

## STUDIES IN KAVAFIS:

### 1. A COMMENTARY ON T. MALANOS' THEORY OF HELLENISTIC INFLUENCES IN THE POETRY OF KAVAFIS<sup>1</sup>

To Professor J. K. Newman  
*de suis*

Timos Malanos in his *K. II. Καβάφης* (Athens 1935, 1957, especially pp. 146-167 of the second edition; all quotations of Malanos in the

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1. These pages are part of a longer paper, read in Professor J. K. Newman's seminar on Hellenistic Poetry, in which I discussed theoretical problems of (comparative mainly) literature, offered an analysis of Kavafis side by side with Herodas, and projected a model for the study of the work of this poet in its entirety. They constitute the first in a series of articles planned to offer a holistic interpretation of the entire poetic production of Kavafis both analysed systematically *per se* and placed in its Hellenistic and contemporary lyric context.

Besides Prof. Newman, I wish here to thank my former teacher Prof. Linos Politis, Prof. G. P. Savidis, and my friends D. J. Brown and G. Kechagioglou for valuable references and suggestions. From the rich bibliography I cite here only texts and basic items which directly or indirectly guided my work (For a selective bibliography on Kavafis, see *C.P. Cavafis. Collected Poems*, transl. by E. Keeley and Ph. Sherrard, ed. by G. Savidis, Princeton 1975, pp. 253-257):

*K. II. Καβάφη, Ποιήματα*, έπιμ. Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, vol. 1 (1896-1918), vol. 2 (1919-1933) Athens 1963.

*K. II. Καβάφη, Άνέκδοτα Ποιήματα (1882-1923)*, έπιμ. Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, Athens 1968.

21 out of the 25 denounced poems (1886-1898) in *Νεολόγος* (Constantinople), 7.12.1897; *Τὰ Νέα Γράμματα* 2 (1936) 1-12 and 105-113.

*Καβάφη Πεζά. Παρουσίαση, σχόλια Γ. Παπουτσάκη*, Athens 1963.

Γ. Λεχωνίτη, *Καβαφικά Αύτοσχόλια*, Alexandria 1942.

'Αφιέρωμα στον Καβάφη, *NE* 74 (1963) 1391-1640.

'Αφιέρωμα στον Καβάφη, *Επιθεώρηση Τέχνης* 18 (1963) 552-708.

Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, Τὸ Ἄρχεῖο Κ. Π. Καβάφη, *NE* 14 (1963) 1539-47. Reprint, Athens 1964.

Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, Γιὰ μιὰ πρώτη ἀνάγνωση τοῦ Καβάφη σὲ δίσκους, *Ἐποχές*, no. 18 (1964) 56-65. Reprint, Athens 1964.

following pages come from this section of his book) expounded an attractive theory regarding the structure of the Kavafic short poems which has since been rather unwisely repeated and considered to be conclusively proven<sup>1</sup>. A critique of the methodological presuppositions of the a.'s theory could be the critique of the psychoanalytical method in general but beyond that it should pose the following fundamental questions: To what extent is it legitimate for M.'s study: 1. to isolate the literary phenomena from their cultural framework (*Kulturgeschichte*); 2. to isolate the work of K. from the immediate history of Literature (*Formgeschichte*); 3. to define the literary genres too rigidly with the result that one believes the abstract models to outweigh the actual writings? 4. to ignore the characteristic Kavafic solution to the tantalizing problem of modern Greek literature, namely that of the famous «ἐλληνοικότητα στήν τέχνη»; 5. to ignore the problems related to the transplanting and operation of one constituent from a genre structure into another.

But since a discussion of the roots is out of place here, our observ-

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Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, *Οί καθαφικὲς ἐκδόσεις (1891-1932)*. Περιγραφή καὶ σχόλιο, βιβλιογραφικὴ μελέτη, Athens 1966.

Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, 'Ο δραστηκὸς λόγος τοῦ Κ. Π. Καβάφη, *Τὸ Βῆμα*, 15.4.1972. Reprint, Athens 1972.

Κ. Π. Καβάφη, *Αἱ σκέψεις ἐνὸς γέροντος καλλιτέχνου*. 'Ανέκδοτο πεζὸ κείμενο παρουσιασμένο ἀπὸ τὸν Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, *Τράμη*, no. 5 (1972) 101-4. Reprint, Thessaloniki 1972.

Κ. Π. Καβάφη, Τὸ τέλος τοῦ 'Οδυσσέως. 'Ανέκδοτο πεζὸ κείμενο παρουσιασμένο καὶ σχολιασμένο ἀπὸ τὸν Γ. Π. Σαββίδη, *Δοκιμασία* 2, no. 5 (1974) 9-22. Reprint, Athens 1974.

Κ. Θ. Δημαρᾶ, *Ἱστορία τῆς Νέας Ἑλληνικῆς Λογοτεχνίας*, Athens 1975.

Linos Politis, *A History of Modern Greek Literature*, Oxford 1973.

J.K. Newman, *Augustus and the New Poetry* [Coll. Latomus 88], Brussels 1967.

P. Valéry, *The Art of Poetry* (tr.) [Bollingen Series XLV. 7], N. York 1958.

B. Axelson, *Unpoetische Wörter*, Lund 1945.

W. Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, Wiesbaden 1960.

W. Schadewaldt, *Monolog und Selbstgespräch*, Berlin 1926.

Walter Nikolai, *Kleine und grosse Darstellungseinheiten in der Ilias*, Heidelberg 1973.

E. Lämmert, *Bauformen des Erzählens*, Stuttgart 1964.

J.-P. Chausserie-Laprée, *L'expression narrative chez les historiens latins: Histoire d'un style*, Paris 1969.

1. Select bibliography on the concept of *mimesis*: E. Stemplinger, *Das Plagiat in der griechischen Literatur*, Leipzig 1912; G. C. Fiske, *Lucilius and Horace*, Madison [U. of Wisconsin Studies] 1920; E. Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro, Aeneis Buch VI*, Leipzig - Berlin 1926; A. de Guillemin, *REL* 2 (1924) 35ff.

ations will be confined only to the fruit: the bearing of the a.'s concrete interpretation on the reading of the poet.

In this interpretation one can observe three major sources of error: I. *misapprehension of Hellenistic poetry*; II. *a forced connection between Kavafis and Callimachus*, and III. *abuse of the terms 'epigram' and 'mime'*.

### I.

According to the psychoanalytical approach of the author, K.'s poetic production is nothing more than a projection of his sexual unorthodoxy: his choice of Alexandrian themes, therefore, is interpreted as a disguise to conceal an erotic vision castigated by contemporary society. The a. reports the poet as having said on one occasion: 'Η ελληνιστική εποχή με τὸ νὰ εἶναι πιδ ἀνήθικος, πιδ ἐλεύθερη, μοῦ ἐπιτρέπει νὰ κινήσω τὰ πρόσωπά μου ὅπως θέλω... M. leaps to the conclusion: "Ἐτσι ἡ ἰδέα τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρειας ἀπὸ καταφύγιο τῆς παράνομης ἐρωτικῆς του διάθεσης γίνεται συγχρόνως κι αἰσθητικὸς συντελεστής, and thereupon he enumerates the general characteristics of Alexandrian poetry which (in his estimation) K. adopts in the development of his technique. But:

(a) The a.'s contention is not verified by the *Poems*. The data:

1. The theme of «love perverted» is not even mentioned once in an Alexandrian setting in the *Anecdota*, although it appears twelve times in non-Alexandrian settings between the years 1903-1923. In vol. 1 of the *Poems* (written between 1896-1918) ten times (in non-Alexandrian settings nineteen times); in vol. 2 (written between 1919-1933) thirteen times (in non-Alexandrian settings nineteen times).

2. Poems dealing with Alexandrian subjects, which have nothing to do with sex at all: in the *Anecdota* twelve, in vol. 1 twenty-eight, in vol. 2 twenty-nine: a total of 69 poems out of c. 230.

There is, I think, only one interpretation of these data: the Alexandrian setting was not primarily used as a convenient persona to conceal under the cloak of the past the sins of the present, since the poet expressed these reprehensible images more often in contemporary settings. In addition, the second set of numbers shows that the reason(s) why K. uses a plethora of Alexandrian topics must be more complex than M. suspected. In effect there are 69 poems which can lead us directly to the laboratory of the poet.

