυλή σου,
κι άλλος απ' όζω του στενού ... (B 343-4)

τα ρούχα σου κι αγαφτικούς πάντα να συχναλλάζεις,
όσο μπορείς στα βρόχια σου πλιότερους για να μπάζεις.

(B 371-2)

2. PANORIA

Panoria parodies Panoria

SCENE A.2

ΓΥΠ. [...] Γιατί θαρρώ δε βρίσκεται θεριό μηδεκαμένα,
να μηδέν κλάψει από καρδιάς περίσσα λυπημένα
γροικώντας τα περίσσα μου βάσανα και καημούς μου,
τα δάκρυα μου, τσι πόνους μου και τσ' αναστεναμούς μου.

ΑΛΕ. Εγώ 'μ', αδέρφι Γύπαρη, στα πάθη μαθημένος·
κι αν ήξερες τη σήμερον πώς βρίσκομ' ο καημένος,
χαρά 'χες πει την πρίκα σου σιμά στην εδική μου·
κι ήθελες το 'χει θάμασμα το πώς κρατεί η ζωή μου.
Τον ήλιον είδα να σταθεί χίλιες φορές γροικώντας
τα πάθη μου και να 'κλαψε τα δάκρυα μου θωρώντας.

ΓΥΠ. Εγώ δεν είδα να σταθεί τον ήλιο να μ' ακούσει,
μα είδα χαράκια και δεντρά πολλά ν' ανασπαστούσι,
να φεύγου για να μη γροικού τ' αναστενάματά μου
και την περίσσα λύπηση απόχω στην καρδιά μου. [...]

ΑΛΕ. Ελόγιασά το αληθινά πως λυγερής αγάπη
θε να 'ν' αιτιά του πόνου σου και του καημού σου, αζάπη. [...]

ΓΥΠ. Λόγιασε ποια 'γριότερη κι άπονη κορασίδα,
και ποια περηφανότερη γυρίζει επά στην Ίδα,
κι εκείνη 'ναι απού η μοίρα μου μου 'δωκε ν' αγαπήσω,
τα βάσανα του έρωτα μόνο για να γνωρίσω. [...]

Τέσσερις χρόνοι σήμερο περνούσι απού γυρεύω
να τη μερώσω, μα θωρώ πως πλια την αγριεύω.
Τα λόγια χάνω μοναχάς, κόπο και δουλειπή μου·
κι εις το 'στερο θέλει χαθεί του δόλιου κι η ζωή μου.

ΑΛΕ. [...] Κι έτσι μετά μου σήμερο κι εσύ παρηγορήσου,
γιατί 'ν' η τύχη μου κακή παρά την εδική σου.

Περίσσα καίγει μια φωτιά απού 'ναι κουκλωμένη
κι η γιαρρωσιά απού χώνεται τον άθρωπο αποθαίνει.

ΓΥΠ. Δίκιο δεν έχεις, φίλε μου, καθώς θωρώ, να λέγεις
πως είσαι κακορίζικος κι ωσάν εμέ να κλαίγεις,
γιατί τα μάτια σου, όντα θες, την κόρη σου θωρούσι
και δύνουνται τα κάλλη τση να σε παρηγορούσι. [...]

ΑΛΕ. Ανέναι και θωρώ τηνε, ανέναι κι ακλουθώ τση
και το τραγούδι τζη συχιά και τσ' εμιλιές γροικώ τση,
σ' είντα 'φελούμαι ο ταπεινός δεν έχοντας ολπίδα
γλυκύ να κάμω ταίρι μου τούτη την κορασίδα; [...]

Τα δάση ετούτα ολημερνίς τα πάθη σου γροικούσι
και τα λαγκά την απονιά τση κόρης σου λαλούσι·
και μετά τούτο την καρδιά λιγάκι αλαφραίνεις
κι απού την πρίκα την πολλή του λογιισμού σου βγαίνεις. [...]

ΓΥΠ. Πάθη ποτέ και κλάηματα, Αλέξη, δε μπορούσι
βάσανα να λιγάνουσι, μάλλιος αυτά γεννούσι
πλειότερα βάρη στην καρδιά.

SCENE C.3

ΓΙΑ. Όστε απού να κρατεί τση γρες αδόντι στη μασέλα, πάντα λογιάζει να 'ν' καλλιιά παρά κιαμιά κοπέλα.
[...]

ΦΡΟ. Θαρρείς, κι ογιατ' εγέρασες κι εσύ και το' αταξάδες δεν άφηκες τσι πρώτες σου, πως είν' ετσά κι οι γράδες;

ΓΙΑ. Καλέ, δεν είσαι τόσα γρε. Δε με περνάς ποτέ σου τρεις χρόνους. Αλλά δείχνει σου κι απού την πορπατέ σου.

ΦΡΟ. Κι εσύ 'σαι πλειότερου καιρού παρ' άθρωπο στην Κρήτη· και μηδεσκιάς στο στόμα σου δεν έχεις τραπεζίτη· κι εμένα λέγεις πλια καιρού πως είμαι παρά σένα, απού κρατού τ' αδόντια μου σα να 'σα σιδερένα;
[...]

ΓΙΑ. Ζιμιό άφησε τα βάσανα και πιάσ' τον πόθο πάλι να δεις πώς ξαναιώνουσι τα πρωτινά σου κάλλη.

ΦΡΟ. Σαν ξεραθεί ο βασιλικός, Γιαννούλη, δε γυρίζει στην πρώτη ντου ομορφιά ποτέ, καλά και να μυρίζει.

ΓΙΑ. Την αγκινάρα την ξερή εγώ 'δα να καρπίσει, ωσά τζη βάλει την κοπρέ κιανείς να τη σκαλίσει.
[...]

ΦΡΟ. Η προκοσύνη σου η πολλή δείχνει σου εκ το ραβδί σου. Έτοια δουλειά, βαριόμοιρε, δεν είναι για τ' ατζί σου.

ΓΙΑ. Μηδέ θωρείς τα γέρα μου, μη βλέπεις τα μαλλιιά μου, μα τήρηξε την όρεξη απ' έχω στην καρδιά μου.

ΦΡΟ. Οι γέροντες κατέχω το πως όρεξη τσι σέρνει, μα τίβετας η μόρση να κάμου δε τζι φέρνει.

ΓΙΑ. Το κυπαρίσσι όσο γερά τόσον αδυνατεύει και το λιοντάρι πλειότερα στα γέρα του αγριεύει.

ΦΡΟ. Κι άθρωπος όσον πλια γερά, χάνεται η δύναμή του κι όσο λιγότερα μπορεί, πληθαίν' η γιόρεξή του.

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