(b) 1. (The Alexandrian poets) παραμέλησαν τὸν λυρισμὸ (Malanos). It is well-established that Callimachus and his contemporaries attempted

to restore lyricism in their narrative poems by introducing musical elements<sup>1</sup> — an attempt which was exaggerated by important poets like Euphorion and his Greek and Latin followers, the famous *Cantores Euphorionis*<sup>2</sup>. One need only hear a line such as the following to realize the extreme results to which this method of composition gave rise: ...τοῖαι / μαρμαρυγαί, αἴρησιν ὅτε ῥήσσοιτο σίδηρος / ἤέρ' ἀναθρώσκουσι... (J. U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina*, Oxford 1925, fr. 51: 9-10). The Callimachean interest in lyric poetry is shown by his work: The *Iamboi* and the *Méλη*, both composed in a variety of meters; his *epinicia*, an attempt to renew the Pindaric type of epinicion, his *Epigrams*, a genre which originated from Lyric Poetry anyway, and the infusion of lyrical elements into his epic poem *Hecale*, his *Hymns*, written in counterpoint harmony to the narrative Homeric hymns, and no doubt his tragedies, comedies, and satyric plays, which he composed according to the *vita* preserved in the Suda lexicon (τῶν δὲ αὐτοῦ βιβλίων ἐστὶ καὶ ... σατυρικά δράματα, τραγωδία, κωμωδία, κτλ.). Cf. also the poet's significant preference of the ear to the eye (*Epigr.* fr. 282: ὀκκόσον ὀφθαλμοὶ γὰρ ἀπευθέες, ὄσσον ἀκοὴ εἰδυλίας), the Scholiast to fr. 384, 15 ff., and Pfeiffer's note on p. xxxvi of his edition: *primi versus singulorum quattuor carminum lyricorum a metricis laudantur (ut primus versus primi Iambi et primus pentameter primi libri Actiorum)*.

On Kavafis lyricus see especially the studies of K. Th. Dimaràs (Μετρικὲς πηγὲς τῆς καβαφικῆς τέχνης, *Ἡ Κόκλος* 3-4, 1932, 69 ff.; *Ἡ τεχνικὴ τῆς ἐμπνευστοῦ στὸν Καβάφη, Φιλολογικὴ Προτοχρονιά* 1956, pp. 97 ff.; *Ἡ Καβάφη λυρικός*, in *Ἱστορία, op. cit.*, pp. 461 ff.) and a series of articles in *NE* (*Ἀφιέρωμα, op. cit.*), which stress exactly the lyrical elements in the *Poems*. It is rather certain that the a. confuses the essence of lyricism (which is musicality resulting from recurring patterns of sounds, syllables, words, lines, whole motifs) with what we are accustomed to call lyric songs of the type that Heine, for example, wrote.

2. (The Alexandrian poets) στὰ ἔργα τοὺς ζήτησαν μὲ κάθε τρόπο τὸ καινούργιο (Malanos). This assertion must be qualified in order to be understood properly; otherwise it is misleading (cf. at least Callimachus'

1. See J. K. Newman, Callimachus and the Epic, in *Serta Turyniana*, Urbana 1974, pp. 137 ff.

2. Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* III, 19. On Euphorion cf. F. Scheidweiler, *Euphorionis Fragmenta*, Bonn 1908; J. U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina*, Oxford 1925, pp. 28 ff.; Westerink, *Mnemosyne* 13 (1960) 329 ff.

doctrine in fr. 612: ἀμάρτυρον οὐδὲν αἰείδω). The Alexandrian poets sought ways to renew the traditional poetic schemes, as poetry always does: the new was not, however, a purpose *per se* for these poets. Euphoriion again, to mention only one example, according to Van Groningen is not seeking for original ideas and he does not wish to relate a *novel* story to captivate the reader. The main purpose of the poetical activity of this poet is the search for the form: the ideas, the stories, and the emotions are only the material from which he can compose beautiful lines. Therefore, as can be seen in the fragments of his Ἰππ]ομέδων μείζων, he does not relate the entire story but simply places together the most striking points of the myth. The Callimachean advice in the Preface to the *Aitia*, ll. 25-28, should also be studied carefully to avoid hasty judgements.

3. (The Alexandrian poets) στή θέση τοῦ πατριωτισμοῦ καὶ τοῦ λυρισμοῦ ἔβαλαν βλα τὰ καθημερινὰ αἰσθήματα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (Malanos). This is absolutely incorrect for both Callimachus, who sets the tone for the rest of the Alexandrians, and Kavafis: Callimachus is «not a poet of tuneful trifles»<sup>1</sup> (*nugae*), he is a poet who wrote solemn hymns to gods, the *Iamboi*, the *Aitia*, elegiac poems, epigrams (with subtle irony) and also he is responsible for the renewal of epic poetry with his *Hecale*, and for experiments with the *epinicion* of the Pindaric type. His work is a critique of the Homeric epic hero, and his Theseus a modern anti-hero — not a mere hero of comedy. Kavafis on the other hand is predominantly a tragic poet and does write a considerable number of «patriotic» poems (like 2, 31)!

4. (The Alexandrian poets) ἀνέπτυξαν ἀκόμη καὶ τὴν ρεαλιστικὴ περιέργεια (Malanos). Although this is true of Hellenistic poetry, it is true also of classical Greek poetry, and, besides, K. did not have to go so far back to discover realism. In George J. Becker's (ed.) *Documents of Modern Literary Realism*, Princeton 1963, the reader will find rich information about the realism of nineteenth century literature.

5. (The Alexandrian poets) ἀπέφυγαν τὰ μεγάλα ποιήματα, καλλιεργώντας τις σύντομες φόρμες, ὅπως τὸ ἐπίγραμμα ἢ συντομεύοντας ἄλλες, ὅπως τοὺς μιμιάμβους (Malanos). The truth is that the Telchines (= Posidippus, Asclepiades et al., according to the Florentine scholiast to the Preface to the *Aitia* of Callimachus) accused Callimachus of applying to longer poems the techniques sanctioned in the small-scale

1. Cf. Wilamowitz' account of the Callimachean work in his *Hellenist. Dichtung*, Berlin 1924, vol. 1, pp. 164-218.

epigrams. The common position that Callimachus was an advocate of the short forms has not passed unchallenged: On the notorious Callimachean slogan μέγα βιβλίον μέγα κακόν, cf. Wilamowitz, *Hellenist. Dichtung* I, 212, and recently J.K. Newman (cf. p. 135 footnote 1).

Callimachus in his Preface to the *Aitia* did not exclude the possibility that long poems may be superior to short ones, declaring that in any case the criterion of good poetry is art and not length. Apparently what he meant was simply that the high finish which gives the measure of the artistic perfection of a poem is much more difficult to attain in the large-scale poem than it is in the small-scale one, although he did not exclude the possibility of highly polished long compositions (such as the later Vergilian *Aeneid*. No one has ever said that Vergil lacks τέχνη by comparison, say, with Catullus, but his τέχνη of ambiguity is Alexandrian). Cf. E. Howald, *Das Wesen der lateinischen Dichtung*, Zürich 1948, for ancient and modern parallels.

This is only a different wording of Valéry's famous words: «they are only 8 lines, but 8 miracles; or rather one miracle in 8 lines, which is almost infinitely rarer and more astonishing than 8 beautiful lines» (*Art of Poetry*, *op. cit.*, p. 24). And for all these too severe criteria of his, Valéry is still capable of finding the 600-line *Adonis* by La Fontaine a marvelous piece of art. It would also be a very interesting point that apart from the Callimachean movement, at least according to the influential book by K. Ziegler, *Das Hellenistische Epos*, Leipzig 1966, a large number of (now lost) long cyclic epics continued to be composed even in Hellenistic times. Moreover, it is certain that the mimiamb is not the result of shortening of the mime, as the author seems to believe, but something qualitatively different.

6. Ἡ τέχνη ἀναπλήρωσε σ' αὐτοῦς (= the Hellenistic poets) τὴν ἔμπνευση (Malanos). This is a very unfortunate oversimplification of the old dispute (Plato vs. Aristotle, although Aristotle allows for *ingenium* too in *Poet.* 1451 a 24), rekindled among the Alexandrian poets over the two catchwords *ars* / *ingenium*. Actually the poets and critics were divided into two camps: those for whom the first value of a poem was its artistic perfection (*ars*), and those who revered the unmixed power of inspiration (*ingenium*). Once again the a.'s negative attitude towards the defenders of *ars* has been created by the well-known confusion which identifies true poetry with the romantic idea of the lyric song presumably written as an outpouring of the feelings of the writer in the heat of the moment and thereafter left unadorned. Everything less spontaneous is

condemned as non-genuine poetry. Similarly, E. Havelock in his widely read book *The Lyric Genius of Catullus*, Oxford 1939, 21967, argues that Catullus is a genuine poet simply because he uses autobiographical material and is spontaneous, whereas Horace is too frigid because he is too good as an artist <sup>1</sup>. Yet the author has driven Kavafis from the realm of poetry simply because he chose to practice what old and modern authorities preach <sup>2</sup>.

7. (The Alexandrian poets) ἦταν συνήθως λόγιοι, φιλόλογοι, σχολιαστές ἢ καὶ βιβλιοθηκᾶριοι (Malanos, contemptuously). The reverse is correct: it was exactly poets who were appointed in the Alexandrian Museum to perform the «tedious» work of the philologists, namely the cataloguing of the heritage of the four previous Greek centuries. Upon the foundation of the Museum, the epic poet Zenodotus was entrusted with the work on the Epic, the tragic poet Alexander of Pleuron undertook the tragic poets and Lycophron of Chalcis, comedy. The same story was repeated in Modern Germany <sup>3</sup>.

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1. Against this conception of the function of poetry it will suffice to cite Valéry (cf. *Art of Poetry, op. cit.*, p. 315): «He (the poet) is no longer the disheveled madman who writes a whole poem in the course of one feverish night; he is cool scientist, almost an algebraist, in the service of a subtle dreamer... A hundred lines will make up his longest poem... He will take care not to hurl on the paper everything whispered to him in fortunate moments by the muse of Free Association. On the contrary, everything he has imagined, felt, dreamed, and planned will be passed through a sieve, weighed, filtered, subjected to *form* and condensed as much as possible, so as to gain in power what it loses in length...».

2. The a. draws a contrast between the meticulous artist, Kavafis, and the spontaneous poet Solomós. Ironically enough the latter happens to have published only a few lines during his lifetime, whereas he kept for himself numerous outlines of his great synthetic works with endless reworkings of individual lines or whole lyrical units, never satisfied by his results.

3. Körte, *Hellen. Dichtung*, Leipzig 1925, p. 76, remarks: «wie die Sammlung und Pflege unserer älterer deutschen Literatur zunächst unseren Romantikern Männern wie Tieck und Uhland, verdanken, bei denen die eigene dichterische Tätigkeit den Vorrang vor der gelehrten Arbeit behauptet, wie dann in der nächsten Generation bei den Gebrüder Grimm und Lachmann die neue Wissenschaft der deutschen Philologie sich von der dichterischen Betätigung scheidet, so löst sich bei den Alexandrinern ganz langsam im Verlauf mehrerer Generationen die Philologie von der Dichtung los; die Begründer der philologischen Wissenschaft fühlten sich sämtlich in erster Linie als Dichter und sie waren tatsächlich die hervorragenden Dichter ihrer Zeit.».

## II.

Callimachus - Kavafis: a direct influence? The a. seems to believe that such an influence can be proven.

1. In a passage of admirable syllogistic power the a. writes: 'Ὄς καὶ τὰ ποιήματά του ἀκόμη τ' ἀρχίζει (ὁ Κ.) μὲ τὴν ἴδια τὴ λέξη τοῦ Καλλιμάχου. Καὶ παρόλο που αὐτὸ ἴσως νὰ γίνεται καὶ ἀσυναίσθητα δὲν παύει ὅμως νὰ εἶναι καὶ ἀπόδειξη τοῦ θαυμασμοῦ του γιὰ κεῖνον (Malanos, p. 151). Examples:

Εἶπας [rpl.] «Ἥλιε, χαῖρε» Κλεόμβροτος Ὀμβρακιώτης (Callim. *A.P.* 7. 471<sup>1</sup>).

Εἶπες [2nd sg.]· «θὰ πάγω σ' ἄλλη γῆ, θὰ πάγω σ' ἄλλη θάλασσα» (Kav. *Poems* 1, 15<sup>1</sup>).

Ὄμοσε Καλλίγνωτος Ἰωνίδι μήποτ' ἐκείνης (Callim. *A.P.* 5.6<sup>1</sup>).

Ὅμνυει κάθε τόσο ν' ἀρχίσει πὺ καλὴ ζωὴ (Kav. *Poems* 1, 58<sup>1</sup>).

But the data are clear: in the *Anthologia Palatina*, quite apart from all the cases where εἶπεν is not the first word of the epigram, there are no less than 21 examples of poems written by various authors which begin with the aorist of the verb λέγω (9.754; 12.130; 7.471; 7.165; 7.379; 14.129; 7.64; 7.426; 5.187; 11.274; 9.532; 11.164; 11.303; 9.586; 11.349; 9.320; 14.75; 7.544; 5.228; 7.80; 16.183), and 7 examples with ὄμοσα, -ε (5.254; 11.340; 9.634; 12.179; 8.248; 5.133; 5.6). Therefore this general technique pervading the history of the epigram cannot be considered an exclusively Callimachean technique!

2. In order to prove that the famous Callimachean irony is imitated by K. the a. cites *A.P.* 7.471 in modern Greek translation of his own:

Εἶπε: «Χαῖρε, Ἥλιε» ὁ Κλεόμβροτος ὁ Ὀμβρακιώτης  
 καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ ὑψηλὸ προτείγισμα γκρεμίστηκε στὸν Ἄδη.  
 Αἰτία σοβαρὴ δὲν εἶχε νὰ πεθάνη·  
 εἶχε ὅμως διαβάσει τὸ Περὶ ψυχῆς τοῦ Πλάτωνος.

and comments: Ὁρισμένως τὸ ἐπίγραμμα αὐτὸ δὲν θὰ τὸ ἔγραφε διαφορετικὰ καὶ ὁ Καβάφης. Διαβάζοντάς το, πρὸ καιροῦ, σὲ φίλους ποὺ ἀγνοοῦσαν τὸν Καλλίμαχο, μὲ ρώτησαν: «Τί, καινούργιο ποίημα τοῦ Καβάφη;». Καὶ πράγματι, τὸ θέμα του ἀνήκει στὸν Καβαφικὸ κύκλο...

However, the study of the motif of death in the poetry of K. demonstrates an entirely non-Callimachean treatment:

(a) The death of a youth by itself constitutes (as it is connected



almost always with the motif of beauty) a traumatic experience for the poet, a passionate lover of beauty; he often gives details of the event (the death is premature, comes from a disease, abuses, φθορά; or it is deliberate assassination, drowning; or the fall of a hero takes place in the field of honor): cf. *Poems* 1, 44; 1,67; 1,72; 1,74; 1,75; 1,99; 1,109; 1,111; 1,113; 1,30 (1,31?); *Anecdota*, pp. 149, 51, 77.

(b) At other times, when no age is mentioned at all, death may come unheralded or from unexpected quarters, and the victim finds no time to react. Others, again, suspect its coming and prepare themselves, but their reactions are split: anxiety, or feelings of bliss absorb them. In other cases death meets people while they are engaged in a noble enterprise, but they show dignity and supreme serenity: nothing could change their decision to defend their goals and execute their tasks while fully conscious of the high cost of this stand. Cf. *Poems* 1,19; 1,100; 1,27; 1,20; 1,103; 1,104; *Anecdota*, pp. 119 etc.

(c) The reasons leading men to death never are frivolous, non-essential, or ridiculous. There is no comparison with those victims of reading the *Werther* of Goethe, or the *Phaedo* of Plato. Kavafis, first and foremost a tragic poet, deals with death with the same seriousness as when he deals with the rest of the great problems of human fate. To use a descriptive characterization, Kavafis is a *vatic* poet<sup>1</sup>, not a Telchine.

On the other hand, it is not so difficult to see what may mislead the audience of M.: the translation of a Callimachean epigram made by the a., which deliberately imitates K.'s diction (ὕψηλός not ψηλός) and the characteristically Kavafic word order of the third line in particular. M., unfortunately, resorts to the same device repeatedly (see p. 157 ff.).

3. Under the rubric «Ἡ πεζότιτα τοῦ ὕφους» the a. criticizes Kavafis because (like another Sudas [sic] or certain poetasters of the Hellenistic decadence) he employs «succinct phrasing», «loan wording» and even «passages of ancient authors untranslated» and «excludes imagery, similes, rare adjectives, metaphors» — in short, because he «simplifiesth e poetic style and versification» and renders them «antipoetic». Of course, «as an artist of inexhaustible patience», he continues, K. composed a few «wonderful verses» which were set off against a sea of others «unbelievably prosaic»; these few lines are intended to save the whole. Moreover, K., realizing that he was not capable of composing a great quantity of such really excellent verses, ended up with a few short poems.

1. Cf. J. K. Newman, *Augustus*, *op. cit.*, Ch. 4: *The concept of Vates*.

It must be observed that the author again holds his own model of the «little lyric song» over the head of Kavafis the «technician». This is a question of literary taste and theory:

(a) In antiquity, Callimachus became the target of criticism of the Telchines διὰ τὸ κάτισχνον τῶν ποιημάτων (to be understood in direct reference to the ἰσχνὸς χαρακτήρ<sup>1</sup> (*genus subtile*) of the ancient critics). Yet cf. the pride expressed by Euripides ap. Aristoph. *Frogs* 941: τὴν τέχνην οἰδοῦσαν ἰσχνα. Quintilian calls Simonides<sup>2</sup> an eminent example of the *tenuis* style.

(b) On the use of ὀνόματα κύρια (= not choice of the proper words but choice of common words, *verba communia* = *sermo proprius*), and the σαφήνεια λέξεως, which are the major characteristics of the ἰσχνὸς χαρακτήρ, cf. Aristotle *Poet.* 1458 a 1: Λέξεως δὲ ἀρετὴ σαφῆ καὶ μὴ ταπεινὴν εἶναι, and id. *Rhet.* 1404 b 5: ἐκ τῆς εἰωθυίας διαλέκτου (ταπεινῆ, simply prosaic, is opposite to ὑψηλῆ, σεμνῆ). Cf. also id. *Rhet.* 1404 b 1: ὠρίσθω λέξεως ἀρετῆ σαφῆ εἶναι ... καὶ μήτε ταπεινὴν μήτε ὑπὲρ τὸ ἀξίωμα ἀλλὰ πρέπουσαν.

Since Theophrastus the πρέπον belongs to the four *virtutes dicendi*. (In the case of Kavafis the concept of πρέπον<sup>3</sup> must be discussed in conjunction with what is thought to be an «idiosyncratic» admixture of *dimotiki* and *katharevousa*).

The ἰσχνὸς χαρακτήρ avoids τὰ ξενικά, i.e. γλῶττα, μεταφορὰ ... καὶ πᾶν παρὰ τὸ κύριον (id. *ibid.*).

(c) Another λέξεως ἀρετῆ is also συντομία (*brevitas*) and ἀφέλεια (*simplicitas*)<sup>4</sup>.

(d) As regards the effect of using loan-words and expressions within the body of the poem, innumerable examples of this practice can be adduced from both ancient and modern literatures. In this conjunction extremely illuminating is the ancient concept of *mimesis*.

(e) Vivid imagery is not absent from the poetical work of Kavafis. On the contrary very often his poems are plastic, they have ἐνάργεια,

1. On the problem of the *genera dicendi* cf. J. Stroux, *De Theophrasti virtutibus dicendi*, Leipzig 1912.

2. Cf. *Vita Aeschyli* (OCT, ed. by G. Murray) 8: ἀπῆρε δὲ (Aesch. sc.) ὡς Ἰέρωνα, ... ἡσσηθεὶς Σιμωνίδῃ. τὸ γὰρ ἐλεγείον πολὺ τῆς περὶ τὸ συμπαθὲς λεπτότητος μετέχειν θέλει, δ' τοῦ Αἰσχύλου, ὡς ἔφαμεν, ἐστὶν ἀλλότριον.

3. M. Pohlenz, *Nachr. Gött. Gesellsch.* (1933) 53-92.

4. The Homeric scholia repeatedly praise the Poet precisely for his συντομία and ἀφέλεια.

and his at times epigrammatic and at times lavish descriptions of beauty (Cf. *Poems* 1, 35; 1,44; 1,49; 1,73; 1,83; 1,84) and *ekphrases* (1,29; 1,37; 1,41; 1,51; 1,54; 2,30) are well-known and praised.

It must be noted, however, that the Kavafic technique of description is not based entirely on the expressed images in full but on the calculated combination of word and silence, in unequal proportions. The due to this technique is given by the poet himself in scattered references in both his prose and his poems and it deserves a special study, in connection with the fundamental function of the evocation technique, which he employs in a masterly fashion.

(f) In any case, the task of criticism cannot become a sheer hunt for those few «fine verses that save the poem», but the structure and contribution of the constituent parts of the composition to the function of the whole<sup>1</sup> is what must be studied thoroughly.

4. 'Ο Καβάφης ἐξιστορεῖ γεγονότα καὶ τίποτα περισσότερο (Malanos). If the emphasis of this statement lies in *γεγονότα καὶ τίποτε περισσότερο*, it is inaccurate, because K. classified<sup>2</sup> his poems into three categories: Ἐχει (ὁ Κ.) τρεῖς περιοχὰς — τὴν φιλοσοφικὴν (ἢ τῆς σκέψης), τὴν ἱστορικὴν, καὶ τὴν ἡδονικὴν (ἢ αἰσθησιακὴν). In the best case the a.'s verdict covers only one third of K.'s production. Taken as a whole the phrase challenges the manner in which this poetry functions: the narration of a story occupies the center of poetic activity for all critics since Aristotle, deemed as highly important not for the information *per se* which it conveys, but because the story is precisely the *sine qua non* matter of poetic dexterity. The history of poetry is the history of changes in the modes of narration. For instance: the difference between the epic narrative and the lyric one is depicted in the way the first heroic deed of Hercules is recounted by Theocritus (*Id.* 24) and Pindar (*Nem.* I). Even the driest relating of a number of events is not necessarily deprived of poetic qualities: One is reminded of the praised *Sachlichkeit* of many of the epigrams in the *A.P.*, not to mention innumerable parallels from modern literatures. In this respect, as in general, it is worth consulting the *Πεζὰ* of K. to trace his intentions and his Poetics. Of immediate relevance to our discussion is the poet's comment in *Πεζὰ*, *op. cit.*, p. 149, concerning the 'choice of details' in the narrative. He also frequently

1. Cf. Lämmert, *Bauformen*, *op. cit. passim*.

2. See in Ἀλεξανδρινὴ Τέχνη Δ', 11, nov. 1930, pp. 342-3, and, with some clarifications, in G. P. Savidis', *Καβαφικὲς ἐκδόσεις*, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-10.

(especially in his long reviews of the two editions of Greek folk songs made by N. G. Politis and Michailidis) refers to his own criteria for judging poetry: it is worth citing even a small selection of the most important among them: motif-building and development; poetic diction; versification; transitions-technique (e.g. from monologue to the third person narrative); end of the poem; simplicity; *ἀφέλεια*; evaluation of dialogue; elliptical phrasing, brevity, succinctness; *ἐνάργεια*; speed of narrative (= rhythm of narrative); musicality.

Yet it is worth asking how often the critics respect the poet's own intentions and ideas (which constitute a clearly structured system), when reading his poetry?

In conclusion: the exact relationship of the two poets needs a thorough study, to which the a.'s remarks offer no contribution, when they do not obscure this relationship completely.

### III.

The core of the a.'s theory, however, is contained in the following statement: Τὸ Καβαφικὸ ποίημα βρίσκεται, ὡς φόρμα, μεταξύ ἐπιγράμματος καὶ μίμου... Ὁ Καβάφης ξεκινᾷ ἀπὸ τὸ γνωστὸ ἐπίγραμμα τῆς «Ἀνθολογίας» καί, χωρὶς νὰ ἀπομακρύνεται πολὺ ἀπὸ τὴ συντομία του, τὸ ἀναπτύσσει, δίνοντάς του, ὅπως ἐξἄλλου ἔκαναν καὶ πολλοὶ ἐπιγραμματοποιοὶ τῆς, τὰ χαρακτηριστικὰ τοῦ «μίμου» (Malanos, p. 156).

This statement has still numerous adherents among the students of Kavafis in Greece<sup>1</sup>. The a. bases his estimation upon erroneous conceptions of both the 'epigram' and the 'mime', and in order to set the record straight more learning is required than originality or imagination; therefore the following pages stand in great debt to scholarship, and particularly to Beckby, Reitzenstein, L. Schmidt, Weinreich, Gow and Page, and Wiemken, whose work it presupposes absolutely.

I believe that these questions (as well as the rest of this paper), beyond being a mere criticism of Malanos' specific approach to Kavafis, define precisely the lines along which every study of the problematic relation Kavafis-Epigram must advance. In the space available here only a few hints at the nature of the problem may be made: First, it is known that length is neither the sole nor the best criterion for

1. I had no access to E. Keeley's dissertation one chapter of which is an attempt to analyse differently the structure of the poems of Kavafis. See G. P. Savidis, *Πρόωτη ἀνάγνωση*, *op. cit.*, p. 31, n. 41.

distinguishing literary genres. Secondly, the subjects dealt with in the approximately 23000 lines of the *A.P.* are already divided in our manuscripts into over a dozen comprehensive sections, since they range from simple riddles or puzzles to elaborate *ekphrases* and highly diversified love poems. Thirdly, as far as the problem of the 'essence' of the ancient epigram is concerned, the answer is far from simple. For instance, H. Beckby in his introductory essay to the latest edition of the *A.P.* was able to discern 22 periods of epigram-writing, during which the essential features of the genre kept changing, and it is obvious that more schools could be distinguished. For in that collection there are epigrams coming from both the metropolis and the Greek colonies or conquered territories, written in a variety of meters and styles whose general pattern of development (from the early brief and unadorned inscriptions to the later highly artistic literary creations) followed that of the 'greater' literary genres, much as the lower Greek pottery followed the developments of the large-scale visual arts. At different times in different regions in varying ratio the strictly matter-of-fact information, the plain narrative pace, the light linear contours, the low vocabulary give way to the tragic diction, the painterly, heavy baroque structure, the tension produced by the use of the devices of Asiatic rhetoric (climax, anticlimax, *amplificatio*), the lyric exaltation. The serene grandeur, the elegance, the satirical, public, pedagogic, elevated content are interchanged with the private, inward, intimate or even provincial; the study of the type with the depiction of the individual, coarse realism with idyllization of nature or the life in the embrace of calm nature with that in the noisy commercial centers<sup>1</sup>. How Kavafis found his personal way in this labyrinth can be shown only by a comparative study of the Ancient and Modern Epigram on the one hand and the Kavafic poems on the other. Until then, it would be both precarious and arbitrary to speak of any influence of the Hellenistic epigram on this modern poet.

However coherent and attractive this theory may superficially appear, a critical examination reveals an essential flaw: the erroneous conception of both the epigram and the mime as literary genres. For the author, the main qualitative characteristic of the epigram is brevity. Although he cites the view of the well-known student of Callimachus Mr. Cahen, according to which an epigram might be extended even to 76 lines, he nevertheless tends to regard the average length of this genre as

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1. Cf. H. Beckby, *Anthologia Palatina* [Tusculum Bücherei], München 1957, vols I-IV.; R. Reitzenstein, *Epigramm und Skolion*, Giessen 1893; A. Gow and D. Page, *Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams*, 2 vols, Cambridge 1965. A. Skiadas, *Ἐπὶ ῥύμβῳ*, Athens 1967, et al. The schools are: 1. Early Inscriptions. 2. Archaic Epigram. 3. Simonidean Epigram. 4. Attic Epigram. 5. Classicist Epigram. 6. Peloponnesian School (Leonidas of Tarent). 7. Ionian-Alexandrian School (Asclepiades). 8. The Doric School. 9. The movement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. 10. The Phoenician School. 11. The circle around Cicero. 12. The circle around Seneca. 13. The so-called Zeitgedicht. 14. The Augustan Restauratio. 15. The Satiric Epigram. 16. The School of Leonidas of Alexandria. 17. The School of Nikodemus of Heraclia. 18. The Oriental School. 19. The movement of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. 20. The Young Christians. 21. The School of Palladas. 22. The Byzantine Epigram.

considerably shorter than a provisional perusal of the *A.P.* would indicate<sup>1</sup>. In the case when the epigram contains such dramatic elements as a scene, a dialogue etc., or consists of a monologue (or even a narrative!), it slides, according to the author, into another genre, which he calls the «epigram-mime». He classifies as such epigram-mimes, for instance, the following: *A.P.* 5.66 (by Rufinus), 5.242 (by Eratosthenes), 5.167 and 5.181 (by Asclepiades), 9.63 (same motif as in Kavafis, *Poems* 1,28<sup>2</sup>) *et al.* Furthermore, the themes employed by the ancient epigrammatists either are confined to *epitymbia* for young men who were distinguished in belles lettres or in beauty, taken from the world of the books, or finally descriptive of realistic scenes of Greek love.

The description of the ancient epigram above, however, poses a number of questions: If the main and decisive characteristic of this genre is brevity, should one also label as epigrams many other very short poems of numerous poets of antiquity<sup>3</sup>? If we relegate all the dramatic elements to the area of the mime, what remains finally as the content of the «pure» epigram? Are the subjects enumerated above the only ones treated in the *A.P.*, which contains 3600 epigrams covering the literary production of 18 centuries, from c. 740 B.C. to the late 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D? Before anything else, would it not be only appropriate to make a distinction between ancient and modern epigram<sup>4</sup>? And if the last distinction be proper, should we not further inquire into the type(s) of epigram which Kavafis chose to imitate from the long development of the genre?

The next question is: How does the a. define the mime? 'Ο μίμος είναι μία φόρμα δραματική... 'Ο μιμογράφος μιμείται κάθε φορά πού βάζει να μιλά ένα πρόσωπο, του οποίου παίρνει τον τόνο και υιοθετεί τις σκέψεις... "Όμως οι καθαυτό μίμοι τῆς 'Αλεξανδρινῆς ἐποχῆς ἦταν συντομότεροι καὶ περιλάμβαναν εἰκόνες καὶ σκηνές ρεαλιστικότητας, ἀπὸ τὴν καθημερινὴ ζωὴ... Τὸ ἔργο τοῦ ποιητῆ μας, γιὰ ὅσους εἶναι ἐξοικειωμένοι μὲ τὶς φόρμες ὄλων τῶν λογοτεχνιῶν, ἀποτελεῖται ἀπὸ ἐπιγράμματα καὶ σύντομους, σχεδὸν ἐπιγραμ-

1. Cf.: 'Η ὄλη σκηνὴ μᾶς δίνεται μὲ τὴν ἐπιγραμματικότερη συντομία. (p. 164): "Όταν ὁ Καβάφης γράφει τὸ «Εὔνοια τοῦ 'Αλεξάνδρου Βάλα» δὲν μᾶς δίνει ἀπλῶς ἓνα σύντομο ποίημα, ἐμπνευσμένο ἀπὸ τὴν ἱστορία, ἀλλὰ μιὰ μικρογραφία ρεαλιστικοῦ μίμου σὲ μέγεθος ἐπιγράμματος (A nine lines poem). (p. 160): Πρόκειται (= «'Η δόξα τῶν Πτολεμαίων») γιὰ ἓναν μονόλογο ... καὶ ἐπιπλέον ἔχει ὀκτῶ στίχους μόνο. Ποῦ πρέπει νὰ τὸ κατατάξουμε; 'Αναγκαστικὰ στὸ ἐπιγράμμα.

2... βέβαια καὶ τὸ ἓνα (*A.P.* 9.63) καὶ τὸ ἄλλο (*Poems* 1,28) ξεφεύγουν χάρη στὸ μονόλογο τους ἀπὸ τὴν τυπικὴ φόρμα τοῦ ἐπιγράμματος (Malanos, p. 160).

3. Cf. Sappho (Voigt) 31 (=16 lines), 62 (=12 ll.), 63 (=10 ll.); Alcaeus (Voigt) 34 (=16 ll.), 130a (=15 ll.); Anacreon (Page) 3 and 13 (=8 ll. each); Simonides (Page) 26 (=9 ll.); Horace, *Od.* I. 30 and I. 38 (=8 ll. each); the «Homeric» Hymn 'to Poseidon' and 'to the Muses and Apollo' (=7 ll. each).

4. Beckby, *A.P.*, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 11: «Unter einem Epigramm verstehen wir heute ein kurzes Gedicht, in dem zuerst eine Spannung erweckt und am Ende eine überraschende, meist beißend-witzige Lösung gegeben wird. Anders im Altertum».

ματικὸς κάποτε, μίμους (Malanos, p. 157-8). From the a.'s observations I extract the characteristics which he attributes to the genre, and the way he connects them with Kavafis. (1) It is a dramatic form; (2) The mimographer imitates a person whose tone and thoughts he adopts<sup>1</sup>. Examples: the Platonic dialogues, some idylls of Theocritus, and Lucian's dialogues, all of which are species of mimes insofar as they present images of the morals of their time; (3) Its subjects: τὰ τε συγκεχωρημένα καὶ τὰ ἀσυγχώρητα (Diomedes the grammarian); (4) The *par excellence* mimes of the Alexandrian period were quite brief, and contained very realistic scenes of everyday life. Example: the mimiambes of Herodas; (5) Some epigrams can also be considered to be miniatures of mimes in that they contain action, narrate a scene and revive persons by means of the dialogue. Callimachus, Asclepiades, Rufinus, etc. have written such epigrams; (6) K.'s work consists of epigrams and 'Epigram-Mimes' as we have defined them in (5) Their models can be found in the *A. P.* The list is imposing: *Poems* 1,79; 1,107; 1,106; 1,21; 1,78; 1,74; 1,37; 2,25; 2,62; 2,93; 2,21; 2,30; 2,24; 2,52; 2,42; 2,54; 2,50; 2,51; 2,69; 2,87; 2,23 etc. (7) Herodas, the mimographer, presents us with brief theatrical plays of two or three pages. Kavafis gives us a poem which *can* be transformed into a theatrical play—or at least into a scene from a theatrical play. (8) Kavafis shares realism with Herodas. (9) Even the *historical* poems of Kavafis are simply miniatures of historical mimes. Examples: *Poems* 1,30; 2,74. (10) Sometimes the poet blends in an indistinguishable mixture his own words with those of the poem's protagonist, as in *Poems* 2,87.

The questions arising from the previous description are more than I intend to answer here, but I select the most fundamental ones: (1) Are we entitled to speak of the 'Mime' as *one genre*<sup>2</sup> without any further qualifications, and furthermore is the mime identical to the mimiamb? (2) Can we identify dramatic elements with the essence of theater? (3)

1. Τὸ πρῶτο καθήκον τοῦ μιμογράφου εἶναι ν' ἀφήσῃ τὸ χῶρο τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ νὰ περιοριστῇ στὸ ρόλο τοῦ ὑποβολέα. (Malanos underlines).

2. I circumvent the problem of the concept of the «genre». For discussion cf. Lämmert, *Bauformen*, *op. cit.*; E. Muir, *The structure of the novel*, London 1949; W. Kayser, *Das sprachliche Kunstwerk*, Bern 1954; G. Müller, *Die Gestaltfrage in der Literaturwissenschaft und Goethes Morphologie*, 1944; A. Jolles, *Einfache Formen*, Halle 1930; O. Ducrot - T. Todorov, *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage*, Paris 1972, pp. 193-201.

Can the primarily tragic poetry of K. be connected with the amusing mime<sup>1?</sup> (4) The subjects and the βιολογία of the mime (= portrayal of characters in everyday life) have nothing to do with the Kavafic ἡθολογία (= the study of human fate, often as it is revealed in rare moments of personal decision-making). (5) Does the brisk action, the narration of a scene, the dialogue, or the monologue belong exclusively to one genre, the mime? (6) Is the coarse realism of Herodas (technically called *Verniedlichung*) comparable to K.'s realism<sup>2?</sup> (7) In the history of the mime, there is no parallel to a 'miniature historical mime', which is attributed by the a. to K. Can there be produced any evidence? (8) Is the role of the prompter «the most essential characteristics of the mime»? (9) Is the employment of apostrophes to the public a «genuine characteristic of the mime»?

Again the only convincing answer must be a statement of the certain data of the history of the mime<sup>3?</sup>

1. The mime, whose origins may perhaps be connected with primitive cults, has a long history and many ramifications. Its pre-literary phase in Doric-speaking Italy and Sicily was succeeded by the (renowned in antiquity) plays of Sophron (5th cent.): they were the first ones to bear the name of 'mime', they were written in prose and in the common dialect. The sung lyric mime (*mimody*) was, it appears, subdivided into *magody*, *simody*, *hilarody*, and *lysiody* (E. Wüst, *RE* XV, 1935, 1730). The half-sung species of the mime were *kinaidology* and *ionicology*. Since the time of Alexander the Great an outcome of the crossing of *mimology* with *mimody* in the Greek East was called μιμική ὑπόθεσις, or simply ὑπόθεσις, an ensemble play

1. The poetic theory of the Renaissance rediscovers this connection between mime and comedy. Cf. J. Scaliger, *Poetices libri septem*, 3rd ed. 1596, book 1, XLII, p. 114: «Quemadmodum Satyra ex Tragoedia, Mimus e comoedia; sic Parodia de Rhapsodia nata est».

2. W. Christ - W. Schmidt - O. Stählin, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* I. 1-5, II. 1, p. 136: «Der griechische Realismus ist aber auf der Vorstufe stehen geblieben und hat es über kleine Momentbildchen, die doch nur den Wert von Studien und Vorarbeiten haben, nicht hinaus gebracht. Die hohe Kunst verhielt sich im ganzen spröde, ja ablehnend gegen die Lebenskräfte, die der Realismus zuführen konnte».

3. Cf. *Herodae mimiambi*, ed. O. Crusius, Lipsiae 1894; *The Mimes of Herodas*, ed. with introduction and commentary by J. A. Naim, Oxford 1904; *Herodas, The Mimes and the Fragments*, ed. by W. Headlam and A. D. Knox, Cambridge 1922; *Herodas Mimiambi*, ed. with introduction and commentary by J. C. Cunningham, Oxford 1971; H. Reich, *Der Mimus*, vol. 1, Berlin 1903; R. Reitzenstein and L. Schmidt, «Mimus», *RE* 15.1., 2380; H. Wiemken, *Der griechische Mimos: Dokumente zur Geschichte des antiken Volkstheaters*, Bremen 1972.



containing iambic parts and lyric cantica. Plutarch informs us (*Quaest. Symp.* 7. 8, 4; *De sollert. anim.* 19) that the hypothesis was lengthy, had *πλοκήν ... δραματικήν καὶ πολυπρόσωπον*, and posed staging difficulties. It was a real *Theaterstück* and names of renowned actors have been preserved<sup>1</sup>, especially of the early Christian centuries. Its stock motifs were adultery, poisoning, love, beating, scenes with martyrs or in the court. Also, motifs from drama were re-worked, in hypotheses such as the *Charition*, which combines *Iphigenia in Tauris* with the Polyphemus motif. After the Roman conquest of the Greek states in the East (2<sup>nd</sup> cent. and particularly after Sulla) the hypothesis was successfully transplanted to Rome, from which it spread all over the Latin West. There it continued to flourish until the invasions of the Germans. The history of the Latin mime, a late offspring of which is the *Commedia dell'Arte*, is better-known than that of the Greek mime<sup>2</sup>.

From this «hypothesis» one must distinguish the so-called *paignion* (Wiemken, *op. cit.*, pp. 197 ff., Reich, *op. cit.*, pp. 417-615): a brief sketch, performed by a sole actor as a «Vorprogramm», before the main play. Its artistic value was insignificant, the interest of the audience being kept through the abundance of off-color humor and the scorn of the Christian sacraments, especially the baptism<sup>3</sup>. The 'Christological mime' must also belong here (differently Reich, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-99). The *Bucolic Mime* is a highly artistic product; it has the form of a dialogue or an exchange of songs among shepherds within (or without) a narrative framework in elaborate Doric dialect. There are fine observations on Nature or the life of the shepherd and the deliberately conventional style and tone raise these types above the sphere of the base realism of the Doric school of epigrams. The successors of Theocritus are numerous: from Bion and Moschus to Opitz, Gessner and Johann Heinrich Voss. The old Italian mime is called *phlyax*, according to the ancient Greek theory (Reich, *op. cit.*, Ch. 2). Later on this influences both the popular *Oscan Attelane* and the literary *Rhithonica*.

2. In addition to these species of «mime» there have been preserved the *mimiambi* of Herodas which bring to bear evidence on the characteristic tendency of Hellenistic times to either transform literary genres<sup>4</sup> or create new ones by crossing the old ones: The mimes of Sophron, once folk-theater, now becomes literature for reading. The genre which Herodas inherited could be profitably compared, *mutatis mutandis*, with the modern one-act play. It possessed all the properties of the genuine theatrical piece, viz.: The text was only *one* of the elements of the show, and consequently

1. For instance *Genesius* (cf. *Acta Sanct. Boll. August.*, vol. 5, 129b); *Ardalio* (cf. *Menologium Basilianum* 3,59); *Gelasinus* (cf. *Chronicon Paschale* 1, 513); *Pe-lagia* (*Acta Sanct. Boll. August.*, vol. 4, 249 ff.): all of them Christian converts finally.

2. R. W. Reynolds, Verrius Flaccus and the early mime at Rome, *Hermathena* 61 (1943) 56 ff.; A. Marzullo, Il mimo latino nei motivi di attualità, *Atti Accad. di Modena* 5.16.1958; E. Wüst, *RE* 15.2., 1727-1764.

3. Cf. John Chrysostomus, ed. Montfaucon, vol. 6, p. 100c.

4. For instance from the 'Homeric Hymns' (composed for ritual performance) to the Callimachean Hymns for reading, or from the epigram on stone to the book-epigram, or from the *Iliad* to the *Hecale* of Callimachus.

its nature was only transitory, neither finished nor functioning by itself; it was improvisatory. A real conflict between the participating *dramatis personae* was reproduced on stage, conflict which resulted from acts presented or, less often, narrated (= dramatic tension, *Spannung*). Thus both the dialogue and the monologue were real instruments for the action. This action was divided into clear-cut roles which were distributed to a number of characters or were undertaken by one gifted mime. It was essential that the roles be kept separate during the performance (*Rollenaufteilung*). The language functioned in a theatrical fashion, i.e. it was not self-sufficient — it needed the support of gesture and scenic devices and props in order to attain its end; at the same time it aimed at helping the actor and was for this purpose lively and descriptive to the extent that often details of actors' performances could be extracted from the poetic text. These texts, we should add, also possessed an acceptable length which made the play fit for performance <sup>1</sup>. On the contrary, close study proves that the mimiambos of Herodas, «Grenfell's Erotic Fragment» (*P. Lond. 2208*), and the Theocritean Idylls are poetry for recitation, and lack all the above-mentioned qualities of a theatrical play. The proof: An attempt early in this century at performing the mimes of Herodas on stage ended in failure <sup>2</sup>.

3. Regardless of the presence of any number of formal dramatic elements in a piece of poetry, it is not theatrical in function unless the organizing element of the entire structure is genuinely theatrical in itself. This is the fundamental principle of any theory of structure. And yet no such principle is in operation in the mimiambos of Herodas. Similarly, the presence of the previously-mentioned «dramatic» elements in the epigram lends it a certain dramatic air; it does not, however, bring it any closer to the mime, or to any other form of theater, since no other fundamental change occurs in its structure. Both theoretically, therefore, and practically, the invented 'genre' *epigram-mime* cannot function. By the same token, the epigram of Martial is not deserving of the name «mime-epigram», simply because it is influenced by mimic elements: its structure does not correspond to a separate narrative function.

4. The dependence of the mime upon comedy is evident (cf. ancient testimonia in Reich, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-405, and Wiemken, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-

1. Examples of such plays (in prose or verse), apart from what we can infer from the fragments of Sophron, have been preserved in the following papyri: P. Oxy. 413 (I/II c. A.D.; 1. *Charition* (8 *dramatis personae* plus chorus); 2. *The Poisoner* (7 *dr. pers.* plus chorus)); P. Lond. 1984 (II c. A.D.; 5 *dr. pers.*); P. Berolin. 13876 (II c. A.D.; 5 *dr. pers.*); P. Varsoviens. 2 (II c. A.D.); P. Berolin. 13927 (V/VI c. A.D.). Each of the mentioned fragments is analysed in an admirable manner by Wiemken, *Griech. Mimos, op. cit.*, according to the following pattern: Handlungsablauf - Auftritte und Zwischenszene, Schlußszene - Personen - Rollenaufteilung, Regieanweisungen und Zeichen (Aufführungstechnik), Form und Funktion des Textes, Die dramaturgische Komposition, Aufführungsort, Die drei aristotelische Einheiten: Zeit, Ort, Handlung: In other words, as genuinely theatrical plays.

2. The information in the Introduction to the Budé edition of Herodas by Laloy, Paris 1928.

148). In addition, all the commentaries on Herodas show how greatly he was indebted to comic diction, comic motifs, comic scenes, and the general study of «type». Especially meaningful in this context becomes the testimony describing the essence of the work of the phylax-writer Rhinthon (4<sup>th</sup> c. B.C.) as τὰ τραγικὰ μεταρρυθμίζων ἐς τὸ γελοῖον.

But is this the atmosphere of Kavafis? If τραγωδία ἐστὶν ἡρωικῆς τύχης περίστασις and if μῦθος ἐστὶ μίμησις βίου τὰ τε συγκεχωρημένα καὶ ἀσυγχώρητα περιέχων<sup>1</sup>, then there can be no common denominator whatsoever between the poet of the «Ἀπολείπειν ὁ θεὸς Ἄντωνιον» and the poet of the Πορνοβοσκὸς or the Ζηλότυπος.

On the contrary, I believe that the central motif which pervades and unifies the Kavafic collection is that of ἀποτυχία, failure<sup>2</sup>. His poetry is a superb study of man's response to this profoundly tragic — and profoundly human — experience. Moreover, herein lies K.'s motive for the employment of an Alexandrian setting; what other historical period offered such a rich source of appropriate motifs than the stormy seas navigated by the Hellenistic and Early Christian world? There existed a society in which τύχης περίστασις and τύχης μετάστασις, the quintessence of the tragic experience, were personalized for almost every Greek<sup>3</sup>, be he a struggling mercenary forced by πένιζ to abandon his native land and do battle in the ceaseless wars of the διάδοχοι, a humble man whose life and property were endangered in the early Christian Era by virtue of his Christianity, or a great and tragic figure like the emperor Julian, whose chimerical dreams defied the exigencies of the times and the death of the Gods. Kavafis identified deeply with the combined motifs of beauty and πένιζ (also a standard motif in Roman elegy, which leads us to unite, in combination with other motifs, the so-called «sensual poetry» under the heading «poems of tragic experience»). The basic motif is brought into play in the collection's first poem, «Ἡ Πόλις» (*Poems* 1,15). Failure here is implicit, but its explicit symptoms are vividly related in *Poems* 2,4 and 7; furthermore, a consciousness of the reality — that there is no exit — is stressed in the poem's second and final stanza: δὲν ἔχει πλοῖο γιὰ σέ, δὲν ἔχει ὁδὸ. Yet we are confronted with ambivalence in the poem's conclusions, for K. does not detail the reaction of the

1. The classical definition given by Theophrastus ap. Diomedes, *Gramm. Lat.*, vol. I, 491 f.

2. An early hint in K. Th. Dimaràs, *NE* 14(1933) 767.

3. See also in G. Seferis', *Λογικιές*, Athens 1974, vol. 1, p. 354.

poem's first speaker. We are not told whether he does or does not succumb to failure.

Whence arises failure? Τύχη is one culprit, as we learn in the next poem, «'Η Σατραπεία». Here the *παράιτησις* has come, but we must note the significance of line 8: (ἡ μέρα ποῦ ἀφέθηκες κ' ἐνδίδεις). It was underscored by the poet himself in the Lechonitis' *Autoscholia*: Reality is not so utterly devoid of hope that every exit is permanently blocked; rather it was the symbolic hero<sup>1</sup> who ἀπεκαρδιώθη εὐκόλα, ... μεγαλοποίησε τὰ γεγονότα καὶ βιάσθηκε νὰ λάβῃ τὴν ἄγουσαν πρὸς τὰ Σοῦσα (Lechonitis, *Autoscholia* on «'Η Σατραπεία»).

Since Τύχη plays such a vital role in human affairs, man must be ever-alert, for even the most seemingly-insignificant incident is capable of wreaking havoc with man's existence. One must not follow Caesar's example, but the poet's warning: ... πρόσεξε σὰν βγεῖς στὸν δρόμον ἔξω, /... / ἂν τύχει καὶ πλησιάσει ἀπὸ τὸν ὄχλο / κανένας Ἄρτεμιδώρος... /... / ... εὐθύς νὰ τὰ γνωρίσεις / τὰ σοβαρὰ γραφόμενα τοῦ Ἄρτεμιδώρου («Μάρτυρι Εἰδοί», *Poems* 1,18).

The paradox arises from the fact that such a watchful life cannot be lived; constant vigilance lies prostrate before the whims of Τύχη. Man cannot evade her, intuit her; she alights, inescapable, unexpected:

Ἄλλη καταστροφή, ποῦ δὲν τὴν φανταζόμεθ' ἄν,  
ἔξαφνική, ραγδαία πέφτει ἐπάνω μας,  
κι ἀνέτοιμους — ποῦ πιά καιρὸς — μᾶς συνεπαίρνει.

(«Τελειωμένα», *Poems* 1,19)

The circle of our fate has been completed. How ought we to behave when stricken by another — and then another catastrophe? At this point K. introduces an all-important concept: human dignity. Is man to slip away from a situation, refusing to attire himself in his rightful garb, but as an actor who lightly discards one persona and assumes another (cf. «'Ο βασιλεὺς Δημήτριος», *Poems* 1,27)? Or ought he to heed the poet's admonition in that wondrous hymn of human dignity, «'Απολείπειν ὁ θεὸς Ἄντωνιον» (*Poems* 1,20)?

1. K. is reported to have said that the protagonist is not necessarily to be identified with Themistocles or with Demaratos, or indeed any politician, but rather is meant to symbolize an artist or even a scientist. See, however, a recent attempt by G. Dallas, «'Η Σατραπεία καὶ ἡ ἀναζήτηση τοῦ συμβόλου της, in *Καβάφης καὶ Ἱστορία*, Athens 1974, pp. 47-63.

The poet's notion of «human dignity» is able to provide not only a noble mode of death, but also an honest ideal for life, in the poem «Ὁ Θεόδοτος» (*Poems* 1,21): Ἄν εἶσαι ἀπ' τοὺς ἀληθινὰ ἐκλεκτοὺς, / τὴν ἐπι-κράτησί σου κῦταζε πῶς ἀποκτᾶς.

Another secondary motif of «tragic experience» is the absence of any change whatsoever — «Μονοτονία» (*Poems* 1,22), in which a theme already familiar from «Ἡ Πόλις» recurs. But, once again in juxtaposition to despair is the suggestion that the voyage called «Life» may be rich, full, and rewarding: μακρὸς ὁ δρόμος, / γεμάτος περιπέτειες, γεμάτος γνώσεις. Perhaps, when all is said and done, one only *dreams* of dangerous encounters with the Laestrygonians and Cyclopes: Τοὺς Λαιστρυγόνας καὶ τοὺς Κύκλωπας, / τὸν θυμωμένο Ποσειδῶνα μὴ φοβᾶσαι, / τέτοια στὸν δρόμο σου ποτέ σου δὲν θὰ βρεῖς, / ἂν μὲν' ἡ σκέψις σου ὑψηλὴ, ἂν ἐκλεκτὴ / συγκίνησις τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ σῶμα σου ἀγγίζει. But the dreams of Laestrygonians and Cyclopes are indicative of an attitude quite different from that of Calderon in his well-known play «Our Life is a Dream», or Palladas' Σκηνὴ πᾶς ὁ βίος καὶ παίγνιον· ἢ μάθε παίξειν / τὴν σπουδὴν μετα-θεῖς ἢ φέρε τὰς ὀδύνας (*A.P.* 10.72).

Our lives, once actualized, are *not* dreams; by means of personal cultivation and self-enrichment, we are made strong enough to invalidate our dread visions. This advice comes directly from the truly Alexandrian central theme of «Ὅσο μπορεῖς» (*Poems* 1,25). In addition to the presentation of an ideal by which man may live and die, K. elaborates upon additional values which he feels are worthy of being followed: In *Poems* 1,28 and 1,29 he explains what it means to be a modern *civis*, whether a man lives in the backward Peloponnese or in a cosmopolitan city like Alexandria. The poem «Φιλέλλην» (*Poems* 1, 37) is crucial for the understanding of a large part of the Kavafic corpus because within it are interwoven, significantly, two motifs — that of the Philhellene and that of the artist. Even the barbarity of a kingdom such as that of the hegemon of Mesopotamia could not dull his wish to be «Greek above all»; he longs to be part of the great traditions exemplified by all the things for which the word «Greek» stood. The figure of this king operates within Hellenistic surroundings exactly as K.'s ideal would have it operate in a modern context. For, just as men like the hegemon were striving to cement their cultural and historical ties with Classical Greece, thus strove the Greeks of the nineteenth century, after the restoration of the modern Greek state. Their poetry, in its (by and large) patriotic, backward-looking tone, was the isogloss for the efforts of the other

nineteenth-century. Greeks working within such fields as history (K. Paparrigopoulos), folklore (N. G. Politis), etc.

In addition, this poem is highly significant because it decodifies the language of a number of Kavafic poems which treat of poets, artists, and grammarians. It is my feeling that the combination of the *two* motifs makes unacceptable Malanos' interpretation of these poems (according to which they are products of «dry grammarians of the worst Hellenistic variety», not worthy of consideration as subjects for «genuine» lyric poetry with the conclusion that all the relevant poems are failures!). It is evident that Kavafis envisioned the artists as creators of the future as well as preservers of the past; he realized their all-important role in the given historical context. But he unveiled them in their «human» context, as men haunted by the tragic vision of life — haunted, but sensitive enough to succeed in the interpretation of their vision. This explains why K. was so fond of depicting artists in various attitudes of suspended animation, while engaged in work, or in moments of reflection (e.g. *Poems* 1,41; 1,43; 1,44).

I hope that this discussion makes at least one point clear: That any attempt to relate, e.g., the *ekphrases* of Kavafis with the numerous *ekphrases* of the *A.P.* remains immaterial, as long as one does not aim at discovering the functions of their respective ingredients. A surface survey in the *A.P.* may possibly prove the descendance of some Kavafic motifs older than was suspected before. But it has no value whatsoever unless it clarifies: why such a typical *ekphrasis* as «Τεχνουργὸς κρατήρων» so aesthetic and even sensual, concludes with the word ἤττα, or why we are left with the bitter aftertaste of tragedy after perusing the 'notorious' ἡδονικὰ (read also *Poems* 2, 61 with the key of 2,10 or 2,37 [end line]!), or why, finally, the so-called ιστορικὰ can convey such a genuine sense of history, even when the protagonists never existed!

5. Kavafis' poems do not intend to portray various types, or characters as is quite obviously the intention of Herodas. Rather, they deal with the καθόλου, with man *qua* man, not with a ζηλότυπος or a μαστροπὸς *qua* ζηλότυπος and μαστροπός. This difference becomes all-clear in the treatment of the story: Both writers often isolate a slice of life, an episode or a scene; Herodas however surrounds the main character with the typical motifs provided by the Comic Tradition to solicit immediate laughter, while Kavafis uses either deduction or induction to make a point: He may choose to open with a general statement on human condition and proceed to the specific exemplum (*Poems* 1,16, lines 1-8;

9-21; 1,18, lines 1-5 :: 6-19), to make a reduction from the particular story to the general (*Poems* 1,47, lines 1-11 :: 12-14), or to blend specific and general inextricably as he more frequently does (*Poems* 1,20 etc.). Even the pseudohistorical and pseudotheatrical «Περιμένοντας τούς βαρβάρους» bearing a surface resemblance to the mime concludes with a statement which was to become a common phrase in Greece:

Καὶ τὴν τὴν θὰ γένουμε χωρὶς βαρβάρους.  
Οἱ ἄνθρωποι αὐτοὶ ἦσαν μὴ κάποια λύσις.

6. The «Doric» version of realism, as practiced by Herodas, delights in descriptions of ugliness and beauty, and Haedlam rightly compares them with the Dutch realistic painting of the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The characters of Herodas come from the lowest social strata and their lives have a high proportion of unattractive aspects (Reich, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-38, section: *Mime und literarischer Realismus*).

In the pages of Kavafis, on the other hand, there is an idealization of the realistic detail, apart from the fact that his characters often are Greek, Hellenistic and Byzantine kings and emperors, distinguished Romans, artists, or famed grammarians, gods and heroes of the battlefield. These exceptional men not only distinguish themselves from the profane crowd, but express their pronounced aristocratic feelings repeatedly: (cf. *Poems* 1,101, line 18; 1,75, lines 3-4). True, these people are usually depicted in a world of decay; but whereas beauty is not spared the concrete and colorful detail, the description of the old man, e.g., in *Poems* 1,98 is vague and indefinite: for the contrast cf. *Poems* 1,49, but also 1,83. In this juxtaposition of the two opposites beauty always gains preponderance, and often even transforms ugliness (*Poems* 1,89)—something impossible in realistic-naturalistic poetry.

As far as the other common denominator between Kavafis and Herodas (according to the a. always), namely 'obscenity' one remark suffices: The motif of the so-called «schöner Knabe» pervades the classical tradition and besides, there is nothing obscene about it, if we manage to set aside modern puritanism <sup>1</sup>.

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1. For examples cf. the whole XII. book of the A.P. and O. Weinreich, *Die Distichen des Catull*, Tübingen 1926, pp. 8 ff.